

Destinations

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION



**2023
BEST
OF THE
BEST**



**CHAUTAUQUA,
NEW YORK**
COME FOR THE
COMEDY, STAY FOR
THE FLAVORS

Special section reprinted for:

**NATIONAL
COMEDY
CENTER**



**TRAVEL
RESOURCE
MARKETPLACE
2024: NASHVILLE**



AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION

2023 BEST OF THE BEST

ABA
AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION





National Comedy Center

Jamestown, N.Y.

By personalizing each visitor's experience based on the kind of comedy that they like most, the National Comedy Center is one of the most immersive and interactive museums in the world. And it sounds like *Destinations* isn't alone in designating it a Best of the Best award recipient: *USA Today* and *Time* both named it on their "Best of" and "World's Greatest" lists.

comedycenter.org | (716) 484-2222 **ABA**



USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park

Mobile, Ala.

Groups will step back in time and see history come to life at this must-see attraction conveniently located on Battleship Parkway in Mobile. See military tanks, artillery, memorials, over 30 aircraft, and two National Historic Landmarks: the submarine USS Drum and the WWII battleship USS ALABAMA. Groups can tour every day except Christmas Day and enhance their visit with a catered lunch.

ussalabama.com | (251) 433-2703 **ABA**



Ripley's Aquarium of Canada

Toronto, Ontario

Ripley's Aquarium of Canada is an ideal destination for groups thanks to its convenient location in the heart of downtown Toronto, hands-on learning opportunities for students, knowledgeable staff, and group discounts and pre-booking options. Over 18,000 marine animals; nine stunning galleries; special programs and events, such as seaworthy sleepovers and paint nights; and even 24/7 underwater webcams captivate visitors of all ages.

ripleyaquariums.com/canada | (647) 351-3474



Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library

Winterthur, Del.

Nestled in Delaware's scenic Brandywine Valley, Winterthur is one of the few surviving great American country estates. Groups can take a self-guided or customized guided tour of founder Henry Francis du Pont's historic home and enjoy a narrated tram ride through the 60-acre garden—a masterpiece of color and design. Enjoy world-class exhibitions, seasonal events, a museum store, boxed lunches, and more.

winterthur.org | (800) 448-3883 **ABA**

CULTURAL HONORABLE MENTION

Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

Grand Rapids, Mich.

meijergardens.org | (616) 957-1580 **ABA**

Pilgrim Hall Museum

Plymouth, Mass.

pilgrimhall.org | (508) 746-1620

ENTERTAINMENT

You'll be the true star of the show when you immerse yourself in these high-energy experiences and theatrical adventures.



The Cody Cattle Company

Cody, Wyo.

Become entranced by dinner and a show with an award-winning family-style meal and cowboy variety music show. Offering group discounts, The Cody Cattle Company's tickets include the all-you-can-eat Chuckwagon dinner, show, and a ticket to the Cody Nite Rodeo at Stampede Park within walking distance to the facility. With easy access both inside the building and out, motorcoach groups will love the experience.

thecodycattlecompany.com | (307) 272-5770 **ABA**



CHAUTAUQUA INSIDER

GROUP FAVORITES

The team at Chautauque County Visitors Bureau understands the specific needs of groups and is ready to help you plan your visit. Group favorites like the Dunkirk Lighthouse, Grape Discovery Center, Lawson Boating Heritage Center, and Roger Tory Peterson Institute can be added to any itinerary. For a list of themed tour ideas or to download the Group Planners Directory, visit tourchautauqua.com/groups.

LODGING

Groups appreciate the convenient locations, on-site restaurants, and other amenities found at each of these group-friendly hotels: Historic Athenaeum Hotel on Chautauque Institution grounds, Chautauque Harbor Hotel on Chautauque Lake, Peek'n Peak Resort, DoubleTree by Hilton Jamestown, and Chautauque Suites. Visit tourchautauqua.com/groups for more details on each unique venue.

HIDDEN GEMS

Make sure you allow time for your group to enjoy the sweeping views of Chautauque Lake at the Chautauque Lake Rest Area on I-86, then surprise them with stops to view these famous statues of noteworthy Chautauque County natives:

- Lucy statues in Jamestown
- Abe Lincoln-Grace Bedell Statue in Westfield
- Marmaduke Statue in Brocton

CHEERS TO CHAUTAUQUA

Come for the comedy, stay for the flavors, and enjoy breathtaking views of Lake Erie Wine Country

BY CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU



Rolling vineyards, historic lighthouses, and picturesque lake views set the scene for unforgettable group tours of the Chautauque-Lake Erie Region of Western New York. Beginning with the first vacationers who came in 1874 to be enlightened and edified through adult summer education, Chautauque County's rich history of tourism and the development of new timeless attractions continue to draw visitors. In addition to being the home of the award-winning Chautauque Institution and National Comedy Center, Chautauque County is conveniently located just a short drive from major markets in three states (Cleveland, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pa.; and Buffalo, N.Y.), making it easily accessible for motorcoach groups.

"Chautauque County is truly an all-season destination with unique attractions that can be enjoyed throughout the year," says Matt Hanson, business development coordinator at the Chautauque County Visitors Bureau. "And whether you come for a one-day or multi-day itinerary, Chautauque County is a place your group will return to again and again."

Discover the culture and heritage throughout the region that make Chautauque County a great tour stop for your next group adventure.

Learn Something New: Chautauque Institution

Celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2024, Chautauque Institution is what first drew visitors to the area. Located on the shores of Chautauque Lake, this beautiful National Historic District has been helping guests of all generations find growth and renewal through a unique combination of programming.



Relax on the porch of the historic Athenaeum Hotel for a great view of Chautauque Lake from the Chautauque Institution grounds.



Embark on a journey through comedy's history at the National Comedy Center.



Groups will see exact recreations of studio sets from *I Love Lucy*, original costumes and props, Emmy Awards, scripts, and more when they tour the Lucy Desi Museum in Lucy's hometown of Jamestown.

For nine weeks every summer, groups can experience education, lectures, art, entertainment, recreation, and more. And what better way to enhance your group's inspirational adventure than by exploring Chautauqua Institution's stunning gardens, American architecture dating back to the late 1800s, top-notch sailing facilities, and award-winning golf club with two 18-hole courses? For help planning your group tour, including lodging, dining, and the 2024 calendar of lecture topics and events, visit chq.org.

Legacy of Laughter: National Comedy Center and Lucy Desi Museum

Enjoy a laugh when you stop in Jamestown during your visit to the Chautauqua–Lake Erie Region. The star of the hit TV comedy *I Love Lucy*, Lucille Ball was a Chautauqua County native and envisioned her hometown to be the destination for comedy. In line with her vision, Jamestown is home to two noteworthy attractions that highlight the art of comedy itself and the first couple of comedy, Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz.

The National Comedy Center is dedicated to presenting the vital story of comedy and preserving it for future generations. This state-of-the-art cultural institution and museum includes more than 50 interactive exhibits that create a personalized experience based on each individual visitor's unique sense of humor.

The National Comedy Center oversees the operations of the Lucy Desi Museum, which dives deep into the

TOUR STOP



The Chautauqua Belle is a must for your group visit to Chautauqua County (pronounced shuh-taw-kwuh). There's a themed cruise for every interest, including a historical cruise, sunset cruise, or a private dinner cruise where groups can enjoy dinner with a view.

lives, careers, and legacies of *I Love Lucy*'s two main stars and the impact they left on the world. The museum features replica sets, costumes, and rare memorabilia. Many groups add a Lucy Hometown Tour to their itinerary, with stops at Lucy's gravesite, murals of various famous scenes from the show, Lucille Ball Memorial Park, and more. And every August, the National Comedy Center presents the annual Lucille Ball Comedy Festival, which celebrates the comedic arts and showcases new comedic talent from around the country.

Sip and Swirl: Lake Erie Wine Country

Chautauqua County's northern border includes nearly 50 miles of Lake Erie shoreline, creating ideal conditions for grape growing and winemaking. More than 20 wineries between New York and Pennsylvania make up what is known as Lake Erie Wine Country, where groups can tour wineries, learn the winemaking process from grape to glass, and enjoy samples of locally made wine and grape juice. At the Grape Discovery Center in Westfield, groups can take a guided tour through interactive exhibits that explore the region's 150-year grape heritage and the important role of the Concord grape and the Welch family.

Prepare to Embark: Chautauqua Belle

Bring your group for a relaxing boat ride on Chautauqua Lake aboard the Chautauqua Belle, one of the last remaining steamships in the nation. Listen as a narrator tells the history of the lake and its impact on the local economy, capture famous Chautauqua Lake sunsets, enjoy a chicken barbecue buffet-style dinner with a view, and more when you book one of the many themed cruises. The Chautauqua Belle can accommodate groups up to 120 passengers and can even serve as a receptive operator and help you plan your itinerary. Visit 269belle.com or call (716) 269-2355 to view the cruise schedule or to book your group visit.

View suggested itineraries, group-friendly accommodations, dining, and more on tourchautauqua.com/groups. For help coordinating your next group adventure to the Chautauqua Lake Erie region, contact Hanson at meetings@tourchautauqua.com or (716) 357-4569. **D**

ABA Chautauqua Belle | 269belle.com, (716) 269-2355

ABA Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau | tourchautauqua.com, (716) 357-4569

ABA Chautauqua Institution | chq.org, (716) 357-6269

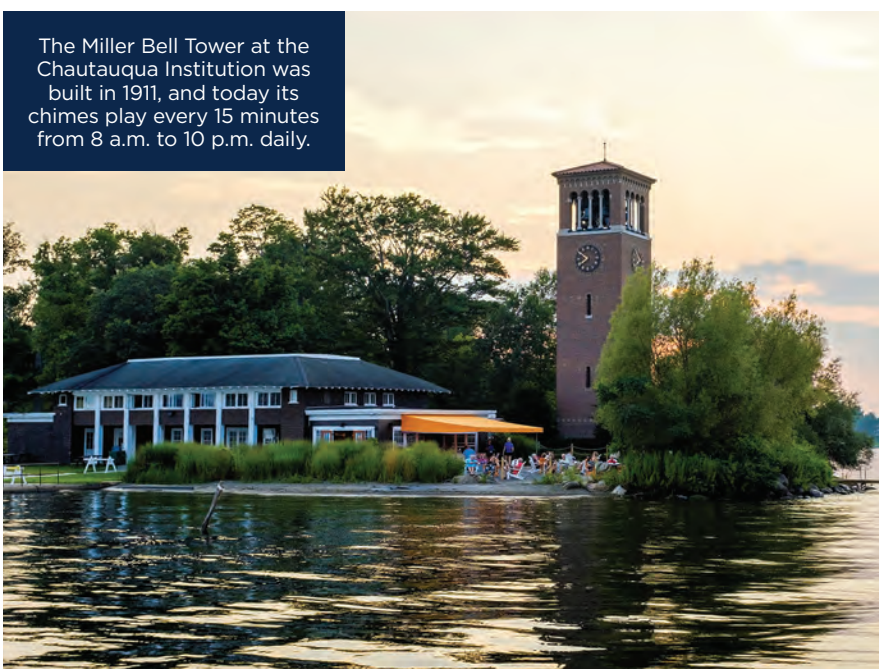
ABA National Comedy Center | nationalcomedycenter.org, (716) 484-0800

Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau is the official tourism promotion agency for Chautauqua County.

Liberty Vineyards & Winery in Sheridan, N.Y., welcomes large groups. Hint: Be sure to make advance reservations for each of the 15 motorcoach-friendly wineries on the Lake Erie Wine Trail.



The Miller Bell Tower at the Chautauqua Institution was built in 1911, and today its chimes play every 15 minutes from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.



"Chautauqua County has great group dining and lodging options," says Matt Hanson, business development coordinator at the Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau. Tour operators can choose from elegant culinary events at the historic Athenaeum Hotel, located on the grounds of the Chautauqua Institution.



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Lucy Desi
MUSEUM

The Lucy
Town
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iloveny.com