





The house favorite at Devil's Pool is a smoked trout, a local Ozarks specialty that's caught from the fresh spring water at Rockbridge Trout and Game Ranch in Rockbridge, Mo. Big Cedar Lodge



Osage Restaurant at Top of the Rock offers an open-air setting with sweeping views of the Ozark Mountains. Big Cedar Lodge



It's not quite the Midwest, nor is it the Deep South; the Ozarks make up a seriously stunning swath of land that covers parts of southern Missouri and northern Arkansas -- even a bit of Illinois, Oklahoma and Kansas. One would be remiss to categorize this area of the country as flyover states. The land is lovely and the economy is booming — especially in the NWA (that's northwest Arkansas) area, home to major corporations like Walmart, Tyson Foods and JB Hunt. With the growth comes a big-time culinary boom, sourcing powerhouse chefs and unique cuisine (around here, they call it high South). But the Ozarks haven't strayed far from their roots; there's lip-smacking barbecue, down-home cooking and curiosities like fried pies, moonshine and Springfield-style cashew chicken.

Start in southern Missouri, along the famous Route 66 and work your way down to northern Arkansas through the gallery above for eats and drinks that are unique to the Ozarks.