

# QUINN

Finger Lakes Media Kit

I Love New York: Winter Media Marketplace

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If you are interested in learning more about the below story angles or have specific requests for materials, please reach out the Finger Lakes team at Quinn PR: [FingerLakes@quinn.pr](mailto:FingerLakes@quinn.pr)

### **About the Finger Lakes**

The [Finger Lakes region](#) is comprised of eleven lakes spread across central New York, encompassing 9,000 plus square miles of outdoor adventures and bucolic scenery along with urban hotspots in the region's "gateways" of Rochester and Syracuse. Visitors will enjoy an abundance of picturesque lakeside retreats and an array of outdoor adventures, a myriad of culinary trails (from a cheese trail to beer trail), more than 130 world class vineyards, farm-to-table culinary delights, hands-on educational museums, and internationally acclaimed annual festivals. A four-hour car drive and Cider Bus ride or 45-minute flight from New York City, there are a number of convenient ways to access the region.

### **Current Story Angles to Consider**

**Under-the-Radar Ski Destinations:** In addition to being home to the highest vertical between the Rockies and the Adirondacks, the Finger Lakes region contains lesser-known ski mountains, trails lit up for night skiing, and even a slope side waffle house accessible only by ski and snowboard. New this year, [Bristol Mountain Ski Resort](#) will host three championship events, including the U.S. Aerials Freestyle Championships utilizing the newly constructed aerial jump. On New Year's Eve, the mountain resort will also be one the best spots from which to watch fireworks.

**Winter Getaways:** A new promotion called "[Hibernation](#)" features the Finger Lakes' Cayuga County and is redefining the cozy winter getaway and encouraging travelers to take winter head-on - part hibernation, part vacation and 100% good for the soul where you can eat, drink, and relax indoors and/or enjoy a few local activities in a cozy, small-town setting.

**Medieval Wassailing in the Name of Harvest:** Travelers and foodies alike can experience firsthand the medieval, winter ritual of "wassailing" in the apple orchards of the Finger Lakes. An ancient tradition beginning as a European ceremony of singing to orchard trees and making clashing noises to scare away evil spirits and bring about a healthy apple harvest, Finger Lakes cideries continue this tradition every January and invite tourists to bear witness! Travelers can join while apple trees with effigies symbolizing bad luck are ceremoniously burned, before picking up [pots and pans to clang away](#) the negative energy.

**Magical Christmas Movie-Immersion Events:** A holiday destination for movie-lovers, visitors to the Finger Lakes can stroll through Frank Capra's inspiration for Bedford Falls in the iconic *It's a Wonderful Life* at Seneca Falls' annual [It's a Wonderful Life Celebration](#) from December 7-9, which involves horse-drawn carriage rides, festive competitions, screenings of the movie, cast member appearances, and events at the [It's a Wonderful Life Museum](#). A short drive away, fans of *A Christmas Carol* can check out the charming lake town of Skaneateles, where [Dickens Christmas](#) occurs every weekend from Thanksgiving through Christmas. Guests can meet Charles Dickens, Queen Victoria and 50-plus characters from the novel as they roam through the snowy streets, jam out to live music at the lakeside gazebo, sample local foods, or take a horse-drawn wagon ride in 1842-era costumes on-loan.

**On the Christmas Market Bucket List:** Travelers looking to get a jumpstart on Christmas can attend the [Canandaigua Christkindl Market](#) in November, named the top Germany-inspired Christmas market in



all of North America! The [Elf School](#) for kids, the [Festival of Trees](#) auction and over 150, heated [vendor stands](#) for last-minute holiday shopping will make holiday dreams come true for the whole family. Travelers can also stop by mid-December's [Watkins Glen Village Christmas](#), where a day of Christmas parading, live music, food, art and cookie decorating is bookended by a stellar firework display on the pier overlooking frozen Seneca Lake.

**Where the Ice Fishers Go:** The Finger Lakes is a fisher's next lucky destination to angle and drop bait – in the cold of winter. Enthusiasts can choose from one of the most highly regarded spots for perch and walleye at [Honeoye Lake](#), Onanda Park on Canandaigua Lake and Enesmore Point on Owasco Lake.

**Sipping on Ice Wine:** Deemed the Napa Valley of the East, the Finger Lakes is renowned for its ice wine, a treat made by pressing the juice out of grapes that were left to freeze on the vine. Less than 20 minutes' drive from Rochester, [Casa Larga Vineyards and Winery](#) pours both Vidal Blanc and Muscat Ottonel ice wine daily and hosts the [New York Ice Wine & Culinary Festival](#) every February to celebrate the sweet dessert wine with samplings, infused menus, horse-drawn tours through the vineyard, seminars and chef cook-offs.

**Over-the-Top Light Shows:** Among the extraordinary electric displays in the Finger Lakes are the Raggi Christmas Light Show made up of [twelve houses and 100,000 lights](#) in Farmington, the Scott Home in Groton that asks visitors to [tune into 89.7 FM and sing along](#), and the [26-foot tall Keg Tree](#) lined with lights at the more than century-old Genesee Brewery. Over in Syracuse, one of the gateway cities to the Finger Lakes, the [Lights on the Lake](#) invites visitors to take a two-mile drive through the holiday light show in Onondaga Lake Park. With towering holiday displays, a larger-than-life land of Oz, a twinkling fantasy forest, Victorian villages and a variety of animated scenes, driving through the Lights on the Lake is a cherished Finger Lakes holiday tradition.

### **Looking Ahead**

#### **The New "100 Ways to Celebrate Women Empowerment" Trail:**

In time for 2020's 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote, the Finger Lakes region will celebrate its role as the birthplace of women's rights with its new "[100 Ways to Celebrate Women's Empowerment](#)" list. An ideal destination for those that want to be immersed in all things women's history, the Finger Lakes region has remained at the center of the movement since. Pioneering residents such as Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Joslyn Gage and Elizabeth Cady Stanton resided in the region and set the stage for our current climate in which a true female entrepreneurial spirit is alive and thriving. With this special guide in hand, visitors can start where it all began in Seneca Falls – home to [the first Women's Right Convention of 1848](#) – and stop by the new location of the National Women's Hall of Fame, the homes of trailblazers like Susan B. Anthony and Harriet Tubman, as well as the court house where Anthony was tried for the "crime" of voting. Other stops include [Café XIX](#) (an homage to the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment), demonstrations by [female glassblowers](#) at the esteemed Corning Museum of Glass, [all-female carpentry classes](#) at Hammerstone School, the Firelight Camps owned by [chef and cookbook author Emma Frisch](#), and the overnight Belva Lockwood Inn, former home of Ms. Lockwood – the [first woman to run for president](#).

### **More Winter Activities**

A truly year-round destination, the Finger Lakes still offers plenty of outdoor adventures and bucolic scenery during the less-crowded winter off-season. With easy access from major metropolitan hubs, the Finger Lakes encourages visitors to take full advantage of the winter environment with fully immersive activities, such as:

- ***Skiing, Snowboarding and Tubing:*** A great alternative to other, pricier locales, travelers can find stay and ski accommodations as low as \$140 per night when booked. There are five ski areas that embody the best qualities of traditional ski getaway hotspots, including major resorts with [condo-style suites](#) such as Greek Peak, [Bristol Mountain](#) with a slew of activities on the terrain, Hunt Hollow's [400-acre winter sports area](#) with countless trails, Toggenburg Mountain's [21 trails and slopes](#) for riders of all experience levels and Labrador Mountain's [17 lit trails for night skiing](#).
- ***Snowshoeing and Cross-Country Skiing:*** Many Finger Lakes hiking trails are converted to snowshoeing and cross-country trails for the season, and the Erie Canalway Trail System provides a snowshoe and ski pathway with multiple stops throughout the region. Ganondagan State Historic Site is one such example for travelers to check out.
- ***Ice Skating:*** With more than 40 skating facilities, guests can enjoy indoor arenas, as well as outdoor skating on park ponds such as Lily Pond at Rochester's Highland Park, or Taughannock Falls State Park close to the frozen waterfalls of Ithaca.
- ***Indoor Adventure:*** From Destiny USA's shopping and WonderWorks imagination labs to Roseland Bowl Family Fun Center's bowling, laser tag, bumper cars and more, the region offers a number of activities to try indoors while the weather is cold.
- ***A Taste of Summer:*** Those seeking a small taste of summer during their winter getaway can head to [Cascades Indoor Waterpark](#), where over 500 feet of water slides meet year-round, 84-degree temperatures.

### **Festivals & Events**

Taking advantage of the bountiful snow, ice and festive spirit, the Finger Lakes offers a plethora of winter festivals throughout the chillier months. From month-long celebrations to wine-centric revelries, travelers can experience:

#### **Canandaigua Christkindl Market**

*November 8<sup>th</sup> – November 10<sup>th</sup>*

*Canandaigua, NY*

Named the top Germany-inspired Christmas market in all of North America, the Canandaigua Christkindl Market hosts events for kids and adults alike. Youngsters can enroll in Elf School to learn how to be Santa's best helpers, taught by "elves" and the Christkindl Angel, and meet Santa himself for the perfect Christmas card photo. Adults will have access to auctioning for the best entry at the Festival of Trees and the over 150, heated vendor stands for last-minute holiday shopping.

#### **Dickens Christmas**

*November 29<sup>th</sup> - December 24<sup>th</sup>*

*Skaneateles, NY*

Every Saturday and Sunday from November 29<sup>th</sup> through December 24<sup>th</sup>, the town of Skaneateles transforms and transports visitors back to 1842, as Charles Dickens is gathering research for his soon-to-be-written classic, "A Christmas Carol." He and Queen Victoria journey to Skaneateles, where they meet such villagers as Scrooge, Tiny Tim, Fagin, Jacob Marley, and the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future. Highlights include The World's Smallest Christmas Parade, warm figgy pudding served at Mid-Lakes Navigation, period costumes at the Town Chamber that can be borrowed for free, Christmas carol sing-alongs, street performances of "A Christmas Carol," horse-drawn wagon rides and more.

#### **Annual Wassails**

*December – February*

*Various Locations*



Travelers and foodies can experience firsthand the medieval, winter ritual of “wassailing” in the apple orchards of the Finger Lakes. Wassailing was a European ceremony of singing to orchard trees and making clashing noises to scare away evil spirits and bring about a healthy apple harvest. Visitors can join in while apple trees with effigies symbolizing bad luck are ceremoniously burned, before picking up pots and pans to clang away the negative energy. Travelers can experience a wassail at Finger Lakes Cider House (Interlaken, NY in late December), Redbyrd Orchard Cider (Burdett, NY in mid-January) and Apple Country Spirits (Williamson, NY in late January).

### **Winter Light Festival**

*December 5<sup>th</sup> – December 15<sup>th</sup>*

*Ithaca, NY*

The Winter Lights Festival features a modern lights palace called “Prismatica” throughout the center of Downtown Ithaca. Prismatica is an interactive installation comprising 25 pivoting prisms more than six feet tall. Visitors will be able to view all the colors of the rainbow, touch the prisms, and hear bell music as they rotate them. After sunset, the enormous interactive kaleidoscope's illusory effects reach a crescendo. Events hosted at the festival range from chowder cook-offs and meets with Santa Clause, to gallery nights and prismatic silent disco dances.

### **Watkins Glen Village Christmas**

*December 13<sup>th</sup>*

*Watkins Glen, NY*

Watkins Glen hosts its famous Village Christmas, complete with a Christmas parade, food & art vendors, live music, cookie decorating, and a chance for kids to take a picture with Mr. & Mrs. Claus and their reindeer. The festival ends with an impressive firework display on the pier overlooking the frozen Seneca Lake.

### ***It's a Wonderful Life Festival***

*December 13<sup>th</sup> – December 15<sup>th</sup>*

*Seneca Falls, NY*

Known as the inspiration behind Bedford Falls, Seneca Falls, NY contains the *It's a Wonderful Life* Museum, which hosts an annual festival paying homage to the film. Visitors experience street appearances by re-enactors of the film's characters, as well as by four actors from the film itself (i.e. Zuzu, Janie, Tommy and young Violet Bick). Back at the museum, travelers can see photographs and memorabilia from the collection of Karolyn Grimes, who played “Zuzu” in the film.

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### **ICE Bar at the Harbor Hotel**

*February*

*Watkins Glen, NY*

The four diamond Harbor Hotel undergoes a complete winter transformation for this three-day charity event. Entire bars made of ice, complete with martini luges complement an evening of music, craft beer, local wine and food.



### **New York Ice Wine & Culinary Festival**

*February*

*Fairport, NY*

A sweet variety of wine, Ice Wine is created by picking grapes as they frost. The concentration of natural sugars creates a syrupy and delicious end product. The unique winter Ice Wine & Culinary Festival, hosted by Casa Larga Vineyards, celebrates the sweet dessert wines produced from grapes that have been left to freeze naturally on the vine.

### **Vintners and Valentines**

*Mid-February*

*Canandaigua, NY*

Finger Lakes Community College hosts a winemaker's dinner for oenophiles seeking the quintessential date night during travels. Guests will be hosted at each table by an expert on wine and gourmet food pairings, complete with a five-course meal prepared by the culinary arts students at the college.

### **Vintage Vines & Valentines**

*Mid-February*

*Naples, NY*

The village of Naples is taken over for a day of winter celebrations that includes wine tastings, food pairings, craft beer stops, art activities, live music, horse-and-wagon rides and the popular Grand Wedding Vow Renewal Ceremony for couples.

### **18<sup>th</sup> Annual Mardi Gras**

*February 22<sup>nd</sup> – February 23<sup>rd</sup>*

*Cayuga Lake Wine Trail*

Participants will receive a souvenir wine glass and taste the offerings of the 16 wineries of the Cayuga Lake Wine Trail. Taste food and wine from each of the 16 wineries on the trail, collecting Mardi Gras beads along the way. Visitors can take home recipes and complete a 16-clue scavenger hunt for a chance to win a mixed case of wine.

### **6<sup>th</sup> Annual Bacon on the Lakein**

*March 21<sup>st</sup> – March 22<sup>nd</sup>*

*Area of Cayuga Lake, NY*

Wine enthusiasts can take a gifted souvenir stemless wine glass along the Cayuga Wine Trail and sample bacon-centric food and wine pairings at each of the 16 wineries. At every winery, travelers can enter for a chance to win a barbeque themed gift basket featuring wine, sauces, and more.

## **Top Attractions**

### **The Strong National Museum of Play**

The world's only museum dedicated to play, The Strong National Museum of Play boasts a high-tech, state-of-the-art Toy Halls of Fame exhibit which houses the National Toy Hall of Fame recognizing iconic toys, such as Big Wheel and Monopoly, alongside the individuals who design, make and sell them such as Walt Disney, George Lucas, Jim Henson, LEGO and more. The 5,000 sq. ft. space includes interactives such as a 20-foot virtual bubble machine and 24-foot virtual playroom using Kinect technology. The museum also houses a beautiful butterfly garden for visitors to stroll through year-round.

<http://www.museumofplay.org/>



### **New York Kitchen**

Located in the heart of the Finger Lakes, New York Kitchen invites visitors to enjoy lunch or dinner in the casual dining atmosphere at the Upstairs Bistro; try a flight of beverages in the Tasting Room; discover a unique gift in the Gift Boutique; and watch a cooking demonstration in the Educational Theater. Opened in 2006, the non-profit center aims to educate, engage and excite visitors about the craft beverage, culinary and agriculture bounty of New York state. <https://www.nykitchen.com/>

### **George Eastman Museum**

The George Eastman Museum is the world's oldest museum dedicated to photography located on the estate of George Eastman, the founder of Kodak and pioneer of popular photography and motion picture film. The museum holds unparalleled collections—encompassing several million objects—in the fields of photography, cinema, and photographic and cinematographic technology, and photographically illustrated books. The institution is also a longtime leader in film preservation and photographic conservation. While there, visitors can explore three exhibitions on photography and cinema, stroll through George Eastman's historic mansion and gardens, join a docent tour and attend frequent talks by in-house experts and visiting artists and scholars. <https://www.eastman.org/>

### **Corning Museum of Glass**

The Corning Museum of Glass is home to the world's most comprehensive and celebrated collection of glass, with more than 40,000 objects reflecting 3500 years of glassmaking history. Included in its collection is the oldest known portrait in glass - that of King Amenhotep II, Pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty of Egypt. The museum now features a Contemporary Art + Design Wing in a state-of-the-art, "energy smart" building. <https://www.cmog.org/>

### **Activities at Destiny USA**

WonderWorks: An amusement park for the mind with over 100 interactive exhibits, a 4D theater, ropes challenge course, laser tag and more. WonderWorks is an amusement park that offers fun for all ages. [www.wonderworksonline.com/destiny/](http://www.wonderworksonline.com/destiny/)

Pole Position Raceway: Offering a true experience in the expanding sport of indoor karting, Pole Position Raceway combines first-class operations with state-of-the-art-technology. Experience enthusiasts of all ages can relish in the real head-to-head racing at Pole Position Raceway and discover why indoor karting is the fastest-growing sport in the United States. High-performance European karts are capable of 45 mph, sitting just one inch off the ground trying in the 1/4-mile course! [www.polepositionraceway.com/syracuse-ny/](http://www.polepositionraceway.com/syracuse-ny/)

### **Sweet Treat Trail**

The Sweet Treat Trail is all about the unique sweets and treats that Cayuga County has to offer. Whether it's honey or jam or homemade cookies made with locally grown and produced products, the trail has everything to satisfy travelers sweet tooth cravings. From north to south in Cayuga County it seems like all roads lead to yummy goodness! <https://www.tourcayuga.com/restaurants/trails-and-itineraries/finger-lakes-sweet-treat-trail/>

### **Museum of the Earth**

A part of the Paleontological Research Institution, the Museum of the Earth is an 8,000-square-foot permanent exhibition that takes visitors on a journey through 4.5 billion years of history, from Earth's origin to the present day. The institution cares for a collection of 2-3 million specimens (one of the 10 largest collections in the U.S.). [www.priweb.org](http://www.priweb.org)



### **The Rockwell Museum**

The only Smithsonian Affiliate in central New York, this hidden gem focuses on the story of the American experience through art. The museum's collection of western and Native American art remains one of the finest collections east of the Mississippi. The museum has a variety of wonderful interactive family-friendly activities from the popular Art Hunt to the Family Exploration Studio.

<https://rockwellmuseum.org/>

### **New Accommodation Developments**

**Esperanza Mansion: (Relaunched August 2019):** Located on a promontory with breathtaking views of Keuka Lake, the 1838 Esperanza Mansion was recently reimaged as a hotel, culinary and bridal destination. With rooms named after the various wines produced in the Finger Lakes, original period artwork and interior design decking the walls, the renovation includes a new speakeasy for a gentleman's spot or for brides and grooms seeking solace before and after the ceremony. Guests have access to accommodations both within the early 19<sup>th</sup> century structure as well as within a separate, modernized expansion building. <https://www.esperanza-mansion.com/>

**Hotel Canandaigua (Launching Summer 2020):** An addition to the Hilton Tapestry Collection, Hotel Canandaigua will be a completely new, mixed-used property with 109 guest rooms and over 40 condominiums for locals, who may opt in to rent out their residences to tourists during the Finger Lakes' off-peak season. Among the experiences available to guests are an outdoor tiki bar, classic American-style restaurant, lounge, a dedicated wine room hosting tastings of Finger Lakes wine, and meeting and event space taking up over 9,000 square feet. In wellness and water activities, the hotel will include a spa with four treatment rooms, a large fitness center, an outdoor pool with accompanying firepits and access for guests to Canandaigua Lake.

**The Lake House on Canandaigua (Launching August 2020):** Located on the former site of the Inn on the Lake, The Lake House on Canandaigua will be a completely new property rebuilt from the ground-up. Continuing the familial leadership spanning three generations, the property will boast 125 rooms with green energy technology, a world-class spa, a barn for hosting events and meetings, a boat dock for locals on Canandaigua Lake heading in for a bite or drink, and seamless connection to the neighboring [NY Kitchen](#), the Finger Lakes' premier stop for local ingredients, wine from among the 130-plus vineyards, and cooking show-style culinary classes. <https://lakehousecanandaigua.com/>

### **Notable New Restaurant Developments**

**South Hill Cider:** Located near the upper entrance to picturesque Buttermilk Falls State Park, South Hill Cider is owned by cidemaker and local, American Old-time musician Steve Selin, who welcomes visitors in to enjoy a gathering place with charming dishes, tastings and live entertainment.

<https://www.southhillcider.com/>

**REDD:** Michelin-starred chef Richard Reddington opened the doors on his newest project in Summer 2019, providing diners with farm-to-table cuisine, a large bar, and indoor and outdoor dining with a view of the colorful fall foliage. The Pittsford native and celebrity chef returns to the Finger Lakes after many successful years of running REDD and Redd Wood in Napa Valley, California.

<https://www.reddrochester.com/>





**Rella:** This newly-opened combination oyster and wine bar in Downtown Rochester serves fresh seafood daily shipped directly from Boston overnight. From the owner of the highly successful Rocco restaurant located only a couple doors down, specialties include tuna, lobster, rock shrimp, crab and half shell oysters. <https://www.instagram.com/rella181>

**Sapalta:** Located on the grounds of the Seneca-lakeside Plum Point Lodge, this brand-new restaurant named after one of the region's native plums is a farm-to-table gem that serves gourmet cuisine with a view. With the largest Sapalta plum orchard in New York, the restaurant incorporates house made plum sauce and plum jam, and locally sourced cheese, meats and alcohol from the region. After opening as a breakfast spot on Seneca Lake, the restaurant recently expanded to serve lunch and dinner. <http://sapalta.com/>

**Szechuan Opera:** Ideal for spice-loving foodies, this new international hot spot in Rochester, NY serves up traditional Szechuan dishes. The trendy interiors evoke the stylings of a Chinese opera house, complete with a rock fountain, stone bar, and masks decorating the walls. Along with the exotic Szechuan dishes such as pork in garlic chili sauce and hot and sour soup, the restaurant also offers traditional Chinese fare. <https://www.szechuanoperany.com/>