

## Hike-Bike-Explore Little Falls

# FIND YOUR PARK

**H**ead to Little Falls where big rocks, big locks, and lots of adventure await. Within a few miles, you can see the iconic Erie Canal, take a hike amidst incredible rock formations, cycle the Erie Canalway Trail, learn about the area's rich history, shop for antiques and unique artisan goods, and treat yourself to a nice meal or an ice cream cone.



## Start your trip here ▼

**D**espite the name, the falls here are not small. Surrounded by steep cliffs of ancient rock, the second largest waterfalls on the Mohawk River hampered navigation for centuries. The Western Inland Lock Navigation Company built the first canal and locks around the north side of Little Falls in 1795. When the Erie Canal was built in 1825, engineers designed a series of four locks to navigate around the south side of the falls. Today, the single, massive Lock 17 has replaced them and is the highest lock on the canal.

**How far?** Access Little Falls from NYS Thruway exit 29A (RTE-169); travel time is just over an hour from Syracuse or Albany. Lock 17 and Moss Island are located together, and you can drive, cycle or walk from there to Canal Place. Boaters can tie up at Little Falls Canal Harbor and Benton's Landing. Herkimer Home is 1.8 miles east from Lock 17 and three miles from Canal Place.

### Lock 17

*Entrance road is off Route 169 on the south side of the Mohawk River, Little Falls | (315) 823-0650*

See the Erie Canal in action at Lock 17. Constructed in 1915, Lock 17 lifts and lowers boats 40.5 feet. It was once the highest single lift lock in the world. The lock was built to help boats navigate around multiple drops and rapids that make up the "Little Falls" of the Mohawk River. In addition to its size, a heavy counterbalanced guillotine gate, hung from overhead chains, makes this lock unique. Walk from the base of the lock to see the towering stone walls of Lock 36, which operated from the 1840s until it was replaced by Lock 17.

### Moss Island National Natural Landmark

*Accessible by foot from Lock 17, off Route 169, or from Canal Place and Benton's Landing via Access Road, Little Falls*

Follow the network of trails from Lock 17 to explore the remarkable Moss Island. Part of an uplifted fault block of ancient igneous rock, Moss Island contains the best exposure in the eastern U.S. of potholes eroded about 13,000 years ago by melting glaciers. Prized by rock climbers and geologists alike, the island's cliffs and 40-foot deep glacial potholes are well worth a visit. The main trail is an easy hike that takes about an hour; suitable for children with supervision.



In partnership with the National Park Service

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## Canal Place

25 W Mill Street, Little Falls  
(315) 823-4309  
[www.littlefallsantiquecenter.com](http://www.littlefallsantiquecenter.com)

Visit Canal Place to see how sustained preservation and revitalization efforts have transformed a former manufacturing site into a vibrant destination. Canal Place centers around two massive stone mills dating to 1855 that sit at the junction of the Erie Canal and Mohawk River. The mills have been transformed from their manufacturing heyday and now house an expansive antiques center, boutique shops, and other businesses. Canal Place is also home to the Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts, as well as several restaurants. You can walk or cycle from here to Lock 17 and Moss Island National Natural Landmark. Canal Place received the Erie Canalway Heritage Award of Excellence in 2008 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## Get Active! ▼

Choose from these great options for active recreation in this area:

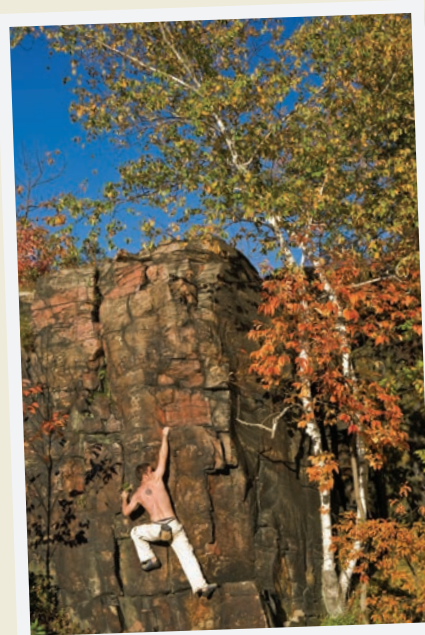
### Cycle or Walk the Erie Canalway Trail

Pick up the trail from Canal Harbor/Rotary Park (directions above) or from Lock 17. Parking is available at both locations. The paved trail between the two follows an old railroad bed through dramatic rock cuts and along the edge of the Little Falls gorge, high above the canal. Cycle east about 2 miles to Herkimer Home State Historic Site. You could make this your destination, or continue out and back as far as you like. Cycle another 2.5 miles east from Herkimer Home to reach a kiosk and picnic spot by the bridge over Castle Creek, which is another good destination/turning point.



### Paddle the Erie Canal

Rent a canoe or kayak or launch your own at **Little Falls Canal Harbor/Rotary Park**. The park offers a full range of boater services, including: a boat launch, overnight docking, electricity, water, showers, bathrooms, pump-outs, and area information. The Harbor is located on Southern Avenue. At the south end of the Route 167 bridge, turn onto Bellinger Street, which quickly becomes Southern Avenue. The Harbor is about 1/2 mile down, on the right.



### Rock Climb at Moss Island

Climbs for every ability. The island's main feature is a 30-40' high cliff on the southern edge of the island along the river. Find detailed climbing guides and information online.

### Take a Canal Cruise

Enjoy the water in Herkimer on a narrated tour and a trip through Lock 18. **Erie Canal Cruises:**  
[www.eriecanalcruises.com](http://www.eriecanalcruises.com)

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## Explore More ▼

### Herkimer Home State Historic Site

200 NY-169, Little Falls  
(315) 823-0398  
<https://parks.ny.gov>

Visit the 1764 Georgian-style mansion that was the home to courageous Revolutionary War hero General Nicholas Herkimer. You'll learn the story of Herkimer's battle against British-allied Loyalists, have an opportunity to tour the mansion, and enjoy strolling the expansive grounds. Stop in the visitor center to get oriented. The site is located on the Erie Canal/Mohawk River and Canalway Trail and has a floating dock, making it easy to visit from a boat or bike. House and visitor center open seasonally May through September; grounds open year-round.

### Herkimer Historic Four Corners

406 N Main Street, Herkimer  
(315) 866-6413  
[www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyhchs/museum.html](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyhchs/museum.html)

Located at the intersection of Church and North Main Streets in Herkimer are four historic sites of note: Herkimer County Historical Society and Suiter Museum building (1884), the old county Jail (1834), Herkimer County Courthouse (1873), and Herkimer Reformed Church (1834). Visit the historical society and museum to get oriented and see engaging exhibits.

## Best Bet Dining Options ▼

Canal Place and the City of Little Falls have a variety of dining options. You'll find sandwich shops, full-service restaurants, and ice cream close at hand.

## FIND YOUR PARK

### TOURISM INFORMATION

[www.iloveny.com](http://www.iloveny.com)

[www.visitherkimercounty.com](http://www.visitherkimercounty.com)

Find other adventures in the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor at [www.eriecanalway.org](http://www.eriecanalway.org)



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