



adirondacks, usa

Adirondacks

2026 Travel Trends & Story Ideas

The list below provides a few areas of focus for 2026; however, there are endless story ideas available, limited only by our imagination. America's 250th celebration, accessibility, travel with pets, low-elevation hikes, agritourism, local food, hidden gems, skiing, snowshoeing, mountain biking and other outdoor pursuits are just some of the topics that can be used as inspiration.

Our communications team is always happy to provide information, share background or help to flesh-out ideas. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

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Town sizing / smaller, lesser-known destinations

The Adirondack Park region comprises 6.2 million acres - a patchwork of public and private land offering myriad opportunities for outdoor recreation. The area's 100+ small towns welcome visitors with opportunities to become immersed in local experiences, events, music and art festivals. Paddling, hiking and mountain bike groups welcome those who wish to take part; and local restaurants provide a place to discover friendships with everyone in attendance.

- Story ideas:
 - Small-town USA
 - Visiting Lake Placid, Lake George or Saranac Lake along with daytrips to some of the area's smaller towns and hamlets
 - Take part in local music festivals, farmers markets and other cultural events
 - Hidden gems - villages, hamlets or unique places throughout the park
 - Immersing oneself in a small town (or two) - most towns have local museums to explore, small restaurants and small businesses with owners that have interesting backgrounds and stories.
 - Best places to travel for July 4th

Wellness travel

The Adirondack region offers more than 6 million acres of wilderness - offering the perfect opportunity to reconnect with nature and experience the quiet, restorative properties of nature. Hiking trails, remote lakes, quiet streams provide opportunities for peaceful adventure.

- Story ideas:
 - Digital detox - cell service can be challenging in remote areas of the Adirondacks; many travelers view that as a significant benefit, offering an opportunity to disconnect and re-connect with family, friends and Mother Nature.
 - Properties throughout the region offer yoga classes.
 - Some properties avoid having telephones in the rooms to ensure quiet.

Sustainability

The Adirondack Park was created in 1892; its protection enshrined in the New York state constitution. We often say that the Adirondack Park has been “doing” sustainability since 1892. There are many ongoing initiatives that contribute to the park’s protection, helping to ensure its well-being for generations to come.

- Story ideas:
 - Protection of waterways and sources
 - Monitoring the park’s plants and animals
 - Love Your Adk - providing education / encouraging commitment to care for the environment
 - Sustainable tourism initiatives
 - Conservation efforts, throughout the region
 - Shoulder-season travel

Leaf-peeping

Fall in the Adirondack Mountains is one of the most beautiful times of the year. Days are warm, nights are cool, the sun often shines and the leaves are awash with color. Many who visit during the fall hope to schedule their trip to coincide with the week that the leaves are at their most colorful - when the reds, yellows, golds and rich browns against a backdrop of pines and evergreens are at their most vibrant; also known as “peak.”

- Story ideas:
 - The Adirondack Park is similar to Vermont, in terms of fall foliage; however, it contains more untouched wilderness (the entire park is roughly the size of Vermont, with significantly fewer residents).
 - Leaf-peeping via paddle allows visitors to see areas of the park that are not accessible by car, making for a unique leaf-peeping experience.
 - According to Jane Hooper, communications manager at the Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism in Lake Placid, the timing of “peak” color can be challenging to pinpoint. “The Adirondack region in upstate New York is very large, at over 6 million acres, with different elevations, temperatures, landscapes, and weather patterns,” she said. “Generally speaking, the most abundant, beautiful color happens within a 2-3 week window beginning the last week in September through Columbus Day, with higher elevations reaching peak first and the warmer valleys along Lake Champlain and toward the south reaching peak just before mid-October.”

- Leaf peeping in the spring offers a completely different perspective, as leaves begin to unfurl and the landscape is awash in pinks and green, with open vistas and great lower-elevation hikes.

Noctourism / astrotourism / celestial phenomena travel

Visitors to the Adirondacks enjoy the region's reputation as a prime stargazing location - supporting the growing "noctourism" trend of travel to areas offering starry skies and dark nights. Clear skies and minimal light pollution are crucial for optimal viewing, both of which the Adirondack region offers. Most of the Adirondacks are a Class 2 on the Bortle Scale, which is described as a "typical truly dark site." The region offers minimal light pollution, relatively low humidity, and elevation – all important factors for viewing the stars. The Adirondacks' clear, dark skies, weather conditions, solitude, and wide open spaces provide the perfect conditions for celestial observation.

Story ideas:

- The Adirondack Sky Center and Observatory, the Adirondacks' only public astronomy-based organization, allows visitors to experience close-up views of deep space through high-powered professional telescopes.
- Each year brings opportunities to see planets, meteor showers and auroras or "northern lights" (again in 2026, increased intensity of sun flares and activity contributes to frequent and stronger displays).

Destination dupes / easy travel location

The Adirondack Park is often compared to other popular destinations including Banff, Aspen, St Moritz, Algonquin Park and others.

- Story ideas:
 - Lake Placid feels similar to a small European village, complete with Olympic history, mountains and lakes.
 - Adirondack Park wilderness is comparable to the wilderness areas found in and around Banff, Algonquin Park and throughout Colorado's popular ski villages.
 - The Adirondacks is a 5-hour drive from NYC/Boston, 5 hours from western NY, 6 hours from Toronto, making it an easy getaway.

Cool-cation

According to US climate data, the Adirondack region of upstate New York boasts an average temperature of 78 degrees Fahrenheit or less from June to August, making it the ultimate destination for beating the summer heat. With numerous towns throughout the region offering mild summer temperatures, there are plenty of options to choose from for a cool, summer getaway. The region also boasts more than 3,000 ponds and lakes, along with 30,000 miles of rivers, brooks, and streams - there's no shortage of ways to cool off and stay refreshed.

- Story ideas:
 - Beach vs. mountain vacation - no need to choose. The Adirondacks offer 3,000 lakes and ponds with lovely beaches along with rivers, waterfalls and swimming holes. Adjacent to

the rivers and lakes are the highest mountains in the state, offering opportunities to spend time in the cool, Adirondack woods.

- There are hundreds of waterfalls throughout the Adirondacks - visiting those waterfalls could make up an entire vacation.

Solo travel / womens' solo travel

The Adirondacks is a safe destination, with very little crime. The villages are small with many residents having lived there throughout their entire lives. Solo travel is easily accomplished here - it's likely you'll meet a travel buddy or two along the way.

- Story ideas:
 - Solo hiking / paddling is easily accomplished - guide services can assist with preparation.
 - Agritourism and visiting the region's farms, breweries allows for immersion into the region. Local restaurants are often supplied by these local farms.