

Upstate Theater

New York's Northern Lights

Powers Theater, Elmira

Theater in the Empire State is too big for just one city—even New York City! Upstate marquee light the winter months with great opera, dance and theater—from Broadway's top touring productions.

The arts thrive in Buffalo's famous Theater District. A glittering collection of professional theaters showcases the city's rich architectural heritage and topnotch productions, from innovative drama to classic comedies. Shea's Performing Art Center, set in an opulent 1926 opera house, features Broadway hits. **716/847-1410; sheas.org**

Rochester's Geva Theatre Center will tickle your funny bone with unique comedy improv. Other highlights of Geva's winter schedule include holiday classics like A Christmas Carol. **585/232-4382; gevatheatre.org**

Southeast of Rochester, the Smith Opera House on Seneca Lake in Geneva is applauded for its near-perfect acoustics. Along with concerts and a film festival, seasonal highlights include children's theater productions. **315/781-5483; thesmith.org**

In Elmira, the Clemens Center's newly restored Powers Theater is a Vaudeville-era palace with magnificent murals, gold-leaf décor and reconstructed opera boxes that recapture its original 1925 grandeur. The annual Best of Broadway series features a dazzling schedule. **607/734-8191; clemenscenter.com**

The Mulroy Civic Center Theaters are part of Syracuse's stunning three-block Oncenter. Highlights this winter include the renowned Syracuse Opera's fully-staged productions and a series of touring Broadway shows. **315/435-8000; oncenter.org**



Syracuse Stage, a professional theatre in residence at Syracuse University, presents a winter of bold new plays and classic drama. **315/443-3275; syracusestage.org**

Syracuse's 1928 Landmark Theater hosts dozens of events each year, from legends like Bob Dylan, to plays and

dance tours. The ornate 2,900-seat palace still wows visitors with its grand staircase, chandeliers and other plush furnishings. **315/475-7980; landmarktheatre.org**

In Central New York, Utica's historic Stanley Theatre features an eclectic "Mexican Baroque" style, combining a terra cotta and tiled mosaic exterior with a lavish gold-leaf Baroque interior, Hapsburg lions, and a multitude of angels and cherubs. The annual Great Artists Series presents internationally acclaimed music and dance. **315/724-1113; cnyarts.com**

The Capital-Saratoga region's beautiful historic theaters include the Palace in Albany (**518/465-3334; palacealbany.com**) and Proctor's in Schenectady. Built in 1926, Proctor's presents touring Broadway productions, nationally known musicians, comedians, dance groups and opera. **518/346-6204; proctors.org**

On the campus of RPI in Troy, the Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC) offers a variety of innovative programs and performances. The stunning venue was hailed by the New York Times as a "technological pleasure dome for the mind and senses." **518/276-3921; empac.rpi.edu**

In the Hudson Valley, Poughkeepsie's 1869 Bardavon Opera House presents children's theater, concerts and the annual holiday-season performance of The Nutcracker by the New Paltz Ballet Theatre. **845/339-6088; www.upac.org**

All this and we've barely brushed the footlights! Check out **iloveny.com** for information on over 100 regional theaters and performing arts centers across the state. Every winter evening entertains in upstate New York!

While late winter snows still frost the landscape, eager beavers are already venturing into New York's woods and waterways. Now the whitewater awakens, the sap begins to flow and early birds enjoy the best conditions for kayaking and rafting, maple sugaring and nature hikes.

As melting snows and dam releases feed rivers and streams a phenomenon called white water rafting occurs. Slip into a wetsuit, grab a paddle and pick a stretch of river. The Hudson River Gorge is rated one of the top ten whitewater rafting runs in the country, thundering past 500-foot granite cliffs and through rapids like Givneys' Rift, the Narrows and Little Nasty. Novice or pro, there's nothing like a refreshing "Adirondack Sleigh Ride" to welcome Spring. Rest assured, you will get wet on this ride.

Quieter waters beckon the gentle kayaker. In a state with 7,000 lakes, ponds and reservoirs you can pretty much kayak from one end of New York to the other, and more people are trying it than ever before. A kayaking clinic and some simple equipment gets you underway. Once you master the basics you might even graduate to some whitewater.

Prefer terra firma? Mountain biking is exploding thanks to ever-growing miles of easily accessible trails that lead to isolated wilderness or quaint country roads. Nestled in the Western Catskills, Plattekill Mountain offers 60 miles of bike trails beginning in April, and boasts one of the first lift-served bike parks on the east coast.

When the sap begins to flow in New York, Spring can't be far away. March is the month for maple, when sugarmakers across the state begin boiling sap into pure nectar. But why just sample the syrup when you can taste the whole sticky experience? During March Maple Weekends more than 100 New York maple producers open their sugarhouse doors to the curious who can tour the operations, boil sap into pure maple syrup, or just enjoy the crop. Learn more at **mapleweekend.com**.