



RV TRIPGEN

The Complete Guide to
RV Travel in
New York

Parkways are closed to you, Adirondacks are huge, Finger Lakes is the play,
and NYC is solved by parking at a New Jersey transit station.

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RV travel in New York

New York is the most heavily parkway-restricted state in the country for RVs. The Taconic, Saw Mill, Bronx River, Hutchinson River, Henry Hudson, Cross County, and Belt Parkways all prohibit commercial vehicles and most RVs entirely -- some have stone-arch bridges below 9 ft. The state is also one of the most rewarding once you understand the geography: the Adirondacks are larger than Yellowstone, the Finger Lakes has more state-park camping than any region in the East, and the Niagara/Buffalo corridor is full of underrated routes. New York City itself is unrideable for an RV; park-and-ride from a Jersey/Long Island base is the only sensible play. Plan around the parkway prohibitions, treat NYC as a transit obstacle rather than a destination, and the rest of New York pays back the planning generously.

New York by the numbers

Boondocking + dispersed sites	653
Established campgrounds	212
Dump stations	50
Propane refills	47
Potable water fill-ups	69
Laundromats	30
RV showers	31
Verified-bad spots (overnight prohibited)	33

Source: iOverlander community database (69% of New York spots verified in the last 24 months).

Driving rules

Interstate (cars + RVs)	65 mph (most rural segments); 55 mph in metro NYC
NY Thruway (I-87/I-90)	65 mph; toll by class -- RVs typically Class 2 or 7
US/State highway (cars + towing)	55 mph default
Built-up areas	25-30 mph (NYC default 25 mph)
Drive on	Right
Seatbelts	Required for all front-seat occupants and all under-16 in any seat
Cell phone use while driving	Hands-free only; all hand-held use prohibited
Parkways (Taconic, Saw Mill, Bronx River, etc)	RVs and commercial vehicles PROHIBITED -- enforce yourself

Highways

RV-friendly corridors

Highway	Note
I-87 (NY Thruway south + Adirondack Northway north)	Albany to NYC south; Albany to Canada north. Main north-south spine; toll on the Thruway portion, free on the Northway.
I-90 (NY Thruway)	Albany to Buffalo and PA border. Main east-west; toll, full-service plazas every 30-50 miles.
I-81	Watertown to PA border via Syracuse and Binghamton. Free, four-lane, easy.
I-86 (Southern Tier Expressway)	PA border to NY-17 corridor across the southern tier. Free; mostly four-lane.
US-9 north of Albany	Free alternative to the Northway through the Adirondack foothills. Two-lane in places.
US-11	Syracuse to Canada via Watertown. Quiet north-south through northern NY.
NY-28	Catskills loop from Kingston to Utica via Margaretville. Two-lane scenic; manageable for most rigs.
NY-17 / Future I-86	Southern Tier west of Binghamton. Mostly upgraded to interstate standard; the older sections are still signed NY-17.

RV-restricted segments

Segment	Restriction
Taconic State Parkway	RVs and trailers PROHIBITED. Multiple low historic bridges. Use I-87 (Thruway) instead.
Saw Mill River Parkway	RVs and trailers PROHIBITED. Use I-87/I-287.
Bronx River Parkway	RVs and trailers PROHIBITED.
Hutchinson River Parkway	RVs and trailers PROHIBITED.
Henry Hudson Parkway (NYC)	RVs and commercial PROHIBITED. Multiple low overpasses.
Cross County Parkway	RVs PROHIBITED.
Belt Parkway / Southern State Parkway (Long Island)	RVs PROHIBITED. Use I-495 (LIE) or Sunrise Highway (NY-27) for Long Island transit.
Northern State Parkway (Long Island)	RVs PROHIBITED.

Bear Mountain Bridge approach (US-6/US-202)	Steep grades, tight switchbacks descending east. Manageable but use low gear.
Most state-park access roads in the Catskills and Adirondacks	Some have 25-30 ft length limits posted -- check before committing.
NY-73 through Cascade Pass (Adirondack High Peaks)	Two-lane, tight switchbacks descending into Keene Valley. Manageable but slow.
NYC tunnels (Holland, Lincoln, Brooklyn-Battery)	Holland/Lincoln/Battery PROHIBIT propane and large RVs. Use the GWB (free of propane prohibition) for any cross-Hudson transit with propane onboard. Plan the route.

Mountain passes

Pass	Elevation	Note
Whiteface Highway (NY-431, Wilmington to Lake Placid)	4867 ft	Private toll mountain road; not for RVs. Drive only if you have a tow car.
Cascade Pass (NY-73, Adirondack High Peaks)	2185 ft	Tight two-lane with switchbacks descending into Keene. Manageable for most rigs but use low gear.
Bear Mountain (US-6/US-202)	1305 ft	Steep four-lane with switchbacks. Manageable; use low gear descending east.
Hunter Mountain area (NY-23A, Catskills)	2200 ft	Two-lane through Kaaterskill Clove; tight, 9-10% grades. Big rigs over 35 ft should use NY-23 mainline instead.

National parks + monuments

National Park / Monument	Entry fee	Reservation note
Statue of Liberty NM + Ellis Island	Ferry \$24.50 adult, \$12 child; included monument access; pedestal/crown reservation extra	No on-site camping or RV parking. Park in Liberty State Park (NJ) and ferry over.
Gateway NRA (Sandy Hook NJ + Jamaica Bay NY + Staten Island NY)	\$20/vehicle day-use at Sandy Hook beach lots	No RV camping at the Jamaica Bay or Staten Island units. Sandy Hook (NJ side) has limited beach parking; arrive early or weekday.
Saratoga NHP	\$10/vehicle (7 days)	Day-use; no camping inside the battlefield. Saratoga Spa State Park nearby has RV camping.
Fort Stanwix NM	Free entry	Day-use only; downtown Rome, NY. Small lots.
Sagamore Hill NHS (Theodore Roosevelt)	\$15/person tour; grounds free	Day-use; small lot. Long Island RVs limited.
Women's Rights NHP (Seneca Falls)	Free entry	Day-use; downtown Seneca Falls. Use Cayuga Lake SP for nearby RV camping.

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS + Home of FDR + Eleanor Roosevelt NHS (Hyde Park)	\$10/site adult	Day-use; small lots. Mills-Norrie SP nearby has RV camping.
Martin Van Buren NHS (Kinderhook)	Free entry	Day-use only.
Niagara Falls (Niagara Falls SP, not NPS)	Free walk-up; parking \$10-20	Note: the US side is state park, not NPS. RV parking in designated lots; tow car preferred for downtown.
Fire Island NS	Free entry; ferry to barrier-island sections	No vehicles permitted on most of Fire Island. Watch Hill ferry from Patchogue. RVs stay at private/county campgrounds on Long Island mainland.

State parks

NY State Parks operates 180+ parks including Niagara Falls SP (oldest state park in the US). RV-camping units of note: Letchworth SP ("Grand Canyon of the East"), Allegany SP (largest in the system), Lake George Battleground, Saratoga Spa, Watkins Glen, Robert Treman, Buttermilk Falls, Hither Hills (Montauk on Long Island, sells out a year ahead). Reservable up to 9 months in advance via reserveamerica.com (NY portal). Day-use \$6-10/vehicle, camping \$22-35/night for standard sites. NY DEC also operates Adirondack and Catskill campgrounds reservable via the same portal.

Boondocking + dispersed camping

BLM: No BLM land in New York. Public-land boondocking is concentrated in the Finger Lakes National Forest and on Adirondack and Catskill state-managed Forest Preserve lands.

National Forest: Finger Lakes National Forest (16,000 acres, the smallest NF in the US, between Seneca and Cayuga Lakes) allows free dispersed camping 200 ft from any road or water. Small but a genuine option. Adirondack Park and Catskill Park (state-owned Forest Preserve, not federal) permit primitive camping on most state-managed land at least 150 ft from roads/trails/water for up to 3 nights; longer stays require a free DEC permit. The Forest Preserve is the largest free-camping zone in the East despite not being a National Forest.

Stay limit: 14 days at any one location (federal rule, applies to BLM and NF dispersed).

Tribal lands

New York has nine federally-recognized tribal nations including the Seneca (western NY), Onondaga (central NY, Syracuse area), Oneida (Verona), Cayuga (Seneca Falls area), Mohawk (Akwesasne, NY-Canada border), Tuscarora, and Shinnecock (Long Island). Several operate gaming facilities (Seneca Niagara, Turning Stone, Akwesasne Mohawk) which welcome RV overnight in their lots with rules. Akwesasne (St Regis Mohawk) at the Canadian border has its own customs considerations.

Propane, dump stations, fuel

Propane: Plentiful in NYC metro, Long Island, Albany, Syracuse, Buffalo, and along the Thruway. Reasonable in the Catskills and Finger Lakes. Sparse in the Adirondack interior (Long Lake, Old Forge,

Indian Lake) -- top up in Saranac Lake or Lake George before heading in. Most KOA and Good Sam parks fill on-site. NYC tunnels prohibit propane transit -- use the GWB.

Dump stations: Reasonable coverage along the Thruway and major highways. NY State Park campgrounds with RV sites offer free dump stations for registered guests. Truck stops on the Thruway have fee dump stations at most service plazas (\$10-15). Sparse in the Adirondack interior -- plan dump stops at state-park campgrounds.

Fuel: Diesel and gas widely available along all interstates and major US highways. Genuinely sparse in the Adirondack High Peaks region (NY-73 between Lake Placid and Keene Valley has limited services), in remote Catskill back roads, and in the Tug Hill plateau north of Watertown. Carry an extra 5 gallons for Adirondack interior touring. Fuel prices typically lowest near the PA border on I-86 and highest in NYC metro and the Adirondack tourist towns.

Weather windows

Best months: Mid-May through mid-October. Daytime highs 70-85 F in lowlands, 60-75 F in the Adirondacks. Foliage peaks late September to early October in the Adirondacks, mid-October in the Catskills and Finger Lakes.

Avoid: Mid-November through April. Most state-park campgrounds close. Snow common; Tug Hill plateau (east of Lake Ontario) gets 200+ inches per year and is one of the snowiest places in the US. Black-fly season (late May to mid-June) is brutal in the Adirondacks. Hurricane risk Aug-Oct on Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley.

Climate caution

The Adirondack High Peaks region requires hiker-shuttle reservations and parking permits in summer for popular trailheads. Check Adirondack Mountain Reserve and DEC websites before planning hikes; trailhead lots overflow by 7 am on summer weekends.

Emergency + road conditions

State patrol

Dial *347 (*FHP) -- actually NY uses 911 for emergencies; (518) 457-6195 for non-emergency state police

Road conditions

<https://511ny.org>

How RV TripGen helps

Every NY parkway prohibition blocked at routing time

RV Tripgen blocks routing of any RV through the Taconic, Saw Mill, Bronx River, Hutchinson, Henry Hudson, Belt, Southern State, and Northern State Parkways regardless of nav-system suggestion. The state troopers don't care that Google sent you.

NYC tunnel propane bans enforced

RV TripGen reroutes any RV with onboard propane around the Holland, Lincoln, and Brooklyn-Battery tunnels to the GWB, so you don't get turned around (or worse) at the toll plaza.