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Camping spots near NYC

Each of these weekend trips is merely a train (or rental car) ride away. By Amanda MacMillan



FIRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE

For those who want to travel light

Desperately need a staycation?



Malouf's Mountain Sunset Campgrounds

All you need to enjoy a weekend at this upstate New York camping resort is a sleeping bag and mat, a knife, a flashlight and a toothbrush, says owner Dick Malouf, who picks city slickers up from the nearby train station and sends them off on a day hike (ranging from a half hour to five hours) while he drives their gear to the well-spaced-out sites. Tents are set up on elevated platforms complete with a tarp-covered fire pit and a "chow box" full of cooking supplies, silverware and even a deck of cards. You can bring your own food, purchase uncooked meat and veggies at the campsite, or order in from local restaurants.

Price: \$68 per night for a platform site with chow box and tent. \$43 for primitive sites

- **For LGBT campers**

Sundance Outdoor Adventure Society

Members of this volunteer organization, whose motto is "come out and play," can sign up for day and weekend trips to public parks in upstate New York, the New Jersey Pine Barrens and the Poconos in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Overnight backpacking trips are available for beginner, intermediate and advanced skill levels, while camping trips are open to anyone who enjoys sleeping under the stars.

Price: Annual membership dues are \$40, \$20 for students. Trips are priced at cost for carpooling, food, equipment and reservation fees.

Getting there: Visit sundanceoutdoor.org for reservation and transportation options.

For a traditional campground experience**Clarence Fahnestock State Park**

If you're nostalgic for the days of family camping trips, rowboat rentals, Saturday-night movies and organized hiking excursions, book yourself one of the 80 campsites at this 14,000-acre upstate park located along the beautiful Canopus Lake. Nearby hunting and fishing are also available with a state permit.

Price: \$19 a night per tent site

Getting there: From Grand Central Terminal, take Metro-North's Hudson Line to the Cold Spring station.

Arrange ahead of time for the eight-mile taxi ride to the campgrounds (about \$20). Visit

newyorkstateparks.reserveamerica.com for reservations. For a quick getaway

Croton Point Park

Just an hour's train ride north of the city, this Westchester County park offers cabin and tent camping on the Hudson River, along with hiking, picnicking and swimming facilities. Tour the historic wineries, thought to be the oldest in New York State, and the fun-for-all-ages Croton Point Nature Center.

Price: Six-person cabins range from \$55 to \$90 a night with a park pass, \$75 to \$120 without. Tent sites are \$30 a night with a park pass, \$50 without.

Getting there: From Grand Central Terminal, take Metro-North's Hudson Line to the Croton-Harmon station, which is about a half-mile walk to the park entrance. Visit westchestergov.com for reservations.

For big groups or a large family**Stone Tavern Farm**

Toss the kids (or a bunch of fun-loving friends) in a rented minivan and head three hours upstate to this mountain paradise in Roxbury, New York, which boasts horseback riding, hiking, paddleboating and ATV rides. Pitch a tent at one of just three campsites across 400 acres, or reserve the bunkhouse that sleeps 15—complete with a fire pit and large lounging and recreation area. Once you're settled, take a scenic ride on the historic Delaware & Ulster Railroad, or drive half an hour to Kaaterskill Falls, the highest waterfall in New York State.

Price: Tent camping is \$20 per tent per night; the bunkhouse is \$150 per night. Food and activities are available for an additional fee.

Getting there: Take Route 87 North to Route 28 West into the Catskill region; visit stonetavernfarm.com for detailed directions and reservations.

For adventure on the water**Kittatinny Canoes**

Pack your tent and your bathing suit for a day of rafting, canoeing, kayaking or tubing on the Delaware River (one of the cleanest waterways in the country) and a night camping on the riverfront in Barryville, New York. Choose from 350 campsites in both wooded and open-grass settings, and catch your own dinner in the stocked trout stream (just bring your own pole).

Price: Water-adventure trips range from \$25 to \$45 a day; two-day specials also available. Tent campsites are \$11 per night, plus \$13 per person.

Getting there: Take New Jersey Transit to Secaucus Junction and transfer to the Main Line/Bergen County Line to Port Jervis. Visit kittatinny.com or call 800-FLOAT-KC for reservations and to make pickup and drop-off arrangements.

For beach lovers**Fire Island National Seashore**

A limited number of free camping permits are available on a first-come, first-served basis in the Otis Pike High Dunes Wilderness area on Long Island's Fire Island, about a mile from civilization (including food and

bathrooms) but steps from the white sand beaches and sparkling ocean. If that's roughing it a bit too much, you can reserve a tent site near Fire Island's Watch Hill Visitor Center, where there's running water, grills, showers, food and even a tiki bar nighttime hangout. No cars are allowed on the island, but summertime Long Island Rail Road trains coordinate with the 20-minute Watch Hill ferry to make your trip quick and easy. **Price:** Wilderness camping is free upon availability; Watch Hill five-person tent sites are \$20 per night with a two-night minimum.

Getting there: Take the Long Island Rail Road Montauk Branch to the Patchogue station and catch a \$4 shuttle bus (or walk) to the ferry terminal. Visit nps.gov/fis for wilderness camping information and watchhillfi.com for a campground reservation form.

For an inner-city escape

Floyd Bennett Field

Manhattanites have always considered Brooklyn to be something of a wilderness, but it may still come as a surprise to learn that you can actually camp there—and we're not talking about sleeping on the sidewalk. This abandoned-airport-turned-national-park in Marine Park has room for about 100 campers, each site with a fire pit and picnic table—and not much else. (It may be the only place in New York City where holes in the ground are considered acceptable bathroom facilities.) It's a little slice of serenity...with bonus noise from JFK-bound planes that occasionally fly nearby!

Price: \$50 per campsite for a three-night stay.

Getting there: Take the 2 or 5 train (at rush hour) to Flatbush Avenue and transfer to the Rockaway Park-bound Q35 bus. Call 718-338-3799 for reservations.

Can't get away? Try these Urban campgrounds

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