

Welcome to The Valley

**A Guide for New Neighbors
and Long-standing Families in
Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Derby,
Naugatuck, Oxford, Seymour
& Shelton**



www.OurValleyCT.com

Welcome to The Valley

Welcome to the Valley! A Letter from the Creator of OurValleyCT.com

Hi There,

Whether you've just moved into town or you're finally getting around to exploring the place you've called home for years – welcome! I'm so glad you're here.

My name is Kayleigh, and I created OurValleyCT.com and this Valley Guide as a way to help people feel connected to this special place we all share. The Lower Naugatuck Valley – Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Derby, Naugatuck, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton – is full of rich history, small-town charm, proud traditions, and above all, incredible people.

This guide isn't meant to overwhelm you with information or duplicate what the internet already offers. It's more of a neighborly nudge – a collection of local go-to spots and ways you can plug into the community if you're ready. You'll find tips, recommendations, and maybe even a few fun facts to help you feel more at home here.

This isn't a news site, and I'm not trying to be everything to everyone. I just believe that community gets stronger when we know each other better – when we take time to learn our shared history, support our local places, and show up for one another.

So, whether you're looking for the best place for pizza, wondering who that statue in the park honors, or trying to figure out how to get involved in your town – this guide is for you.

I hope it helps you feel more connected to your neighbors, your town, and the Valley as a whole.

Kayleigh Mihalcko
Community Guide



What Is "The Valley"?

The Valley is a cohesive region made up of seven towns:

Ansonia

Beacon Falls

Derby

Naugatuck

Oxford

Seymour

Shelton



Though each town has its own flavor, from urban grit to quiet farmland, they function more like siblings than separate cities. You'll often cross town lines to work, shop, hike, volunteer, or attend events.

Some organizations define The Valley as five core towns (Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton), but we embrace all seven. This region shares a river, a history, and a spirit of resilience and reinvention.

The Naugatuck River physically connects our towns, and so does a long tradition of collaboration. You'll see that in our local nonprofits, our business community, and the way we show up for each other when it counts.

Where Are We

So... Where Exactly Is The Valley?

Great question. The Valley is one of Connecticut's best-kept secrets, tucked between the coast and the hills, where the Naugatuck River winds through seven tight-knit towns with deep roots and big heart.

We're talking about:

Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Derby, Naugatuck, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton. If you're from around here, you just say "The Valley" and everyone nods.

We're perfectly placed:

- 🛣️ Just off Route 8, our main north-south lifeline
- 🚗 About 15 minutes from I-95 and the Merritt Parkway (Route 15)
- 🚗 20-25 minutes to I-84 or Route 9
- 🏙️ Roughly 30 minutes to New Haven or Hartford (depending on the day – and the traffic)
- 🗽 Under 2 hours to NYC
- 🦀 Just over 2 hours to Boston

It's the kind of place where "just up the road" could mean five towns over, but everyone still waves like they know you. But if something is more than 20 minutes away, they will still groan. The Valley blends small-town charm with easy access to everything, making it a perfect home base for living, working, and exploring.

So whether you're a weekend wanderer, a new neighbor, or a born-and-raised Valley kid – welcome. You're in the right spot.

Things You Should Know

Ansonia football
Seymour softball
Sikorsky
Wiffle ball



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Town Profiles

Ansonia

A gritty city with strong working-class roots and a clear sense of pride. The downtown is laid out in a classic grid structure and features over 20 restaurants, a senior center, train station, and City Hall all within walking distance. With ongoing redevelopment, former factories are being reimagined as lofts, studios, and storefronts. Look for the ongoing restoration of the historic opera house, a symbol of the city's cultural revival.

Beacon Falls

Small, serene, and scenic, Beacon Falls offers quiet suburban life tucked into a wooded landscape. It's mostly residential, with single-family homes and a tight-knit community. Its business district may be modest, but the town makes up for it with its strong sense of place and natural beauty.

Derby

Despite its size, Derby boasts a deep well of community pride. The Housatonic River is central to its identity, and revitalization is underway along the riverfront. Expect new housing, small businesses, and a cultural reawakening in the coming years.



Town Profiles (cont)

Naugatuck

Built by industry and reshaped by reinvention, Naugatuck's odd street layout reflects its unique history. Today, the city is becoming a magnet for families looking for affordability and access to transit. The train station is the heart of a growing TOD (Transit-Oriented District) project that aims to reconnect the city through smart design and walkability.

Oxford

One of the fastest-growing towns in Connecticut. Known for the Quarry Walk development, an all-in-one plaza for dining, fitness, shopping, and living, Oxford is suburban living at its most convenient. With great schools, nature preserves, and new construction homes, it's ideal for families and retirees alike.

Seymour

Charming, historic, and accessible. Seymour's downtown antique district is a treasure trove for collectors and weekend explorers. But it's also evolving, with new businesses cropping up along Route 67. With a mix of older homes and newer neighborhoods, Seymour strikes a balance between the past and present.

Shelton

The economic engine of the Valley. Home to major employers, miles of walking trails, and some of the best schools in the region, Shelton is both family-friendly and business-forward. From the upscale Huntington Green to the quirky Berries neighborhood, it's a city that's grown fast while trying to keep its small-town charm.



Dining & Coffee

Whether you're grabbing a quick bite or settling in for a long, relaxed meal, the Valley has something to satisfy every craving. New spots are opening all the time – be sure to sign up for our emails so you'll be the first to know when a new place opens its doors.

Roseland Pizza (Derby): A Valley institution. Old-school, thin-crust, cash-only. Known far and wide.

Aribella (Shelton): Modern Italian, perfect for date night or a family celebration.

Wellingtons (Shelton): Elevated American cuisine in a stylish setting near Huntington Green.

Valley Diner, Riverdale, Plaza: Classic diner fare served with a side of local flavor.

Caloroso (Shelton): Cozy Italian spot great for wine nights and big portions.

Looking for coffee? Options are growing:

Common Grounds and Kickstart Café (Shelton): Two favorite independent coffee shops with atmosphere and community vibes.

Focaccia's, Munch, Fritz' Snack Bar: Great places for casual breakfasts or quick lunches.

And for something sweet:

Rich's Farm (Oxford): Locally made ice cream with generous portions.

Wells Hollow Creamery (Shelton): Farm charm and outdoor seating with seasonal specials.

Dunkin' fans—you're in luck. Shelton alone has six. We take our coffee seriously.



Outdoor & Recreation

Nature lovers, rejoice. The Valley is packed with opportunities to get outside:

Indian Wells State Park (Shelton): A summertime staple with swimming, hiking, and waterfalls.

Osbornedale State Park (Derby): Dog-friendly, picnic-perfect, and connected to the Kellogg Environmental Center.

Ansonia Nature Center: 150 acres of trails, live animals, and educational exhibits.

Kellogg Environmental Center: Offers free workshops and stunning nature trails.

Shelton Riverwalk: A paved, scenic trail that's part of the Valley's long-term greenway vision.

Regional Trail Systems: Active work is being done to link all the towns with a bike- and pedestrian-friendly trail system that follows the Naugatuck River.

Whether it's a morning hike or an after-dinner stroll, there's a perfect spot just minutes away.



Annual Events

The Valley calendar is packed with traditions that bring neighbors together. Mark your calendars for:

Celebrate Shelton Events: Including Food Trucks on the River and Downtown Sounds—music, food, and vendors on warm evenings along the Riverwalk.

Seymour Pumpkin Festival: Held every September. A full-day family event with vendors, food trucks, contests, and thousands in attendance.

Rock the Valley (Ansonia): A one-day street festival with live music, family activities, and downtown dining.

Holiday Tree Lightings: Each town has its own December celebration, usually featuring carolers, cocoa, and Santa sightings.

Parades & Fireworks: Derby and Shelton host notable Memorial Day parades, and summer fireworks can often be viewed from multiple town greens.

Schmoozapalooza: The Greater Valley Chamber's signature networking bash. High energy, highly recommended—even if you don't think you're a "business person."

TEAM Inc's Men Who Cook and BHcare's A Chance To Shine are just two of the many fundraising events held by non-profits in The Valley.

Attending events is one of the best ways to meet new people and feel connected fast.

Stay In The Know

There's always something going on in our corner of Connecticut – from community events and town meetings to new businesses and school updates. Here are a few trusted sources to help you stay informed, engaged, and connected:

Local News & Updates

- The Valley Independent Sentinel (valleyindy.org). The go-to source for local reporting focused on Ansonia, Derby, Seymour, and beyond. Independent and community-focused.
- CT Post (ctpost.com). While it covers all of Fairfield and New Haven counties, the CT Post often reports on Valley issues.
- The New Haven Register (nhregister.com). A broader regional outlet that includes occasional Valley stories – especially helpful for regional news.

Town & City Websites

Official municipal websites often post meeting agendas, community events, and announcements:

Ansonia – ansoniac.org

Beacon Falls - beaconfalls-ct.org

Derby – derbyct.gov

Oxford – oxford-ct.gov

Naugatuck - naugatuck-ct.gov

Seymour – seymourct.org

Shelton – cityofshelton.org

(Pro tip: Subscribe to their email notifications where available.)

Community Facebook Groups & Pages

Many Valley towns have active Facebook groups where neighbors share everything from events to traffic alerts to lost pets:

- "Ansonia CT Community"
- "Derby CT Community Group"
- "Oxford CT Locals"
- "Seymour CT Neighbors"
- "Shelton CT Residents"
- Plus: "Valley CT Events," "Lower Naugatuck Valley Rants & Raves," etc.

(Just remember: Facebook groups can be helpful – and occasionally dramatic. Read with kindness.)

Ready to Go Deeper?

Now that you've read through this guide, we invite you to take the next step and explore even more of what makes the Valley special.

👉 Visit OurValleyCT.com for:

- Local stories and historical gems
- Volunteer opportunities and town resources
- Highlights from around Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton
- Ways to plug into the community and connect with your neighbors

We're not a news site – we're a friendly, ever-growing collection of what makes the Valley feel like home. Whether you're looking for a bit of local history, a place to get involved, or just a sense of belonging, you'll find it here.

We're glad you're part of the Valley.

P.S. Why the Japanese Maple Leaf?

The seven-pointed Japanese maple leaf symbolizes beauty, resilience, and deep roots – just like the Valley itself. Each point reflects one of our core towns and the many ways we stay connected, growing stronger together through every season.

