SCENIC ROAD TRIPS THROUGH New York State Parks
Adventure
& Thrills

Niagara Falls: Where fun for all ages is measured in gallons per second!

**From Cleveland: 3.5 hours**
**From Toronto: 1.5 hours**
**From Pittsburgh: 3.5 hours**
**From Albany: 4.5 hours**

Spend the day experiencing the thundering waters of the mighty Niagara Falls. Get up close to this natural wonder with a visit to the world famous Niagara Falls State Park. Start early with a ride on the iconic Maid of the Mist boat and then head over by the Keyto Goat Island, where you can dine at the top of the Falls restaurant, then descend into the gorge for an exhilarating soaking on the Cave of Winds Hurricane Deck within inches of the roaring waters. ([niagarafallsstatepark.com](http://niagarafallsstatepark.com))

Head 15 minutes north for more heart-pounding action with a Jet Boat trip up the Class V rapids of the Niagara River Gorge and its whitepools. ([niagara-jet.com](http://niagara-jet.com), [whirlpooljet.com](http://whirlpooljet.com))

Bring a set of dry clothes so you can enjoy the many cafés and shops in nearby Lewiston, a charming riverfront village, after you catch your breath from the wild and wet ride.

If Niagara Falls is your base, Old Falls Street offers dining and entertainment. Stay the night at any of the hotels within steps of the Falls or for more unique lodging, book a yurt at Four Mile Creek State Park along Lake Ontario, just minutes away. ([newyorkstateparks.reserveamerica.com](http://newyorkstateparks.reserveamerica.com))

**Day Two:** Head to Letchworth State Park, about an hour and a half drive from Niagara Falls. Voted the best state park in the nation in 2015, Letchworth is known as the Grand Canyon of the East. It does not disappoint when it comes to spectacular views and non-stop adventure with its three major waterfalls and cliffs as high as 800 feet.

Find miles of trails to bike and hike. Other great ways to see this 17-mile long gorge along the Genesee River Gorge include hot air balloon or white-water rafting ([balloonsoverletchworth.com](http://balloonsoverletchworth.com), [adventure-calls.com](http://adventure-calls.com)). For a break in the action, enjoy a relaxing drink or bike ride at the Glen Iris Inn over looking the park's picturesque Middle Falls. ([glenirisinn.com](http://glenirisinn.com))

**Tip** For savings on all the park’s cool attractions, make sure to buy the Niagara Falls USA Discovery Pass. ([niagarafallsstatepark.com](http://niagarafallsstatepark.com))

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Cave of the Winds, Niagara Falls USA
Waterfalls & Wineries

What’s more relaxing than spending a few days among award-winning vineyards and ‘gorge-ous’ backdrops in the Finger Lakes?

With more than 30 wineries and vineyards, Seneca Lake offers the perfect location to jumpstart a Finger Lakes getaway filled with bold wines, rugged gorges and a bounty of wine and dining. Take advantage of a climate that supports hearty winter grapes and premium hybrids by making a stop along the Finger Lakes Wine Trail. (fingerlakeswinecountry.com)

Head to the southern end of the lake for outdoor adventure. A must-see is Watkins Glen State Park with its well-deserved reputation for leasing visitors eyeball to eyeball. The gler’s stream descends 409 feet, generating 19 waterfalls along its course, and a gorge path with over 800 stone steps that wind over and under waterfalls. The Gorge Garden is one of two falls that you can walk behind.

Drive east on Route 79 for 25 miles to Cayuga Lake and the many gorges and waterfalls near the city of Ithaca and the surrounding area. Roughly 12,000 years ago glaciers formed Cayuga Lake and its deep valleys that are now home to 100 waterfalls within 10 square miles of the city’s downtown. (visitithaca.com)

On the way, be sure to see Robert Treman State Park’s Craig gorge and trails that follow the Enfield Glen past a dozen waterfalls including the 115-foot Lucifer Falls. On a hot summer day there’s nothing more refreshing than swimming in the stream-fed pool at the base of the flowing waterfalls. Just a few miles away, Buttermilk Falls State Park takes its name from the foaming cascades formed by Buttermilk Creek as it flows down the steep valley side toward Cayuga Lake.

Talk about a nice pairing! Continue exploring the region’s vineyards with a stop along the Cayuga Lake Wine Trail. (Or sample some of the local farm-to-table cuisine ranging from fine dining to rustic charm. The Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway includes a number of destinations around the lake. (cayugawinetrail.com; cupagula-ke.com)

Island Hopping

Sparkling waters and picturesque coastlines in the Thousand Islands are the perfect summer setting for watersports and anglers.

Hook up your boat or camper and head to the Thousand Islands, a vacation paradise for water enthusiasts along eastern Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. Fish the big water for trout, salmon and walleye or head into the river system for pike, bass and perch. Sail, canoe, water ski, kayak, tube...and more! (visit1000islands.com)

The fishing is excellent at Wellesley Island State Park. Its sandy beach on the river offers great swimming, and the park is known for its campgrounds, cabins and cottages. Beavers enjoy the full-service marina and three beaches. Landlubbers can hit the links at the golf course or join one of the outdoor programs at the nature center. Or for a true getaway, reserve a campsite or cabin at one of the best-beach-only island state campgrounds like Gananoque Point Park or Mary Island State Park. (ny.gov)

While on the river, a must-see is the landmark Bold Castle on Heart Island built by hotel magnate George G. Boldt as a tribute to his wife. Learn the thrilling story behind construction of the Gilded Age mansion and why it was never completed. Accessible by water taxi, tour boats and private boat, the castle is open for self-guided tours from mid-May through mid-October. (boldycastle.com)

Rock Island Lighthouse State Park is off of Fishers Landing and features a lighthouse commissioned back in 1842. Docking is available to those aboard Clayton Island Bay Boats and private craft (Gross Point State Park is the closest launch site, about a 5-minute boat ride away.) Visit the museum and gift shop, picnic, then climb the lighthouse stairs for spectacular views of the sanctuary. (claytonislandstatepark.com)

Tip

After walking along the curving paths of the gorge at Watkins, explore the nearby Catharine Valley Trail by bicycle.

Tip

After a day on the water, nothing tastes better than one of this area’s legendary island Shem Diners – a fresh catch cooked over a wood fire by local fishing guides.
Grand Estates & Gardens

Explore the beauty and symmetry of gracious dwellings and divine green spaces along the east shore of the Hudson River to Sleepy Hollow.

From Boston: 3 hours
From Hartford: 2 hours
From Indianapolis: 2.5 hours
From Burlington: 4 hours

Begin in Columbia County with a visit to the PersNL-illustrated mansion Claiborne State Historic Site, the 18th-century home and studio of Hudson River School artist Frederick Keenly Church. The 70-acre estate boasts dramatic views and picturesque landscapes. Visitors can marvel at remarkable interior tiles with original sketches and paintings as part of the guided tour. Or enjoy self-guided walking tours of the grounds. (alseo.org)

Travel down Route 96 to the riverside Clement State Historic Site, the former home of the prominent Livingston family. Seven successive generations of the family left their imprint on the site's architecture, room interiors and landscapes. Clement appears much as it did in the early 20th century, filled with family furnishings, art and the lush gardens.

Clement State Historic Site

Just south is Rhinebeck, a charming village with boutiques, cafés and restaurants. 868Bn and other lodging including the historic Rhinecliff Inn are a short walk from the train station. Local attractions include local wineries and the Bear Mountain Bridge.

Just outside Rhinebeck is the largest and most complete collection of ship models in the world. The model shipyard is the only one of its kind in America. The model shipyard is a living museum of ship models. It is open to the public year-round. The shipyard is located at 600 Main Street, Rhinebeck, NY 12572. (rhinebeckmodelship.com)

Military History Comes Alive

Start out at Bear Mountain State Park – only an hour or so north of New York City – and then venture to nearby Fort Montgomery State Historic Site. Tour the remains of the 14-ton fortification, the site of a fierce Revolutionary War battle. Original artifacts, weapons and large-scale models of the fort and the attack can be found at the site's museum. Visit parks.ny.gov for events, demonstrations and reinactments.

Continue your path through history with a tour of the famed U.S. Military Academy at West Point 10 minutes south of Fort Montgomery. The central starting point is the West Point Visitor Center. Visitors may enter the West Point grounds through guided tours (pointpoint-tours.com). Before you leave, it is recommended to contact the Center at 845-938-2368 for updated status of any tours.

The next stop on the journey is a visit to New Windsor Cantonment State Historic Site, where the Continental Army under George Washington spent the winter and spring of the Revolutionary War. From April through October, you will have an opportunity to see the 18th-century camp. The Cantonment is a living museum where reenactors demonstrate muskets, drills, and other aspects of life in the Continental Army. The Cantonment is open year-round from 10am to 5pm. (parks.ny.gov)

Awards for the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor, located at New Windsor Cantonment, the Hall honors men and women who have been awarded the Purple Heart and is dedicated to commemorating the sacrifices made by the men and women who served in the military. The Hall is open to the public.

Spend the afternoon at Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site in Newburgh. Tours are available to explore where General Washington made some of his most important military and political decisions that would help shape the American Republic. Afterwards, visit one of the craft breweries and eateries in the area.

Tip

When in Hyde Park, check out the Culinary Institute of America – enjoy award-winning restaurants and cafes, retail stores and public tours. (ciachef.edu/visiting-new-york)

Tip

Learn more about lodging, dining and other must-see stops at the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area site. (hudsonrivervalley.com)
SET A COURSE FOR FUN!

Whether a day trip, weekend getaway or family vacation, New York’s 215 state parks and state historic sites are the perfect stops on the road to adventure. Visitors of all ages can experience the beauty, outdoor wonders and rich heritage found throughout the Empire State.

Feel the sheer power of Niagara Falls or meander along a canyon in a hot air balloon at Letchworth; hike the gorge parks then treat yourself to a vineyard visit in the Finger Lakes; dine on your fresh catch and travel by boat to a campsite in the Thousand Islands; capture the grandeur of the Hudson River’s great estates; and hear the roar of cannon fire at American Revolutionary War battlefields.

To explore and stay active or just unwind and relax, there are a variety of four-season, affordable options for you, your friends and family. For more information about state parks and sites, visit parks.ny.gov; and for additional attractions and travel destinations be sure to check iloveny.com. In the meantime, use these five suggested itineraries for inspiration to start your planning today.

Enjoy!
ENJOY THE RIDE!

It's a big country, with countless wonders to discover. Getting there is half the fun when you travel by car. Your first stop is geico.com for a free insurance quote and to enroll in their Emergency Road Service Plan. Then check out these helpful apps and you'll be good to go!

PLANNING AHEAD
• Roadtrippers—Helps you plan your perfect road trip, with information on eateries, attractions, scenic spots and more.

POWER UP
• GasBuddy—Searches for the best gas prices in your vicinity
• Plugshare—Provides a nationwide database of charging stations for your EV vehicle

SMOOTH SAILING
• Tollsmart—Calculates toll costs across the US and Canada
• iExit—Finds the best exit to make a pit stop along interstates

LOCAL FINDS
• Field Trip—Notifies your phone when you’re near an interesting location
• LocalEats—Finds the best independently-owned restaurants across the U.S.

FOR THE KIDS
• Sago Mini Road Trip—Allows your little one to take their own virtual road trip
• Stack the States—A fun geography game about the 50 states

Monies saved. Memories made.
We’ll make sure you’re covered all the way down the trail.

You love life
And you know that spending time in the great outdoors has proven benefits for mind and body, like an improved mood, a sharper memory and lower stress. Did you also know that parks offer healthy activities like guided hikes, yoga classes, wildlife viewing and more? Find out about park programs and events: parks.ny.gov.

Visit www.newyorklife.com to make sure you have the right long-term care insurance plan to support a long life.

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