

Hibernation: A cozy winter escape in Cayuga County

• Noah Howard, special to The Citizen.

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As the winter chill sets in, many people seek a reprieve from the cold with a cozy, restful getaway. Enter the concept of “Hibernation” — a hybrid of hibernation and vacation that focuses on slowing down, unwinding and embracing the winter season. This trend is all about escaping the hustle and bustle of everyday life to recharge in a tranquil, relaxing environment, surrounded by the beauty of winter.

Cayuga County, with its picturesque landscapes and welcoming accommodations, is the perfect place to embrace the art of Hibernation. Whether you're looking to unwind by a roaring fire, indulge in comfort food or enjoy scenic winter walks, the county offers a range of activities that allow you to embrace the quiet serenity of the season.

Start your Hibernation by booking a stay at one of Cayuga County's charming accommodations. For a truly unique experience, consider Abby's Tiny Homes in Aurora, where Hibernation guests receive a 10% discount and a complimentary welcome basket featuring your choice of local red or white wine from Constantia Winery. Prefer something more traditional? The Auburn Hilton Garden Inn offers modern comforts, while 34 State, a historic inn, combines boutique hotel luxuries with spacious private suites — perfect for unwinding after a day in the winter air. Whether you're savoring hot cocoa by the window or relaxing in cozy surroundings, your perfect winter retreat awaits.

Dining plays an important role in the Hibernation experience. Sweets by Sarah Bakery offers a delightful selection of homemade pastries, perfect for a cozy treat during your stay. For a satisfying meal, [Curley's Restaurant](#) serves hearty comfort food with a local flair, ensuring you feel right at home. If you're in the mood for a glass of wine, [Izzo's White Barn Winery](#)

provides a welcoming atmosphere to relax and enjoy its exceptional local wines, making it a great place to unwind after a day of winter exploration. The Finger Lakes region is renowned for its culinary scene, and during winter, local chefs focus on hearty dishes made with seasonal ingredients — imagine a bowl of hot soup followed by a rich entrée, winter vegetables and a decadent dessert to cap off the meal.

Throughout your Hibernation, you can indulge in a variety of local flavors, thanks to our partners offering unique experiences. Start your morning with a freshly made bagel or a warm bowl of soup from Auburn Bagel Co., a downtown favorite that's perfect for a cozy breakfast. For something a bit more adventurous, visit [Combgrown Mead](#), where you can enjoy a flight of their craft mead — mention "Hibernation" for a free sample of Owasco Starlight in its inviting tasting room. After a day of exploration in the picturesque Fair Haven area, including a visit to the [Sterling Nature Center](#) or [Fair Haven State Park](#), unwind with a delicious meal at [Turtle Cove Restaurant](#). Not only will you enjoy a great meal, but you'll also be treated to stunning views of Little Sodus Bay. If you're in the mood for a local brew, stop by [Prison City Brewing](#), where you can savor a light vanilla porter brewed just for the Hibernation season, crafted with Madagascar and Tahitian vanilla beans for a unique twist. Each of these spots provides a perfect way to embrace the comforting flavors of winter during your relaxing retreat.