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Apple-basket of the nation

How the Hudson Valley became a land of orchards

by Frances Marion Platt

WHETHER YOU PICK YOUR own or just grab a half-peck bag from a farm-stand on the fly, fresh apples are among the most enticing treats of early autumn in the Hudson Valley and a staple of local agritourism. This time of year, visitors from throughout the tri-state metro area flock to Ulster County, and with good reason: It's the second-biggest county for apple production (after Wayne County, on the southern shore of Lake Ontario) in the second-biggest apple-growing state (after Washington) in the U.S., which is the second-biggest apple-producing nation (after China) in the world.

The once-ubiquitous Jonathan is rarely seen for sale in these parts any more.

Since 1976, the apple has been designated New York's "official state fruit." There are more than 600 commercial orchards comprising about 55,000 acres of apple trees statewide, yielding about 30 million bushels in a good year.

Why this area, though? What makes our state, and particularly the mid-Hudson Valley, such a fruitful apple-growing region? What's the history behind so many orchards being established, some of them maintained by as many as seven generations of the same family?

While apple-friendliness will vary from site to site, the simple answer is a generally favorable climate. Apple trees, which



PHOTOS BY LAUREN THOMAS

originated in the mountains of central Asia – southern Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and northwestern China – like temperate zones and don't mind cold winters (though a late frost can drastically impact yields, as happened in late May of this year in our region).

"The Hudson Valley offers a unique and dramatic microclimate for apple-growing," said Elizabeth Ryan, owner of

Breezy Hill Orchard in Staatsburg and Stone Ridge Orchard in Ulster County. Besides the deep soils with "nearly perfect 6.5 pH" left behind by the passage of glaciers during the last Ice Age and the "incredible air drainage" afforded by the region's rolling hills, Ryan cited the "dramatic deep river" fed by snowmelt in the Adirondacks as key to the ability of *Malus domestica* to thrive here.

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"Fruit-growers want to be near a body of water for its moderating effects," she explained. "It needs to be big enough to hold the temperature." Well-drained slopes are important as well, to prevent cold air pool-

Hudson Valley Explore

Fall in the Valley

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ing around the trees for extended periods.

Ryan, who came to the Hudson Valley in 1980 with a pomology degree from Cornell University, has made it her business to document the social history of fruit-growing in the Hudson Valley, which she broadly defines as extending from Lake Tear of the Clouds to the end of Long Island Sound. She got her first of a series of grants from the New York

State Council on the Arts in 1984 to create an archive of information on the subject, launching what she calls her “endless book project” and giving illustrated lectures at places as prestigious as the Smithsonian Institution.

“I’ve been doing this for decades,” she said. “I’ve recorded 80 oral histories with fruit-growers, mostly in Ulster County, and compiled more than 5000 photos.”

Her magnum opus on the history of Hudson Valley apples isn’t finished yet, but it would be difficult to find a more knowledgeable expert on the subject, going right back to the beginnings. “Except for a few species of crabapples, apples are not indigenous to North America. Virtually all of the *Malus domestica* that enjoy are introduced or were developed here,” she explained. In the days before

U-pick farms

BELOW IS A list of 19 u-pick farms in Ulster County, waiting for you to explore and sample their wares. Some have onsite bakeries, plus added attractions such as hayrides, petting zoos, scarecrow dioramas and corn mazes. Check the websites for more details, including hours of operation.

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applehillfarm.com

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dresselfarms.com

DuBois Farms

209 Perkinsville Road, Highland
duboisfarms.com

Hurd's Family Farm

2187 Route 32, Modena
hurdsfamilyfarm.com

Jenkins & Lueken Orchards

69 Yankee Folly Road, New Paltz
jlorchards.com

Kelder's Farm

5575 Route 209, Kerhonkson
keldersfarm.com

Locust Grove Fruit Farm

199 North Road, Milton
locustgrovefruitfarm.com

Maynard Farms

324 River Road, Ulster Park
maynardfarms.com

Minard's Farms

250 Hurd's Road, Clintondale
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Prospect Hill Orchards

73 Clarks Lane, Milton
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Saunderskill Farm

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Stone Ridge Orchard

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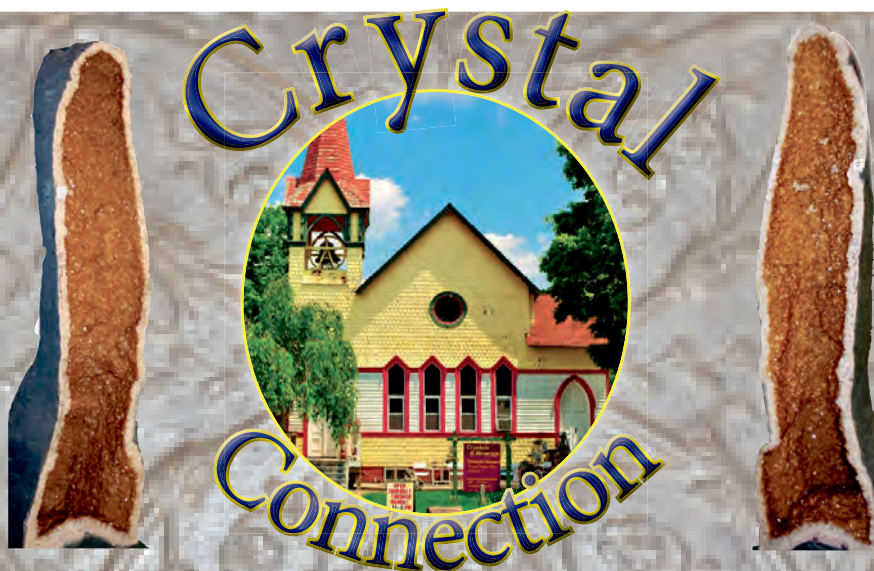
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refrigerated storage and overnight transportation, “Every homestead and home had at least one apple and pear tree Where were you going to get the fruit if you didn’t grow it?”

Apples were used for cidermaking as well as for raw eating and baking, and “Every house had a cider press.” In Colonial times in the Northeast, hard cider was drunk at every meal, even by children. Apple bees, in which apples were cut up for drying and winter storage, were a popular social activity for young people.

Apples were introduced to North America by colonists in the early 17th century, with the first apple orchard on the continent planted in Boston by reverend William Blaxton in 1625. The Pilgrims brought apple trees with them in 1629 to the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Apples were introduced to what was then New Netherland by the Dutch. In

1647 “Peter Stuyvesant brought some trees from Holland and planted them in Manhattan Manhattan was bursting with orchards,” Ryan said. “The Huguenots, the Palatines, the English and the Dutch were all mighty fruit-growers.” In his 1655 book *A Description of the New Netherlands*, Adriaen van der Donck (the *Jonkheer* or “young squire” after whom Yonkers was named) wrote an entire chapter on fruits as part of his effort to entice Dutch settlers.

Van der Donck’s sales pitch must have worked. It wasn’t long before orchards were being planted all over what is now eastern New York State. The first – and for a long time, the largest – commercial plant nursery was established in Flushing by a Huguenot family surnamed Prince in the 1730s. In 1793 a descendant renamed it the Linnaean Botanic Garden and Nursery, and it remained in operation until 1869. Another Queens farm, in the

village of Newtown (now Elmhurst), was the birthplace of the iconic Newtown Pippin apple, sometime in the late 17th or early 18th century.

While serving as ambassador to France, Thomas Jefferson complained in a letter back home that in Paris, “They have no apples here to compare with our Newtown Pippin.”

According to Ryan, a big part of the reason why the Hudson Valley quickly became a booming orchard region was the handy presence of the Hudson River itself to ship fruit quickly to market. “First they used sloops, and then later steamboats, up until about the 1920s.” One of the first designated public roads in the mid-Hudson, the Farmers’ Turnpike in Highland (now called the Milton Turnpike), was commissioned in 1790 for use by farmers to transport fruit and cider to the docks in Milton for shipment to New York City.

Before too long, said Ryan, “Our region was doing an international trade in fruit, shipping to England, the West Indies – and it built wealth.” The first commercial orchard in eastern New York dedicated specifically to fresh-fruit production for export was established in Esopus in the 1820s by Robert Livingston Pell. He started with 20 acres, growing Newtown Pippin apples that were shipped by schooner and later steamer to England. By 1838 he had expanded to 1200 acres (including Pell Island, now known as Esopus Island). He became immensely wealthy and built resorts on Overlook Mountain in Woodstock and at Paltz Point, later to become the site of the Mohonk Mountain House. Pell was one of the largest fruit shippers in the world until the Civil-War blockade wiped out his transatlantic market.

By 1875, the New York census counted 18,278,636 apple trees in the state. As the fruit industry rapidly expanded, the labor force began to employ increasing numbers of recent immigrants. These included Irish people who had fled the great potato famine of the 1840s and 1850s, and Italians, many of whom came to the Hudson Valley to work on the massive public-works projects of the era: the D&H Canal, the Catskill Aqueduct, the Rondout and Ashokan reservoirs.

In World War I, the orchards faced a labor shortage and began to recruit women from New York City, inspired by Great Britain’s effort known as the Women’s

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Land Army. The last standing women's dormitory from that program, in Milton, was only recently demolished, Ryan said.

World War II saw the beginnings of the tradition – still thriving today – of recruiting Jamaican migrant workers: “They were considered the elite pickers. It was a godsend. Bob Greig, the father of Norman Greig from Greig Farm in Red Hook, met the first Jamaicans at Grand Central Station.”

Another major milestone of the early 1940s was the introduction of controlled atmosphere (CA) storage for apples. The first successful commercial CA storage room in the U.S. was built in 1941 at Hurd's Family Farm in Clintondale.

The New York Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, known today as the Cornell AgriTech program of Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, has been a key player in the orchard industry in New York State and beyond, since 1870. It is the preeminent think tank, laboratory and proving ground where pomologists have developed some 70 new apple cultivars over the past century and a half. It's a massive undertaking, complicated by the fact that *Malus domestica* is what geneticists call heterozygous. Trying to grow new apple plants from seed and hoping they'll resemble their parents is a total crapshoot.

The early settlers brought potted or baled apple saplings from their home countries, or else wasted a lot of time experimenting with apples grown from seed that ended up tasting bitter. That worked well enough for the likes of John Chapman a/k/a Johnny Appleseed, who was planting nurseries in Ohio and Indiana primarily meant to be used for cidering. Culinary apples needed to be more palatable. Grafting branches of trees known to yield apples of superior quality onto existing rootstocks soon became the favored approach.

Of course, on occasion a random seedling would grow into a tree that produced excellent fruit. These would be cherished, coddled and regrafted – not to mention crossed with other known outstanding cultivars -- in hopes of generating a few usable offspring.

The two best-known apple varieties to be discovered here in Ulster County were the Esopus Spitzenburg, first found in the mid-1700s growing along the banks of the Hudson River near the village of Esopus; and the Jonathan, believed to be



a Spitzenburg offspring, first discovered in 1826 as a chance seedling on the farm of Philip Rick in Woodstock. The “Rick apple” was later renamed after Jonathan Zander, who brought it to the attention of to the Albany Horticultural Society to have it officially recognized.

The once-ubiquitous Jonathan is rarely seen for sale in these parts any more, and the Spitzenburg had all but died out until the recent resurgence of interest in heirloom apple varieties. “There are a few people around growing the Spitz – one in Ulster Park, Tom Maynard,” said Ryan, “and I ferment a varietal of the Esopus Spitzenburg for cider.”

The DNA of these two Ulster County natives is also to be found in dozens of varieties of apple still commercially produced and enjoyed today. Among their best-known descendants are the JonaMac (Jonathan x McIntosh); Idared (Jonathan x Wagener – another New York native, first grown in Penn Yan in 1791) -- and Jonagold (Golden Delicious x Jonathan).

The Jonagold was a 1943 discovery of the NYS Agricultural Experiment Station. Other apple varieties developed at Cornell include the Cortland (McIntosh x Ben Davis, 1898), Macoun (McIntosh x Jersey Black, 1932), Fortune (Red Spy x Empire, 1962), Liberty (Macoun x Purdue 54-12, 1978), RubyFrost (Braeburn x Autumn Crisp, 2015) and SnapDragon (Honeycrisp x Golden Delicious x Monroe x Melrose, 2015).

The most recent releases from Cornell AgriTech in 2020 were Cordera (Honeycrisp x Liberty), Pink Luster (Honeycrisp x Gala), and Firecracker (Golden Delicious x Monroe x Melrose). These three newcomers aren't yet widely available, but each year you can find a wider variety of apple cultivars including some rediscovered heirlooms at the Hudson Valley's farmstands and farmers' markets. One place to brush up on your familiarity with the widely available breeds is at the New York State Apple Growers' Association website: www.applesfromny.com/varieties.

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A Dutchess County October

Classic autumnal activities never go out of style

by Cloey Callahan

LEAF PEEPING, CORN mazes, and apple pies: Here are the best spots in Dutchess County to grab your sweatshirts. Turn on the heat. Fall is officially here.

It's one of the best times in the Hudson Valley, attracting tourists from New York City and beyond to come peep at leaves and enjoy a taste of autumn. For locals, it's right in our back yards. The best of

the season is not to be missed. October is prime leaf-peeping season, which goes hand in hand perfectly with all the other fall activities.

While the entire region has robust fall offerings, we're zooming in on Dutchess County. Here's your go-to guide, categorized by activity, for the best way to indulge in the season.

Find the perfect pumpkins

At Pawling's Dykeman Farm you can

stroll through vine-covered fields in search of the perfect pumpkin. A family tradition since 1974, pick-your-own pumpkins are available weekends only all October including Columbus Day. The farm also offers free hayrides and a children's tent for activities with the kids.

Disappear into a corn maze

Barton Orchards in Poughquag is really the perfect one-stop-shop when it comes to celebrating the perfect fall

day. It's easy to get lost quickly in the five-acre corn maze. Each year, Barton has a custom theme, leaving visitors multiple paths and plenty of places to get stuck. It's perfect for all ages. It's open on

weekends starting Labor Day weekend. While you're there, you will find multiple other activities across the 175-acre farm, including live music, pick-your-own apples and pumpkins, hayrides, a petting

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Bite into cider doughnuts

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Hay bales make up the giant bear at Kesickes Farm.

farm stand and during its fall festival, happening every Saturday and Sunday until October 29. Plain or coated in sugar, you can't go wrong when you grab this delicious treat here.

Head out for leaf peeping

Once you grab a dozen doughnuts, make your way to one of our favorite leaf-peeping spots. Drayton Grant Park at Burger Hill in Rhineback offers

360-degree views of the changing leaves.

There are multiple scenic outlooks in the county that provide stunning fall views. The Walkway Over the Hudson in Poughkeepsie, the longest elevated pedestrian bridge, provides a stunning backdrop along the Hudson River. And if you're up for a hike, head to Breakneck Ridge or Mount Beacon in southern Dutchess County.

Visit a farm store for apple pie

Fishkill Farms is the go-to place to find seasonal farm-fresh fruits and vegetables that are grown right on site. What are we there for? The apple pie. You can purchase the homemade pies frozen to bake later, or fresh to dive into right away; one of both is our suggestion. While there are long wait times during the fall season, the store has a lot more to offer, like artisanal bath and body products, kitchenware, and fresh goods like yogurt, honey, cheese, maple syrup and more. But the fresh cider donuts can't be skipped.

"That's why people come," said Katie Ross, marketing communications manager for Fishkill Farms. "There are homemade pies, pre-picked produce if people don't want to pick their own, pumpkins, homemade jarred goods, cheeses, meads, and wine and liquor."

While you're on site, explore the one-acre corn maze in the shape of a bee that they cut and designed themselves, or check out the pick-your-own flower garden. It's perfect for locals, open six days a week. If you make a pick-your-own reservation between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Wednesdays, you get a free tasting flight of hard cider.

And while the farm store is perfect to bring goodies back home, it also boasts three food options this year: the farmers' and chefs' food truck, a Las Mañanitas food tent, and rotating pizza vendors.

Indulge in art and music

The second annual Beacon Bonfire Music + Art Festival runs November 4 and 5. It includes 150 performers and over 20 venues and galleries. The event's a can't-miss, but does require tickets, so it's best to purchase ahead of time. Children twelve and under get in free. There will be cozy fires and immersive experiences throughout the City of Beacon. Bundle up, grab some warm apple cider, and stroll around Main Street to be a part of the fun.

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While maybe not the most family-friendly, the mansion does host a kids day on October 9 from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. which will feature magic shows, arts and crafts, and a trick-or-treat trail with friendly monsters.

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The history of horror

A genre that has been evolving in lockstep with American culture

by G. Labate

WHAT COMES TO mind when you think of a horror movie? Whether it evokes the classic black-and-white of Dracula and Frankenstein, the schlocky special effects and slashers of the Eighties, or the choppy found footage of the turn of this century, you almost certainly have an idea of what a horror movie is. Both loved and hated, horror is a vast genre spanning over a hundred years in cinema, from creature features to psycho killers, and from the bone-chilling and thought-provoking to the campy and comedic.

Since the early days of cinema, we have had horror movies starting with the 1896 short film *The Haunted Castle*, believed to be the first. The 1920s and 30s saw the genre really take off, inspired by the gothic literature and classic novels of earlier eras. Early horror mostly focused on gothic mansions and creatures of the night, from werewolves to vampires. *Nosferatu*, the 1922 silent film, was the first ever to feature vampires as its scare.

The age of Creature Feature, movies with individual monsters as their main attractions, spanned the Fifties. Creature

Horror movies of the time period showed that killers could lurk around any corner.

Features such as the original *Godzilla* and *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* saw great strides in special effects. The puppetry and practical effects used in these films would inspire filmmakers for years to come.

With the 1950s came the Cold War and the beginning of the space race in



the U.S. Both can be seen in the horror movies of their time. Movies such as *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and *The Thing* (later iconically remade by John Carpenter) speak to the fear of infiltration, of invaders living among us as well as

fear of what we may discover as we reach deeper and deeper into space.

The 1960s brought new elements to the genre, with the culture of the Sixties engaging mind-expanding drugs that brought on new and different behavior

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unrecognizable to previous generations. In horror films. This hitherto unusual behavior took the form of the paranormal. To this day, some of these movies are still considered some of the scariest we have, with lead characters being possessed by something within.

Like other movies of this bent, *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist* terrified and fascinated. They were the first horror movie ever to be nominated for best picture.

The Sixties brought about the era of the psycho killer, a character which would

linger in horror for decades to come. Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 film *Psycho* is one of the most memorable and truly iconic films from this era of horror.

Significant numbers of the American public were beginning to realize that our own government was in the wrong on a number of issues and were staging protests against it. Evil, people concluded, was not outside but inside.

Horror movies of the time period showed that killers could lurk around any corner. Maybe outsiders weren't what we had to fear. Maybe the call was coming

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In the 1970s and early 1980s, movies like *Halloween* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* created an era of horror that would leave its mark on pop culture. Updated news coverage of serial killers as a result of new technologies within the FBI fascinated the public. Filmmakers produced popular franchises like *Friday the 13th* and *Nightmare on Elm Street*. Horror movies kept up with the times.

Mostly untouched by massive cultural disturbances, the 1990s largely continued the trends started in the Eighties. The Nineties thrived with large,

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multi-sequeled franchises like *Scream* and *Child's Play* (now more commonly known as *Chucky*), which often had comedic bends. These low-budget movies marketed to high-school-aged audiences were looked down upon by critics and serious consumers. They remain beloved by many fans of the genre.

With the dawning of the new millennium, the ever-evolving culture and the rising Internet brought new things to be afraid of. With the horrors of real life, such as the September attack, growing every day, the American public sought adrenalin. How far we could go with horror? Could we go bigger? Could we make it gorier? Could we truly shock ourselves?

Of course we could. Zombie flicks, spanning decades back, took on a new, undead life of their own. Torture-genre movies such as *Hostel* and *Saw* (which



The Orpheum in Saugerties will be showing modern and vintage horror classics throughout October.

added another film to its ongoing series on September 29) gained a following.

With the Internet in nearly every home in the U.S., new technologies allowed horror to reach new audiences, enabling new fears. Found footage movies, such as *The Blair Witch Project* and *Paranormal Activity*, brought a modernity that captivated many new viewers for horror.

As our culture continues to develop and new fears make themselves known, new kinds of horror movies continue to be made. With new filmmakers have come new visions. Directors such as Jordan Peele and Ari Aster have gained approbation for a kind of psychological horror film nicknamed elevated horror. New audiences are learning what there is to love about horror.

To start your horror story this Halloween, view these classic horror movies at your local theater:

The Others (2001) at the Orpheum in Saugerties on 10/06/23

Hour of the Wolf (1968) at the Orpheum in Saugerties on 10/14/23 and 10/18/23

Horror Hotel AKA The City of the Dead (1960) at the Rosendale Theatre on 10/21/23

Suspiria (2018) at the Orpheum in Saugerties on 10/21/23 and 10/25/23

Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me (1992) at the Orpheum in Saugerties on 10/28/23 and 11/01/23

The Haunting (1963) at the Rosendale Theatre on 10/29/23

And for brand-new horror movies debuting this October, check out *Saw X*, *The Exorcist: Believer* (debuting for the 50th anniversary of *The Exorcist*), *Pet Sematary: Bloodline* and *Five Nights at Freddy's*.



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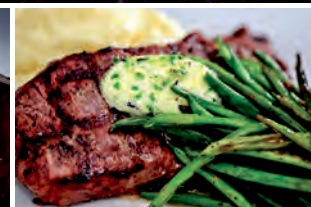
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Drop that apple!

Six off-the-beaten-path outdoor activities to enjoy fall in the Hudson Valley



PHYLLIS McCABE

Disc-golf.

by Zac Shaw

YES, YES. I know. Apple-picking. Historic sites. Leaf peeping. Farmers' markets. Corn mazes. Hayrides. Wineries and cideries. There's nothing wrong with these fall traditions, but we can be more creative.

The Hudson Valley is synonymous with autumnal beauty and color-shifting foliage. You're right to want to enjoy the fall in the great outdoors. But perhaps you've grown tired of the typical activities pictured on the full-color covers of monthly

regional magazines and brochures, and seek to venture off the beaten path while still enjoying nature. Below are six unique activities that may not be obvious to you. From personal experience as a long-time local, I humbly suggest these are great enough pastimes to stand beside placing apples in bags and watching chlorophyll break down.

Pick-apple alternatives

Apple picking in the Hudson Valley has become so passé that Saturday Night Live wrote a skit poking fun at it. So while all the tourists are knee-deep in pies and

ciders, we recommend you join the cool kids by picking anything but apples.

Pumpkins are the obvious apple alternative, but few Americans eat them save un pumpkin pies. If you're looking to be adventurous, Kelder's Farm in Kerhonkson is one of a few places you'll find sugar pumpkins, which distinguish themselves from gargantuan Halloween gourds. They're smaller and sweeter, perfect for cooking.

But we can get more adventurous still. DuBois Farms in Highland advertises October picking of kale, collards, swiss chard, eggplant, peppers, tomatoes and

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even grapes. Homemade country wine, anyone?

Raspberries can be found at several local pick-your-own spots, including Greig Farm in Red Hook. Several varieties of pears can be picked down at Fishkill Farms in Hopewell Junction (reservation required).

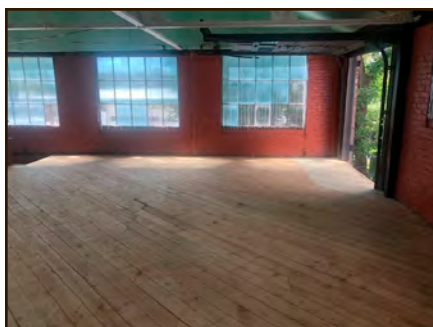
Go on and pick your apples, but consider some other types of fresh fall produce to liven up your autumnal aesthetic.

Play disc golf

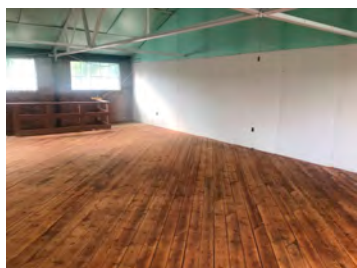
Once you've caught the disc golf bug, you wonder why it took so long to catch on. It's accessible to almost anyone regardless of athletic skill. It's easy to



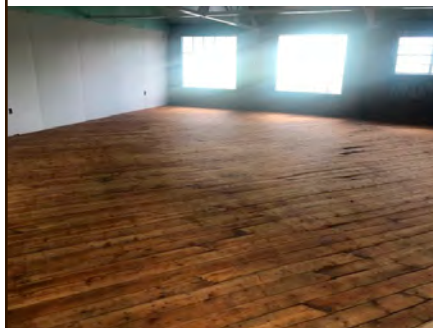
The gnome hides out in the woods. Good luck finding it.



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learn. The pursuit is relatively inexpensive, especially compared to real golf. Courses are typically free to the public, and you only need a handful of discs to start playing (though you'll be replacing lost discs from time to time). Open spaces like parks can easily be turned into disc golf courses. Disc golf offers great camaraderie when enjoyed with friends, and can be as casual or competitive as you care to make it. And even if you've managed to get a disc caught in a tree and two in the water, at least you had a great walk in the woods.

Lucky for us, the Hudson Valley has some incredible disc golf courses.

An unofficial top three might include Hunter Mountain's hilly hike of an 18-hole course, the challenging and diverse bucolic landscapes of the Beacon Glades disc golf course, and the heavily wooded (and thus highly demanding) Gunks disc golf course. Warwick Town Park disc golf course is a bit further-flung, but gets an honorable mention as many a Hudson Valley disc-tosser's favorite. Also check out Kingston Point's nine-hole setup – nothing fancy, but certainly some cool features and views.

Go metal detecting

Metal detecting is having a moment, thanks to social-media accounts and video streaming channels which give a first-person perspective of treasure hunters in historic locations. Several content creators have amassed audiences in the tens of thousands. Their fans hunt vicariously, watching metal objects being found and dug out of the ground in live streams and vlogs – everything from Civil-War paraphernalia to discarded handguns. When one factors that popularity in with the low price of a beginner-level metal detector (around \$60), the hobby can become alluring. Hudson Valley's rich history and plethora of ruins and historic sites, add another dimension to the hunt. We have the real makings of a metal-detecting odyssey.

This is a needle-in-a-haystack type of pursuit. You will likely find hundreds of bottle caps, metal scraps and screws

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before something interesting surfaces. Coins that have slipped out of pockets are typically the only items of value you'll find. But who's to say you won't get a one-in-a-million hit on a lost gold ring or valuable historical artifact? That's what metal detecting is all about – never knowing whether that beep you just heard is treasure, trinket or trash.

In addition to the metal detector, you'll need one or more implements to dig – start with a small trowel built specifically for metal detecting. Wear gloves that can handle hours in the dirt. Having a partner is recommended, so one person can do the detecting while the other does the digging. You can switch off to keep things interesting.

There are many resources available online for you to learn more about the techniques behind detecting objects and choosing locations in which to hunt. There are no resources online that will



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develop the patience you need to metal-detect for an extended length of time. For that, you need the offline idyllic nature of the Hudson Valley to continue motivating your hunt during long moments of silence between beeps.

Forage for a terrarium

Foraging for food is all the rage in the Hudson Valley (locals' tip: there are more mushrooms growing at the aforementioned Hunter Mountain disc golf course). Foraging for a terrarium is

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perhaps less popular, but it's a fantastic and family-friendly way to bring the outdoors inside and create a piece of nature-inspired decor for your home.

Terrariums are another hobby that has risen in popularity with the advent of online content creators who build elaborate closed ecosystems and otherworldly natural installations housed behind panes of glass.

All this hobby requires is a clear vessel of some kind. Old aquariums are ideal, but you can make most see-through containers work. Once you have a container for your canvas, all that's left to do is get outside and start finding objects in nature with which to build a virtual miniature landscape.

There are countless directions to take your terrarium, and endless oceans of inspiration online. For a first-timer terrarium, consider using only objects that will not quickly break down: cool-looking rocks, of course, but also interesting sections of tree bark, moss, sticks, and plant life that can survive for a while even if ignored.

The more living and organic you make your terrarium, the more you'll need to maintain it as you would a plant or garden. Introduce living organisms if you're feeling ambitious. You'll need to layer your ingredients and manage moisture strategically, but worst-case is everything in your container becomes withered and dead. If that happens, you'll have a pretty cool apocalypse terrarium.

Make grave rubbings

A bit of charcoal and some lightweight paper is all it takes to make amazing artwork for your home. This is particularly true in the Hudson Valley, with its historic and often-unique graveyards. Plus, the act of graveyard rubbing offers peak spookiness for Halloween, and an opportunity to enjoy the dying leaves amongst monuments to the dead.

It's easy to create a grave rubbing – just get some lightweight paper like tracing paper, some sticks of charcoal (you can also use rubbing wax, chalk or a soft pencil), and maybe some masking or painter's tape to hold the paper in place. Perfectionists

will want to bring a soft brush (like a paintbrush) to gently clean the grave of dust and dirt, perhaps even using a soft cloth or sponge. Cleaning the gravestone is not necessary, though, and in some cases it might draw unwanted attention.

Most graveyards don't have a problem with grave rubbings as long as you're acting responsibly. But don't expect graveyard staff to sanction them if asked – especially in historic graveyards that have been preserved and restored.

Take your rubbings home and frame them for some great decor that carries with it the memory of enjoying fall in the Hudson Valley, and the reminder you are thankfully still alive.

Search for the dice gnome

This is by far the weirdest item on the list, and one that I might get in trouble for telling you about. That's because the dice gnome is one of our area's most closely-guarded secrets, an experience you only hear about via word-of-mouth, or if, like me, you stumble upon it on Google Maps.

Basically, the dice gnome is a statue that can sometimes (but not always) be found in the southern area of the Ferncliff Forest in Rhinebeck. It's in a small wood shrine at the base of a fallen tree a bit off the Orange Trail. Based on Google reviews, the gnome has been spotted in this vicinity as far back as 2019, but its presence is far from reliable, ostensibly because people keep stealing it. Or perhaps Ferncliff Forest caretakers are not too keen on all the attention the gnome gets. Fortunately, gnome devotees bring replacement gnomes in from time to time.

There's also the matter of dice. Some visitors leave dice of all kinds to present as offerings, while others take the dice. Though my most recent visit to the site revealed no gnome, I did find a single white six-sided die was where the gnome should have been. To my knowledge, there is no explanation for the appearance of the gnome or its obsession with dice, which makes the object all the more mysterious.

Even if the gnome's not home, Ferncliff Forest is a fantastic casual fall hike accessible to folks of all ages. It's the kind of traditional activity you'd expect to partake in during autumn in the Hudson Valley, so why not spice it up by rolling the dice? You might get lucky.

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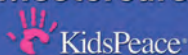


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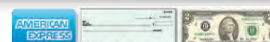
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Coach House Players theater.

Sacred objects

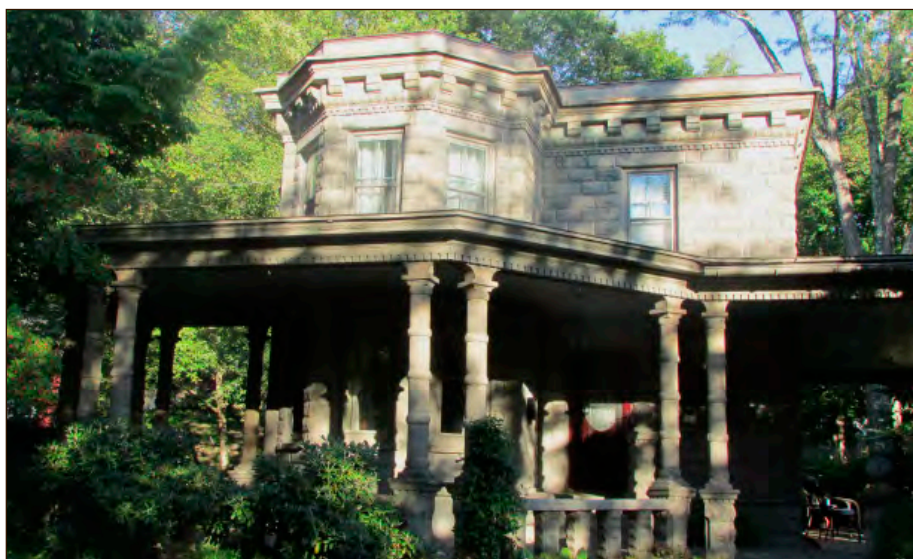
Architectural gems in our midst

by Susan DeMark

TO JOSEPH MITCHELL, buildings inspired reverence. In his essays for *The New Yorker* over nearly three decades, with keen attention to detail and expression, Mitchell became renowned for his true-to-life, eloquent writing capturing the lives of movie-house bouncers, the longshoremen working the harbor, circus characters like the bearded Lady Olga, clammers in sloops, and others among the usually unsung.

Mitchell brought the same fascination to looking at New York City's buildings, particularly its older ones. He devoted many hours to this passion.

"What I really like to do is wander the



26 North Oakwood Terrace (one of the two Storr Houses).

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streets aimlessly in the city," by day and by night, Mitchell wrote. He would ride the city buses or walk, at times taking detours to examine certain buildings more closely.

The variety of ornamentation astounded Mitchell. So, too, did the resilience of what lasted over generations in these buildings, ornaments that "have triumphed" over the ravages of ice, frost, heat, humidity, wind and rain, and traffic constant enough to cause "stone-cracking and mortar-crumbling vibrations."

Undoubtedly, human intervention helps. Yet, as Mitchell reflected in the



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Dash Snow, Untitled (Poodle), 2008. Courtesy of the Dash Snow Archive, NYC and Maria Matar

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third quarter of the 20th century, these structures triumphed over profound changes in architectural styles.

"I revere them," he wrote. "To me, they are sacred objects."

Walking or riding on the streets, lanes, and country roads of Ulster County, one can feel this awe in the architectural variety, character, beauty, and one-of-a-kind elements around us. Autumn's cooler, crisp days and display of bright reds, oranges, and yellows as a backdrop invite long walks and those Joseph Mitchell-inspired detours on streets, roads, and alleys to gaze at architecture. Graceful fan windows, ornate cornices, brickwork on corners rounded as finely as though a bricklayer had poured it as liquid, striped patterns of stone with marble trim, and much more await.

The architecture around us reveals layers of past lives and features to be cherished on buildings both humble and grand. In the introduction to his superb book, *Ulster County New York: The Architectural History and Guide*, author

and architectural historian William B. Rhoads writes that Ulster County is a place of many architectural treasures. Often, they are "the simpler structures associated with everyday middle- and working-class life ... [having] an interest and appeal no less great than the architecture of the wealthy."

A new temple

Kingston's Uptown area is blessed with three historic districts, each within comfortable walking distance. They offer a mix of many historic buildings and styles, from the pre-Revolutionary stone houses, with parts traced to the 17th century, to mid-20th-century Modernism, of which a prime example: the International-Style county office building.

Within the Fair Street Historic District, St. James United Methodist Church, 29 Pearl Street, at the corner of Pearl and Fair streets, has a gorgeous, sumptuous exterior texture. Rhoads terms the church Kingston's best example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style.

Its architect was George W. Kramer, who in just over a half-century of work designed more than 2200 churches. When it opened as St. James Methodist Episcopal Church in January 1894, *The New York Times* headline proclaimed, "A New Temple for Kingston." No wonder, given its rounded arches, tower roof in the shape of a pyramid, and thick stone walls. Kramer used a striking material known as green serpentine stone, from Chester County, Pennsylvania, one quite popular in the late 19th century. At the center of its broad walls on the street sides are huge, richly patterned semi-circular stained-glass windows.

Less than two blocks away, at 265 Fair Street, is a splendid, well-kept building from Kingston's 19th-century firefighting days, in which volunteers maintain a museum that keeps alive this history today. The volunteer Wiltwyck Hose Company (named after the early Dutch settlement in New Netherland) built this firemen's hall in 1857. Though its twin doors date from the 20th century, otherwise the slim four-sided bell tower and façade remain intact. It has twin brackets within the pediment and a round arch of the Italianate design in favor at the time. These elements signified a place of civic importance. The Volunteer Fireman's Hall and Museum, open to the public, preserves Kingston's firefighting history with its collection and display of equipment, vehicles, artifacts and documents.



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For sheer look-up-and-be-in-awe, it's hard to beat the Clermont Building, at 295-299 Wall Street. It's a magnificent

commercial survivor from the 19th century. The 1878 building is topped by delicate iron cresting, a slate mansard

roof, a large arched window, and an intricate set of two corbel tables – continuous rows of stone blocks – below the cornice. The corbels enhance the Clermont's character. Six polychromatic tiles punctuate the brickwork above the second floor. Mansard roofs were going up a lot at the time in Kingston and all over, which the *Kingston Daily Freeman* termed “the French-roof epidemic” even before the construction of the Clermont Building.

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What industry hath wrought

The capability to see generations of working-class and middle-class people making homes and creating new places is evident in countless buildings in Ulster County. St. Peter's Catholic Church and Rectory, atop a commanding vista in Rosendale, were built in the 1870s for a parish of hundreds of workers for the Delaware and Hudson Canal and the cement industry. The former Temple Emanuel synagogue (now residential), which a congregation erected in 1891-1892 at 50 Abeel Street in Kingston's Rondout, shows two tablets of the Law on its stone façade that make clear its beginnings as a Jewish house of worship.

The restoration of Midtown Kingston's

awesome former factory buildings and their reuse as homes, workspaces and art studios often takes center stage. Nearby, however, whether along its main thoroughfares or on residential side streets,



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lie other architectural riches which often have roots in the times of the city's booming industrial growth.

Holy Cross Episcopal Church, born out of a desire to serve working-class families, remains an architectural beauty. The Rev. Paul Watson aimed to establish an Episcopal church in the Anglo-Catholic model. William J. Beardsley designed the Gothic Revival church at 30 Pine Grove Street, built in 1891-1892. Today, Holy Cross + Santa Cruz Episcopal Church holds services in English and Spanish. It has a simple, eye-catching wooden belfry. The exterior walls have rough-cut blue-stone from Ulster County's quarries that go up to the windowsills. In the early 20th century, the parish expanded the church and did significant renovations to the interior, adding a small chapel, two side altars, and a high altar.

The lasting power of inimitable buildings through generations is astonishing, with imaginative renovations that bring a neglected place back to life. People who see this potential adapt them to wholly different uses. Take the Coach House Players building, at 12 Augusta Street in Kingston's historic Chestnut Street neighborhood. Constructed around 1894, it was a carriage house for coaches and horses on the Coykendall family estate, and today it's a theater with a long-running life of its own. (The elaborate Samuel Coykendall mansion did not survive.)

In its first life, the carriage house combined an Old-World, medieval feeling in its cupolas, dormers, and exposed timbers. Its inventive interior included pulleys that brought down hay and a cistern that collected water, each devised for the horses. Through a confluence of events in the 1950s, a community theater group was able to purchase and

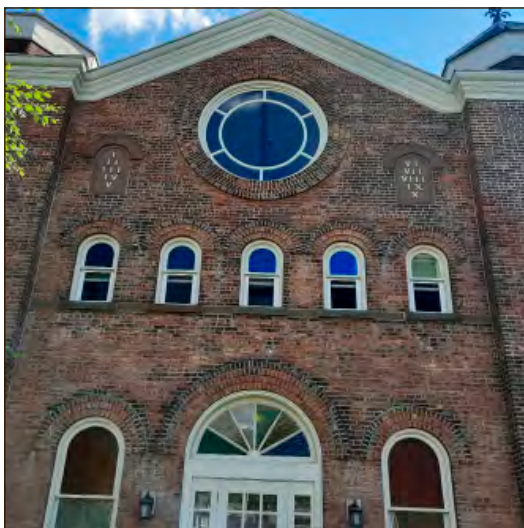
ultimately renovate it, starting in 2000.

Today, the Coach House Players continues to produce theatrical performances and hints, on its website, that if you use your imagination, you might just hear the "clipping hooves of ghost horses."

Locally sourced

Exploring so often reveals how designers and builders used local materials, both natural and manufactured. A Shingle-style house in New Paltz, at 19

North Chestnut Street, has cobblestones that the builder drew from the mountainside, according to Rhoads. A professor at New Paltz Normal School, Henry Griffis was the owner of this home, completed in 1892-1893. It's a marvelous survivor, embodying a more American architecture that rebelled against Victorian opulence and expressed a stronger relationship to the outdoors. This is evident in the home's eclectic mix of shingles and rustic stone walls, varied porches and



Top, the Clermont Building; above left, 50 Abeel Street; above right, Henry Griffis House.

balconies with rounded arches, and a lack of ornamentation.

Local materials of another sort are in two very distinctive 1907 houses at 26-28 North Oakwood Terrace in New Paltz, composed of concrete blocks shaped in front to make them look like stone. David Storr, successful in manufacturing, moved to New Paltz in 1905. As Rhoads relates, Storr began to manufacture concrete blocks from Portland cement and sand in a former coal shed. Homes of concrete block construction became quite the rage in the early decades of the 20th century. Storr bought up land in the village, laid out streets, and erected some 20 houses, though mostly of wood-frame construction, in a development he called Oakwood Park. Storr, who became a local leader and benefactor of various worthy causes, resided at 28 North Oakwood Terrace.

As Joseph Mitchell observed, the sight of masonry, tile, or stone that working people labored to execute long, long ago "will lift my spirit for hours." Contemplating these places and those who keep them intact and cared for today inspires and soothes the spirit.



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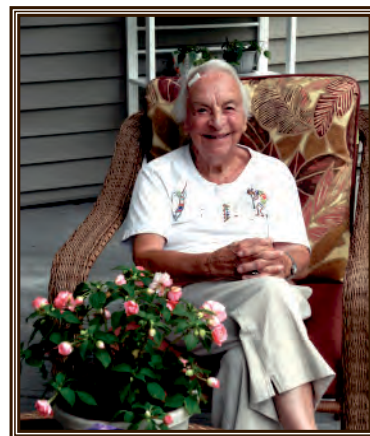
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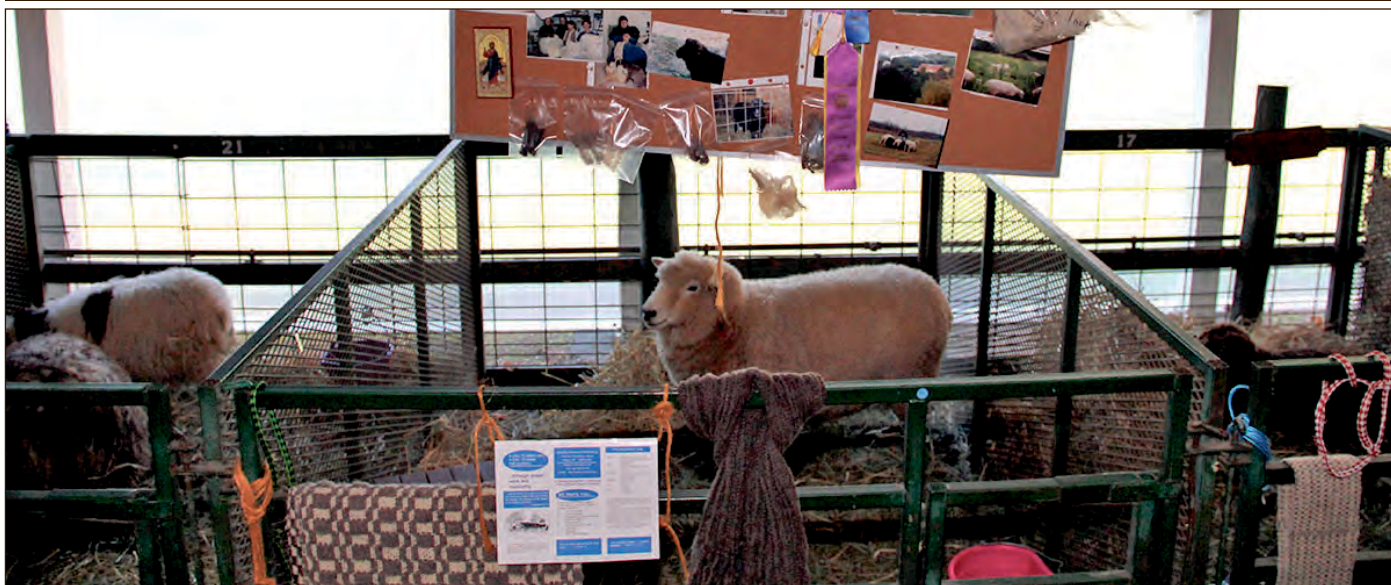
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October events

Friday-Sunday, October 6-8

O+ Festival

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The O+ Festival is a brilliant, innovative community celebration that brings artists of every discipline together with healthcare providers for a weekend of performance, healing and the barter

economy. And each year Kingston comes away with a bunch of new gigantic murals spiffing up humdrum urban walls. As of press time it is far too early for the O+ crew to have posted hints about this year's lineup, so it's on you, dear reader, to keep checking the website for updates.

Saturday-Sunday, October 7-8

Fall Festival Belleayre

Discovery Lodge, 15 Hostel Drive, Pine Hill

www.belleayre.com/event/fallfest

Belleayre is open for free from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, October 7 and from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday for a sort of sampler of what the ski resort has to offer, but with Oktoberfest-ish cultural vibes. The Taste of Belleayre component emphasizes German fair foods like bratwurst on a pretzel bun with sauerkraut, washed down with craft beers from local breweries. Planned activities even include a stein-holding contest, a pie-eating contest, and cornhole and disc golf games.

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Rosendale International Pickle Festival is on Sunday, October 15.

There will be live music, a K9 demo and a visit from Smokey the Bear, lots of kids' activities, craft vendors, and an art show. A booth will be hawking Belleayre season passes and snow-sports programs. Possibly the most enticing attraction, though for an extra fee: are the scenic gondola rides to the summit of Belleayre, just as foliage season is revving up in the Catskills.

**Sunday, October 15,
10 a.m.-5 p.m.**

Rosendale International Pickle Festival

Ulster County Fairgrounds
249 Libertyville Rd, New Paltz
<https://rosendalepicklefestival.org>

Yes, you read that right: Now in its 26th year, the annual Rosendale International Pickle Festival will be happening outside Rosendale this year, for the first time. The popular event has outgrown the cucumbersome confines of its longtime home, the Rosendale Community Center, and will make its move to the county fairgrounds.

One may assume that, now that it has room to stretch, there will be even more vendors of pickled and pickle-adjacent foods and wares on hand, and that there will be a wider variety of weird fermented products from many culinary traditions to sample. Deep-fried pickle chips are just the beginning. Presumably, the pickle-eating, pickle-juice-drinking and pickle-tossing contests will go on as well. Any local bands with a pickle-themed song in their repertoire should probably

be submitting a tape right about now.
General admission to the picklefest will

avid fans of the fiber arts, of which there are many.

cost \$5, and kids under twelve get in free. Check the website for schedule updates.

October 21-22, 2023

New York State Sheep & Wool Festival

Dutchess County Fairgrounds, 6550 Spring Brook Avenue, Rhinebeck
<https://sheepandwool.com>

The schedule is quite extensive, so be sure to go to the website for details. Many of the events are already filled to capacity, so don't delay! You can expect the 2023 Sheep & Wool Festival in Rhinebeck to be the usual blowout for

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Antiquing in the lower Hudson Valley

Spend a day visiting Beacon, Cold Spring and Newburgh

by Cloey Callahan

THE HUDSON VALLEY isn't shy of amazing spots for relics and bygones. There's the Saugerties Antiques Gallery. There's a whole strip of antique stores in New Paltz's Water Street Market, Woodstock boasts Vintage Modern Antiques. And there are many other places both near and far.

But today we're heading down to the lower Hudson Valley and giving you a roundup of the best antiques stores in Beacon, Cold Spring and Newburgh -- perfectly for an ideal day trip. As the days start to get shorter and the weather grows colder, it becomes the perfect time for home improvement projects. For someone looking for unique furni-



Vintage Violet in Cold Spring.

ture, wall art or funky upholstery and tchotchkes, antique stores are a perfect

place to start.

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going on the weekend, because most of these aren't open during the week. If you're coming from Ulster County, we recommend starting in Cold Spring and heading back toward home from there.

Cold Spring:

Each of these locations are a short walk from each other. We recommend parking at the municipal lot on Fair Street, next to the Riverview Restaurant. If this is your first stop of the day, grab a coffee and baked good at the Cold Spring Coffeehouse at 92 Main Street, which has some of the best croissants in the lower Hudson Valley. The freshly baked pastries sell out fast, so get there early to have a bite.

Cold Spring Antiques Center

This is a must-visit for any antique lover. Located in the heart of Cold Spring, it is home to over 30 dealers, each with their own collection of antiques, vintage clothing, jewelry, furniture and more. The dealers here are knowledgeable and friendly, willing to help customers find the perfect item. It's easy to get lost in this store for hours digging around the packed booths, so make sure your calendar is free. *77 Main Street.*

Bijou Galleries

Known for its art and decor, this is an antiques store at which you're certain to find your next statement piece at a fair price. It's a treasure trove of collectables that anyone passing through Cold Spring wouldn't want to miss out on. Plan on browsing for an hour or more. *50 Main Street.*

Vintage Violet

Here you'll find furniture, artwork, collectibles perfect for the home, and also clothing, jewelry and accessories. They have everything from embroidered throw pillows to fine china. This store is also always on the lookout for new pieces, so if you have old treasures, bring them with you. *113 Main Street.*

Beacon:

Just a short ten-minute drive from Cold Spring on Route 9D north, you arrive in Beacon. With a bigger Main Street than Cold Spring, it might be easy to snag street parking. If not, we recommend

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Newburgh Vintage Emporium.

parking in the municipal lot behind the Yankee Clipper Diner on Henry Street. Most of Beacon's antiques stores are on the east end of the town, so head that way.

Dickinson's Antiques

Step into this antiques store to find wooden furniture with ornate details, delicate porcelain teacups, Art Deco mirrors, old match boxes, and more. The window display gives you only a small sneak peak to what's inside, where you can get lost for much longer. Find typewriters, unique lamps and more to fill your home with a touch from the past. *440 Main Street.*

Violet Reserve

On Google, still called Another Door, this consignment shop grabs you in with neon green depression glasses, which have low levels of uranium oxide that make it glow under UV light. The goods in this store are always changing, but inside everything is nicely categorized and well-displayed, making it easy to sort through. With a long day of antiques, this place will let you catch your breath. It's the best spot to restock your glassware. *486 Main Street.*

Finders Keepers

You might miss this store if you don't keep your eyes peeled, as it's a small hole in the wall on the opposite side of the street from the other two stores. In fact, it's so small that only a couple of



Dickinson's Antiques in Beacon.

people can be inside at a time. But on the sidewalk, the owner displays interesting antiques that will draw your eye over. Looking to revamp your vinyl collection, or even find a new record player? This is the place to go. Aside from that, it's knickknack galore. *493 Main Street.*

By now, all this antiques calls for a break – over lunch, of course. On the same side of Main Street, Beacon has a number of delights, ranging from the fancier option at The Roundhouse,

overlooking the waterfall, or a personal favorite, Melzingah, right across the street. For people looking to keep moving and don't have time to sit down for lunch, grab something quick at the Bagel Shoppe, which has an extensive sandwich menu and delicious drinks.

Newburgh:

We've got all of our walking out of the way in the first half of the day. In



Cold Spring Antiques Center.

Newburgh, we are driving from antique destination to destination. From Beacon, the first one is right off the highway, just a quick ten-minute drive away over the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge, also setting us in the direction to head back home.

Newburgh Vintage Emporium + Newburgh Vintage Emporium Ware-House

It's been voted the best antiques and vintage store in the Hudson Valley time and time again. You can't skip it. The two locations are just seven minutes apart, and combined offer over 125 vendors and over 50,000 square feet of shopping across all price points. There is everything from mid-century modern and Victorian to Art Nouveau, Americana, and European antiques. There is no shortage of furniture – both repurposed and custom-made. If you can only make it to one location, the ware-house is the spot to go. Customers have spent the entire day in just this location alone. 5006 Route 9W, 10 NY-17K.

Hudson Valley House Parts

Going all in on your fall home improvement projects? This architectural salvage store is a must-visit. It's the perfect place to find hardware and trim, vintage stoves, sinks and kitchen accessories, and more. It's an antiquity heaven for classic, Victorian and pre-Revolutionary home renovators. Customers can find vintage

doors, windows, and an endless number of chandeliers. Beware, it is on the pricier side, but it's the perfect store if you're looking for that special something. 159 Broadway.

Dan & Karen Olson Antiques

This is a hidden gem, literally. It can be hard to spot from the road (go to the white building to the left of the stone house). But it's well worth taking the time to check out, especially if you are

on the hunt for furniture that is carefully curated and in great condition. Besides furniture, there are paintings, dishes, books and more. The owners have been dealing early American antiques since the 1970s, so they are knowledgeable and ready to answer questions. 1445 NY-300.

Blooming Grove Antiques Take 2

Another multi-seller shop, this antique store is worth a couple of extra minutes from Newburgh. Separated into booths by different vendors, there is everything from crystals to colorful glassware to unique furniture. They are loaded with inventory to decorate your home, revamp your closet, or to just enjoy seeing things from years past. 436 Blooming Grove Turnpike, New Windsor.

After a long day of antiquing, and hopefully a few special finds later, it's time for dinner in Newburgh. We love the waterfront because of its beautiful views and new offerings like Primo Waterfront and Jet Set Tiki Bar. But Liberty Street is not to be overlooked. Grab elevated bar food at The Wherehouse or pick from the carefully curated menu at Mama Roux. Looking for something to eat on the car ride home? Head to Pete's hot-dog stand on South William Street, which has been open for nearly a century. After a long day trip to the lower Hudson Valley, your stomach will be full, your car will be full, and it will be time to head home.

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