



10 Ways to Enjoy the Great Outdoors in Sturbridge

With over 6,000 acres of public land to explore, dozens of farm-to-table restaurants to try, and an endless supply of outdoor recreation, Sturbridge is a nature-lover's dream. Spend a day exploring Leadmine Mountain, perfecting your disc golf throw, or pick several activities from the list below for a day of fun-filled, fresh air adventure!

Learn Outside the Classroom

Those looking for a low key, educational outdoor excursion will find all that and more at Old Sturbridge Village. Already the largest outdoor living history museum in New England, OSV recently overhauled its programming to allow for social distancing *and* maximum customer enjoyment. Many of their popular indoor exhibits can now be viewed outside, along with several new, never-before-seen installations. Step back in time as you walk through this quaint slice of early American life, where horse-drawn carriages roam the streets and blacksmiths hammer away in coal forges. Guaranteed to be a delightful, unforgettable experience for both history buffs and novices, old and young. Visit their website for COVID operations and to book your tickets in advance.

<https://www.osv.org/plan-your-visit/>

1 Old Sturbridge Village Road, Sturbridge, MA 01566

Solve a Mystery

Though not outdoors, **Escape the Pike** is an award-winning escape room that is guaranteed to get your heart racing and your blood pumping! Find clues and solve puzzles in this immersive mystery experience, in which you and a group of friends race against the clock to “escape” your mystifying surroundings. Perfect for families and friend groups of all ages.

179 Main St, Sturbridge, MA 01566

<https://www.escapethepike.com>

Note: Due to COVID-19, all escape room events will be private sessions with your group only. Reservations are required at least two hours in advance. Walk-ins not accepted.

Get Your Apple a Day

Every fall, Hyland Brewery & Orchard opens to the public for apple picking and autumnal festivities. Bring a picnic to eat on the lawn and enjoy some live music, or stop by the barn to pet some of its friendly residents. Enjoy a classic hay ride before you hunt through the orchard's 2,400 trees for the perfect Macintosh Apple. If you're a fan of craft beer, you'll also want to stop by the brewery and grab a case of Rapsallion IPA, which is brewed on site in the 1,200 square foot facility.

199 Arnold Rd, Sturbridge, MA 01518

www.hylandorchard.com

Perfect Your Disc Golf Game

If you're a fan of disc golf, you don't have to go far: right next to Hyland Orchard is a premiere 18-hole disc golf course run by Rapsallion Brewery. Open to players every day from dawn-to-dusk, the course will take you through sunny, open fields and thick, wooded terrain. Well-maintained and beloved by local disc enthusiasts, a trip through this course is a perfect addition to any family or group outing.

195 Arnold Rd, Sturbridge, MA 01518

<http://drinkrapsallion.com/sturbridge/disc-golf/>

Brush Up on Your Archery Skills

Test your skills with a bow and arrow at Bay Path Archers, located just over the border in Southbridge. Whether you're interested in wielding a Crossbow, Recurve, Compound, or Long Bow, Bay Path has a wealth of instructors, friendly members, and resources to help visitors of all skill levels. Sign up for a lesson, membership, or simply visit the indoor range during public hours on Wednesday and Friday, from 6:00 to 9:00 PM.

243 Guelphwood Rd, Southbridge, MA 01550

<https://www.facebook.com/www.baypatharchersinc/about>

Race on Ice

In the winter, the Hamilton Rod & Gun Club is the site of a unique northern tradition: Ice Racing. Whether you're spectating or participating, you'll be pulled into the excitement of this event, which sees motorcycles, quads, ATV's and more battle for supremacy on an icy, frozen pond. Follow their Facebook page for event updates, as races are subject to cancellation if weather is inclement. Race season begins in January and typically continues until March.

24 Hamilton Rd, Sturbridge, MA 01566

https://www.facebook.com/Sturbridge-Ice-Races-652954604756438/?ref=page_internal

Walk on the Wild Side

Abandoned mines, stunning vistas, unique creatures, and more all await you on Sturbridge's many trails and preserves. Here are a few local favorites:

❖ **Wells State Park**

With over 1,400 acres of oak-hickory forest and freshwater, Wells State Park has something for every nature explorer! Explore its 12 miles of trail on foot, mountain bike, horseback, or cross-country ski. Dip your toes in Walker Pond, which also offers kayaking, canoeing, an assortment of fishing, and a campers-only swimming beach. Be sure to visit Carpenter Rocks, whose summit boasts a scenic lookout over the surrounding forest. *(For more on camping at Wells Park, see Where to Stay, below).*

159 Walker Pond Rd, Sturbridge, MA 01566

<https://www.mass.gov/locations/wells-state-park>

❖ **Leadmine Mountain Conservation Area**

A robust, multi-purpose area, Leadmine Mountain boasts five marked trails totaling 11 miles, spanning everything from oak and pine forest to submerged wetland. Visitors are invited to use the trails for hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, horse back riding, and wildlife viewing (motorized vehicles are not allowed). Fishing and hunting are also permitted on the property, so be sure to wear bright orange during the hunting season.

197 Leadmine Road, Sturbridge, MA 01518

www.sturbridgetrails.org/leadmine-mountain.html

❖ **The Trustees' Tantiusques Reservation**

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Tantiusques Reservation is an outdoor excursion and history lesson rolled into one. The reservation was once a great source of graphite and was mined for centuries by the native Nipmuc tribe and local English colonists until it was abandoned in the late 1800's. Today, hikers can still see an open mine shaft and partially-filled mine cut, the only remnants of New England's first-ever mining operation.

493 Leadmine Rd, Sturbridge, MA 01566

<https://thetrustees.org/place/tantiusques/>

❖ **Accessible Trails for All Explorers**

Sturbridge boasts several ADA trails, so that those with limited mobility can still get out and explore the great outdoors:

- **Grand Trunk Trail** – Also referred to as “Titanic Railroad,” this unique trail follows the path of an old railroad bed. You won't see any tracks, however, as the project was shortly abandoned after its founder perished on the ill-fated Titanic (hence the trail's nickname). Instead, you'll be treated to a pleasant nature walk on a well-constructed, fine gravel trail, whose wide width and ADA appropriate grades can easily accommodate mobility aids, strollers, and mountain bikes.
- **Burgess Discovery Trail** – Located on the grounds of Burgess Elementary School, this federal ABA compliant trail is fully handicapped accessible and offers many opportunities to “interact with nature,” including a wetland bog bridge, glacial boulders, and local wildlife.

- **Heins Farm Conservation Lands** – This 84-acre property boasts a number of trails, including the Pond View Loop (*0.7 miles*). This handicapped-accessible trail features a picturesque rest area that overlooks the pond and nearby Heins Farm. Keep an eye out for the pond's many residents, including ducks, heron, and spotted turtles. Parking lot boasts a designated handicapped spot.
- ❖ *For a full guide to all of Sturbridge's public lands, visit:*
https://www.sturbridge.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf3881/f/uploads/stur_trail_guide_final_2019_v2.1_2.pdf

Treat Yourself

After exhausting yourself on a long hike, stop into town for a well-deserved feast. Sturbridge boasts a mind-boggling variety of restaurants that are sure to satisfy any palette, whether you're looking for vegan, Italian, or anything in between.

If you're leaving **Leadmine Mountain** or **Old Sturbridge Village**, you can easily find generous portions of southern-style, smoked barbecue right up the road at **B.T.'s Smokehouse** (btsmokehouse.com). Nearby is another noteworthy neighbor, **Sturbridge Seafood**, who proves that you don't need to live on the coast in order to score a great bowl of chowder (sturbridgeseafood.com).

If you're looking to fuel up *before* a long day of exercise, we recommend starting bright and early at **Annie's Country Kitchen**, where they serve classic American comfort food, cooked to perfection, at an unbeatable price (anniescountrykitchen.com).

For more information on where to dine, go to: <https://www.sturbridge.gov/businesses/pages/business-directory>

Where To Stay: Wells State Park

For the full outdoors experience, stay under the stars at Wells State Park. With 60 camping spots and several ramp-accessible yurts, this campsite can accommodate many types of travelers. Whether it's your first time pitching a tent or your fiftieth, you'll love all the amenities Wells Park has to offer, including 12 miles of hiking trails and a picturesque lake for swimming, boating and fishing. Each yurt is equipped with bunk beds, tables and chairs, in addition to water and electricity access. Regular campsites are outfitted with a fire ring and picnic table, so you can feast on your catch of the day before roasting marshmallows at night. For those looking to truly reconnect with the outdoors, this is the ultimate experience.

<https://www.mass.gov/locations/wells-state-park>
159 Walker Pond Rd, Sturbridge, MA 01566

Where to Stay: Publick House

If you're a fan of history, consider anchoring your outdoor adventure weekend with a stay at Publick House. Located just a few minutes from Old Sturbridge Village, the historic Publick House inn has stood on the Town Common for the past 230 years, serving travelers from near and far. After a long day of outdoor excursions, you'll find there's nothing better than relaxing in an 18th century atmosphere with 21st century amenities. A truly one-of-a-kind experience that you'll *only* find in Sturbridge, Massachusetts.

277 Main St, Sturbridge, MA 01566

<https://publickhouse.com/accommodations/>

Sturbridge has a number of lodging properties to accommodate all types of travel. Following is a list of accommodations in Sturbridge:

[Days Inn Sturbridge](#)

[Econo Lodge](#)

[Hampton Inn Sturbridge](#)

[Holiday Inn Express & Suites](#)

[LaQuinta Inn & Suites Sturbridge](#)

[Publick House Historic Inn](#)

[Sturbridge Host Hotel](#)

[Super 8 Sturbridge](#)

For more information on where to stay, go to: <https://www.sturbridge.gov/businesses/pages/business-directory>