



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Stick Around and Take a “Staycation” in Upstate New York

PATTY RITCHIE September 29, 2014

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Senator Ritchie’s Weekly Column

When most people think of travel in upstate New York, they think of time spent on the water, engaging in activities like boating, fishing and everything in between. However, what many don’t realize is that our region’s fall season is one of the best times to take in all our area has to offer.

If you’re planning an upcoming getaway, consider a “staycation—a vacation where one takes time off at or close to home—instead. Staycations are a perfect way to take a break from the everyday without spending a lot of money and also provide a great opportunity to explore the many things that make our area special. Looking for ways to fill your time? Here are a few of my favorites:

Taking in fall foliage: Thanks to a wide variety of trees, our region has some of the best—and prettiest—opportunities for foliage viewing. Looking to find the best spots to catch the leaves changing colors? There’s a new app called “Leaf Peep,” which allows foliage fans to report what stages of turning leaves are in and features the best locations on an interactive map.

Hunting: Hunting is one of the most popular forms of outdoor recreation in New York State. In fact, nearly 700,000 New Yorkers, and more than 50,000 people from out of state take to our forests, streams and fields every season to take advantage of the wide variety of terrain and wildlife we have to offer. Before you head out, be sure to check out hunter safety tips from the DEC, available at their website, www.dec.ny.gov.

Fall festivals: From apple festivals to pumpkin festivals, there’s no shortage of events in our region that celebrate the season. For information on how you can join in the fun, be sure to visit your local chamber

of commerce's website.

Apple picking: Last week, I told you about the many health benefits of eating apples. In our region, there are more than a dozen locations where you can pick your own. Most orchards are open through Halloween, and you can find more information about where to go—and when to pick—at the New York State Apple Growers Association's website, www.nyapplecountry.com.

Last fling for farmers markets: Our area's dozens of farmers markets are a great way to get fresh produce and support our area's hardworking agribusiness owners at the same time. If you're still looking to get your farmers market fix, you can visit many local events well into October. To view a schedule of markets, check out my Farmers Market Guide, [available here](#).

From fun to food, fall is one of the very best seasons to live in upstate New York. Whether you take a scenic drive, spend a weekend hunting with friends or simply join your family on an apple picking adventure, I hope you get the opportunity to experience everything the season has to offer.