

HAUNTED HISTORY TRAIL of New York State

ABOUT THE CENTRAL NY REGION

Central New York is not only at the heart of New York State – it holds much of its soul – with attractions and hidden gems that can be considered the pride New York. Take a scenic country road and it may lead you to a large city in this region. And the activities found are so diverse you never know what you might stumble upon next.

DAY 1

Start your trip at the **Erie Canal Museum** in Syracuse, NY – the last remaining Weighlock Building in America, and home to several ghostly inhabitants. As you tour the museum, keep your eyes peeled for a group of see-through children who may be playing in the courtyard, or a pair of men tromping through the 150-year old hallways while settling some long-forgotten debate. You may also encounter a woman who was killed in the place where a model canal boat now sits in the museum, as you learn about the history of these people and the Erie Canal.

Next visit the **Landmark Theatre**, opened in 1928. You may encounter the ghost of Clarissa, a woman who fell from the theatre balcony to her death in 1930 – just two years after the theatre opened. Workers and visitors have reported sightings of Clarissa, whose spirit often haunts the now antiquated space.

For lunch, head over to **The Brae Loch Inn**, for American Cuisine with a Scottish and French flair. The Inn is known for welcoming the normal *and* the paranormal through its cozy cabin doors. Located next to the picturesque Cazenovia Lake, the Inn has reported sightings of a ghostly girl in a long blue dress offering to show guests to their rooms. Once inside, you may encounter a few other-otherworldly friends, such as a man and woman walking through closets and among the Inn's many rooms.

After exploring the The Brae Loch Inn, drive up the road to the **Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum**. Back in the 19th century, thieves and murderers often lurked along the Erie Canal. Superstition says that the victims of these criminals still roam the canal towpath – in search of justice for their ultimate fate. The drydocks, built in 1855, still stand at Chittenango landing – waiting for visitors as they learn about the language and culture of the canal folk, the origins behind their superstitions, and the most popular ghost stories of the time.

In the evening, test your courage while sharpening your skee-ball skills at the **Historic Sylvan Beach Amusement Park**. This old theme park is a hub of

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paranormal activity – from ghostly sightings in the arcade to paranormal accounts from the park's own staff. The theme park has been operating since the 1870's and includes numerous rides, games, restaurants, shops and entertainment located next to the beach and Oneida Lake. (Not open Mondays and Tuesdays).

DAY 2

Start your day with ghosts of a classier era. The **Rome Capitol Theatre** was built in 1927, and is an art-deco theatre from the depression-era. Paranormal occurrences date back more than 30 years, with witnesses reporting a shadowed figure of a man, whispered conversations and doors opening on their own. Staff of the theatre have also heard organ music (despite the lack of a working organ until 2003) and sounds of a late night show taking place on the stage.

Next, explore the **Shoppes at the Finish Line** and grab lunch while learning its spooky history. The building's now known as the Shoppes were once home to The Utica Woolen Mills before a fire destroyed the buildings back in 1871. Paranormal activity began after the buildings were rebuilt. Enjoy sandwiches, burgers, and salads at the **Utica Brews Café** while relaxing at this spooky stop.

Just 30 minutes up the road is the **Herkimer Home State Historic Site**. Seeped in history, the home was built by Revolutionary War hero, General Nicholas Herkimer. Herkimer was en route to help defend Fort Stanwix when British-allied Loyalists ambushed him and his men. While the general survived the ambush, he later passed away in his home from an infection after his leg was amputated. Ghostly voices, footsteps, and doors shutting are often heard throughout the mansion today – as well as a few other unexplained occurrences.

On your way to dinner, stop by **Hyde Hall**. The mansion is a National Historic Landmark and a New York State Historic Site. Mostly restored and filled with original furnishings, the hall is the source of many stories about hauntings – and even a curse. Ghost tours and dramatic re-enactments are offered to groups.

End the evening with dinner and an overnight at **The Otesaga Resort Hotel** in Cooperstown, NY. From swinging doors, voices calling your name, to non-existent children roaming the halls – guests and employees have heard it all at the Otesaga. The resort occupies 700 feet of lakefront on the southern shore of Lake Otsego and is the perfect way to finish off your evening – if you are brave enough to stay the night.

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TOUR AT A GLANCE

Timeframe: 2 Days

Distance Day 1: Approx. 47 miles round-trip

Distance Day 2: Approx. 80 miles round-trip

Stops: Erie Canal Museum, Landmark Theatre, The Brae Loch Inn, Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum, Historic Sylvan Beach Amusement Park | The Rome Capitol Theatre, Shoppes at the Finish Line, Herkimer Home State Historic Site, Hyde Hall, The Otesaga Resort Hotel