



ABOUT THE FINGER LAKES REGION

The Finger Lakes Region was recently recognized by *Money Magazine* as one of the United States Top Ten Vacation Spots. This national recognition fortified what the locals have known for a long time: the Finger Lakes Region is a scenic marvel and a bewitching locale that's easy to get to, safe and teeming with activities for the single traveler, the exploring couple, or the entire family.

Whether you're interested in a day trip, a long weekend, or an extended stay to experience all that the Finger Lakes have to offer, all possibilities offer a varied and enticing realm in which to relax or stimulate your mind, body and spirit. Best of all, meandering at your own pace allows spontaneity, entertainment and fun. Getting away from it all is something you'll want to do again and again, and it's never been easier.

The northern gateways to the Finger Lakes are Rochester and Syracuse, while Corning provides a good southern starting point. A short car ride from any of these cities provides that first spectacular glimpse of the lakes, the most compelling attractions of the area. Legend has it that a giant hand had caressed and blessed the landscape and left the imprint of fingers. These impressions formed the Finger Lakes. Five lakes, Seneca, Canandaigua, Honeoye, Canadice, and Hemlock are the signature of Ontario County's Lake Country.

Each lake has its own character. Seneca is the largest and is our connection to the world via the Cayuga Seneca Canal. Canandaigua means "The Chosen Spot" and has historically been referred to as "the playground of the Finger Lakes." Honeoye is a prime fishing spot, and because of its small size it often freezes over in the winter making it a prime location for ice fishing, skating and ice boating. Canadice and Hemlock are sister lakes, reclusive in nature and surrounded by wooded hillsides. These lakes offer peaceful retreats for nature experiences.

During summer, the lakes come alive with boats of all types. Popular activities are water skiing, fishing, and lake excursions on the Canandaigua Lady, a delightful replica of a stern wheel paddleboat. From May through October its 110-foot length offers plenty of room for lunch and dinner cruises, as well as shorter excursions on Canandaigua Lake. Captain Gray's Boats provide a history filled narrative on the waters of Canandaigua. Marinas and boat launches are plentiful for those who want to bring their own boats to cruise around the lakes. Sailing, fishing, and party charters are also available.

Special events highlighting the area provide fun for everyone. From rose festivals to Civil War weekends to whale watches (that's right – whale watching) to grape and wine festivals, events provide year round excitement. There are scarecrow contests, carriage rides, and home and garden tours. The area is truly diversified, and the events that take place year-round reflect this incredible span of interests.

The New York wine industry and the Finger Lakes are synonymous. On the hills overlooking the lakes, the industry's pioneers lovingly planted vineyards that eventually matured, producing the award-winning wines of today. Wine tasting is available throughout the area, and guided tours

provide lessons in winemaking that are educational and fun. Ontario County is home to the Canandaigua Wine Trail and Geneva is conveniently located on the Seneca Lake Wine Trail.

Sports activities abound throughout the area in all seasons. In winter, Bristol Mountain Ski Resort is a thrilling spot for the downhill skier. In autumn, the ski lifts provide sky rides to the mountaintop for a scenic vista. Cross-country skiing is available at Cumming Nature Center, where well-mapped trails are enjoyed by everyone. In summer, the same trails bloom with foliage that is untouched and preserved. A complete guide to hiking and biking the Finger Lakes offers 12 suggested biking routes and a list of trailhead locations for hiking across six of the Finger Lakes counties. Finger Lakes Gaming & Racetrack offers thoroughbred horse racing excitement and a new 1,000-plus video gaming center. You can check out the Canandaigua Speedway for dirt track motor sports.

For a change of pace, sample the historical traditions of Ontario County. Canandaigua's Sonnenberg Gardens and Mansion is world famous. The 50-acre Victorian garden estate attracts visitors who want a glimpse of life at the turn-of-the-century. You'll be reluctant to leave the varied gardens, as a different style beckons at every turn. Other historical points include the Granger Homestead and Carriage Museum, Rose Hill Mansion, Valentown Museum, Bloomfield's AWA Wireless and Radio Museum and Vintage Tracks Museum, and historical society museums in Geneva, Canandaigua and Bloomfield. Whether you're an avid history buff or a casual observer, visit the Ganondagan State Historic Site for a look at the area's Native American roots and culture. There is a full-size replica of a long house, a visitor's center, and interpretive walking trails on the site. The Hill Cumorah Visitors Center in Manchester should be your starting point for a tour of the historic sites of the Mormon Church, which was founded by Joseph Smith in Palmyra. Even our smaller communities of Phelps, Clifton Springs, and Gorham have historical societies preserving, interpreting, and displaying the history unique to their community.

Living history is displayed at Abbey Farms in Flint, or throughout the year with Canandaigua's Carriage Project. You never know when you're going to spot someone from an earlier century reflecting on how things used to be in this area. Historical assets are being reinvigorated at places like Clifton Springs, where the architecture is being preserved and reused for gifts shops, delis, and bed and breakfasts. Even the spa industry is undergoing revitalization with the planned opening of the Springs at Clifton.

Hand-in-hand with historical interests are the many art galleries and cultural activities. Special events always provide a sampling of the area's finest arts, crafts, and music. The Finger Lakes Performing Arts Center in Canandaigua, with its spacious outdoor amphitheater, fills summer evenings with music and special performances. Geneva, Honeoye, and Canandaigua provide concerts at their gazebos. The Bristol Valley Playhouse in Naples presents a professional summer stock company featuring musicals, comedy, and mystery. In Geneva, the Smith Opera House for the Performing Arts, a national historic site, offers year-round stage productions and films. Honeoye, Geneva, and Canandaigua all offer music from their centrally located gazebos throughout the summer.

If your idea of a good getaway is to enrich yourself, you can do so at two places that specialize in what's been coined "edutainment." The South Bristol Cultural Center has performances, classes, and workshops on watercolor, interior design, healing, jazz and nature. Nearby, in the Bristol Hills, the Gell Center is an inspiring retreat location for individuals (it is very popular for writers especially) or groups who are looking for an intimate meeting setting.

For something a little different that kids will enjoy as much as adults, visit the Willow Pond Aqua Farm in Canandaigua or the Copper Creek Farm in Farmington. It's hands-on at both of these "hidden" visitors attractions. Parks, like the Seneca Lake State Park with its water play area are also popular spots for family activities and reunions. Nine parks are available, each having its unique features offering activities from shuffleboard to swimming. Canandaigua's Roseland Waterpark

invites everyone to “immerse yourself in fun” at its giant wave pool, splash factory, raft and flume rides, and slides.

Shopping is one of the favorite activities for visitors to our area. Charming villages provide just the right atmosphere for window shopping or finding a special gift for someone in the over 35 antique shops dotted throughout our area. On our Main Streets you can find specialty gift and music shops, artist’s galleries, and clothing stores featuring popular lake resort wear. An intriguing side trip is the Wizard of Clay Pottery in Bristol. Inside a complex of geodesic domes, handmade pottery is crafted every day. The Wizard welcomes visitors to the workshop, where they watch, ask questions, and enjoy the ancient art form. EASTVIEW Mall is the area’s largest shopping complex with over 250 name brand stores, restaurants, and services. Routes 5 and 20, a former stagecoach road and precursor to the New York State Thruway, are particularly notable for both the variety and quantity of antique shops.

Just as popular as shopping in Lake Country is eating. Whether you are dining or snacking, you are guaranteed a tasteful experience in the Finger Lakes. The Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty highlights restaurants that use locally grown products while promoting Finger Lakes wines on their menus. Ontario County’s Culinary Bounty participants include: Pasta Only at the Cobblestone, Warfield’s Restaurant in Clifton Springs, The Pier House Restaurant at the Ramada and Ports Café in Geneva, Casa de Pasta in Canandaigua, and Bloomfield’s Holloway House. You can also pick your own fresh fruits and vegetables. Red Jacket Orchards is one of the best-known fruit outlets in the area. Be sure not to miss the apple cider, grape pies, specialty mustards, and hand coated chocolates.

Bed and Breakfast establishments, campgrounds, hotels, and motels are conveniently located wherever you're ready to stop. Two of our facilities, Acorn Inn Bed and Breakfast and Geneva-On-The-Lake, have earned the coveted four-diamond designation from AAA. The Geneva Lakefront Ramada Inn and the Canandaigua Inn on the Lake are full service hotels located on Seneca and Canandaigua Lake respectively. Other properties with lake access include Bristol Harbour Resort and Belhurst. Camping is available throughout the county, and cabins are available at Onanda Park on Canandaigua Lake, and at most of the campgrounds. Our lakes, five of them for Ontario County (Seneca, Canandaigua, Honeoye, Canadice, and Hemlock) provide not only a coveted landscape, but also a backdrop for high-energy activities or simple relaxation.

When you plan a visit to the Finger Lakes and Ontario County’s Lake Country there is so much to do. To get all the details or to plan your getaway, visit our Web site at www.VisitFingerLakes.com or call us for a getaway planning kit, including a visitor's guide, maps, events calendars and specialty publications like Canal Guide, Hiking and Biking Guide, Fishing Guide, Agriventure Guide or Cultural and Historic Sites Guide to the area.

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