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TravelSmart

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"I only know that summer sang in me." Edna St. Vincent Millay

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9 Protective Tips...

Cruise Ship Safety



In March, massive waves rocked the 732-cabin Louis Majesty off the coast of Spain, reminding us once again that ships can run into serious problems. The waves smashed windows in the ship's lounge area, leaving two dead and many injured. The ship had 1,930 people on board. Even New York's stodgy Staten Island Ferry managed to have a serious crash this past May. As the engine malfunctioned approaching the terminal, it smashed into a pier. The severe jolt injured over 35 people. (The same ferry's 2003 wreck killed 11 passengers.) And cruise ship passengers can run into problems as well. According to industry experts, every year more than 20 fall overboard.

Cruise ships are usually very safe, great fun and a fine way to see many places while unpacking just once. Nevertheless, they are a small enclosed city and just as when visiting New York, Rome or Barcelona, you should be prepared and use common sense.

Note: We recommend that prior to booking a cruise, you check the ship's cleanliness rating. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention regularly inspects and rates many international cruise ships, posting the updates at: www.cdc.gov/travel/cruiseships.htm. You'll find other useful information on the site.

Here are our **9 tips** for safe cruising...

1. Gather together important items. The nearly 1,600 people who were forced to leave the Greek *Sea Diamond*, had little time to prepare as the ship took on water

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THREE CHARLESTON RESTAURANTS

Non-profit fundraiser and Charleston (SC) resident, **J. Carter Hiestand** tells us about off-the-tourist-trail restaurants. Each is unique, reasonably priced and loved by the locals!

■ **Cru Café** (18 Pinckney St, ☎ 843-534-2434, www.crucafe.com). It's small, so make reservations; ask for a table on the porch. Run by renowned Le Cordon Bleu chef **John Zucker**. The fried calamari salad is America's best. Bread pudding with seasonal fruit a close second. Small plates from \$9.25; entrees from \$14. **Open** for lunch & dinner.

■ **Glass Onion** (1219 Savannah Hwy, ☎ 843-225-1717, www.ilovetheglassonion.com). Specializing in Southern comfort food — anything with catfish is wonderful. Daily specials dictated by season. All organic, all home-grown. Reservations taken for 8 or more. Weds is jazz night. **Open** for lunch, dinner & brunch.

■ **Gaulart and Malicet Café** (98 Broad St, ☎ 843-577-9797, www.fastandfrench.org). Authentic French menu in a casual atmosphere. Wonderful pâtés. Thurs night the specialty is fondues (\$15 incl soup and assorted breads). Scallops with veggies, \$14.80. The chocolate mousse cake will make you stand up and sing *La Marseillaise!* **Open** for bkfst (the best in Charleston), lunch & dinner.

Send your favorite travel tip to: TravelSmartNow@aol.com or ☎ 212-228-4769. If we publish your suggestion, we will send you a thank-you gift.

Baseball, Bumppo & Burgers...

Cooperstown, NY

special report

Our Checking In columnist, **Ward Morehouse III**, is just back from Cooperstown (in the northern foothills of the Catskill Mountains) where he got a feeling of what America was like before the Industrial Revolution. He also found natural beauty, idyllic lodging and fine dining in this town with only one stoplight and only 3½ hours from New York City and 4 hours from Boston.

Looking across the 9-mile long Lake Otsego from the sweeping front porch of the Cobblecote on the Lake inn, I could have been back in those early pioneer days. The rolling thickly-forested land directly across from the resort is protected from development and looks as it must have when James Fenimore Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans* was published in 1826. (The author was 1 year old when his father, Judge William Cooper, moved his family to the town that now bears his name in 1790.)

Those who love baseball will want to spend at least half a day at the **National Baseball Hall of Fame** (25 Main St, ☎ 888-HALL-OF-FAME, www.baseballhall.org)

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James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851) is best known for his five "Leatherstocking Tales" featuring frontiersman Natty Bumppo. Critics regard his novel "The Last of the Mohicans" as among his best. His father, a US Congressman, was concerned when his son was expelled from Yale for "pranks" but delighted in his success as a writer.



Cooperstown, NY *(cont'd from page 1)*

while children and adults alike will thoroughly enjoy **The Farmers' Museum** (5775 State Hwy 80, ☎ 888-547-1450) which overlooks the lake and recreates rural life in the 1840s. It has over 2 dozen authentic buildings, incl a tavern, doctor's office, homestead and pharmacy. There are also fascinating exhibits of 19th century games and a children's barnyard. The museum is also home to the Empire State Carousel, a hand-crafted merry-go-round celebrating New York state's history and culture which 1,000+ volunteers from across the state helped build.

Outdoor enthusiasts will make a beeline for the miles of hiking trails and swimming and boating activities and music aficionados will want to attend the world famous **Glimmerglass Opera** (☎ 607-547-2255, 1257, www.glimmerglass.org) in July and Aug. **Note:** It was James Fenimore Cooper who dubbed Lake Otsego as Lake Glimmerglass in his *Leatherstocking Tales*.



Cobblescote On The Lake

Whatever your particular interest the following accommodations and dining spots will enrich your visit. Book your room far in advance — group tours are numerous and inns often sell out. Many have weekend 2-night minimums from May-Oct. (High season extends beyond summer because of the gorgeous fall foliage.) Rates are approximate and frequently change.

WHERE TO SLEEP

Cobblescote on the Lake. This gracious 1915 waterfront villa, (6515 State Hwy 80, ☎ 607-437-1146, www.cobblescote.com) is 3 miles from downtown. The rate incl a huge bkfst, with sweet buns, eggs, pancakes and famed area-baked "Heidelberg Bread." Innkeeper **Peter Bissell**, who has operated Cobblescote since 1984, greets all guests personally. There



The Landmark Inn

are 2 singles and 2 one-bedroom suites in the main house and 2 singles in the carriage house. In July & Aug rates start at \$195 a night/dbl.

Cooperstown B&B. From this charming 1902 Victorian inn it's a short walk to Lake Otsego (88 Chestnut St, ☎ 607-547-2532, www.cooperstownbandb.com).

Rates range from \$90-\$180/dbl. It has a family suite large enough for 2 adults and 2 children. **TIP:** The Cooperstown Trolley stops in front and whisks visitors to the Farmers' Museum and other attractions.

Main Street B&B. Built in the late 1880s, the gingerbread-style inn (202 Main St, ☎ 607-547-9755, www.mainstreetbandb.info) is 2 blocks from the Baseball Hall of Fame. Inkeepers **Ron and Susan Streek** will take good care of you. Rates range from \$109-\$165.

The Otsego Resort Hotel, a magnificent grand hotel (60 Lake St, ☎ 800-348-6222, www.otesaga.com) reminded me of The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Spring (WV). Its lakeside front portico is supported by massive 30-ft columns where guests can enjoy vintage rocking chairs with views of endless blue water. Its next door 18-hole golf course make this one of the country's top golf resorts. The rooms are expensive for the area (from \$330/sgl in late Oct), but rates incl bkfst, dinner and afternoon tea.

Landmark Inn. This 1856 Italianate mansion (64 Chestnut St, ☎ 607-547-7225, www.landmarkinncooperstown.com) was carefully restored in 2005. Some of its 11 bedrooms have working fireplaces. Rooms start at \$185/dbl in Oct. It has its

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THE DOWNLOAD DIARY Yours For The Asking

SPECIAL SUMMER SPOTS

■ **ARIZONA: Experience Sedona Guide.** The town of the stunning Red Rocks and turquoise arches at McDonald's, has mild weather, extraordinary resorts, wild jeep tours, film festivals, concerns museums. See where movies featuring Robert De Niro, Glenn Ford, Clark Gable, Jimmy Stewart and John Wayne were shot. ☎ 800-288-7336, www.visitsedona.com.

■ **CALIFORNIA: Monterey Visitors Guide.** From the Bay Aquarium, Fisherman's Wharf and Cannery Row and Steinbeck land to Pebble Beach, Salinas Valley, Carmel-by-the-Sea, Big Sur and Del Rey Oaks, this guide covers it all. ☎ 877-MONTEREY, www.seemonterey.com.

■ **IDAHO: Lewis & Clark Historic Trail.** Trace the steps they traveled thru the Idaho wilderness. Excellent detailed map. Also request the *Official Idaho Travel Guide*. ☎ 800-VISIT-ID, www.visitidaho.org; click on "Free Publications."

■ **OHIO: Hocking Hills Visitors Guide.** SE Ohio's great getaway areas: camping, hiking, horseback riding, golf, antiques, rustic cabins, luxurious inns. Only 190 mi from Cleveland; 50 from Columbus. ☎ 800-HOCKING, www.1800hocking.com.

■ **TENNESSEE: Official Visitors Guide.** What to do, listen to and where to sleep and eat in "Music City." Incl info on Nashville's music — country, blues, jazz, contemporary Christian. ☎ 800-657-6910, www.nashvillecvb.com.

■ **WISCONSIN: Golf, Wineries & B&Bs.** The Badger State has some of the loveliest yet least expensive and least crowded golf courses, wineries and other places to vacation in the US. Getaway Guides: ☎ 800-432-8747, www.travelwisconsin.com.

The badger has been closely associated with Wisconsin since territorial days. It was declared the state animal in 1957.



Cooperstown, NY *(cont'd from previous page)*

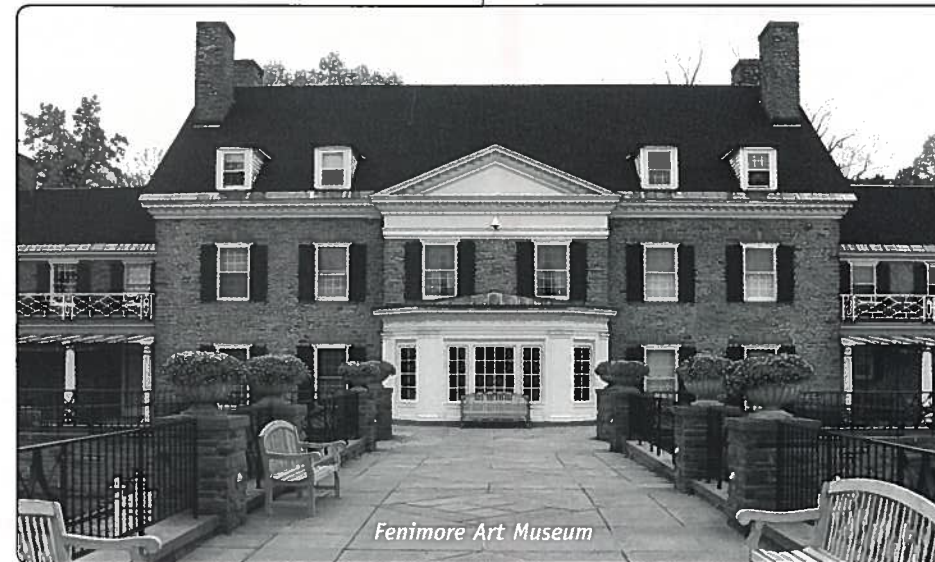
own 2-acre private park even though it's only 1 block from Main St.

WHERE TO DINE

My favorite for atmosphere and views is the outdoor terrace at the **Hawkeye Bar & Grill** in The Otsego Resort Hotel (see above). Moderately-priced good food with lunch from 11:30-3 and dinner from 5:30-9:30. An 18% gratuity is added to your bill.

Portabello's (6207 State Hwy 28, ☎ 866-876-5839, www.portabellosinflycreek.com) is in the charming hamlet of Fly Creek, 3 minutes from the Baseball Hall of Fame. Specializing in Mediterranean cuisine, the restaurant uses produce grown on its own farm. In warm weather, there's a sidewalk café. Entrees, which incl salad and rice or potatoes, start at \$18.95. There's also a Kids Menu.

TIP: While there, stop in at the wonderful Fly Creek General Store.



Fenimore Art Museum

Cooperstown Diner (136-1/2 Main St, ☎ 607-547-9201, www.cooperstowndiner.com). This historic, family-owned diner serves bkfst all day (1 egg with toast, only \$1.75). Earle and Janet Hayford say they have the "biggest burgers (from \$4.95) in the smallest diner." Lots of comfort food. Fri is Fish Fry Night; Sat is all you can eat Spaghetti Night. No reservations taken.

The Blue Mingo Grill at Sam Smith's Boatyard, 2½ miles north of Cooperstown on State Route 80 (☎ 607-547-7496, www.bluemingogrill.com), is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Meals are served on its lakeside Adirondack porch — great views. At lunch, try the fresh grilled fish sandwich. The creative international dinner cuisine has entrees from \$18.95. Lighter bar menu (\$4.95-\$11.95) and a nice Kids Menu.

MORE THINGS TO DO

Other area attractions apart from the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Farmers' Museum:

Hyde Hall (1527 County Highway 31, ☎ 607-547-5098, www.hydehall.org) is a 50-room mansion overlooking the lake. When it was constructed in 1817, it was said to be the largest mansion in the US. House tours from Mother's Day to Oct 31.

Fenimore Art Museum (5798 State Hwy 80, ☎ 888-547-1450, www.fenimoreartmuseum.org) has a renowned collection of American Indian Art as well as other American masterpieces.

Cooperstown & Charlotte Valley Railroad (☎ 607-432-2429, www.lrhs.com) in Oneonta (NY) has train rides, train robbery enactments and live blues. Contact for ever-changing schedule.



Illustration from the 1896 publication of "The Last of the Mohicans."

Museum, Fenimore Art Museum, Double-day Field, downtown Main Street shops and more. There are 3 parking lots as you approach Cooperstown from different directions. Park for free. Trolley is \$3 for adults; \$2 for kids under 12.

For Further Information

- **Cooperstown/Otsego County Tourism**, 242 Main St, Oneonta (NY) ☎ 607-643-0059 & ☎ 800-843-3394, www.thisiscooperstown.com.
- **Cooperstown Chamber of Commerce**, ☎ 607-547-9983, www.cooperstownchamber.org.
- **The Village Library of Cooperstown**, 22 Main St, ☎ 607-547 8344, www.villagelibraryofcooperstown.org. Open every day. Housed in an 1898 building, it has 22,000+ volumes. Great for a rainy day.
- **James Fenimore Cooper Society**, e-mail: jfcooper@stny.rr.com, http://external.oneonta.edu/cooper. Devoted to the author of 32 novels.

POPULAR "CHECKING IN" COLUMNS

Airport Down Time	May 2009
Asheville	Nov 2009
Brussels	Feb, Mar 2009
Bus Journeys	April 2009
Lewisburg (WV)	Jan 2009
London Hotels	Aug 2009
Manhattan's Chelsea	Jan 2010
Manhattan's Turtle Bay	Dec 2009
NY Theater Restaurants	June, July 2010
Restaurant Speak	Mar, April 2010