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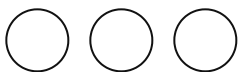
HUDSON VALLEY // TRAVEL

12 ways to make the most of a ski weekend in Windham

The Catskills adventure town also dabbles in wine, magic and Scandinavian stays

Julie Baumgardner

Dec. 3, 2021



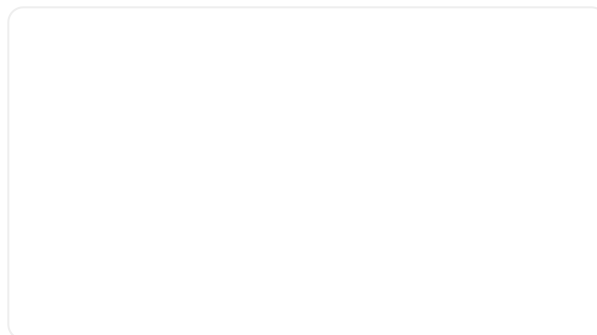


Eastwind has snowshoes it can lend guests to explore area trails like Windham Path.
Lawrence Braun

No doubt the name Windham immediately conjures skiing. After all, the town’s ski resort has become a staple for winter sports in the Hudson Valley.

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But while the Windham Mountain Resort put this Catskills town on the map, so to speak, skiing, snowboarding, and tubing aren't the only great things around here to warrant the journey. A flurry of new places to stay (many available for short-term rentals), has helped spur a thriving leisure scene that is more focused on the pre- and après ski.

The town of Windham itself is nestled on the northern ledge of the Catskills Escarpment, in view of Windham High Peak. It's one of the oldest towns in the region, with a historic Main Street and a mish-mash of 18th-, 19th- and 20th-century buildings. While there are cute boutiques, no one is coming here just to shop — this is an adventure town known as both the “Gem of the Catskills” and “Land in the Sky” for good reason.

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We've rounded up the sites, hikes, slopes and bites for a fun, fit day in Windham.

Getting there and getting started

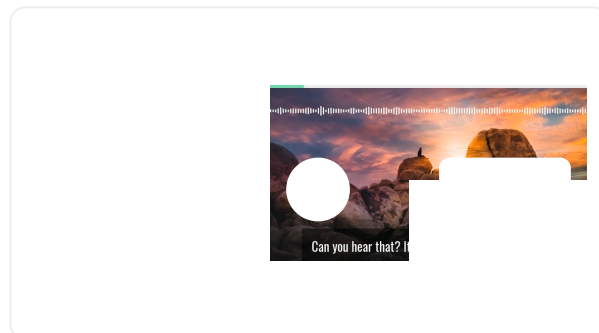


The tubing park is perfect for non-skiers or those looking for a more affordable way to have fun in the snow.

Windham Mountain

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From New York City, Windham is a 2 hour, 45 minute drive by car, or Trailways bus ride from Port Authority to the center of town. From Albany, Windham is an hour away by car.



To make sure you're getting the earliest start, you should probably be waking up in one of the Lushna cabins at **Eastwind** (5088 NY-23), modeled after Scandinavian traditions of living outdoors comfortably. Their two outdoor barrel saunas help extend the theme further. This resort is nestled into a mountain on the south side of Windham, and has become both a hotel destination for luxury seekers and a social spot for those in town.

A crop of very cozy-chic cottages and cabins have opened up recently that would be great alternatives: Saltbox Lodge, The Away Frame or the Millbrook Farmhouse.

After coffee and a bacon egg and cheese at **Higher Grounds** (61 NY Route 296) it's time for some outdoor fun.

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Choose your own winter adventure: Skiing, tubing, snowshoeing

Windham Mountain updates its trail openings and conditions daily via its online snow report. Typically all of the resort's 54 trails open by mid-December and January.

Windham Mountain

Windham Mountain announces its trail openings and ski conditions via its daily [online snow report](#). Currently, about a quarter of its 54 trails are open, recommended for more advanced skiers or snowboarders. As temperatures continue to drop, the resort further blankets the mountain with snow and opens more of its trails for all levels.

A day ski pass with Windham Mountain lift tickets and equipment rentals runs \$50 to \$145; ski and snowboard rentals are \$65.

For downhill action that doesn't involve skis, Windham also has a separate **tubing park** (*360 Route 12*), for all ages to shoot down a 650-foot slope on a canvas-covered inner tube. A conveyor belt will ferry you back up for as many rides as you can fit into a two-hour session. ([Check the site](#) to learn when the park opens and to make reservations in advance.)

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Not ready to hit the slopes? There's still plenty to explore. Head towards **Windham Path** (*4982 NY-23*), a lovely two-mile loop walk through and behind town, that leads back through Batavia Stream and across five bridges with great

views of the Catskills. The Path is part of an 8-part trail plan to make Windham more accessible by foot or bike and reduce the need for car traffic. It also happens to be a simply gorgeous all-season trail. (Eastwind lends out its snowshoes to guests; **Windham Mountain Sports** (*19 Resort Dr*) also sells them in adult and kid sizes.)

Choose your own retail adventure: A quick shop

Downtime is the best time

Make the most of your Hudson Valley weekend, every week with our newsletter.

Pop into town to scope out a few local shops that are worth exploring. **The Knitting Room** (*11111 NY-23*), a women-owned business, sells incredibly sought-after yards of yarns that consistently sell out, as well as offers classes and workshops for all things related, including darning one's socks. **Briars and Brambles** (*61 Route 296 & South St.*) is an excellent indie bookstore that offers

brainy respite for inquiring minds or a rescue if you forgot to bring reading material for the weekend. **European Craft Store** (6 Mill St.) feels like an old-world alpine village shop where rows of Polish pottery and local wood-carved statues offer a curious detour from an otherwise active day.

Before you leave downtown, don't forget to stop into **La Patisserie Normande** (5339 NY-23), a bake shop run by an actual Frenchman, with delicate pastries and quiches that are just what the midday calls for.

Après ski (whether or not you ski)

The Vineyard at Windham specializes in New York-made wines, from the Finger Lakes, North Fork, and their own vineyard.

The Vineyard at Windham

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It wouldn't be a trip to Windham without heading to **The Chicken Run** (5639 NY-23). Part smokehouse, family restaurant, biker bar, and live-music venue, the Chicken Run is both an Americana throwback and modern roadhouse.

Next, kick things up a notch at **The Vineyard at Windham** (11 Mt View Estates Rd). The winery grows its own grapes and produces its own bottles, and offers a tasting room experience that would be at home in the Finger Lakes or the North Fork (where they also source lots of the wines for sale). The tasting room, with expansive views of the vines, is a perfect place for sampling varietals of Riesling and Cabernet Francs, among New York State's more popular grapes, alongside cheese and charcuterie. Reservations required for parties up to 8 people; for larger groups, email for details.

Keep the wine flowing, and sit down to dinner at **The Windham Local** (5410 NY-23). As it's a public house, there's also live music and lively conversation where townies and tourists all congregate.

Finally, carve out time for some parlor magic tricks with **Magic on Main** (5428 NY-23). Sean Doolen, an attorney-turned-wizard, hosts intimate hour-long magic shows for 10 people at a time in his private library in a historic Main Street house.

Tickets are \$15 per person, and the raved-about show is recommended for ages 10 and up.

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Written By

Julie Baumgardner

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