

A Taste of History

The Saratoga area was originally known for its prime hunting grounds, which attracted the Mohawk tribes to the land. The Mohawks soon discovered the mineral waters bubbling from cracks in the earth. They believed the springs had special healing powers and protected their sacred waters.

Settlers began to move into the area in the 1700's. One of the more famous early visitors was Sir William Johnson, who later became New York's Superintendent of Indian Affairs.



By the mid 1800's, bathing in and drinking the mineral waters had become a popular health treatment. Several bathhouses were in operation in Saratoga Springs. Saratoga had become the seasonal "Watering Hole" for the rich and famous, and was referred to as "The Queen of Spas".

Private industry had discovered a use for the springs by 1880. Over 200 mineral wells were in operation in the area, mostly for the extraction of carbonic acid gas. The gas was used to carbonate the popular fountain sodas of the time. The extraction process inevitably ceased the flow of many springs. By 1908, the state of New York stepped in and passed anti-pumping legislation. The state reservation was formed soon after to protect the springs.

When Franklin Delano Roosevelt became governor in 1929, he made an urgent plea for the development of the Saratoga Reservation. In 1931, construction of the "New Spa" was initiated. By 1935, the buildings and landscape malls, modeled after the spas of Europe, were completed as they are preserved today. This new facility, the first major project finished under the New Deal, brought in individuals seeking medical treatment for heart and internal afflictions.



The formal opening of the New Spa took place on Friday, July 26th, 1935.

Saratoga's spas experienced their finest times between 1936 and 1950, the peak of which was 1946. In the 1960's, recreational uses of the park expanded to include a second swimming pool, picnic sites and a redesigned championship golf course. Saratoga Performing Arts Center was added in 1966. These amenities, including the mineral baths, are still available for use today.

Saratoga Spa State Park

MINERAL SPRINGS GUIDE



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

Mineral Springs Map



1. **State Seal:** This is a fresh, non-carbonated spring.
2. **Charlie:** This is actually Geyser water, one of three waters once bottled in the park.
3. **Orenda:** This spring is high in salt and potassium iodide.
4. **Island Spouter:** The mineral buildup under this spring is called tufa.
5. **Hayes:** Hayes has a high salt content. It tastes similar to the Island Spouter.
6. **State Seal**
7. **Polaris:** This spring contains less salt and carbonation than the other springs.
8. **#5:** Also called Tallulah, this is one of the milder springs in the park.
9. **Ferndell:** This is a fresh, non-carbonated spring.
10. **Karista:** Mud found near this spring was once used as a treatment for arthritis.
11. **Coesa:** One of three waters that was bottled and sold by the state, this spring spouts from Coesa Pond.
12. **Hathorn #3:** This is the park's most saline and mineral-rich spring.

What's In the Water?

Analysis of the Waters of Saratoga Spa
(Amounts shown in mg/l)

Element/Radical	SPRINGS							State Seal
	Hathorn #3	Hayes	Orenda	Lincoln	Polaris	Karista		
Sodium	2690	2610	2610	920	824	1610		8.8
Potassium	429	276	229	106	108	136		1
Lithium	40	12	<.050	<.050	4.7	11		<.050
Calcium	1160	894	866	477	465	489		60.9
Magnesium	454	259	265	183	121	184		7.33
Barium	28.2	9.53	17.4	5.45	5.14	9.43		.013
Strontium	23.8	9.37	13.8	5.11	4.24	7.62		.24
Ammonia	17.5	10.7	10.5	4.67	4.96	14.1		.11
Iron	4.38	2.4	2.38	7.68	1.65	4.45		<.08
Aluminum	.334	.308	.209	<.010	.141	.112		.100
Manganese	.129	.139	.102	.118	.120	.275		<.03
Calcium	1160	894	866	477	465	489		60.9
Chloride	6470	3640	4130	1180	1210	1970		12.4
Bromide	<.05	<.05	39	15	11.5	20		<.50
Silicon	3.5	4.4	4.5	25	8.4	5.5		5.0
Sulfate	2.45	2.19	4.07	5.87	3.38	3.25		14.4
Total Solids	17,000	10,000	9900	6,166	3,260	6400		240

Friends of
Saratoga Spa State Park

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