Early Registration Extended for Cycling the Erie Canal

Bicyclists invited to join fully-supported and family-friendly bicycle tour across Upstate New York

ALBANY, NY – Spaces are still available on the 16th annual Cycling the Erie Canal, an eight-day, 400-mile bicycle tour from Buffalo to Albany along the legendary Erie Canal, scheduled for July 13-20, 2014. Early registration has been extended through June 11, and for riders with limited time, weekend options are offered from Buffalo to Pittsford on July 13-14 and Canajoharie to Albany on July 19-20.

Cycling the Erie Canal riders will experience one of the best trails in America as they pedal through historic canal villages and discover the small-town charm of Upstate New York. Along the way, canal historians and local experts will introduce participants to the people, places, and things that make the Erie Canal so unique and so important to the history of New York State and the nation. With three-quarters of the route off-road on the mostly-flat and traffic-free Canalway Trail, and the rest on rural roads with good shoulders, the tour offers unparalleled cycling for all ages and abilities.

Last year, Cycling the Erie Canal drew more than 500 riders, ages 4 through 89, from 36 states, four Canadian provinces, and Great Britain.

“Summer in New York State isn’t complete without a bike tour along the Erie Canal! Cycling the Erie Canal is truly a great ride and we are excited to share this beautiful and historic region of New York State with riders from across the country and around the world,” says Robin Dropkin, Executive Director of Parks & Trails New York, which organizes the tour.

Parks & Trails New York is a statewide nonprofit advocacy organization working to create a network of parks, trails greenways, and green spaces across the state for all to use and enjoy. Funds raised will help Parks & Trails New York close the gaps in the Canalway Trail and promote bicycling for sustainable tourism and economic development in Upstate New York. When complete, the 524-mile Canalway Trail will be the longest intra-state multi-use trail system in the country and a premier cycling destination.
The $675 fee for *Cycling the Erie Canal* includes: camping accommodations each evening; eight hearty breakfasts and six delicious dinners; two refreshment stops daily stocked with fruit, snacks and beverages; sag support and baggage transport; marked routes and daily cue sheets; entertainment and historical presentations; and guided tours of the canal, historic sites, museums, and other attractions. Cyclists under 18 enjoy a special half-price rate.

The New York State Canal Corporation, the agency charged with operating, maintaining and promoting New York's Canal System and the Canalway Trail, is the Premier State Sponsor of the *Cycling the Erie Canal*. The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor is the event’s Heritage Sponsor.

Additional sponsors of *Cycling the Erie Canal* include Champion Sponsor First Niagara Foundation, Leading Sponsors CSEA and Brookfield Renewable Energy Partners, Nalgene, and Wegmans.

Eleven tourism promotion agencies along the route are partners for the event: Visit Buffalo Niagara, Orleans County Tourism Agency, Wayne County Office of Tourism, VisitRochester, Seneca County Chamber of Commerce, Cayuga County Office of Tourism, Oneida County Tourism, Syracuse Convention & Visitors Bureau, Madison County Tourism, Montgomery County Business Development Center, and Albany County Convention & Visitors Bureau.

For further information on *Cycling the Erie Canal*, visit [www.ptny.org/canaltour](http://www.ptny.org/canaltour), e-mail eriecanaltour@ptny.org, or call 518-434-1583.

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