

Niagara County

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Niagara County holds a treasure of wonderful resources to explore and experience.

What's the big attraction? It's Niagara Falls, of course.

But the magic doesn't end there. There is an inland ocean at the Aquarium of Niagara, an incredibly intact colonial era fortification at Old Fort Niagara, off-Broadway entertainment, year-round festivals, and enough water and fish to put a smile on any angler's face.

Other well-known attractions include Artpark in Lewiston, Maid of the Mist, Cave of the Winds museum, art galleries, fine restaurants, upbeat nightspots, major shopping centers, outlet malls in the Town of Niagara and many cultural activities. Attractions such as these draw millions of visitors annually from all over the world.

Three hundred years of history can be found at the Old Fort Niagara Historic Site in Youngstown. Established in 1679 by the French, the fort was subsequently held by the British and then used as an active Army barracks up until 1963. French-and-Indian War battle re-enactments are regularly staged at Old Fort Niagara. The site of historic battles and sieges, trading and conquest, Old Fort Niagara is an exciting place where the past lives on. Preserved as they stood in the 1700's when France and Britain controlled Niagara, the Fort's structures include the oldest building in the Great Lakes region.

The history of Niagara County also centers on the interaction of agriculture and the Erie Canal, which continues to today. Wine growers, dairy farmers, and farmers markets dot the area. As one example of the agricultural history of the area, Murphy Orchards in Burt, NY is a privately owned and operated fruit farm, located 25 miles east of Niagara Falls. The farm is believed to have been part of the Underground Railroad network between 1850 and 1861. The farmhouse, barn, orchards and landscape itself remain virtually the same as they were 150 years ago, allowing one to step back in time and experience a very special and unique view of Underground Railroad history.

Thirty Mile Point Lighthouse at Golden Hill State Park in Barker is found along New York's Seaway Trail, the longest National Recreation Trail in the country. The 1875 lighthouse is built of hand-carved stone and a climb to the top provides a breathtaking view of Lake Ontario. Campsites and rental suites in the lighthouse are available for visitors. Thirty Mile Point Lighthouse was one of five chosen for the "Lighthouses of the Great Lakes" series postage stamp designed by

Howard Koslow in 1995.

The town of Burt is home to the Van Horn Mansion, a historic 1800s mansion. This lovely restored home is on display for walking tours and is said to be haunted.

The Wilson Harborfront is a recently renovated harbor that features dining at the historic Wilson Boat House on Lake Ontario, with specialty shops, free harbor boat tours, sport fishing and swimming. In Newfane, Olcott Beach has a full service marina, beautiful parks, interesting shops, good food and lodging, with a long tradition as a place for all forms of water recreation.

The Eighteenmile Creek Streambank Stabilization and Habitat Restoration Project is located in the Town of Newfane. The restoration project begins just below Burt Dam and extends approximately 1 mile downstream (north) to the Fishing Access Parking Area. Eighteenmile Creek flows from the south and discharges into Lake Ontario approximately 18 miles east of the mouth of the Niagara River, through Olcott Harbor. Niagara County has received State and Federal grant funding to initiate watershed improvements within the Eighteenmile Creek Watershed. This project is designed to be the first critical step in creating sustainable fisheries in, and improving access to, Eighteenmile Creek.

Usually it's C-130 aircraft that cruise the skies over Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station. The Niagara Falls International Airport operates under a joint agreement with the military. The facility handles international charter and cargo service and functions as the reliever airport for the region. Currently the airport has three active runways, which serve general aviation, military, and some commercial flights. Celebrating its past and future, the air base hosts an annual international air show every summer.

The Tuscarora Reservation is located nine miles northwest of Niagara Falls, near the shores of Lake Ontario. The reservation covers an area of 5,700 acres.

The Tuscarora are of the Iroquois linguistic group and indigenous to North Carolina. They moved to Western New York where they were admitted into the League of the Iroquois as the sixth nation in 1718. The treaty of 1784 secured for them the possession of the land they occupied.

Visit the quaint Village of Lewiston on the banks of the Niagara River. This historic village has many fine restaurants, gift shops and is the home of Artpark, a popular summertime indoor/outdoor theater venue. The village has activities and events almost every weekend starting in April and running through December. The village hosts a juried outdoor art show every August along with a weekend long jazz festival.

Travel up River Road to Youngstown, another wonderful little hamlet where the Niagara River meets Lake Ontario, the only Great Lake that doesn't flow into the Falls. Every year this tiny community hosts the world class level Regatta Sailing competition. Youngstown is also home to Old Fort Niagara and Fort Niagara State Park.