



GREAT NORTHERN CATSKILLS



A HIKER'S PARADISE

The Great Northern Catskills is a hiker's paradise, offering a "big mountain" experience and year-round adventure. With an array of hiking trails to choose from, you can climb to the summits of the Catskills' tallest peaks for breathtaking five-state views, hike to Kaaterskill Falls – the highest cascading waterfall in the New York State, discover the northern Catskill Mountains' legendary "cloves" where Rip Van Winkle took his marathon nap, and enjoy the area's enchanting wilderness.

For the experienced hiker, try the Long Path which includes the 21-mile portion of the Escarpment Trail. Beginning in Ft. Lee, NJ, the path winds through State Parks and continues through the Catskill Park for 95 miles and climbs some of the highest in the Catskills. The path presents challenging climbs interspersed with gentle walks.

Other well-known hikes:

Diamond Notch Falls

A hidden gem, Diamond Notch Falls is a 15-foot waterfall in a beautiful stream valley with a hiking trail that leads up to Diamond Notch. The notch separates Hunter and Westkill mountains.

Directions to Diamond Notch Falls:

Drive to the eastern end of Spruceton Valley along Cty. Rte. 6, off Rte. 42, north of Deep Notch. An old roadbed continues east of the parking area, heading for Diamond Notch. The waterfalls are located about 0.75 miles from the trailhead.

Distance and Difficulty: The 1.5-mile round-trip walk to Diamond Notch Falls and back is easy and family-friendly. The scenic 4-mile round-trip hike to Diamond Notch is also relatively easy.

Hunter Mountain Fire Tower

During the summer months at Hunter Mountain, hikers can ride the chairlift to the Colonel's Chair and then walk the remaining 2.1 miles to Hunter's 4,040-foot summit and fire tower. Surrounded by a dense spruce-fir forest, the tower has the distinction of being sited higher than any other in New York State and offers 360-degree views of the Catskill high peaks, Devil's Path, Platte Clove and the Hudson Valley.

Directions: Follow signs to Hunter Mountain ski resort base lodge off Rte. 23A.

Distance and Difficulty: From the top of the chairlift to the fire tower and back, it is a difficult 4.2-mile round-trip hike.



AWAKEN TO ADVENTURE



Kaaterskill Falls

At 260 feet, this two-tiered fall is the highest cascading waterfall in New York State. The spectacular waterfall attracted tourists, painters and poets when it was first publicized in the early 1800s. It is the subject of numerous paintings by Thomas Cole and other painters in the famed Hudson River School of Art.

Directions to the base of the waterfall:

Park 0.1-mile west of the horseshoe bend on Rte. 23A at Bastion Falls. Walk downhill along the road, cross bridge and follow yellow markers. Trail ends at .7 miles. Do not attempt to hike beyond this point or climb the falls.

Distance and Difficulty: A moderate 1.4-mile round-trip hike.

Directions to the top of the waterfall:

Continue west on Rte. 23A to Haines Falls. Turn right on Cty. Rte. 18, North Lake Road. Turn right onto Laurel House Lane, park at end of road and follow the beaten path for a magnificent view from the top of the falls.

Distance and Difficulty: A short, easy walk ideal for all capabilities.

Exercise caution near the waterfall.

Newman's Ledge and the Catskill Mountain House Site

In the mid-to-late 1800s, this area was among the premier resorts in the New World. Hikers can check out Newman's Ledge and the site of the former Catskill Mountain House, a famed summer retreat for European nobility and America's nouveau riche that overlooked 50 miles of the Hudson Valley and into New England. Even more ambitious hikers may want to head north on the Escarpment Trail, which offers incredible views from Sunset Rock, Artist's Point, North Point and other vistas.

Directions: From Rte. 23A at Haines Falls, take Cty. Rte. 18, North Lake Road, to North-South Lake State Campground.

From the beach parking area follow the signs and head up the road to the Mountain House site. After returning to the parking area, follow the Escarpment Trail (blue markers).

Distance and Difficulty: An easy .25-mile hike, suitable for all.

Pratt Rock

Dubbed the "Mount Rushmore of the East," Pratt Rock features 150-year-old carvings commissioned by Zadock Pratt, who ran one of the largest leather tanneries in the United States during the 1800s. An avid breeder of prized horses and dogs, Pratt hired stonemasons to immortalize him and his loves. A series of interwoven trails follow a moderate grade to the carvings and the trail continues for a short distance to a series of southeast-facing ledges with great views of the Schoharie Valley, Bearpen and Vly mountains.

Directions: Look for a parking area located along Rte. 23, about one mile west of its intersection with Rte. 23A. The trail leads to a picnic area and a kiosk with information about Pratt and the interwoven trails.

Distance and Difficulty: An easy 0.4-mile climb from the parking area.

For more information about hiking on State Land, contact the DEC, Region 4 office at 518-473-9518 or www.dec.ny.gov



CAUTION: Outdoor recreation activities are by their very nature potentially hazardous and contain risks. All participants in such activities must assume the responsibility for their own actions and safety. The outdoors are forever changing. The Greene County Tourism Office cannot be held responsible for inaccuracies, errors or omissions, or for changes in the details in this publication or for the consequences of any reliance on the information contained herein for the safety of people in the outdoors.



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