



# Exploring New York's Hudson Valley

BY JUDI ROTHENBERG

There's no better place to welcome spring than the Hudson Valley. This splendid destination is close enough for the day, but with so many great activities consider spending the weekend. Whether your pleasure lies in touring historic homes, wine tasting, viewing modern art or taking a Segway tour along the Hudson, the valley is bursting with plenty of options for both inside and out. Here are our top choices for an enjoyable visit.

## Glide Along the Hudson

For just plain fun, join a Segway tour along the banks of the Hudson River. The Segway PT (personal transporter) may look like an old-fashioned lawn mower but it's really a two-wheeled vehicle for one rider. Apprehensive? Don't be, the Segway is surprisingly easy to operate and every tour starts with a training session. For reservations, Segway of the Hudson Valley, 845.485.7349, [segwayofthehudsonvalley.com](http://segwayofthehudsonvalley.com)

## Historic Homes

Take a step back in time to the era of the Great Depression, World War II and the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Visit the FDR presidential library as well as Eleanor Roosevelt's Val-Kill and FDR's family estate, Top Cottage. Hyde Park, 1.800.FDR.Visit, [www.nps.gov/hofr](http://www.nps.gov/hofr)

The Tarrytown/Sleepy Hollow area boasts five historic homes including Kykuit, a family residence to four generations of Rockefellers. The grand home was completed in 1913 in the

classic revival style. In 1968, when then Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller moved in, he brought with him a love for modern art and added outdoor sculptures and an incredible collection of art that he displayed in his basement! Visitors will see works by Alexander Calder, Pablo Picasso, Henry Moore, Louise Nevelson and many others. There are also tapestries by Pablo Picasso and portraits of the governor and his wife by Andy Warhol.

Also of note nearby is the Union Church of Pocantico Hills, where you can take a self-guided tour of nine stained glass windows by Marc Chagall as well as the Rose Garden window by Henri Matisse. 914.631.8200 or [www.historic-hudsonvalley.org](http://www.historic-hudsonvalley.org)

In Hyde Park, the trappings of the gilded age are on display at the Vanderbilt Mansion. Take a peek into the lives of one of America's wealthiest families. The 50 room mansion, completed in 1898, combined lavish interiors with the modern amenities of central heating, electricity and plumbing. The estate even had its own private hydroelectric powerhouse. Guided tours of the mansion and gardens are by reservation, 845.229.9115, [www.nps.gov/vama](http://www.nps.gov/vama)

Be sure to check before visiting any property as many are not open year-round. Reservations are always suggested.

## Antiques and Modern Art

The quaint town of Beacon, lined with antique shops and art galleries, is an ideal place for an afternoon stroll. It's also home

Photos: top left, The Castle on the Hudson, right, Clinton Vineyards' cassis, photo/J. Rothenberg; middle, Hudson River view from Kykuit, photo/Brian Haeffele; bottom left: modern art at Kykuit, photo/Mick Hales; right, Culinary Institute of America



to DIA: Beacon, a museum of contemporary art carved from the shell of the former Nabisco box factory. The expansive architectural spaces are as interesting to see as the unique art collection. 845.440.0100, [www.diabeacon.org](http://www.diabeacon.org)

Speed Demons

The Grand Prix New York offers two quarter mile tracks with decreasing radius turns and elevation changes for challenging kart racing. The staff will suit you up in the right gear and teach you the basics before you hit the pedal to the metal. 914.241.3131, [www.gpny.com](http://www.gpny.com), Mount Kisco

Wine Tasting

From fruit liqueur to pinot noir, the Hudson Valley always offers a taste of something delicious.

Wind your way along the Dutchess County Wine Trail and make a stop at the former dairy barn that became Clinton Vineyards. Chandeliers hang over the fermentation tanks in an old barn that also serves as a tasting room. The specialty of the house is the Kir, a heavenly mixture of the winery’s own cassis, a blackberry liqueur, and crisp white wine, Seyval Blanc. [www.clintonvineyards.com](http://www.clintonvineyards.com), [www.dutchesswinetrail.com](http://www.dutchesswinetrail.com)

At Millbrook Vineyards and Winery, join a complimentary tour and learn about the winemaking process. Standard wine tastings are \$7 per person, which includes a sampling of six wines and a souvenir wine glass. Also on premises is a delightful gift shop with wine-related items. [www.millbrookwine.com](http://www.millbrookwine.com)

The Little Wine Bus offers an easy and responsible way to enjoy tastings at a variety of wineries. Join a scheduled tour or get a group of friends together for a personalized itinerary. 917.414.7947, [www.thelittlewinebus.com](http://www.thelittlewinebus.com)

Dining

All brews served at The Hyde Park Brewing Company and Steakhouse are made on the premises. Lagers with names like “Von Schtupp’s Black Lager” and “Chaos Irish Dry Stout” are served alongside casual American fare, with views of the brew kettles and fermenting vessels. 845.229.TAPS, [www.hydepark-brewing.moonfruit.com](http://www.hydepark-brewing.moonfruit.com), Hyde Park

Down home southern food in upstate New York? In a word, yes! Pulled-pork, catfish fingers, fried okra, spicy peel ‘n’ eat shrimp, the Piggy Bank has all your favorites covered. The warm and inviting spot is in the shell of an 1880s bank with the wine cellar housed in the original vault. [www.piggybankrestaurant.com](http://www.piggybankrestaurant.com) 845.838.0028, Beacon

In the stately halls of a former Jesuit seminary on the banks of the Hudson River, the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) is training tomorrow’s superstar chefs. See the students in action baking bread, decorating cakes and prepping meals during a fascinating tour of the school. Follow up with a delicious meal at one of five student-run dining rooms. Reservations strongly recommended. 845.451.1588, [www.ciachef.edu](http://www.ciachef.edu), Hyde Park

Ready for a coffee break? Hang out with the locals at Coffee Labs Roasters, a quirky coffee shop with a huge drum roaster smack in the middle of the shop and an open door policy for dogs. [web.mac.com/coffeelabsroasters](http://web.mac.com/coffeelabsroasters), 914.332.1479, Tarrytown

An educational center and working farm, Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture offers all types of food-related programs. Try a cooking workshop and learn to prepare a meal from ingredients gathered on the farm. Attend a lecture, get your hands dirty during a “Farm Chores” workshop or just stroll the pastoral grounds. Light seasonal fare is available at the Blue Hill Cafe during the day and dinner starts at 5 p.m. at the Blue Hill at Stone Barns Restaurant. Both emphasize farm-to-table cuisine and rely heavily on the farm’s bounty and local resources. Restaurant reservations, 914.366.9600. [www.stonebarnscenter.org](http://www.stonebarnscenter.org). The center and restaurants are open Wednesday to Sunday. Pocantico Hills

Stay

Towers, turrets, stone and stained glass – the opulent Castle on the Hudson has everything you would expect in a medieval castle, along with luxurious suites, spa services, a fitness center and an outdoor pool. 800.616.4487, [www.castleonthehudson.com](http://www.castleonthehudson.com), Tarrytown

Newly renovated with large, handsomely decorated rooms, the Westchester Marriott is convenient to local attractions and every room has Internet access and flat panel TVs. 914.631.2200, [www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com), Tarrytown

All types of accommodations are available on the estate grounds of the Belvedere Mansion. The mansion itself has seven rooms furnished with sumptuous down comforters and European antiques. Rooms are also available in three other structures on the grounds. The Hunt Lodge, Carriage House and Zen Lodge each has a distinctive personality and all come with a country breakfast. 845.889.8000, [www.belvedere-mansion.com](http://www.belvedere-mansion.com), Staatsburg

Going with friends or family? Consider the Guest Cottage at Storm King Lodge. The secluded home has two private guest suites, a fully equipped kitchen and a family room with a wood burning fireplace. 845.534.9421, [www.stormkinglodge.com](http://www.stormkinglodge.com), Mountainville



Segway of the Hudson Valley, with the Tappan Zee Bridge in the background

Discover Your Sanctuary



mention this ad and receive 10% off a package (new clients only)

yoga classes for

- mind
- body
- soul



78 Broadway, Denville • 973.627.YOGA • [www.pranayogadenville.com](http://www.pranayogadenville.com)

The Dining Experience Perfected

Brandl.

Innovative American Cuisine  
[www.brandlrestaurant.com](http://www.brandlrestaurant.com)

The Artful Diner's Top 10 at the Jersey Shore 2006



Zagat Rated “Excellent”

Reservations Recommended On-line

732-280-7501  
9<sup>th</sup> & Main Street • 703 Belmar Plaza • Belmar, NJ