



The Kaaterskill Clove Experience – Leisure Itinerary

Stops Along This Route:

Greene County Visitor Center, Olana State Historic Site, Rip Van Winkle Skywalk, Thomas Cole National Historic Site, Historic Catskill Point and Freightmasters Building, Kaaterskill Clove Lookout, Kaaterskill Falls, Mountain Top Historical Society, Kaaterskill Rail Trail, North-South Lake Campground, Catskill Mountain House Site, Mountain Top Arboretum, Hunter Mountain Resort, Pratt Rock - New York's Mount Rushmore, Zadock Pratt Museum, Jon Burroughs' Woodchuck Lodge

Day One: The Hudson River School of Art

Begin the Kaaterskill Clove Experience at the **Greene County Visitors Center** in Leeds for insider tips on where to go, what to expect and what to see for a relaxing, yet inspiring trip through the mountains.

From the Visitors Center in Leeds, head over the Rip Van Winkle Bridge to the **Olana State Historic Site**, located across the Hudson River from Cedar Grove (Thomas Cole's name for his home) in Hudson. Olana was the former home of Cole's star pupil Frederic Edwin Church. Designed in the Persian architectural style, the 250-acre estate is just as picturesque inside as it is out. See the paintings, sculptures and furnishings of Church and his wife Isabel, tour the grounds, and participate in an array of art programs offered throughout the summer months.

For your next activity, head back to the Rip Van Winkle Bridge's parking area to enjoy a leisurely walk across the **Rip Van Winkle Skywalk**. One of two pedestrian crossings over the Hudson River, the Skywalk provides panoramic views over the lush landscape of the Catskill Region. Capture the view with your camera or smartphone and share on our social channels before heading to the next stop on the Kaaterskill Clove Experience.

Continue back across the bridge toward the Town of Catskill and the **Thomas Cole National Historic Site** on Spring Street. The former home of Cole, renowned as the father of American art, is open from May through October, offering special exhibits, tours, guided hikes and events. The home and grounds with views of the Catskill Mountains is the first stop on the Hudson River Art Trail, a series of hiking trails that lead to vistas made famous by painters of the Hudson River School.

Now is a great time to break away from the trail to recharge with lunch. Main Street in Catskill offers a variety of eateries and cafés perfect for a relaxing meal or a quick bite to take along the trail. The Village of Catskill also offers an array of boutiques and shops filled with jewelry, clothing, books, and much more.

Next, drive to the **Historic Catskill Point and Freightmasters Building** on the Hudson River, an open-air cobblestone plaza and waterfront park ideal for a quiet stroll along the Catskill Creek, an outlet of the mighty Hudson. Also within the plaza, the Freight Master's Building and the Historic Warehouse offers insight into the history of transportation on the river.

From Catskill, head west on Route 23A to Palenville and arrive at the **Kaaterskill Clove Lookout** parking area, just before the 'Entering Catskill Park' sign. Park in the lot and venture off on a 1.8-mile hike with views of the clove. This hike is on the New York-New Jersey Long Path, the same trails as the horse trails



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used to bring travelers to the mountaintop for summer vacation. Next, continue on Route 23A through the winding mountains to the **Kaaterskill Falls** parking lot located past Bastion Falls on the left. Enjoy a moderate, 1.47-mile round-trip trek to the base of Kaaterskill Falls, the highest cascading waterfall in New York State, for a breathtaking view up the falls. Be cautious when hiking along the path as erosion and water can create slick conditions. Be prepared with the proper footwear and gear. Do not wear flip flops, sandals or have bare feet. Do NOT hike to the top of the falls as there are no guardrails to protect viewers from slipping and falling.

From the parking area, continue west on Route 23A toward the **Mountain Top Historical Society** in Haines Falls, a short drive from Kaaterskill Falls. Dedicated to preserving and discovering the unique history of the Catskill High Peaks, the Mountain Top Historical Society maintains the visitor center, as well as an Art Trail Center and the Ulster & Delaware Train Depot. 2014 marks the Society's 40th anniversary and to celebrate, a series of events continue throughout the year, including artist exhibits and hiking programs. The Mountain Top Historical Society's Art Trail Interpretive Center is a stop along the Hudson River School of Art Trail (along with Kaaterskill Falls and the Thomas Cole National Historic Site), and was a favorite place for Hudson River School painters to ply their brushes to canvas.

This stop on the Kaaterskill Clove Experience's Leisure Itinerary is also home to the **Kaaterskill Rail Trail**, a 1.5-mile section of the abandoned Ulster & Delaware Railroad. This is the first completed section of a multi-phase, ongoing project. Feel free to bike or simply walk along this scenic woodland path.

Next, continue west on Route 23A to North Lake Road, ending at the **North-South Lake Campground**. Pick up a map at the entrance and follow to the campground parking lot closest to the site of the Catskill Mountain House Site, which closed during the First World War. Here you will find the short, blue-blazed hike to the historic marker for the Catskill Mountain House, which will take about five minutes from start to summit; short and sweet with a spectacular view. Immortalized by famed American author James Fenimore Cooper, the vista from this summit offers views across the Hudson River Valley, the river winding like "a curled shaving," and the hills of New Hampshire beyond.

Camp at North-South Lake for a nominal fee (though be sure to reserve a spot ahead of time as they sell out quickly), or find a cozy inn, B&B or hotel in one of the nearby towns such as Palenville, Tannersville, or Hunter where you'll enjoy easy access to local dining and entertainment. Be sure to check out our [lodging packages](#) for specials available on your trip.

Day Two: Hiking to Hymns for Nature

Good morning! Begin your day by heading to the **Mountain Top Arboretum** in Tannersville to explore one of Greene County's coolest sanctuaries of native and exotic trees and shrubs. Open dawn to dusk, year-round, the Arboretum features three main areas: East and West Meadow, Woodland Walk, and the Black Spruce Glen. Known as a "living museum" the Arboretum is an excellent introduction to the flora and fauna of the Catskills, offering peaceful activities amid breathtaking surroundings. Special programs such as "Fairy House and Garden Day" are held throughout the summer.

Continue on to **Hunter Mountain Resort** for history and a bit of adventure where you can take the Summer and Fall Scenic Sky Ride chairlift to the summit and enjoy outstanding views across the Great Northern Catskills of Greene County. Feel like exploring a bit? The summit also boasts the highest fire



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tower in New York State at 4,040 feet, as well as a larger-than-life-sized stone carving of Rip Van Winkle, Washington Irving’s beloved fictional character.

Enjoy a delightful array of lunch options in the area and relax before heading on to the next stop, which lies west on Route 23. Stop at **Pratt Rock - “New York’s Mount Rushmore.”** The monument is carved into a cliff as homage to the life and work of Zadock Pratt, who commissioned the carvings to commemorate his achievements. Located just outside of Prattsville on Route 23, Pratt Rock Park is a must-see.

Wrap up your visit through the past at the **Zadock Pratt Museum**, which depicts the life of Prattsville founder Zadock Pratt. Explore cultural and historical exhibits offering a glimpse into early American life through the lens of the tanning industry and railroad expansion.

Your final stop on the Kaaterskill Clove Experience is renowned naturalist **Jon Burroughs’ Woodchuck Lodge** in Roxbury. The lodge is a National Historic Landmark, and the place where Burroughs honed his essays on the natural world. You’re invited to step inside the author’s sanctuary and enjoy one of the many [events](#) offered throughout the summer and fall.

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