

Hunter College - CUNY  
Department of Geography  
Geography of New York State

## NYS Heritage Sites

To ensure its history, document events and preserve places of importance, NYS established HERITAGE AREA SYSTEM in 1982. This program preserves and develops areas throughout the state that hold special significance in the history of NYS. From the Niagara Frontier to Montauk Point, they include some of the state's most significant natural, historic and cultural resources.

There are 18 areas in the system. Each is themed to focus on a particular aspect of NYS's past. Each of the links below will bring you to the web site for that particular area.



**1. Albany Business & Capital** Since its beginnings as a fur-trading post, Albany has been a center for world trade, finance and government and a pivotal force in the development of the state and the nation. For information, call (518) 434-0405 or 1-800-258-3582. <http://albany.org/>

**2. Buffalo Flowering of Culture** Since the mid-19th century, when Buffalo was booming with lake, canal, and rail traffic, the city has supported a broad range of entertainment and culture, a tradition that lives on in the city and its Theatre District. For information, call (716) 852-2356 or 1-800-BUFFALO. <http://www.buffalocvb.org/>

- 3. Hudson-Mohawk – RiverSpark Labor & Industry** At the confluence of two great rivers, natural resources and cutting-edge technology were harnessed in the region's transformation from an agrarian to an industrialized society. This heritage is visible today in the landscapes and streetscapes of the RiverSpark communities: Troy, Cohoes, Colonie, Green Island, Troy, Waterford and Watervliet. For information, call (518) 270-8667 or (518) 237-7999. <http://riverspark.org/>
- 4. Kingston Transportation** The city of Kingston began in the narrow streets and stone houses of the colonial Stockade District, which served as the first capital of New York State, and grew to include the bustling Hudson River port of Rondout. For information, call (800) 331-1518. For Rondout, call (845) 331-7517. For Uptown, call (845) 331-9506. <http://ci.kingston.ny.us/>
- 5. Lake Erie Concord Grape Belt** Fruitful vineyards, hospitable communities, breath-taking vistas, and healthy flavors abound in the 50 miles of shoreline that form the world's oldest and largest Concord grape-growing region. <http://www.concordgrapebelt.org>
- 6. Long Island North Shore** From the historic mansions of Great Neck to the farm stands of Orient, from sunny vineyards and well-worn fishing piers to luxurious Gold Coast estates, Long Island's north shore abounds in attractions. For more information call (516) 922-8605. <http://linorthshoreheritagearea.com/>
- 7. Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor** The dramatic landscapes of the eight Mohawk Valley counties are layered with centuries of history, from Iroquois encounters with fur-traders and missionaries, through European settlement, colonial wars, the Erie Canal and industrialization. For information, call (518) 673-1045. <http://mvhcc.org/>
- 8. New York City - Harbor Park Maritime Trade & Immigration** Historic waterfront sites around New York's harbor tell the epic story of growth from a colonial trading post to the largest seaport and immigration destination in the world. For information, call (212) 344-3491. <http://thebattery.org/>
- 9. Ossining Reform Movements** In this historic Hudson River village, unique landmarks like the Old Croton Aqueduct and Sing Sing Prison display state-of-the-art advances in 19th-century civil and social engineering. For information, call (914) 941-3189. <http://www.hudsonriver.com/rivertowns/ossining.htm>
- 10. Rochester - High Falls Natural Environment** Where millraces and waterwheels once captured the power of the mighty Genesee River. Rochester's High Falls area now welcomes visitors day and night to revitalized factories, dramatic archaeological sites, and magnificent scenery. For information, call (585) 325-2030. <http://centerathighfalls.org/>
- 11. Sackets Harbor Defense** The War of 1812 Battlefield, historic Madison Barracks, and quaint village streets bear witness to Sackets Harbor's role as a military stronghold defending the northern border during our country's turbulent first centuries. For information, call (315) 646-2321. <http://sacketsharborny.com/home.html>
- 12. Saratoga Springs Natural Environment** "Queen of the Spas" in the 19th-century, Saratoga still attracts visitors to its bubbling mineral springs, racetracks, Victorian architecture, vibrant downtown and flourishing cultural life. For information, call (518) 587-3241. <http://www.saratogatourism.com/vcstuff/vchome.html>
- 13. Schenectady Labor & Industry** "The Electric City" grew from a 17th-century stockaded village into the modern industrial giant that is home to General Electric, the American Locomotive Co, Union College, and numerous historic neighborhoods. For information, call (518) 382-5147, ext. 5128. <http://www.sayschenectady.org/>
- 14. Seneca Falls** The righteous spirit of reform earned Seneca Falls a place in world history as the setting of the first Women's Rights Convention in 1848. Today, the historic mill town features a classic main street, canal promenade, and many mementos of women's activism. For information, call (315)568-2703. <http://www.senecafalls.com/history-heritage.php>

**15. Susquehanna** *Immigration & Migration and Labor & Industry* Antique carousels, factories, ethnic neighborhoods and gold-domed churches tell the story of the thousands of immigrants drawn to the industries of Binghamton, Endicott, and Johnson City in the Susquehanna's "Valley of Opportunity". For information, call Binghamton (607) 772-0660, ext.255 or Endicott (607) 757-5355. [http://www.roberson.org/visitors/binghamton\\_visitor\\_center.asp](http://www.roberson.org/visitors/binghamton_visitor_center.asp)  
[http://www.endicottny.com/Visitor\\_Center/visitorcenter.htm](http://www.endicottny.com/Visitor_Center/visitorcenter.htm)

**16. Syracuse** *Transportation and Business & Capital* Salt, a precious natural resource, first put Syracuse on the map, but it was the Erie Canal that transformed the city into a modern center of business and capital. For information, call (315) 471-0593. <http://eriecanalmuseum.org/urban.asp>

**17. Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor** The Erie Canal brought pioneers, the fervor of social reform, and industrial progress to the fertile landscapes of Western New York, a legacy that survives in the fascinating cities, towns and sprawling farms that line today's canal. For more information call (585) 546-7029. <http://eriecanalheritage.com>

**18. Whitehall** *Defense* Whitehall's harbors, museums, parks, and charming main street evoke the village's history as home base for Benedict Arnold's Lake Champlain fleet during the American Revolution and as a prosperous port on the Champlain Canal. For information, call (518) 499-1155 or (518) 499-0716. <http://www.museumsusa.org/museums/info/115278>

**SOURCE:**

NYS Parks & Recreation web site

<http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/historic-preservation/heritage-areas.aspx>