

You ain't afraid

of no ghosts?

Good, because our road trip of New York's most haunted sites isn't for the faint of heart. By *Katherine Alex Beaven*



Iron Island Museum

It's no wonder that this spot, once a church and a funeral home, is now an institution dedicated to all things supernatural. According to staffers, paranormal investigators (including the *Ghost Hunters* team) have captured voices, shadows, orbs of light and other evidence of lingering spirits. Keep your eyes peeled for the specter of military vet Edgar Zernicke, whose ashes went unclaimed in the basement for decades.

→ Buffalo, NY (ironislandmuseum.com). Tours \$5, overnight investigations \$105-\$175. 6hrs 40mins from NYC.



Rolling Hills Asylum

If you've ever longed to explore a decaying asylum with just a flashlight and an EVP meter, consider your prayers answered. These rooms are arrayed with hospital beds, ratty dolls and old medical equipment, all amplifying the eerie atmosphere. Make sure to visit the second floor of the east wing to see if the Shadow People Hallway lives up to its ominous name. (Fun fact: Appropriately, the former poor house was a shooting location for *American Horror Story: Asylum*.)

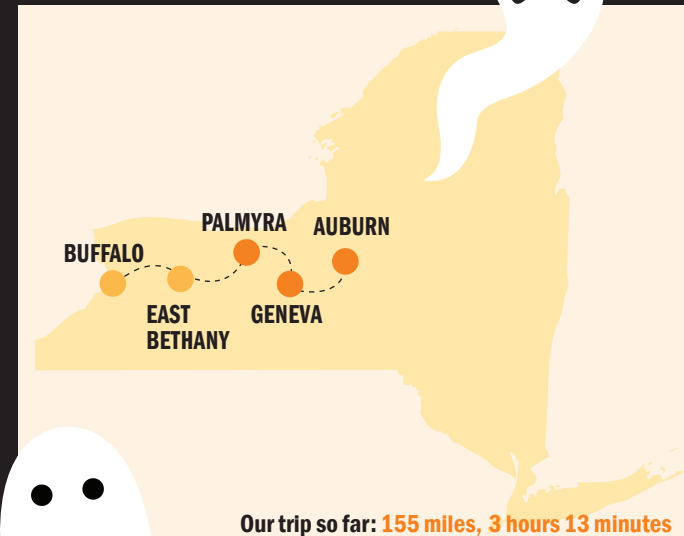
→ East Bethany, NY (rollinghillsasylum.com). Tours and self-guided ghost hunts \$20-\$55. 6hrs from NYC.



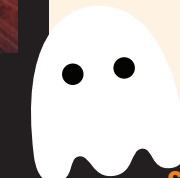
Palmyra Historical Museum

In 1964, six children and a young mother perished in a fire at this former three-residence property. Over the years, museumgoers have reported a host of creepy happenings: a smell of ash lingering in the basement, toys flying off the shelves, the sensation of having one's clothes or hair tugged, and even a phantom feline.

→ Palmyra, NY (historicpalmyra.com). Ghost tours by appointment only; from \$35. 5hrs 30mins from NYC.



Our trip so far: **155 miles, 3 hours 13 minutes**



Seward House Museum

This pre-Victorian gem, home to four generations of the influential Seward family, is also the site of two attempted murders. True-crime aficionados can ogle the 153-year-old, bloodstained sheets of a brutal but failed assassination attempt on the house's own William Seward (the secretary of state under President Lincoln), while museum-led tours and talks will prove that not all horror stories need ghosts to be creepy AF.

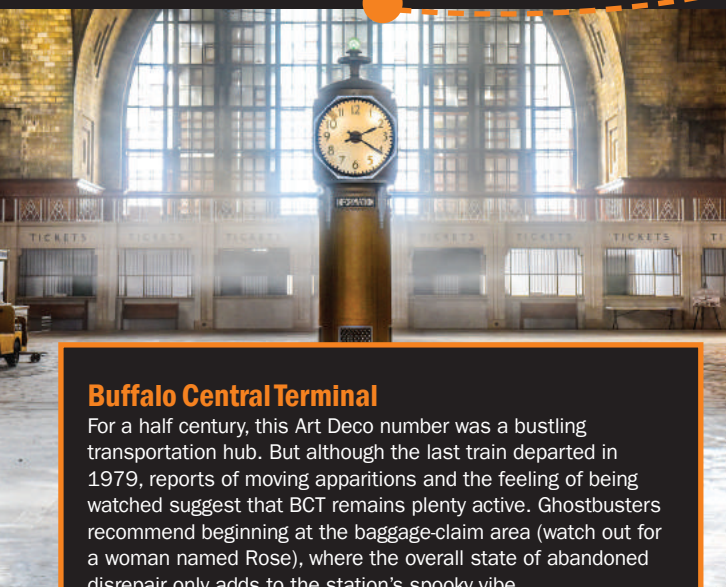
→ Auburn, NY (sewardhouse.org). Haunted history tours Oct 25-30; \$15. 4hrs 45mins from NYC.



Belhurst Castle and Winery

Trips to this vino-boastin' hotel in the Finger Lakes may involve more than one type of spirit. At the late-1800s Romanesque Revival structure, which over the decades has been a casino, a supper club and a Prohibition-era speakeasy, patrons have claimed to glimpse a forlorn woman in white who stands silently on the front lawn. According to legend, she was an Italian opera singer named Isabella who decamped to the castle with her lover, only to meet her demise when one of its tunnels collapsed on top of her.

→ Geneva, NY (belhurst.com). \$75 and up per night. 5hrs 15mins from NYC.



Buffalo Central Terminal

For a half century, this Art Deco number was a bustling transportation hub. But although the last train departed in 1979, reports of moving apparitions and the feeling of being watched suggest that BCT remains plenty active. Ghostbusters recommend beginning at the baggage-claim area (watch out for a woman named Rose), where the overall state of abandoned disrepair only adds to the station's spooky vibe.

→ Buffalo, NY (buffalocentralterminal.org). Paranormal investigations \$15. 6hrs 40mins from NYC.

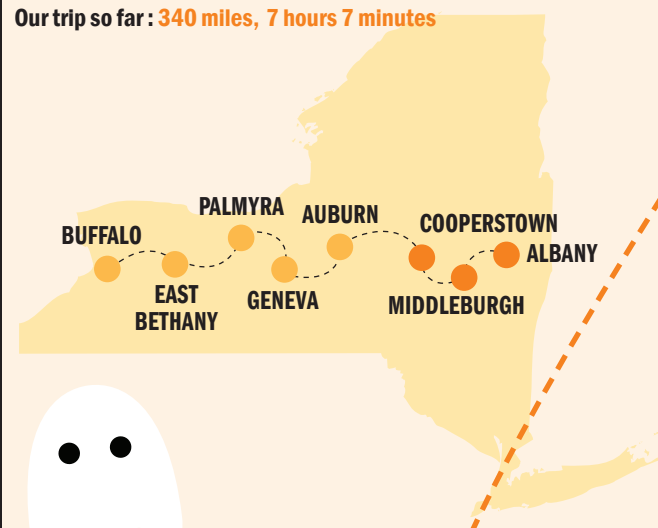
Our trip so far: **50 miles, 55 minutes**



PHOTOGRAPHS: TOP LEFT CENTER LEFT COURTESY AMITY PHOTOS; TOP RIGHT: MARK GUTMAN; BOTTOM LEFT: COURTESY BUFFALO CENTRAL TERMINAL / JOE CASO; BOTTOM RIGHT: COURTESY AMITY PHOTOS; COLLECTIONS OF THE SEWARD HOUSE MUSEUM/AUBURN NY

Haunted road trip

Our trip so far: **340 miles, 7 hours 7 minutes**



Hyde Hall

In 1817, George Clarke began the nearly two-decade process of building what was then the largest private residence in the U.S.—but he died within a year of its completion. However, some believe that even death hasn't kept Clarke from enjoying his dream house. More than 150 years of paranormal experiences have been documented, including apparitions, footsteps and sheets being pulled off beds. If that's not eerie enough, the property also features a detached family crypt, which you can experience for yourself during candlelit tours of the grounds on Friday and Saturday nights.

→ Cooperstown, NY (607-547-5098, hydehall.org). Candlelit ghost tours \$20. 4hrs from NYC.



Burn Brae Mansion

Once part of a large estate for the president of the Singer Sewing Company, this Victorian bed-and-breakfast has frightened more than a few greenhorns. Private ghost hunters and guests alike have sworn to seeing a woman pacing the halls and to hearing unexplained noises, footsteps and music from an unseen piano. Can't bear the thought of an overnight stay? The mansion's fall BYOB murder-mystery dinners serve suspense without as many spooks.

→ Glen Spey, NY (burnbraemansion.com). Murder-mystery dinners Sat 6, Dec 8 at 6pm; \$40. 2hrs 15mins from NYC.



New York State Capitol

Don't let the architectural splendor of this 119-year-old building fool you: Ghoulish reports describe flickering lights and shadowy figures, clocks mysteriously rewinding by eight minutes and a dutiful night watchman who still makes his rounds well after expiring in the structure's 1911 fire. During a gratis tour, see if you can spot the hidden devil carved into the wall by a disgruntled stonemason.

→ Albany, NY (ogs.ny.gov/ESP/tours.asp). Haunted tours through Nov 2; free with reservation. 2hrs 45mins from NYC.



PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY AMITY PHOTOS

Sleepy Hollow Cemetery

Want to hear the scandalous stories that certain cemetery residents wish they could have taken to their grave? Of course you do. During these weekend tours, kerosene lamps light the way as you're guided through town tales of murder-suicide, corruption, extortion and insanity that are so terrifying, they will leave you shaking among the tombstones. Psst: A handful of famous bodies lie beneath the soil, including "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" writer himself, Washington Irving.

→ Sleepy Hollow, NY (sleepyhollowcemetery.org, 914-631-0081). Murder and Mayhem tours \$25. 1hr 10mins from NYC.



PHOTOGRAPHS: TOP, LEFT, TOP RIGHT, COURTESY AMITY PHOTOS; BOTTOM, LEFT, SHUTTERSTOCK; CENTER, RIGHT, COURTESY SLEEPY HOLLOW CEMETERY



The total trip: **560 miles, 11 hours**



Dr. Best House & Medical Exhibit

The well-preserved doctor's home and office provide curious onlookers with a snapshot of life in the late 1800s. While that's cool and all, it's the collection of crude, mid-1600s medical instruments that will send shivers down your spine. Not only that, Dr. Best and his wife and son all died inside the house. Paranormal investigations have found soaring EVP levels along with the faint sounds of the Best Family and a tinkling piano.

→ Middleburgh, NY (drbesthouse.com). Paranormal investigation Oct 20 at 7pm; \$30. 3 hrs from NYC.



Craving more creepy fun? Find NYC's best Halloween events at timeout.com/nyhalloween.