

Erie Canal Bicentennial Itinerary in Cayuga County

Step back in time and discover how the Erie Canal shaped New York's history and helped fuel a growing nation. This one-day itinerary guides you through Cayuga County's canal-era landmarks, charming towns, and scenic byways. From historic murals and preserved canal locks to immersive museums and local cuisine, each stop reveals part of the story behind one of America's most transformative infrastructure projects. Whether you are a history enthusiast, a curious traveler, or simply looking to connect with the past with a full day of discovery and reflection.

Begin With Breakfast

Start your day with a hearty breakfast at **Potter's Farm to Fork** in Port Byron, a welcoming, community-focused restaurant serving American comfort food made from fresh, local ingredients. It's the perfect place to fuel up before exploring the Erie Canal's rich history across Cayuga County.

[1951 NY-31, Port Byron](#)

Montezuma Heritage Park

Next, head to Montezuma Heritage Park, a 160-acre site where nature and history meet. Explore walking and biking trails that wind past remnants of the old Erie Canal, including the striking 1849 Richmond Aqueduct, once the canal's second-largest water bridge. It's a peaceful place to take in both the landscape and the legacy of 19th-century canal engineering.

[8098 High St, Montezuma](#)

Note: The mural locations in this itinerary use Google Geographic 'Plus Codes' which do not require clicking from a digital document. Simply type the code into google search and the location will be highlighted on Google Maps.

While in Montezuma, take time to view two murals by local artist and canal historian Dawn Jordan. Her work brings Erie Canal stories to life through vivid imagery and historical detail.

Richmond Aqueduct: Now and Then - contrasts the aqueduct's 19th-century grandeur with its present-day remains.

Geo Plus Code: [278R+JH](#)

Exchange Hotel on the Erie Canal - recalls Montezuma's past as a lively stop for travelers and traders. Together, these murals add depth and color to your canal journey.

Geo Plus Code: [276W+67](#)

Center for Canal History

Visit the Samuel Center for Canal History, housed in a beautifully restored former church in Port Byron. Opened in 2022, the center showcases an impressive collection of maps, artifacts, and exhibits curated by the Canal Society of New York State. It's a compelling stop that brings the Erie Canal's legacy to life through history, education, and storytelling.

[38 Rochester Street Port Byron](#)

Lunch Break

Stop for lunch in Weedsport at **Lunkenheimer Craft Brewing Co.**, a family-run brewery known for its wood-fired pizzas and award-winning craft beer. Enjoy favorites like Margherita or mushroom pizza in their cozy taproom or on the outdoor patio—an ideal break before the next leg of your Erie Canal journey.

[8931 N Seneca St, Weedsport](#)

In Weedsport, pause to view another mural by artist Dawn Jordan.

Erie Canal – 1910 - a detailed scene from the canal's early 20th-century days. Set along Route 31, it features the now-vanished Brutus Street bridge and buildings that still stand today, offering a visual bridge between past and present.

Geo Plus Code: [3C2Q+53](#)

Old Brutus Historical Society

Step into Weedsport's past at the Old Brutus Historical Society, a volunteer-run museum housed in the former *Cayuga Chief* newspaper office. Explore exhibits like a canal boat cabin, one-room schoolhouse, and local artifacts that reflect life in a 19th-century canal town. It's a thoughtful stop for those curious about the community's canal-era roots.

[8943 North Seneca Street, Weedsport](#)

Erie Canal Heritage Park

End your journey at Erie Canal Heritage Park in Port Byron, home to Lock 52 and the restored Erie House Complex, including a tavern, mule barn, and blacksmith shop from 1895. Explore interactive exhibits, view the full-scale replica canal boat *Lois McClure*, and reflect on the canal's impact at this thoughtfully preserved site.

[1575 Rooker Dr, Port Byron](#)

In Port Byron, stop to view

Summer Afternoon on the Erie Canal - a mural by Dawn Jordan near the intersection of Routes 31 and 38. Inspired by archival photos, the scene imagines canal life around 1900, with steamboats, homes, and businesses evoking the lively spirit of a bygone era.

Geo Plus Code: [29MG+R7](#)

To wrap up a full and fun day consider a stop at **Muzzi's D'Italian Ice** for a cold sweet treat!

[2674 W Brutus St, Weedsport](#)

The Erie Canal, completed in 1825, transformed New York into a commercial powerhouse by connecting the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean. As you journey through Cayuga County, you've explored the legacy of this engineering marvel. From preserved canal locks and evocative murals to hands-on exhibits and hidden stories of canal-town life. Your day along the Erie Canal ends not just with a deeper understanding of the past, but with a renewed appreciation for the communities it helped shape.