

TOURCODE: 43700 GRADE: D/SS

SEPTEMBER 2013

Sep 14 - Sep 28
Sep 23 - Oct 07

15 Days Duration

BEAUTIFUL NEW YORK STATE

A scenic journey from Southern Ontario to New York City



HOLIDAY INFORMATION

TOUR DESCRIPTION

This information is additional to our General Information Booklet, which is enclosed.

This new holiday takes in the Canadian region of Ontario before continuing by rail across the border into the beautiful New York State region for some fantastic walking and sightseeing. Where possible on this trip our travel will be by train, invoking a feel of times past and where we can view the fast changing local scenery in comfort.

We fly to Toronto and spend a day recovering from the flight, enjoying the relaxed pace of life and hopefully the stupendous views from the top of the CN Tower. We travel first around the shores of Lake Ontario to Niagara Falls to enjoy not only the delights of the Falls themselves but also a stroll through the vineyards at the picturesque Niagara on the Lake, a very much more relaxed place.

Continuing by train and coach we travel to Ithaca, home of Cornell University, situated at the end of one of the Finger Lakes. The town itself is full of interest with shops and restaurants to suit all tastes and pockets. However we are here for the walking and this region is renowned for the famous gorges and rivers cascading down through the mountains.

In the Catskills we venture out into the wild landscape of what the Native Americans used to call 'Onteora' – the land in the sky. This entire region is an eroded Appalachian plateau that offers some fine walking. We stay at Kingston at the base of the Catskill mountains and use transport to get to the best walking. The lower slopes are covered in open woodland, the easily reached upper slopes offer fantastic views down to the Hudson valley, hopefully enhanced by the fall colours.

We end our journey in New York, one of the world's most exciting places; full of interest, culture, sights, jaw-dropping architecture and unique NY life. We could go to the top of the Empire State Building or Rockefeller Center, take an around-Manhattan Circle Line cruise, and walk across the Brooklyn Bridge, with time to take in an (optional) Broadway show and to visit the big shops like Bloomingdales.

ITINERARY

Day:	Overnight accommodation:	Daily itinerary:	Meals:
1	Toronto	Depart on the flight to Toronto. On arrival transfer to our hotel for two nights.	D
2	Toronto	One full day will be spent sightseeing in the Toronto area.	B
3	Niagara Falls (Canada)	Transfer by train to Niagara Falls (Canada) and our hotel for three nights.	B,D
4	Niagara Falls (Canada)	Niagara Falls lies on the border between the USA and Canada and we have time to walk over the Rainbow Bridge to view from both sides. In addition we have time for some short walks and sightseeing at the Town of Niagara On the Lake.	B
5	Ithaca	Crossing into the USA, we transfer by train and road to Ithaca in New York State where we stay for four nights.	B,D
6-8	Ithaca	Our time spent here will include a range of walks and sightseeing in the woodlands and gorges which surround Ithaca when the autumnal colours are at their best.	B,D(day 6) B (days 7-8)
9	Kingston	Transfer by train and road to Kingston for a 2 night stay.	B,D
10	Kingston	Local walking in the Catskills.	B,D
11	New York	Transfer by road to New York City for a 3 night stay.	B,D
12-13	New York	Sightseeing in New York.	B(day 12) B,D(day 13)
14	In flight	Transfer to JFK for the return overnight flight to London Heathrow.	B
15		Arrive UK.	

D (Dinner) B (Breakfast)

Please note: The above itinerary is our planned programme, however the leader may substitute alternatives on occasion due to variations in local conditions and the makeup of individual parties.

HOLIDAY GRADE & WALKING PROGRAMME

This holiday is graded **D/SS**.

Our programme explores the resorts and countryside at an unrushed pace, with walking of generally less than 5 hours each day. We climb as much as 500 metres on a few days (though many involve considerably less), over moderate terrain which is not too steep or rough underfoot. On several days, the walking and sightseeing programmes are combined to give a varied day out. We use many local trails, tracks leading us to lakes and waterfalls, through woods and to some magnificent viewpoints. Please note that this region of Canada and the United States is largely tree covered (which is why it is so beautiful in the fall), and on our walks we explore the varied nature of this particular landscape.

The following list of possible walks is intended to give an idea of what to expect. We would hope to include some of these walks in the holiday.

Niagara Glen. The Niagara Glen exists thanks to the lowering of the Niagara River (by both natural and man made reasons). The river now contains only 10% of its original volume but it is still an impressive sight. We walk through the Glen with great views of the river and stop by the river for a quick paddle to cool off. We have all kinds of options to make the walking longer or shorter as required.

Watkins Glen. From Ithaca we will hire transport to Watkins Glen, famous for beautiful gorges and hosting Grand Prix races in the 1970's. The gorge is spectacular but wet so bring waterproofs. We hope to walk the gorge trail in both directions through tunnels and behind waterfalls. The return distance for the walk is approximately 3 miles but we will linger to take in the spectacular views.

The Catskills, North/South Lake.

A walk along the Escarpment Trail, with spectacular viewpoints offering views over the Hudson Valley. This a beautiful walk that perhaps best allows us to enjoy the amazing Catskill scenery. It is steep in places and requires care but rewards that care with a marvellous views.

PERSONAL EXPENDITURE

Local transportation costs in conjunction with the walking and sightseeing programme are not included in the holiday charge, but you should allow approximately £50 per week. Any entry fees to sites or theatre/cultural activities not specified in the itinerary will be at additional cost. Please note: There will be some free time – details will be confirmed locally by your tour leader.

Please note that the estimation of local costs relating to this holiday is based on currency exchange rates valid at the time of the publication of our summer 2013 brochure and this Holiday Information sheet. Any fluctuations in exchange rates may impact on this estimation of local costs. Please check with your bank or foreign currency provider prior to your holiday to enable you to plan your spending.

Each evening the leader will discuss with you the programme of walks for the following day. Should you not wish to join the party, please let the leader know.

INSURANCE

Please make sure that your insurance for this holiday covers you for guided walking below 2000m.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

- Flights: London Heathrow to Toronto and return from New York JFK to London Heathrow with British Airways.
- Baggage allowance will be confirmed in your travel documents, sent approximately 10 days prior to departure.
- Arrival transfer by road is approximately 1 hour.
- Transport within Canada and the United States will mainly be by train and coach. Smaller vehicles may be used in conjunction with the walking programme. Public transport will also be used when necessary.

If you intend joining the party in Canada and leaving the party in the USA it is assumed, unless you advise us otherwise, you will join the party at the hotel in Toronto and leave from the hotel in New York City. If this is not your intention please let us know in writing at least 5 weeks prior to departure.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Please refer to Section 2 of the enclosed General Information Booklet.

Passport, visa and health requirements can change at any time. It is your own responsibility to ensure that you inform yourself from a professionally qualified source on, and comply with, such requirements. Advice on vaccinations is available from your GP, or can be obtained from the Medical Advisory Services for Travellers Abroad (MASTA). In addition, general travel advice is available from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office at www.fco.gov.uk/travel.

It is a good idea to photocopy the relevant pages of your passport so that you can carry these with you and leave your passport safely in the hotel. This should allow you to change money and possibly obtain free or discount entry into some museums.

Our walking programme includes the option to walk over the border from Canada to the United States of America at Rainbow Bridge to view the American side of Niagara Falls. The US border control charges an admission fee of \$6 for entry which must be paid individually by the person entering and is not included in the holiday charge. This payment must be made in cash and in US Dollars.

Please note that most British Citizens are entitled to travel without a visa to the United States of America under the Visa Waiver Programme. However, there are strict conditions to this system and various reasons for exclusion that may relate to sensitive personal information. We therefore recommend that you contact your local US Embassy

to check if you are eligible to travel without a visa. Alternatively, you can look on their web-site www.usembassy.org.uk and follow the link to the Visa Services section. Please see pages at the end of this document for more information.

LOCAL CURRENCY

Local currency in Canada is the Canadian Dollar and in the USA the US Dollar. Please refer to Section 2 of our General Information Booklet for details. There are banks in all centres with ATM facilities and the hotels accept most major credit cards.

ACCOMMODATION AND MEALS

We stay in twin bedded and single bedded rooms with bath or shower and wc in the following hotels. The electricity supply is 110/120v AC.

Radisson Admiral Hotel

249 Queen's Quay West
Toronto
ON M5J 2N5
Canada

Tel: 001 416 203 3333
Fax: 001 416 203 3100
Web: www.radissonadmiral.com

Days Inn & Suites by the Falls

5068 Centre Street
Niagara Falls
ON L2G 3N9
Canada

Tel: 001 905 357 2550
Fax: 001 905 357 7771
Web: www.daysbythefalls.com

Holiday Inn Ithaca

222 South Cayuga Street
Ithaca
NY 14850
USA

Tel: 001 607 272 1000
Fax: 001 607 277 1275
Web: www.hiithaca.com

Holiday Inn Kingston

503 Washington Avenue
Kingston
NY 12401
USA

Tel: 001 802 988 2611
Fax: N/a
Web: holidayinnkingstonny.com

Hotel Newton

2528 Broadway
New York
NY 10025
USA

Tel: 001 212 678 6500
Fax: 001 212 678 6758
Web: www.newyorkhotel.com

All breakfasts and eight dinners are included (dinners are included on days 1, 3, 5-6,9-11 and 13). Dinner on days 2, 4 7-8, 12 and 14 are not included and will be at your expense. Lunches are not included. Please note that local tax and service charges are added to the meal cost in restaurants. This can be in excess of 25% and is extra to the cost of your meal.

RESORT INFORMATION

Resort facilities at all centres are plentiful and include:

- Shops
- Banks
- Restaurants & Bars
- Supermarkets
- Post Offices
- Tourist Information
- Medical Facilities

CLIMATE, CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

There are many websites that you can look at to get an idea of the climate of the area you are visiting including:

<http://www.myweather2.com/>
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/weather/>

The weather is likely to be very similar to that in Britain. However, overnight temperatures can drop dramatically in mountainous areas, especially in the latter part of the season when winter can start early!

As space in the vehicles can be restricted, luggage should be kept as compact as possible. We suggest you take a fleece and windproof jacket as well as lighter summer clothes. A set of waterproofs will also prove to be essential as you will be in close proximity to waterfalls even if it doesn't rain. Umbrellas are not practical for use on many of the walks near Ithaca. Although shorts are widely worn, we recommend long trousers for both men and women as deer ticks can be an issue when walking through long grass or forested areas. Casual dress is perfectly acceptable in America, even when dining, so a jacket and tie are not necessary for men and ladies would probably find little use for dresses on this holiday. It can be cold in the evenings and a light jacket may come in useful. You may also wish to bring swimwear with you as there are swimming pools at many of the resorts (although we cannot guarantee they will be in use).

Lightweight walking boots with good ankle support, and moulded soles are strongly recommended for the walking programme. The trails, although well maintained, are varied underfoot and contain many small stones, exposed tree roots, and at times wet leaves.

A daysack is very useful whilst walking and sightseeing; this could also be used as hand luggage on the aircraft. Other handy items are a lightweight water bottle, plastic cup, cutlery, small first aid kit, insect repellent and a small torch.

HEALTH

Mosquitoes can be a problem on the walks near Niagara and Ithaca; please bring good insect repellent. Ticks and Lyme Disease are also prevalent in these areas. Please ensure you check daily for ticks. We advise wearing long trousers on walks and walking boots are essential. Please also watch out for poison ivy which is also found in low quantities in some areas.

Please do not drink the water from the rivers and streams as it is unsafe. Please take bottled water on the walks.

TRAVELLING LIGHT

As we travel between various centres and you will have to handle your own luggage, please try to travel reasonably light. You should be able to lift and carry your own luggage. At some hotels, the coach may have to stop some distance short of the hotel entrance and you may also have to carry your luggage on and off trains. Also, within some of the hotels themselves, there may be some long walks between the rooms and lobby area which may include steps.

TIPPING

Tipping is entirely at your discretion but is expected in all resorts by all persons working in the hospitality trades. We suggest you allow \$1.50-\$2.50 per day for chambermaids. As a general guide, restaurant tips are around 15-20% of the meal total. Please consider this when budgeting for your trip and arranging your own dinners.

MAPS & SUGGESTED READING

Maps are available locally. Basic maps are available covering the specific areas we walk at and are often free of charge from visitor centres and tourist information offices. Detailed maps are also available but are relatively expensive. Road maps of Ontario and New York State are widely available in supermarkets and fuel stations. Apart from very general road maps, we do not recommend trying to buy walking maps before departure. Many local libraries stock a good selection of travel guides/books which may offer you more information on New England or you can buy guidebooks from any good bookshop or specialist travel shops such as:

The Map Shop
15 High Street
Upton upon Severn
Worcs WR8 0HJ
Tel : 01684 593146
Fax : 01684 594559
www.themapshop.co.uk
themapshop@btinternet.com

PLEASE QUOTE YOUR HOLIDAY CODE AND BOOKING REFERENCE NUMBER IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE.

WE WISH YOU AN INTERESTING AND ENJOYABLE HOLIDAY AND WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS UPON YOUR RETURN.

be found in the Holiday Information Sheet or Hotel List issued for your chosen holiday.

- **Requirement to provide fingerprints prior to departure or on arrival in the United States**

Biometric data (a photograph and fingerprints) will need to be provided prior to the issue of a US visa or on entry to the United States or when arriving in transit to a final destination outside the US.

- **Biometric Passports**

Under new US rules, **passengers with passports issued after 26 October 2006 must have a biometric passport** (which includes embedded digital information such as a digital photograph and other biometric information). Without a biometric passport containing such embedded biometric information, passengers will be required to apply for a visa to enter the United States. Passports must additionally remain valid for six months beyond your date of arrival in the United States and qualify for the Visa Waiver Programme.

The US Visa Waiver Programme (VWP) allows most British Citizen passport holders to visit the US for up to 90 days. The types of journeys that are permissible under the VWP include general travel/tourism, certain types of business and when transiting to another country.

- **Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA)**

All passengers are now required to apply via the internet for an **Authorisation to Travel to the United States** (ESTA).

It is compulsory for passengers travelling to the United States under the Visa Waiver Programme (VWP) to apply for an Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA) no later than 72 hours prior to departure. This online form will replace the green visa waiver form (I94W) which is currently completed whilst en-route to the US.

You should visit the website: **<https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>** and fill in the required information. In most cases a response will be received within seconds determining whether travel to the US has been authorised. If the application is not authorised then you may be required to apply for a visa through the US Embassy. In some instances travellers may need to wait up to 72 hours for authorisation.

An approved travel authorisation is valid for two years for multiple entries into the US, although a new application will have to be made if a new passport is obtained within the two year period, or if the details you have provided to any of the YES/NO questions on the ESTA form change.

For more information, and to apply online please visit <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. Once Electronic travel authorities have been obtained they will be valid for a period of two years, or the validity of the travellers passport (whichever is shorter). If you do not have Internet access, a third party, such as a relative or travel agent, may apply for the ESTA for you. However, you will still be responsible under the law for the questions answered on your behalf.

If you have any doubts about whether you are eligible to enter the US under the Visa Waiver Programme, or about visa matters generally, you are strongly advised to contact the US Embassy in London before your travel. The Visa Information line is 09042 450 100 (calls are charged at £1.20 per minute).

- **Exclusions from the Visa Waiver Programme**

The United States Embassy advises that passengers should not attempt to enter the United States under the Visa Waiver Programme if they have been arrested for, or convicted of, any offence whatsoever in any country, even if the arrest did not result in a conviction. Please note that this still applies even with spent convictions.

Note: Travellers with minor motoring offences committed outside the US which did not result in an arrest and/or conviction (such as paying a fixed penalty speeding fine by post) can still currently travel under the Visa Waiver Programme.

It should be stressed that the fact that a conviction might be spent (and no longer relevant for most purposes in the UK) is **NOT RELEVANT** for the purposes of the Visa Waiver Programme or other United States visa matters. The US immigration authorities do not recognise the concept of a spent conviction. Further, the fact that an arrest may not have resulted in a conviction is **NOT RELEVANT** for the purposes of the Visa Waiver Programme or other United States visa matters.

Should you have any concern as to whether you qualify for the visa waiver programme please do not hesitate in making enquiries.

For more details are available on the Visa Waiver Programme and other aspects of US immigration please contact:

US Embassy in London:

US Embassy Visa Branch, 5 Upper Grosvenor Street, London, W15 2JB
www.usembassy.org.uk

Operator assisted visa information from the US Embassy in London is also available on the following premium rate telephone number: 09042 450 100

Department of Homeland Security: www.dhs.gov

Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA)

Information and application: <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>

- Further advice

All non-UK passport holders should contact their own national passport issuing agencies and their nearest US Embassy or Consulate for further details.

Should you have any concerns as to whether you qualify for the Visa Waiver Programme, please do not delay in making enquiries. Should a visa be required, it is likely that an application will need to be made in person at the US Embassy in London, and we understand there to be at least a ten-week period between the application for and the issue of a visa.

If you have visited or plan to visit Cuba, please see also the Cuban section regarding the US economic embargo.

Details of Prohibited Items which may not be carried in checked-in and carry-on (hand) luggage are available on the Transportation Security Administration website: www.tsa.gov.