

CarLife

COLORFUL HISTORY

Fall foliage brings Lake George's vivid past to life

STORY & PHOTOS BY DON KLEIN

TOURING LAKE GEORGE, N.Y., IS LIKE GOING on a history-class field trip. Reminders of its past are everywhere. The region's records go back to the mid-1600s, when the lake, then called Lac du Saint-Sacrement, played an important role in fur trading with England and France. During the Seven Years War (1756-63), the 32-mile-long lake—renamed after King George II by the British in 1755—became a military asset with three forts. The once-peaceful region was now the venue for gruesome conflicts.

Eventually, everyone made nice, and by the late 1800s, the seeds of tourism had been sown. Logging was the main industry, but there were (and still are) enough trees to make the region a natural wonderland, especially when the foliage is at its peak. But the lake makes this place special, and as access became easier, vacationers began coming in droves.

They still do, and that's another reason fall is the perfect time to tour the Lake George region. You'll probably find the water too cold for swimming or waterskiing, but fall is the ideal season for pleasure boating, fishing, hiking, biking and golf. And, of course, driving. If scrambling up Prospect Mountain doesn't get you pumped, you're probably reading the wrong magazine.



THE LAKE GEORGE REGION

Located in north-central New York State and not far from Vermont, the Greater Lake George region includes the southern Adirondacks, Lake George, Queensbury/Glens Falls and the northern Saratoga areas. We recommend concentrating on the lake's southwestern shore. Before you go, check out www.visitlakegeorge.com.

WHERE TO STAY

The Sagamore
www.thesagamore.com
What kind of experience do you want? If you want to go high-end, Lake George is home to the Sagamore, one of the finest lake resorts in the United States. With a history extending more than 100 years, the majestic Sagamore is located on its own island and has been completely refurbished. It has a day spa, a choice of restaurants and activities ranging from tennis and golf to kayaking and fishing.

Lincoln Log Colony
www.lincolnlogcolony.com
On the other end of the spectrum, Lake George has a number of rustic cabin "colonies" evocative of the 1950s. One we recommend, the Lincoln Log Colony, has been in operation since 1948. The modest cabins are old-timey but clean. Places like this are hard to find these days.

O'Connor's Family Resort
www.oconnorscottages.com
Along the same lines is O'Connor's Family Resort,



Sun Kiss Ballooning



Bolton Beans



Lake George from Sagamore property

which has two dozen classic lakeside Adirondack cottages nestled among the pines. Throw in a 1955 DeSoto Fireflite sedan, and you have the perfect classic postcard.

WHERE TO EAT

The Lake George Chamber of Commerce lists more than 300 restaurants. We didn't try them all, but we did like the following.

Breakfast

Bolton Beans
(518) 644-3313
This funky little diner is about the size of a Chevrolet Suburban, so get there early. Park yourself at the counter, enjoy the excellent coffee, and order the "Adirondack Hungry Person" with eggs over easy.

Lunch

Son of a Sailor
www.sonofasailor.com
boltonlanding.com
Try the beer-battered

crawfish-tail meat followed by a build-a-burger and fried green tomatoes, all served up hot and tasty on the sunny deck.

Dinner

Expensive: **Sagamore**
www.thesagamore.com
If you're staying at the Sagamore and want a side order of jaw-dropping foliage view with your prosciutto-crust-ed white prawns, prime rib and Michele Chiarlo Barolo, simply head for the main dining room.

Moderate: Log Jam

www.logjamrestaurant.com
Some might remember the Seneca Lodge in Watkins Glen, where everyone would gather after the races. You'll find a similar log-cabin vibe here, with steaks, chops, lobster and other man food on the menu.

Bargain: **Docksider**
www.glenlakedocksider.com
Hungry for some local

flavor? This place should do the trick. Leave your titanium Black Card in the Bugatti Veyron.

WHERE TO GOLF

Top of the World
www.topoftheworldgolfresort.com
Given the spectacular views, the real challenge here is keeping your eye on the ball.

WHERE TO DRIVE

Prospect Mountain
www.visitlakegeorge.com
For a small fee, you can drive the Nordschleife. For a small fee, you can drive Prospect Mountain Veterans Memorial Highway. Coincidence? We think not. Pack your GoPro.

WHERE TO DIVE

Rich Morin's Pro Scuba Center
www.richmorinsproscubacenters.com

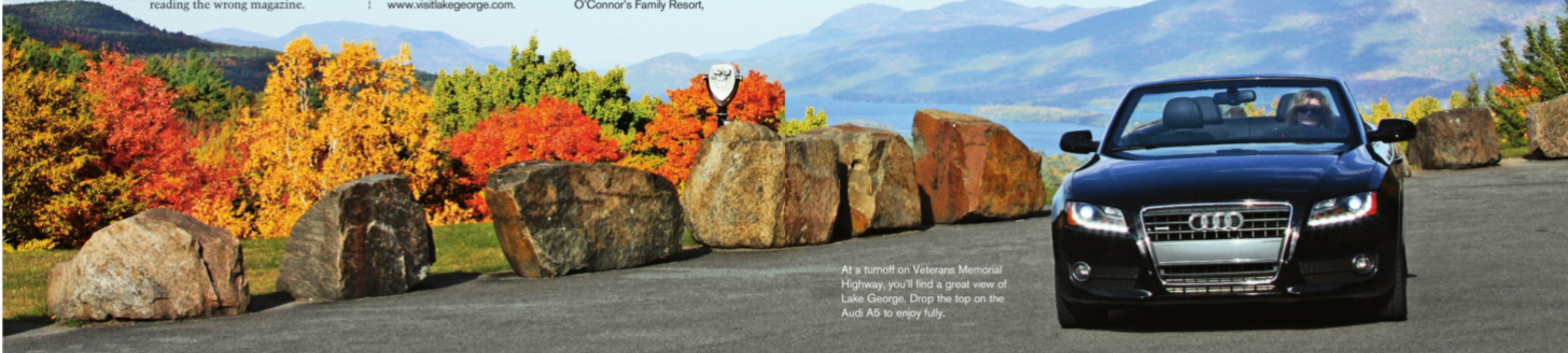
Remember those forts we mentioned? Some of their foundations are still there, and this is the only way to see them. Operates all year.

UP, UP AND AWAY

Sun Kiss Ballooning
www.sunkissballooning.com
Pilot-owner Todd Monahan provides an interesting narrative as you float above the hills. Try to book the sunset flight. This is definitely worth doing.

CAR-GUY ATTRACTION

Saratoga Automobile Museum
www.saratogaautomuseum.org
It's not technically in Lake George, but it's a great excuse to take a back-road side trip (Routes 9/32/39). The museum offers a great combination of permanent and rotating displays and an active calendar of excellent events. Tell 'em *Autoweek* sent you. 🚗



At a turnoff on Veterans Memorial Highway, you'll find a great view of Lake George. Drop the top on the Audi A5 to enjoy fully.