



ABOUT ACCESSIBLE NEW YORK

In July 2020, on the 30th anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), I LOVE NY debuted a new initiative, Accessible New York, designed to improve the travel planning experience for visitors with accessibility needs. Recognizing that anyone, regardless of physical limitations, abilities, or age should be able to enjoy New York's world-class attractions and events, the program was launched to extend an invitation to over 67 million American adult travelers with accessibility needs.

In an effort to help enhance and streamline the travel planning experience for those with accessibility needs, the Accessible New York program consists of a centralized hub on iloveny.com, which provides detailed accessibility information on over 130 visitor attractions and facilities. Information is searchable based on accessibility amenities or specific accommodations provided. Attraction accommodations can cover multiple accessibility needs including mobility, cognitive, hearing and visual impairments, and details on everything from entrances and restrooms to special programs and the best ways to experience activities. The hub also includes editorial pieces based on accessibility needs, as well as recommendations from popular travel blogger Cory Lee, who details his experiences as a wheelchair user.

New York State has a wealth of accessible destinations and the Accessible New York program not only highlights these amazing experiences but works to create a more positive travel planning experience for those with accessibility needs.

ACCESSIBLE NY HIGHLIGHTS

Below is a brief sampling of the numerous welcoming attractions in New York State for those with varying abilities. A full list of attractions that are a part of the Accessible NY program with detailed accessibility information can be found at:

www.iloveny.com/things-to-do/accessibility/

LEGOLAND New York Resort

Newly opened in 2020, LEGOLAND New York Resort caters to travelers with accessibility needs. Restaurants, show venues, shops and many of the rides and attractions are ADA accessible to guests using wheelchairs or who require additional services. The park also will provide accommodations for visual and hearing disabilities and for those who are not able to stand in a line for a long period of time.

Families who have young ones living with autism and/or various sensory disabilities can access quiet rooms to combat overstimulation and anxiety, and help children decompress with weighted blankets, dim lighting and tactile toys. Visitors may experience “social stories” that offer an illustrated, step-by-step walkthrough of every theme park ride and show. In addition, New York’s LEGOLAND Hotel offers complimentary noise-cancelling headphones, weighted blankets, squishy toys and LEGO building tables. Finally, specialized training equips team members with skills to interact with guests on the autism spectrum, as well as their families or caregivers.

The Autism Nature Trail at Letchworth State Park

Letchworth State Park has created a recreational Autism Nature Trail (The ANT) within the park that is designed to allow visitors with autism and other developmental disabilities to experience nature up close, explore new activities and develop skills. Visitors can spend time in several areas at the trail that are sensory friendly and provide a safe place to be immersed in nature.

Bethel Woods Center for the Arts

Bethel Woods Center for the Arts, located at the historic site of the 1969 Woodstock festival, has launched Sensory-Friendly Museum Days. Individuals of all ages with autism, complex developmental disabilities or sensory sensitivities are welcome to experience the main exhibit, gift shop and cafe during special early-morning hours before the museum opens to the general public.

Wild Center

Located in the Adirondacks, the Wild Center offers programs for visitors with accessibility needs to enjoy the nature park. Reserved guided tours are offered for the visually impaired and the entire Wild Walk is fully accessible, so guests do not need to miss out on any of the attractions or scenic vantage points. The main building and exhibits were developed using universal design, ensuring an experience that is accessible for everyone. Wheelchairs and walkers can be rented free of charge, electric mobility scooters are available and sensory days take place through the year.

The Strong National Museum of Play

The Rochester-based Strong Museum of Play welcomes guests of all abilities through accessible facilities, programs and resources. All entrances in the museum and most exhibits can accommodate wheelchairs (available free of charge), scooters, strollers and walkers. Families can experience facilities before the general public through its Sensory Friendly Sunday program. Designated quiet areas feature sensory-friendly toys, light and sound reduction, and extra visual safety signage. The first two floors of the museum offer “guest rests” for breaks and a chance to be in a quiet environment.

The Whitney Museum of American Art

Housing over 25,000 American art works, The Whitney Museum of American Art is one of the world's most iconic museums. For deaf or hard of hearing art lovers, the museum has a deaf educator on staff who leads monthly ASL tours. Afterwards, they can enjoy a complimentary wine and cheese reception together. In addition, guests may visit the Whitney Museum's ASL Vlog to learn about a number of American artists and the stories behind their artwork.

For more information on I LOVE Accessible New York please contact:

Sara Emmert

Director, Tourism Policy and Special Initiatives

518-292-5105

Sara.Emmert@esd.ny.gov

###