2018 Orleans County VISITOR'S GUIDE







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• FREE •

Orleans County is Chock-Full of Fun, Without All the Big-Name Drama

Photos and article by Tom Rivers, Editor of OrleansHub.com



A Little League player for the Carlton team is mobbed after crossing the plate for a home run.



The Grease Pole competition at the annual county fair provides a lot of laughs as the teams test their mettle and endurance in getting to the top.



Turn off your cell phone and enjoy a walk on a nature trail. In the fall you'll see leaves floating by in some of the streams.

No casinos. No big-name bands or professional sports. We don't even have a movie theater. You'd think there was nothing to do in Orleans County.

Wrong. I can tell you every weekend there are lots of things going on. Local business associations and civic groups keep community festivals and celebrations going throughout the year. There is always something to do.

But it isn't "big time." It's very much "small town." And that's a good thing.

Kids still play baseball and the games are often thrilling nail-biters, played until the last light of dusk. You will even see kids riding with huge smiles in the back of a pickup, on their way to the ice cream stand to celebrate after a game.

High school football is still popular and Albion and Medina can count on big crowds for "Friday night lights." People show up in droves for the football, the pep band, the popcorn, the home town pride.

Our school districts put on musicals that are regularly recognized as among the best in the area by the Rochester Broadway Theater League.

The local 4-H Fair is alcohol-free but that hardly makes it a bore. About 30,000 folks attend the week-long event each year, making Orleans the most popular youth fair in the state. The community supports the 4-H kids showing their animals and participating in many contests, including a pie-eating showdown. One of the fair's biggest draws: The greased pole climbing contest. It's an Orleans tradition, with about 1,000 people gathering each night to watch teams try to climb a utility pole slathered in grease. It's quite a spectacle, watching the teams slip and struggle, with many completing the tough challenge, gobs of grease covering their clothes and embedded in their hair.

The fair also has a midway, carnival games, deep fried dough, taffy, fireworks and a very entertaining karaoke contest. A local grocery store employee is among the crowd favorites with his high-energy country music renditions.

We still have parades with fire trucks, Scouts, and veterans in the Honor Guard. The local marching bands give their best show of the year in the local parade.

People still line Main Street, sometimes a couple hours early, to see the patriotic displays.

We still do campfires, fly kites, and talk to neighbors on our porches. We have tournaments for kickball, bocce, bowling, horseshoes and darts.

Fishing remains big here, whether by boat, casting from the pier at the Oak Orchard Harbor, or pulling on the waders and trying our luck in local creeks. Even the most camera-shy people lose any reluctance to pose for a picture when they have caught a 30-pound Chinook salmon.

You still see kids selling lemonade from tables in their driveways, kids riding bikes or skateboards down the sidewalks, or Boy Scouts filing into the parish hall for the annual Pinewood Derby.

The church bells still ring from steeples that were built more than a century ago.

The only Elvis sightings we've had are a nearby impersonator at the Super Cruise in Medina, when Main Street is blocked off for about 300 classic cars.

I guess Orleans County hasn't hit the big time. But that's just fine by us.





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In the spring, the apple blossoms come out, and they are spectacular. There are numerous orchards around the county. Orleans is the state's second-leading apple producer.







Photos on page 8 courtesy The Cobblestone Society & Museum





AVAILABLE JULY - OCTOBER MAILABLE JULY - OCTO

2018 ORLEANS COUNTY VISITOR'S GUIDE Cobblestone in Orleans County

By Douglas Farley, Director, The Cobblestone Society & Museum

Upstate New York is the best place in America to see a unique development in our nation's architectural historythe cobblestone house. About 1,000 cobblestone structures were built from about 1825 up until the beginning of the Civil War, with the epicenter of construction located around Rochester, NY and moving outward along the historic Ridge Road. The earliest cobblestone buildings were constructed from glaciated field cobbles (a stone that will fit in one hand), a product that was found in abundance when the early settlers cleared their land of trees and first tilled their soil to become fields. By about 1840, the craft had become more artistic in design and beautiful lake-washed cobbles were transported from the nearby Lake Ontario shoreline to build stunning architectural structures that contain stylistic stone designs that rival the beauty of any other form of building construction.

Despite a lasting fascination in the craft, no one is making a serious effort to build cobblestone houses today, perhaps because the secrets learned by the early masons took decades to perfect to make a fine and lasting lime-mortar, and the arduous chore of gathering and pre-sorting thousands of small round stones is too much work for even the most diehard enthusiast.

The Cobblestone Society in Childs, N.Y., was birthed out of a grass-roots desire and passion to save these vanishing 19th century treasures from the 20th century wrecking ball. A handful of men and women established the Society in 1960 to preserve the oldest Cobblestone Church in North America (1834), which was attended by George Pullman, the sleeping car industrialist. Visitors can also see the Victorian splendor of the adjacent cobblestone parsonage (1836), once owned by New York Tribune editor Horace Greeley, and a one-room cobblestone schoolhouse (1849) where John Cunneen taught classes before becoming a future New York State Attorney General. The latter was closed after over 100 years of service to the community and remains today a veritable timecapsule of the early American education system. The three cobblestone structures were recognized 25 years ago by the US Department of the Interior (National Park System) as the Cobblestone National Historic Landmark District, and it is in good company with the only other newly designated National Historic Landmark in Orleans County, the Erie Canal.

The cobblestone buildings are supplemented in the present day Cobblestone Museum by four wooden buildings that represent the 19th and early 20th century trades of blacksmithing, farming, printing, woodworking and leatherworking. These buildings have been painstakingly restored to accurately depict what life was like in a by-gone era. The Museum showcases a very extensive taxidermy collection, including a beautifully restored specimen of a fox by acclaimed taxidermist Carl Akeley.

The Cobblestone Museum is open to the public for daily tours from June to October and other times by appointment for group tours. The National Historic Landmark Cobblestone Church is also available for weddings of any faith. The beautifully landscaped gardens and grounds provide a stunning backdrop for photography.

Cobblestone Society members are welcome to browse the amazing collection of books, photographs, records and more in the museum's Cobblestone Resource Center, located in the Brick House (1836) adjacent to the church. Historic home owners will also benefit from the educational programs offered throughout the year, including an upcoming seminar on window restoration and preservation.

Several unique, interesting and educational events are held each year during the summer season to highlight the beautiful buildings, as well as offering a glimpse of 19th century life in Orleans County. Popular events are the Cobblestone and Christmas Tours of Homes, Quilt Show, Antique Appraisal Fair, Historic Trades Fair, and Ghost Walk, as well as an Outhouse Tour that spotlights the Museum's extensive collection of outhouses, in-houses and privies.

For more information about exhibits and our 2018 event schedule, please visit our website at www. CobblestoneMuseum.org or call (585) 589-9013. Mark your calendars to experience the heart of cobblestone country. As America's only museum dedicated to cobblestone architecture, we know you will enjoy your visit!



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2018 ORLEANS COUNTY VISITOR'S GUIDE How Has Social Media Changed the Way we Fish?

By Capt. Bob Stevens, Sunrise II Sportfishing

Growing up just a few short miles from Lake Erie, the Walleye capital of the world, I often wondered how my dad knew when and where the fish were biting. Back then you had extremely limited resources, such as the fishing report in the Sunday paper, hearing some "hot tips" from your friends, or information from local magazines, which were only published once a month.

How about today? Let me list the ways to find out how your favorite fishing hole is producing. I'm pretty sure when the internet was first introduced to us, we didn't know the endless possibilities we were – and are – in store for.

Let me start with fishing charter websites. In the past you had to rely on friends who fished with a charter, by booking at a local sport show, or replying by mail or phone to the ads in the back of your favorite fishing mag. Now most, if not all charters, have very attractive websites that let you see their business up close, even allowing for booking and paying online. One of the websites that put Oak Orchard on the map was put



Steelhead glory on the swung fly!

together and continually updated by a retired charter captain and his wife, Joe and Shirley Reefer. It was called "At the Oak." This single site would get thousands of hits on a daily basis. It shared up-to-the-minute information. Upon Joe's passing, the site was maintained by an active captain, Bob Songin, until the host made it too challenging to keep. He then shifted his focus to Facebook, doing live AT THE OAK, and AT THE BAR (spring), live daily videos to help those that both charter, or fish their own boats, with that so-valuable information.

There are also multiple active feeds on one very popular site, Lake Ontario United, a great place to find out about fishing, tournaments, bragging rights, or an awesome classified section. This site helps anglers keep up to date with what is happening on Lady O.

Keep hitting the social media sites with your favorite captain, local tackle shops, marinas, and any avenues there are to find your "hot tips."





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Tributary Techniques

by Ron Bierstine, owner of Oak Orchard Tackle and Lodge

Trout and salmon fishing is unmatched in the Orleans County tributary waters like the Oak Orchard River during the fall, winter and spring. It's a three-season trophy fish migration from September to May out of Lake Ontario and into the tribs. In the fall from Sep through Dec Brown trout and King salmon can make seasoned and novice anglers' alike hearts race. Die-hard anglers pursue prized Steelhead in all three seasons, with peak action usually February through April. There's outstanding Atlantic and Coho salmon fishing too. All this great fishing takes place from your own two feet... Come on out and just wade right in!

Let's go over three main techniques to pursue trophy trout and salmon in the tribs during these nine months. Fly rod, spin rod or float rod – each has merit in different situations. Some anglers choose to fish one particular method just because they enjoy it the most. That's fine, but learning other techniques might just broaden your skills and keep you on the water longer.

Fly fishing is popular with anglers pursuing brown trout in the fall. It's fun and ideally suited for what's often clear flows and sight fishing opportunities. Use at least an 8 weight rig and a stout leader to subdue the bruiser salmon, but it might be a lengthy battle! Fly casters stay in on the action all winter and spring hoping for a steelhead hookup. Fly fishing in the tribs doesn't have to be a complicated proposition. Short casts and simple egg flies on a good drift will do well enough. Most anglers use floating lines and attach a mono leader with weight just ahead of the fly. Use a long enough leader to avoid trying to sink the tip of the fly line. Use enough split shot to barely bounce along the bottom for most of your drift. You can also affix an indicator along your leader to let you know what the drift is doing. Like bottom bouncing the idea is to keep the fly drifting along naturally. Swinging a streamer or spey fly on a switch rod is another challenging option. One hard strike can make you a convert to this fun method. The most important part of the fly fishing equation is getting the right drift or swing, and flies that an angler has confidence in will fish the best!

Float fishing with centerpin reels is arguably one of the most productive methods. It works especially well in cold or slow flows such as what might be found in the winter or lower trib reaches. Where snags might make for frustrating bottom bouncing, float fishing from the top down can be very effective. The centerpin reel revolves freely on a ball bearing, allowing drifts to extend

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downstream of an angler's position. It is the ultimate dead drift, straight line presentation. Light line can further contribute to the overall effectiveness since leaders are rarely in contact with the stream bottom. A float (there are many styles and sizes) suspends a fly, bait or lure anywhere along the water column, but near the bottom is usually best. Split shot is most often placed staggered along the whole line below the float. Affix large shot near the float and small shot nearer the bait. Anglers can use flies, natural bait like egg sacks, or jigs. Just be sure not to interfere with other anglers by extending your drift too far downstream into where they are drifting.

Spin fishing is versatile since it can be utilized to cast and retrieve, bottom bounce or float fish. Most anglers cut their teeth somewhere by spin fishing, and trib fishing has historical roots in noodle rod angling. The technique is often misapplied with tackle too heavy for fooling trout and salmon into biting. Light mono or fluorocarbon line (6 to 12 pound test), smooth drags, and limber rods land big fish - not heavier pound test snagging techniques. Since castable weight is used on the terminal end, spin fishermen can use flies and presentations just like fly fishermen. If floats are used to drift downstream, control may not be as good as with a centerpin reel. Casting and retrieving is a lost art with the drift fishing craze, but it can be used in large flows or lakeshore areas. When salmon are staged in the inshore lake waters in the fall and brown trout are shallow in the spring, casting spoons and plugs will reward you with jarring, fun strikes.

Some trib anglers employ one or more of the above techniques, and crossing over to other legitimate methods can make for a new challenge. Whatever method you choose, it should be first and foremost about having fun. Consider catch and release angling, especially for trout so that future good fishing is preserved. Try out all the Orleans County trib waters like the Oak Orchard River, Johnson Creek or Marsh Creek. Orleans County is also a great central WNY location to target waters all the way east to the Genesee River and west to the Niagara River. To round out a year long fishing experience, try out the trolling action on the big lake waters too. Be sure you check with a local area tackle shop and lodge specializing in trout and salmon run timing, the weather, water flows and fishing techniques. Reliable trib and lodging info can be found at Oak Orchard Tackle & Lodge at 585-682-4546 or www.fishoakorchard.com. The Orleans County Fishing Hotline at 800-724-0314 or www.OrleansCountyFishing.com are good resources too.

Now that you know about the different methods to fish in the Orleans County tribs and lakeshore, be sure we see you out on the water where you might hook up with the biggest trout and salmon of your life!





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On the Oak Orchard River, at Point Breeze, Lake Ontario.



Photo courtesy John Oravec, Tightlines Charters



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The Hidden Jewel

by Mike Waterhouse, Sportfishing Coordinator at Orleans County Department of Tourism

In Western New York is the small rural county of Orleans. Its rolling landscape is home to vast farmland, dairy farms and apple orchards. Nestled among these are many small towns and villages that share the essence of what rural America is all about. Local businesses, rustic churches of both cobblestone and sandstone construction that have withstood the test of time proudly dot these communities as a testimony of time gone by.

Bigger stores and modern industry is slowly working

its way into the fabric of these communities as some of the smaller businesses close their doors. There is a standing joke in these small communities that the good news is that everyone watches out for their neighbors and the bad news is that everyone knows their neighbors business. The truth is that these small communities still have many of the old tried and true values that make them the great places they are.

Orleans County is bordered on the North

by Lake Ontario and has several tributaries that help supply the lake with water. Of these tributaries probably the most known is Oak Orchard River. During the time of the Indians roaming free in this area the "Oak" was known as "the Black North" because of the dense forest that lined this waterway, making daylight almost disappear as you traveled its length.

As the area began to be developed by the settlers who tended to settle around waterways, much of the forests were cut both for the erecting of their log cabins and also as a commerce for the area. This commerce created a need to have a method to transport the lumber from the forests and what better way to accomplish this than to use the river and the lake so the harbor at Point Breeze on Lake Ontario was born. Not only did this offer a reasonable way to transport goods but it also offered the area residents a great source of recreation, boating and fishing.

Created by an act of Congress, Oak Orchard Harbor, with its jetties and break wall is now listed as a harbor of refuse for all boaters using Lake Ontario as a part of nature's playground when storms force them off the lake. With the introduction of Trout and Salmon into Lake Ontario in 1968, a great sport

fishery began which has caused a great resurgence of Oak Orchard Harbor. Today more than 35 fulland part-time Sportfishing Charter Boats call this port home from early April through mid October each vear. The vast numbers of Chinook, Coho and Atlantic salmon along the Steelhead/Rainbow. Brown and Lake trout that cruise the waters off Orleans County foraging on the large bait pods help create a fresh water sport fishery that rivals any in the world.

But the fishery is not enough. You also need support businesses like full- and partial-service marinas, lodging for customers, tackle shops, restaurants and much, much more to make this a destination of choice. The World Fishing Network has named Point Breeze on Lake Ontario the Ultimate Fishing Town USA because we have all of this and so much more staffed by people who are ready to welcome and help insure that when your visit is over you want to plan your next visit with us soon.

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Cobblestone Museum Brings History Alive These children were part of a Ghost Walk at the Cobblestone Museum on Route 104 in Childs. The museum includes the one-room schoolhouse pictured behind. The school was built in 1849 and was closed in 1952. The interior with desks, chalkboard, and book shelves is largely unchanged from when it was an active school. The Cobblestone Museum, which includes several other buildings, is a National Historic Landmark.



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The canal villages have retained their downtown historical business districts that feature stunning architecture from the mid- to late-1800s. This photo shows some of the historical buildings along the canal in Albion. The downtowns in Albion, Holley, and Medina, are all recognized on the National Register of Historic Places.





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