



Winter may be here, but there's no reason to stay cooped up indoors – there's so many things to do close to home, including weekend getaways, hikes, ice skating, skateboarding, cultural events, and wine tastings. Recently, Discover Long Island and area businesses keyed us in on what's hot in cool climes – and you don't have to leave Nassau or Suffolk to have a wealth of cold weather fun.

Skates Are Great: What would winter be without ice skating? There are several indoor locations, but to truly get a feel for the season, bundle up and head out to one of Long Island's many outdoor ice skating rinks. up. The Town of Oyster Bay operates three, in Bethpage, Massapequa, and



Oil City Skatepark

Hilton Garden Inn in Riverhead and you'll receive luxury transportation to visit three select wineries, complimentary tastings at each location, a boxed lunch or a food voucher at a local vineyard, and a farm-to-table breakfast.

Other great options: If you're booking a stay with family or children, consider a hotel that includes a visit to local attractions such as **Spring Hill Suites'** "Aquarium Experience," which includes admission to **The Long Island Aquarium** in Riverhead; or **The Hampton Inn Garden City's** "Family Fun Package For Four."

Greenbelt Trail system.

Other options: Explore the 588-acre **Blydenburgh County Park** in Smithtown, with richly forested hills and valleys at the headwaters of The Nissequogue River. Explore the historic mill district featuring The 1798 "New Mill", the 1802 **Miller's House**, the c.1860 **Farm Cottage**, and the c.1820 **Blydenburgh Farmhouse**, which feature bridle paths and hiking trails. Or hike the massive 423-acre **Massapequa Preserve**, representing the largest single acquisition by Nassau County of a New York City watershed property. The southern section, from Merrick Road to Sunrise Highway, contains the most diverse and ecologically valuable lands. Freshwater swamps, marsh, stream, lake and sandy-bog area provide habitat for many rare and endangered Long Island plants. The longest hiking trail in Nassau County, The Nassau-Suffolk Greenbelt Trail, begins at Merrick Road and Ocean Avenue and continues through the length of the preserve, ending at Cold Spring

Your 2017 Cold Weather Guide: LI's Winter Fun Is Second To None

Syosset. Massapequa's outdoor rink is at Marjorie R. Post Community Park; Syosset's outdoor rink is located at Syosset-Woodbury Community Park in Woodbury. The Town of Oyster Bay's new **Ice Skating Center** is at Bethpage Community Park.

Several of the Island's villages and parks, including Port Jefferson Village, Greenport Village, Christopher Morley Park in Roslyn, Grant Park in Hewlett, Bethpage Community Park, Marjorie Post in Massapequa Park, and Syosset-Woodbury Park, welcome skaters of all levels to their outdoor rinks. Indoor rinks are located at Cantiague Park in Hicksville and Freeport Recreation Center, among other public and privately operated facilities.

If you're of the mindset to brave the cold by



Long Island Aquarium

public and privately operated facilities.

If you're of the mindset to brave the cold by skating indoors, **Oil City Skatepark** in Oceanside is in the midst of a very hot winter;



Port Jefferson Ice Skating

there's skating, BMX, a huge retail shop featuring scooters and much more, group lessons, money-saving packages, and more fun choices than we have room to list here. Learn all about it at oilcitysk8.com or call (516) 442-0702.

Pool Parties: Want to forget about winter and dive into a luxurious pool? Plan a "pool party weekend." Have a romantic getaway, enjoy the scenery, or just bask in the clean, heated water. You don't have to go far to find a hotel with an indoor pool and restaurant where you can shut out the idea of the cold and snow and relax in comfort; "getaway deals" are all the rage, making it a weekend to remember. Examples: Book a "Spa-jama Getaway" at **The Inn & Spa At East Wind** in Wading River that combines a facial, massage, a spa lunch, and a round of cocktails. Or consider a wine country getaway at **The**

"Family Fun Package For Four," including four tickets to **The Long Island Children's Museum.**

The Andrew Hotel in Great Neck has a special "Pampered Pet Package," which includes luxury accommodations for you and your pet, a special welcome pet amenity, complimentary dog walks, and turn-down service with treats for you and your pet.

Take A Hike: Regardless of the weather, there's plenty of opportunities to view Long Island's scenic beauty outdoors: **The NYS Office Of Parks, Recreation & Historic**

Preservation runs children's programs all winter. These indoor and outdoor programs include craft-making and nature education. If you want to head out on your own quiet adventure outdoors, you can explore the rare Dwarf Pines in The Pine Barren region; set out on a bird-watching tour, or discover the bluff-top hiking trails on the north end of The

Harbor.

Get Some Culture: If you're the type that doesn't want to be out in the cold, there are events still going on at our local museums: There's a Norman Rockwell-era exhibit at **The Heckscher Museum**; a "Long Island In The 60s" exhibit at **The Long Island Museum**, and a photography exhibit at **The Nassau Museum Of Art.** **Suds & Wines:** Many might not realize it, but area wineries, breweries and distilleries are open year-round for tastings and tours. Many feature live music during the winter months. Attend a "VIP Wine Maker For A Day Blending Session" at **Sannino Bella Vita Vineyard.** With this exclusive session, you and your guest will have the chance to learn how to blend a custom bottle of wine as you learn about life as a vintner.

What we've hit is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg; learn much more at the website discoverlongisland.com.

