

HAUNTED HISTORY TRAIL *of New York State*

ABOUT THE HUDSON VALLEY & CAPITAL REGION

Hudson Valley and the Capital Region make up much of the eastern part of New York State. In this area, magnificent landscapes open up to sweeping rivers and majestic valleys – making the region a photographer’s paradise. This region is deeply rooted in history and will lend to sights that make visitors feel as though they have traveled back in time.

DAY 1

Start your haunted excursion with lunch and a tour at **Silvio’s Italian Villa** in Warwick, NY. At first glance – Silvio’s is a seemingly innocent (and delicious) Italian Restaurant, but there is more than meets the eye at this haunted location. Once the home of the Vail family from 1920 – 1960, tragedy struck in 1972 when Roy Vail’s sister was found murdered. It was suspected for almost a decade that Roy was involved, and eventually he walked into the room where Table 24 now sits and took his own life. Today, ghostly shapes, unexplained footsteps, and disappearing items have been reported on site – and no one wants to go into the basement.

OPTIONAL – NOT HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE: Next, head to **Bannerman Island** to visit the castle and ruins that reside there. Board a boat or sign up for a kayak tour with a Bannerman Castle Trust historian and make your way over to the island. From there, take a special guided ghost tour through the majestic ruins – which is said to be haunted by Native Americans and Dutch colonial settlers.

Next tour **Wing’s Castle**, a haunted Bed & Breakfast with plenty of ghostly stories to share. The medieval-style décor and antique memorabilia within the castle walls help tell the stories of many unexplained events that have occurred over the years. Why did Toni take an axe to a goat-headed artifact embedded in the castle wall? Why don’t trick-or-treaters dare to venture past the jack-o-lantern in the driveway? One visit to Wing’s and you will find out.

For dinner, make your way up to the **Vanderbilt House**, a hotel and restaurant built in 1860 by the Vanderbilts to serve their railroad employees in Upstate NY. Guests who stay overnight have reported seeing a child jumping on an upstairs bed when no children are at the inn, as well as other apparitions and antics. Dine in the cozy tavern or in the larger formal dining room while hearing the stories of the house. After your meal, take a moment to relax in the Victorian parlor, or outside on the two-level outdoor deck overlooking scenic Summit Lake.

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End the night with a Lantern Tour at **Howe Caverns**. On this underground tour you will travel back in time to 1842 and explore the caverns as Lester Howe did – in the dark. As you are guided through the caves you will see Howe Caverns in its most natural state – obscured in shadow, with glimmering rock formations and immense galleries around every turn. You can even board a boat and explore The Lake of Venus, with only candlelight to guide you.

DAY 2

Start day two with a tour at the **Glen Sanders Mansion Inn**. Built as a trading port in 1658, the mansion was a family home before it was transformed in 1961 to cater to guests. Since then, reports of EVPs, ghostly sightings, and spiritual interactions surround the inn.

Next, make your way up to Saratoga Springs for a stroll through **Yaddo Gardens**. A one-hour, docent-led tour will allow you to experience the spirits of the Gardens, while sharing in stories that intrigued contemporary visitors like Edgar Allan Poe – who is said to have written part of “The Raven” on the grounds. It is commonly said that the original residents of the Yaddo Estate – the Trask Family – still haunt the grounds today. All four Trask children died untimely deaths, with their father following them to the grave after a tragic railcar accident. Visitors have seen and felt their presence in the garden to this day.

Downtown Saratoga Springs is the perfect place to stop for lunch on your own and do a little shopping before heading to the next stop. Home to horse racing and many natural mineral springs (giving the town its name), this is a great area to take a short break and explore the town before embarking on your next haunted expedition.

Head up the road to the **Saratoga Springs History Museum/Historic Canfield Casino** when you are done exploring the area. This 140-year-old landmark is home to three floors of exhibits telling the history of Saratoga Springs and its more influential residents. While the museum has always been rumored to unexplained phenomena, reports of strange occurrences have accelerated in recent years – after the museum brought in antique clothing once owned and worn by Saratoga’s prominent first families – all of whom are now deceased.

The only way to end your haunted adventure is with a candlelight tour at the **Fort William Henry Museum and Restoration**. The area surrounding Fort William Henry has been the scene for countless battles, terrible disease, and harsh climate.

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Ghost stories run aplenty – and your tour guide will share personal experiences with the paranormal as well as those that have been handed down over the years.

TOUR AT A GLANCE

Timeframe: 2 Days

Distance Day 1: Approx. 181 miles

Distance Day 2: Approx. 54 miles

Stops: Silvio's Italian Villa, Wing's Castle, Bannerman Island, Vanderbilt House, Glen Sanders Mansion Inn, Yaddo Gardens, Saratoga Springs History Museum/Historic Canfield Casino, Fort William Henry Museum and Restoration

Alternate stops:

Miss Fanny's Victorian Party House