

Hudson River Valley – Parks & Preserves: *Olana*

Man, in his nature, is a hobo. Since the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden of paradise we have been homeward bound to return to our Eden – our place of naked innocence, of nature’s abundant nourishment, of communion with our God.

Olana is the late-1800’s home and estate of renowned Hudson River School artist Frederic Church. Olana offers all the elements of the Hudson River School of art: the splendor of nature, the divinity of creation, and our belonging in the outdoors. Here all the styles of the Hudson River School are evident: the *sublime* thousand-acre viewshed preserved by Scenic Hudson, the *picturesque* pastures and carriage roads through purposefully planted stands of trees, and its *beautiful* home with garden and grassy lawn.



Olana – pond view

With its five miles of carriage roads, the only state parks in the Hudson River valley offering more are Minnewaska (33 miles) and Rockefeller (45 miles). On his 250-acre estate, Frederic Church built these roads, cleared pastures, planted thousands of trees, and created a 10-acre lake in order to – in his own words – “make more and better landscapes in this way than by tampering with canvas and paint in the studio.”

With all that is at Olana – house tour, movie theatre, bookstore, and extensive grounds – a visit to Olana is a full day. For lunch enroute are two authentic 1950’s diners: West Taghkanic Diner (on route 82 in Ancram) and, Martindale Chief Diner on Route 23 in Craryville. Both are just off the Taconic Parkway and are evident by their large, lit, American Indian marquee. For pick-your-own, Don Baker Farm adjoins the Olana property on Church Street (Route 14).

Olana is owned and operated by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, (nysparks.com/historic-sites/23/details.aspx) and is supported by The Olana Partnership (see olana.org for a calendar of events). The extensive adjoining views have been preserved by Scenic Hudson land conservation (scenichudson.org/parks/olanaviewshed), its land trust partners, and more than 20 private landowners.

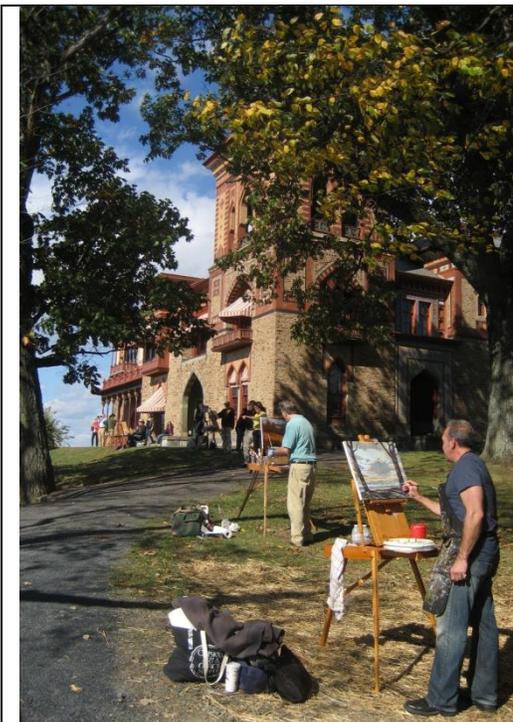
To be immersed in the beauty, culture, and nature of Olana, on Friday, May 1, I will be showing a two-hour primer on the Hudson River School of Art (paintings, painters, period and places) which includes a guided hike of the Olana grounds afterwards, and a guided tour of the Church residence. For information on this and similar events, please contact me at ReCreationMissions@gmail.com.



Olana – farm house



Olana – carriage road



artists at Olana



Olana map