

# Finger Lakes Study Tour 2016

Learning Opportunities  
for Norfolk County and Ontario's Southwest



# Thank you

*Special thanks to everyone who made the Finger Lakes Study Tour a success:*

*Andrew Tompkins, Finger Lakes Boating Museum  
Brandon Kane and Joe Romano, GreenStar Cooperative Market  
Chef Richard Larman  
Chris Iversen, Birkett Landing  
Chris Wright, Penn Yan  
Christine Peacock and staff, Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel  
Coleen Fabrizi, Corning's Gaffer District  
Debra Loehnert and staff, Three Birds Restaurant  
Frédéric Bouché, Ports of New York  
Harvey the Driver, Attridge Transportation Inc.  
Jeremy Coffey and staff, Hermann Wiemer Vineyards  
Joanne Wolnik and Jen Moore, Southwest Ontario Tourism Corp.  
Joe Myer, Myer Farm Distillers  
John Johnson, The Technology Farm  
Karen Taft, Amanda Vinson and staff, New York State Wine & Culinary Centre  
Katharine Korona and staff, Three Brothers Winery  
Kris Pearson and Sandy Murrin, Arts Centre Yates County  
Lauren Lowman and staff, Coltivare  
Lorin Hostetler, Shtayburne Farm  
Patrick Gaffney and John Jensen, Greater Hammondsport Chamber of Commerce  
Phyllisa DeSarno, JoAnn Cornish and Annie Sherman, City of Ithaca  
Sage Gerling, City of Geneva  
Steve Griffin, Finger Lakes Economic Development Center  
Suzan Richards, Susan Wolff, George and Carolyn Schaeffer, Milly's Pantry  
Trevor Davis and staff, Rooster Fish Brewery  
Zach and Laura Cutlip, Winewagen Tours*

*Front cover photo of the group was taken by our driver, Harvey, at the New York State Wine & Culinary Center, Canandaigua NY*

*Photographs in the report were contributed by Gail Bouw, Fritz Enzlin, Tracy Haskett and Clark Hoskin*

## About the tour

The Finger Lakes Study Tour was first held in March 2015, conceived by Norfolk County staff and organized in cooperation with the Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporation (SWOTC). It was a great success. For its efforts and the outcomes realized by participants, Norfolk County won the award for Cross Border Cooperation and Regionalism from the Economic Developer's Council of Ontario.

Participants asked for another Finger Lakes tour to be organized for spring 2016. Of the total group of 47 registered participants in 2016, 30 were new and 17 were repeat participants from the first year.

Norfolk County collected the registration fees from each participant (\$210, plus HST and handling), which was forwarded to SWOTC to offset the overall cost of the tour. The participants' contributions and SWOTC partnership funding paid for the cost of the bus, hotel accommodation and meals. Norfolk County staff made contact with the stops, set the schedule and guided the tour.



Tour guide Clark and driver Harvey kept us on time

The group assembled at the Norfolk County Fairgrounds to board the coach bus that would be our rolling home for April 4-5, 2016. Thanks to the Norfolk County Fair & Horse Show for allowing us to use part of their parking lot for the two days.

As a thank you, each new host along the route received a copy of the Norfolk County Cookbook. Repeat hosts received a bag of Norfolk County food products. Thanks to SWOTC for their support on this event. With the participation of the many businesspeople, farmers, chefs and other individuals who joined the tour, and the assistance of our many gracious and generous hosts along the route, the Finger Lakes Study Tour was once again a success.

The following report, based on a survey of those who attended, summarizes the learning moments that participants experienced in the Finger Lakes.

Clark Hoskin  
Manager, Tourism & Economic Development  
Norfolk County

# 10 Learning Moments

Here are just a few of the ideas and concepts the group learned during the Finger Lakes Study Tour:

1. **Enabling Neighbourhood projects:** The city of Geneva operates a “center for neighbourhood initiatives” that encourages and supports projects and volunteers that revitalize all parts of the city. Musical porch parties and concerts in the cemetery engage residents and get them communicating and working together.

2. **Upselling second-floor apartments:** Chris Wright in Penn Yan upgraded his second-floor apartment in the downtown core and listed it as overnight tourist accommodation on Air BnB. He’s now earning \$300 a night for an apartment that used to take in \$500 a month.



Fritz explores an upstairs apartment in Penn Yan converted to an AirBnB property

3. **Story-telling for Business:** Telling your story is the most important thing you can do when you are operating a business whose target market is consumers. Ports of New York in Ithaca is a small business but offers a powerful, memorable experience because the owner narrates his family’s story so well.
4. **Social Enterprise:** Social enterprises can address community needs by raising money from tourists and consumers. Milly’s Pantry in Penn Yan and the GreenStar Coop in Ithaca are great examples of non-profit organizations that rely on income from one stream of business to subsidize the costs of a social need in the community.
5. **Collaboration and Community Mindfulness:** Collaboration is everything – there is no “them”, there is only “us”. It was clear in most communities – Corning being a good model – that work got done when people rowed in the same direction, especially if a major corporate sponsor is on board. There was acknowledgment that all players in the community have a role. When everyone respects one another, a lot gets accomplished. As one participant put it: “I love that every place we went was community minded.” This kind of collaboration enabled the ‘Race for Space’ program in Geneva, where entrepreneurs competed for a discounted downtown storefront lease.

6. **Multiple Revenue Streams:** Several stops showcased the many ways multiple revenue sources were maximized. Three Brothers Winery tapped into merchandise, featuring lots of clothing, trinkets and souvenirs. Arts Centre of Yates County rents out a lakeside property to artists and their students. Shtayburne Farm built a cheese factory and shop so the next generation could move back home to the farm. The Make Your Own Glass experience at the Corning Museum of Glass generates \$1.5 million in revenue annually.
7. **Tax Incentives:** Yates County's Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) program offers an average of 68% property tax abatement over 14 years on a business capital investment or job enabling project for commercial, industrial, manufacturing and service oriented firms. For retail and destination tourism firms, the average percentage is 60% over 10 years.
8. **Regional Support, Local Direction, Big Dollars:** Numerous times during the trip we were reminded that New York State has a healthy regional economic development grant system in place. Not only do the grants often benefit private-sector projects, but they are large in size and utilize direction from local and regional stakeholders. That said, local communities didn't wait for the white knight to charge in on his horse. For example, the group was surprised at how much emphasis the Gaffer District of Corning puts on making its storefronts and windows look good. That level of dedication takes financial commitment.



Retail window promoting 'Shop Small' in Corning

9. **Tolerance for Risk and Failure:** The incubator program at The Tech Farm highlighted how risky it is for an entrepreneur to develop a product for the food industry. Investors and supporters of such new businesses must be patient and tolerant. There is a high probability of failure in this sector, which seems to be tolerated more often here.
10. **Paradigm Shift:** From an Ontario perspective, many ideas and ventures along the route were perceived to be "colouring outside the lines" or "bending the rules". The fact is that New York legislation appears to enable innovation to take place. Examples include the Farm Distillery Act, which lets farmers like the Myer Family start a small-batch distillery and tasting room.

# Participants' Impressions Overall



The following comments were provided by participants on the tour when asked to provide feedback on the experience, overall:

***“Winewagen, Chocolate Trail, Window dressers, Porch bands, apartments downtown, street sign toppers. KISS - keep it simple, seriously!!!!”***

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*“It was certainly inspiring to see the activity and development that is underway in these smaller communities to make better use of underutilized spaces and buildings. Ideas that we can potentially use in our own smaller communities. Great networking opportunity.”*

***“It affirmed philosophies already in place, and woke me up from complacency. Confirming the path we're already on.”***

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*“From my perspective it was great to learn how collaborative each community is, and the buy-in from private sector, local government and State government to support communities not very different from the one I work in or grew up in.”*

***“I loved that every place we went is very community minded.”***

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*"I am always so impressed with meeting the tourism and economic development folks - their passion is admirable!"*

***"How these communities are trying to build back up and revamp their businesses, and real estate ventures."***

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*"We also need to work more closely with the Chambers, BIAs, and other groups (Fanshawe, Grand Erie) to make sure we're not missing out on some new opportunity ... and to continue to explore avenues of funding on the Provincial and Federal levels that could enhance any of these projects/programming/ideas."*

***"All stops were interesting and worthwhile, even if some will not directly apply to our business or community; it is invaluable to be aware of what other areas are doing."***

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*"I am an artist and educator and I strive in my own work to use the three Cs - cooperation, collaboration and communication not only with people but with nature. I found that nature was played down as was the inclusion of art in spaces. If the guiding concept included 'the well-being of all' there would be more emphasis on the presence and effect of flora, fauna and arts."*

***"How many small towns have the same economic problems and how each are attacking the problem in very creative ways. Such wonderful progress in many small Finger Lake regions."***

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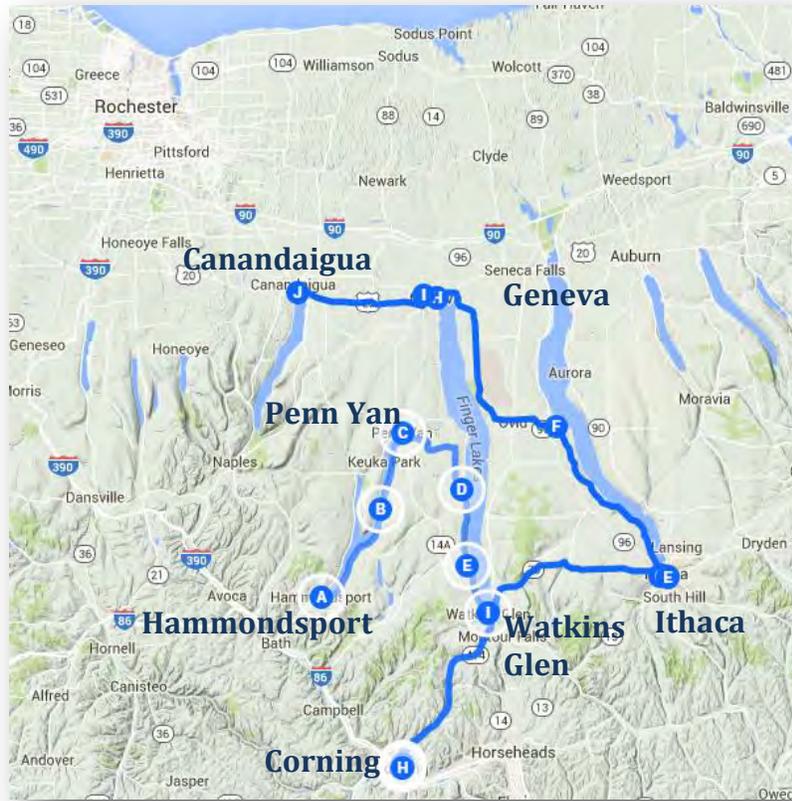
## **Finger Lakes**

Finger Lakes is one of ten regions defined by the New York State Department of Economic Development. It includes 11 lakes which were originally a series of northward flowing streams widened and deepened by the Laurentide Ice Sheet glaciers moving southward from Hudson's Bay two million years ago. This area was the central part of the Iroquois homeland, including the tribes of Seneca, Cayuga, Tuscarora, Onondaga, Oneida and Mohawk. The First Nations of this region were attacked by the Sullivan Expedition of 1779 during the American Revolutionary War and many died or moved.

## **Key Observations**

In the pages of this report, we highlight not the linear progression of our tour, but summarize the key learning moments uncovered at each stop. We start with the stops considered most valuable by participants, according to the survey.

# Tour Stops



**Total Distance Covered: 881 km**

## Day 1 - 456 km

- A Hammondsport
- Finger Lakes Boating Museum
- B Sunny Point (ACYC)
- C Milly's Pantry, Penn Yan
- Walking Tour of Penn Yan
- D Hermann J. Wiemer Vineyards
- E Shtayburne Farms
- H Gaffer District, Corning
- Three Birds Restaurant
- I Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel
- Rooster Fish Brewing

## Day 2 – 425 km

- I Leave Watkins Glen
- E Green Star Cooperative Market
- Ports of New York
- Ithaca Commons
- Coltivare Restaurant
- F Myer Farms Distillers
- H Three Brothers Winery
- I Winewagen Tours
- Geneva Neighbourhood Tour
- Tech Farm Incubator
- J NYS Wine & Culinary Center

# Walking Tour of Penn Yan



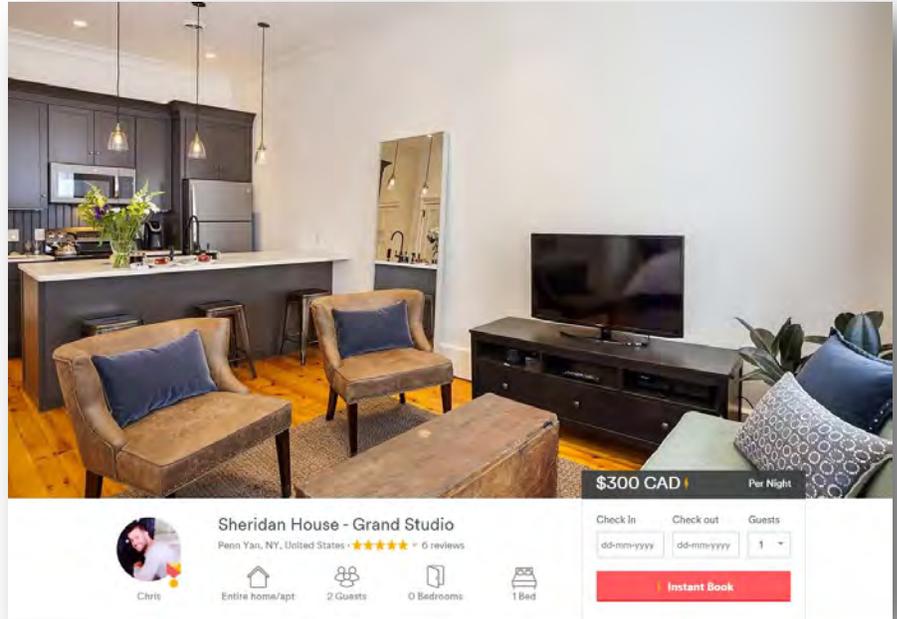
## Key Observations

- Second-floor apartments conversions into higher revenue overnight tourist accommodation
- Understanding the assets of the community and leveraging them
- Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) program helps make projects happen

Steve Griffin of the Finger Lakes Economic Development Center ([fingerlakesedc.com](http://fingerlakesedc.com)) led the walking tour of Penn Yan (pop. 5,200). His organization is the sole economic development agency responsible for Yates County (pop. 25,000).

Our first stop was Chris Wright's second-floor apartments, which he renovated (see Air BnB listing on next page) with assistance from the town's façade improvement program. The 800-square-foot two-bedroom apartment is now advertised as tourist accommodation. Chris can now rent the space out for \$300 per night to tourists, as opposed to \$400 per month to low-income tenants. One tour participant would later write that the key take-away for them was "how important it is to have lived-in downtowns."

Next stop was Birkett Landing (birkettlanding.com), a project by developer Chris Iversen. The former historic industrial building has been gutted and renovated into a mixed-use development containing 13 residential market-rate apartments and about 4,600 square feet of commercial space.



The \$6-million project received a \$2.2-million Restore New York grant, \$1.7 million in Historic Tax Credit equity purchased by First Niagara Bank, and a 10-year PILOT agreement with the Finger Lakes Economic Development Center.

The PILOT (Payment-in-Lieu-Of-Tax) program represents significant reductions in real property taxes paid by a company over a 10 to 14 year period. The tax abatement is inclusive of all real property taxes including education taxes but does not abate minimal locally levied municipal fees. The average property tax abatement over 14 years on a business capital investment or job enabling project is 68% for commercial, industrial, manufacturing and service oriented firms. For retail and destination tourism firms, the average percentage is 60% over 10 years.



Chairs made out of wine barrels

The Community Preservation Corporation (CPC) also provided a \$2.7-million construction loan for the purchase and rehabilitation of the project, along with a \$1.3-million permanent loan, which will be 100% insured by New York's mortgage agency. The project also received a permanent loan commitment from

the Canandaigua National Bank for \$1.3 million as a backup to CPC's permanent loan.

One of the commercial units in the canal-side building is home to the new Water Street Wine Bar. The bar was not open on the day we toured, but Chris let us look inside. The owner decorated the wine bar with special touches, such as chairs made from wine barrels (see photo, page 12). The wine bar has proven to be a popular tourist stop for Penn Yan. It has already received 40+ reviews on TripAdvisor with an average rating of 4.5 stars out of 5.

Last year, Steve Griffin showed us the site of the proposed 72-room Hampton Inn on the waterfront (photo at right), that was given planning approval in March 2015 and site plan approval two months later.

Groundbreaking occurred in May 2015 on this four-storey hotel, which includes meeting space, lakefront patio bar and indoor pool. This is another project spearheaded by Chris Iverson and will create 25 new jobs. It received a \$750,000 grant from New York State Regional Economic Development Council.



Finger Lakes Economic Development Center also assisted in the opening of Starkey's Lookout ([starkeyslookout.com](http://starkeyslookout.com)), a winery and microbrewery that produces soda and serves food.

### **What Participants took away from this stop...**

***"We need a developer to come and renovate upstairs apartments.  
We need people who are able to spend money downtown."***

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*"Restoration of old downtown buildings so that second floor can be used for overnight accommodations."*

***"We currently own a vacant building in a small rural community,  
having been part of this trip has given me a lot of "food" for thought  
in regards to potential uses for this building."***

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*“Repurposing buildings, preserving what is already there and transforming it to meet modern day code.”*

***“Collaboration with our local business owners and the chambers or BIA. Each small community town has similar problems. Be creative with your ideas on downtown business and how they work together. A wine bar in downtown Simcoe would attract a different crowd than the usual crowd in the downtown area. This would be a great way to feature our Norfolk County wineries. Feature local. The old Melbourne Hotel would make a great location for a microbrewery with a unique Norfolk County appeal. Some talk of Robinson Street parties and outdoor theatre nights. Create a downtown that people want to visit. Unique shops with small town appeal. So many ideas so little time. Shop Small for the small towns. Raise the advertising budget for downtown shops. Proud of your store fronts. Selling your buildings? Clean it up inside so that it is appealing to the next purchaser. Keep the store fronts looking top notch with displays in the windows. My main take away is that I want to start my own business. Just can't decide what kind of business.”***

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*“One thing I would like to do is get businesses in the community I work for more aware of what happens in other places. Perhaps a study tour of Norfolk is in order. Some neat downtown revitalization ideas such as ‘win this storefront’, high-end apartments as an accommodations.”*

***“That we need to attract healthy creative people to our community.”***

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*“Need to have a developer to develop apartments - higher end - attract people. Downtown parking is not a problem - PARKING IS A PERCEPTION.”*

***“Businesses in the county need to support each other to promote growth for everyone. The people in the government positions need to fight to find grants and financial support for local, small businesses. All the guest speakers we listened to were very passionate and dedicated and that is the kind of people we need in these positions.”***

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*“Workable relationships - knowing what is out there to assist with growth - networking.”*

***“The spokespersons for the downtown developments implied that additional funding came because of former plans and improvements.”***

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*“Visionary - excellent.”*

***“Showed what you could do in a very small village.”***

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Another view of Chris Wright's renovated second-floor apartment



Penn Yan's downtown core is becoming more vibrant

# Milly's Pantry, Penn Yan



## Key Observations

- Social enterprises can address community needs by raising money from tourists and consumers
- Focusing on selling local food, local art and other products helps build a connection with the community

Yates County (pop. 25,000), which includes Penn Yan (pop. 5,200), has among the lowest household incomes in New York State. Years ago, a public health nurse named Milly Bloomquist witnessed children who weren't learning well or were in trouble, tended to be hungry – even on weekends, when the school did not have the students in the building to feed. So Milly created the Weekend Back Pack program. Children could take a back pack filled with food home for the weekend to keep their hunger pangs at bay. Today, more than 500 students participate in the program every weekend. Milly passed away in 2014 in her 90s. However, before she died, she received the Presidential Citizens Medal from U.S. President Barack Obama.

Suzan Richards of Milly's Pantry (millyspantry.org) explained the social enterprise housed in this facility. She explained that many older students are hungry but too proud to ask for a back pack. Commissions from sales of art and jewellery, as well as profits from the café, provide funds to purchase food for the Weekend Back Packs.



Suzan serves lunch at Milly's Pantry

We were served lunch at The Pinwheel Market & Café, also home of Milly's Pantry. Lunch was chili, soup and quiche made by volunteers in the café's kitchen. Susan acknowledged that, by choosing to have lunch at The Pinwheel Café, our tour group helped feed a half-dozen children for a significant period of time.

During our stop, Chef Richard Lerman sampled his locally made sauces and salad dressings. Flavours included Grape/Pumpkin Spice, Strawberry Dijon, Cuke-a-Dilly, and Horseradish French.

### **What Participants took away from this stop...**

*"This is just plain inspirational. It shows how to take care of those in need. This should be repeated in every location across the country."*

***"Great Retail Experience - that would fit perfectly in our downtown. Working with local artists and having a coffee shop/lunch."***

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*"Brilliant amalgamation of ideas and possibilities."*

***"The not for profit model at Milly's Pantry was very inspiring."***

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*"Loved the back pack programme at Milly's."*

***"Such a wonderful project."***

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*"Just a great concept."*

***"Great work going on to benefit the community and I was happy we could support their efforts by stopping by for lunch."***

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# Ithaca Commons



## Key Observations:

- Pedestrian-only streets contribute to the vitality of downtown cores
- The community needs a vision of what it wants the future to look like, then stick to that vision – don't let everyone do whatever they want
- Wildlife imprints on sidewalks were a nice touch

Phyllisa DeSarno, Director for Economic Development, City of Ithaca (pop. 30,000) was very helpful and welcoming. She toured our group through Ithaca Commons ([downtownithaca.com](http://downtownithaca.com)), a three-block pedestrian area in the city's downtown core. Ithaca Commons is a popular regional destination, and is filled with restaurants and shops, public art, and frequent community festivals.

In 1971, the mayor proposed converting several blocks of State Street into a pedestrian mall. At the time, many small towns in the U.S. were experimenting with using pedestrian malls to revive downtowns. Construction began in 1974, and the Commons opened in 1975. It cost \$1.13 million.

In 2009, the city commissioned a landscape architecture firm to do a complete redesign, with a more open central lane, "patterned pavement, varied and movable seating, improved performance spaces, energy-efficient lighting, an outdoor reading area and a small playground." The old Commons was demolished in April 2013. The reconstruction was originally planned to take 18 months and cost \$9.5 million. In August 2015, the Commons re-opened, at a total cost of \$15 million.

Ithaca Commons also includes public art, sculptures, wildlife track imprints in paving stones, gateway features, and other touches.

### **What Participants took away from this stop...**

*"During the Ithaca stop, the economic development officer from the city explained that someone wanted to redevelop a nearby property and proposed to tear it down. The city said that isn't what they wanted to see and wouldn't let it happen. I felt this was a very important message - good economic development and planning does not mean just letting anyone do whatever they want."*

***"Revitalization does not happen overnight, but it takes a community to support each other - special provisions by the county/community/council may need to be given to help the downtown succeed. I think this is an important point because I think community members are tired of hearing 'it won't work' when they present a new idea."***

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*"Pedestrian areas in downtowns."*

***"I'd love to work on closing a street in Simcoe to traffic and making it pedestrian-only (big dream)."***

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# Green Star Cooperative Market



## Key Observations:

- Committing to selling local food can be lucrative and builds relationships
- Member volunteers earn discounts by working in the store
- Small players can compete with large companies

GreenStar ([greenstar.coop](http://greenstar.coop)) is a member-owned, community consumer cooperative with over 11,000 members based in Ithaca, New York (population 30,000). We met with Joe Romano, Director of Marketing, who gave us a tour and spoke to us about the organization and its activities.

GreenStar celebrates fresh, whole foods, sustainable living and the transformative power of a strong local economy. Sales in 2015 were approximately \$19.5 million. GreenStar carries more than 4,100 local products (within 100 miles) and 3,300 regional products (within 300 miles), resulting in over \$4.9 million reinvested into the local economy, and over \$1.7 million reinvested into the regional economy. See photo of “local” labels on shelves on next page.

In 2015, GreenStar had 81 full-time employees and 53 part-time employees. GreenStar provides opportunities for its members to act as “SuperWorkers” or in-store volunteers, that commit to 2 hours weekly, for a designated shift and a 4 month minimum commitment for all SuperWorker shifts. They receive a 15.5% discount in addition to the 2% standard member discount for a total discount of 17.5% on most purchase. Every two-hour volunteer shift earns seven days of the SuperWorker discount. In 2015, 480 member-owners (and their share partners) saved \$187,455 through their participation in the Member Labor Program, an average savings of \$391 per worker.



Local symbol on GreenStar shelves

The non-profit engaged graffiti artists to paint its exterior walls (see photo, lower right).

GreenStar works with art teachers from local schools. There were 57 classes and 2 Movie Nights, bringing 549 people to GreenStar, 13% were new. GreenStar donated \$36,375 to community organizations in 2015. GreenStar’s 130-kW solar farm went online last year. It is estimated to produce 12% of their power usage.

### What Participants took away from this stop...

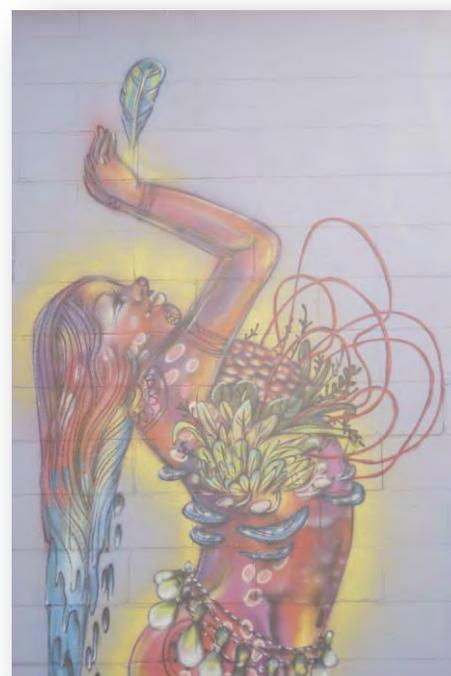
*“Amazing that they can complete with the larger scale grocers and it works! Grassroots and that deep local feel that everyone craves.”*

***“The market was fantastic.”***

*“Co-op Markets at their best ... saw so many members filling shelves. Although expensive, found the concept fascinating.”*

***“Love what they’re doing to support local and to provide food education and healthy products for their members.”***

*Concept “could tie rural growers to the towns of Norfolk.”*



Graffiti artists were engaged to paint on GreenStar’s walls

# Ports of New York



## Key Observations:

- Winery promotes, celebrates and values its family history
- Storytelling makes the experience excellent
- Efficient use of a small space

Ports of New York ([portsofnewyork.com](http://portsofnewyork.com)), also located in Ithaca (pop. 30,000), is a small artisanal urban winery producing specialty wines. Owner and winemaker Frédéric Bouché met with our group and told us the story of his family business. Located in a small building with efficient use of a small floor plate, story-telling is important to this business, which helps entertain the visitor and sell the product. From a technical standpoint, even the winemakers on the trip learned something, such as Frédéric's use of argon instead of carbon dioxide when closing barrels and bottles.

Frédéric comes from a long line of winemakers starting with his great-great-grandfather from the Buzet appellation of the Bordeaux region of France. His great-grandfather started a successful winery in the Calvados appellation of Normandy. This is where he learned to make wines and distill spirits. As a small

boy, Frédéric worked with his grandfather and was trained in the family techniques that he still uses today. Nine years after arriving in the Finger Lakes region, he started his own winery. All vinifera grapes used in the operation are grown on the east shore of Seneca Lake.

### **What Participants took away from this stop...**

*"Creating efficiencies with the space you have."*

***"Opened our eyes to a better way to entertain visitors."***

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*"Found story very interesting - the history, how it's a large part of their storefront."*

***"Commitment to quality not quantity. Fine craftsmanship in the midst of a busy town. A gem!"***

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*"The motivation and passion of the makers - whatever the craft - putting effort, time and method into the process results in the pride of a good product."*

***"Loved the small artisanal urban winery where the makers radiated the pride and craftsmanship of their product."***

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*"An experience is enhanced by a good story"*

***"I can appreciate this beverage in a new light."***

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*"Very educational and I picked up a few valuable tips."*

***"Very original information - passion of a home winery making port and where they came from."***

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*"Amazing and talented wine maker."*

***"Super interesting and personal."***

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*"Loved Ports of New York as it was a great story and our host was very engaging."*



Ports of NY's Frédéric with Rush Creek's Ron

# Gaffer District of Corning



## Key Observations:

- Collaboration is everything – there is no “them”, there is only “us”
- Tapping into local business resources is crucial
- Keeping the downtown vibrant means putting the resources behind it, including 11 staff, with merchandising designers among them

The Gaffer District of Corning ([gafferdistrict.com](http://gafferdistrict.com)) is the operating name of the “Corning Intown District Management Corporation, Inc.”, a downtown business improvement area in the City of Corning, New York (population 6,500).

The town hosts the world headquarters of Corning, Inc., which employs 5,100 works in the region and 35,000 worldwide. Annual sales for Corning, Inc. are approximately \$10 billion. The company no longer makes cookware and now specializes in advanced optics and glass applications for aerospace, defence, pharmaceutical and consumer applications. The town is also home to the Corning Museum of Glass, which employs 130 staff and recently completed a \$64-million expansion. There were 460,000 visitors in 2015 providing \$4.1 million in admission revenue. More than 60,000 visitors participate annually in

the Make Your Own Glass Experiences at the museum, generating another \$1.5 million in revenue.

The group ate dinner at Three Birds Restaurant ([threebirdsrestaurant.com](http://threebirdsrestaurant.com)) in Corning. Special thanks to Debra Loehnert for including as many local ingredients as possible on the menu. Before dinner, participants had the opportunity to walk around downtown, stopping in a local pub for a drink. The establishment incorporated the motif of the gaffer or glass blower into its décor.

We met with Coleen Fabrizi, Executive Director of the Gaffer District. She spoke about the importance of collaboration with the community. The Gaffer District has an 18-member board. Two members represent the City of Corning and the rest represent business interests in Corning.

- Majority of funding for the Gaffer District comes from private-sector corporate investment, primarily from the city's largest employer
- The Gaffer District has two "visual design" staff who assist merchants with setting up storefront windows and displays.



Corning's Gaffer District and the City of Corning work together to encourage business owners, local residents, and consumers to have a hand in defining the character and improvements of the various neighbourhoods of the city.

The Gaffer District staff includes: Executive Director, Director of Preservation and Design, Director of Events, Director of Marketing and Communications, Director of Administration and Operations, Director of Finance and Human Resources, Visual Design Manager, Visual Design Assistant, Coordinator of Administration and Events, and a Maintenance Manager.

### **What Participants took away from this stop...**

*"All of the store fronts in Corning were beautiful. They are lucky to have access to two designers at no cost to the operator. They suggested we use design students."*

***"Downtowns that have key investors, can achieve their downtown 'WOW'! It is possible to work together to form a vision and make it happen."***

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*“Need to work together, communicate, collaborate and cooperation. Needs to be a Retail Experience. Promote Local - have all products at eye level. Window Displays must be changed up - never keep it the same - People stop looking.”*

***“Collaboration of private and public stakeholders necessary.”***

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*“Developing more networks within the community is important. Upselling our community rather than downplaying what we have to offer, because things will change with time.”*



***“I loved the idea of a storehouse of interesting objects that store owners could borrow like library books; of mobilizing students from local high schools to create interesting storefront displays; of building in an educational and creative component to changing storefronts. In Simcoe for example, with the High School so close by, there could be ways to bring the students downtown for more than lunch. This whole thing is a project that involves partnerships but it would be such a creative challenge that could enhance any vitality already present.”***

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*“Knowing that the State will cover 75% of costs for Main Street projects or a town of 11,000 can have a Business Improvement District with 11 staff gives you an appreciation of what you are up against!”*

***“Looking out the window, just amazed at that 'picture perfect' downtown; just beautiful!”***

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*“The presentation was lovely and rang true.”*

# Tour of Geneva



## Key Observations:

- City established a “neighbourhood resource center”
- Music on porches and other events gets neighbours connecting
- Race for Space Contest invited entrepreneurs to look at downtown core

Geneva (population 3,300) is located on the northern end of Seneca Lake. Local government operates the Geneva Neighbourhood Resource Centre ([genevanrc.org](http://genevanrc.org)), a one-stop-shop for information to help residents become more active, involved and connected to their town and neighborhood.

We met Sage Gerling, Director of Neighbourhood Initiatives. She provided a guided tour of the downtown area and spoke about some of the unique projects that Geneva’s citizen-led neighbourhood associations have undertaken, including street closures for events, Race for Space Contest to encourage entrepreneurs in downtown core, musical porches, butterfly garden, garden walks, music concert in cemetery, neighbourhood cleanup events and porch light-up events to promote community safety.

In July 2016, Geneva was selected by the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council to receive \$10 million to revitalize local neighborhoods and generate new opportunities for long-term growth and prosperity. The award will include up to \$300,000 in planning funds for private sector experts to work with a local planning committee to draft a Strategic Investment Plan that will identify specific economic development, transportation, and housing and community projects.

### What Participants took away from this stop...

*“Closing streets to enable events, music in the graveyard, race for space, front porch music, downtown revite, changing bylaws and creating regulations on-the-fly to foster business startup and diversification.”*

*“Would love to explore some of the concepts for downtown revitalization such as the Race for Space mentioned before as well as the street closures for special events. Those ideas really resonated. Also want to work more closely with some of our peer organizations that are working on similar projects with similar agendas. Sometimes we get so busy we forget about some of the other groups playing in our sandbox.”*

*“Lots of interesting ideas, stunning homes.”*

*“Great ideas regarding downtown revitalization, including closing streets for special events/concerts on a Friday or Saturday night (on a regular basis during the season), working with sponsors on a ‘Race for Space’ where you have entrepreneurs apply for retail space, then work with sponsors to help subsidize rent, provide some free marketing, mentoring, etc. I also loved the idea of the porch concerts/music nights that would be very cool in some areas.”*

**GENEVA MUSICAL PORCHES 2016**

The image shows a map of downtown Geneva, New York, with ten numbered locations marked in red. Above the map is a silhouette of a band performing. To the right of the map is a circular logo for 'FOUNDERS SQUARE' with a red and gold design. Below the map is a list of ten numbered entries, each corresponding to a location on the map. At the bottom right of the map area is the logo for 'qnr.c'.

1. Uke Nuts at 22 Cortland Street
2. Native Sol at 55 Monroe Street
3. The Gray Hares Bluegrass Band at 141 Washington Street
4. Rogue Hedon at 148 Washington Street
5. Seneca Sound Waves at 180 Washington Street
6. Darwin at 200 Washington Street
7. Sojourn at 226 Washington Street
8. Michael George at 251 Washington Street
9. Mark Barrett-Guitar Duet with Vocals at 256 Washington Street
10. Touch of Joy at 269 Washington Street

# Coltivare & TC3 Farm



## Key Observations:

- College operates organic farm and training kitchen in restaurant
- Reuse of ground floor of parking garage

Tompkins Cortland Community College or “TC3” (tc3.edu) has a Farm to Bistro program that gives students hands-on experience in every aspect of the food-production system. In Ithaca (pop. 30,000), the College owns and operates TC3 Farm which supplies fresh produce to Coltivare Restaurant (coltivareithaca.com), a 17,000 square-foot culinary center including a full-service restaurant, amphitheater, wine cellar and event space. TC3 Curriculum includes Culinary Arts, Sustainable Farming and Food Systems, Wine Marketing and Hotel and Restaurant Management. In the near future, the farm will be run using only renewable energy. Coltivare is located on the ground level of a parking garage in downtown Ithaca (see photo right). Thanks to Lauren Lowman, Catering and Events Manager, for setting up the meal.



*“Very creative and successful partnership.”*

# Hermann Wiemer Winery



## Key Observations

- Quality rather than quantity is the focus of the wine and the experience
- A simple touch goes a long way: personalized tasting card for the group

Hermann J. Wiemer Vineyards ([wiemer.com](http://wiemer.com)), located on Route 14 north of Watkins Glen, is considered by TripAdvisor users as one of the best food and drink experiences in the Finger Lakes. The winery was founded by Hermann Wiemer, who emigrated to the Finger Lakes in the 1960s from Germany's Mosel Valley. His mother's family had been making wine in the valley for 300 years.

Jeremy Coffey, hospitality and program development manager, greeted us. The group enjoyed a tour of the production area and tasted some of the wines. The group was particularly impressed with the "Welcome Norfolk" message on the wine tasting sheets. There was a true, welcoming ambience upon our arrival, and a sense of professionalism and integrity persisted for our entire visit. Our hosts were very knowledgeable and gracious.

The winery sells high quality vintages that fetch top dollar. For example, Wiemer's Noble Select Riesling Josef Vineyard 2011 sells for US\$135 per

bottle. Blanc de Blanc 2009 is priced at US\$45 per bottle. However, the winery also has dry Rieslings and cuvee that start at US\$13.50 per bottle.

The winery is housed in a 150-year-old barn that was deconstructed on a neighbour's property and raised on the Wiemer land.

### **What Participants took away from this stop...**

***"Customized their tasting card to welcome us back. Just a small thing but it provided a very welcoming feeling."***

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*"I picked up many tips being a winery and seeing how the locations we visited operate. Since the trip we have or will be implementing a new policy on charging for wine sampling."*

***"Hermann's is a first class winery."***

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# Sunny Point



## Key Observations

- Artist-in-residence program encourages artists to come to the area
- Additional revenue stream for Yates County Arts Centre

Sunny Point, located on Keuka Lake north of Hammondsport, is owned by the Yates County Arts Centre ([artscenteryatescounty.org](http://artscenteryatescounty.org)). We met Kris Pearson, Executive Director, and Sandy Murrin, Board President, who explained that the property was bequeathed to YCAC by Dr. Annie Smith of Toronto, a former cottager on the lake. The Host Residency program provides allows artists to host their own students for a week at a time. The Artist in Residence program is open to professional visual, literary and performance artists. The ten-day residency is an award made by YCAC twice per year. Residence and studio space are provided at no cost to the artist, but travel and meals are not included. The “red barn” was undergoing interior remodeling to expand the space for workshops. The “white cottage” provides accommodation for up to 8, is offered on an as-available basis, and includes linens and full kitchen. There is a rental charge and a non-refundable deposit. The boathouse will be used as a seasonal ceramics studio. By summer 2016, Sunny Point had hosted many classes.

# Winewagen Tours



Sarah and Kim from Blue Elephant pose by the Winewagen

## Key Observations:

- Guide's perspective on a great winery stop: quality of wine, personality of staff, atmosphere of winery, good rapport between winery and guide
- Even a crowded marketplace has room for a unique business catering to a niche market, especially if the focus is on quality

Winewagen Tours ([winewagentours.com](http://winewagentours.com)) is a family owned and operated tour company that provides transportation between wineries, breweries and other attractions in the Finger Lakes. We met Zach Cutlip, owner of Winewagen Tours, who delivers a “wow experience” with the use of his 1971 Volkswagen Westfalia. The vehicle is Zach's labour of love, and he admits the VW requires daily maintenance. He started out expecting only to book a few tours during a season. He soon learned that his Volkswagen bus was in high demand, and he has taken scores of tour groups around the Finger Lakes. Zach acknowledged that he fills a niche tour product area that serves groups who do not want the typical limo or tour bus experience. His business is based in Geneva.

## What Participants took away from this stop...

*“I'd love to find an entrepreneur that would set up a winery/brewery/site-seeing tour company like Zach from Wine Wagon Tours. We could really market that!”*

*“I tell you the Wine Wagon idea will become a reality ASAP.”*

# Hammondsport



## Key Observations

- Large projects underway because investors see value of tourism
- Hammondsport has retained its heritage features and charm
- New hotel development benefited from grants, tax abatement

The town of Hammondsport (population 700) is located on Keuka Lake. It was voted “Coolest Small Town in America” by readers of Budget Travel magazine. It is home to the oldest bonded winery in the United States, and many award-winning wineries are located nearby. We met with Patrick Gaffney and John Jensen of the Hammondsport Chamber of Commerce ([hammondsport.org](http://hammondsport.org)), who explained some recent news in the town, including grant of \$410,000 through the Upstate Revitalization Initiative. The funds would offset some of the cost of building a pier for the operator of a 300-passenger tour boat that could be in place by summer 2017.

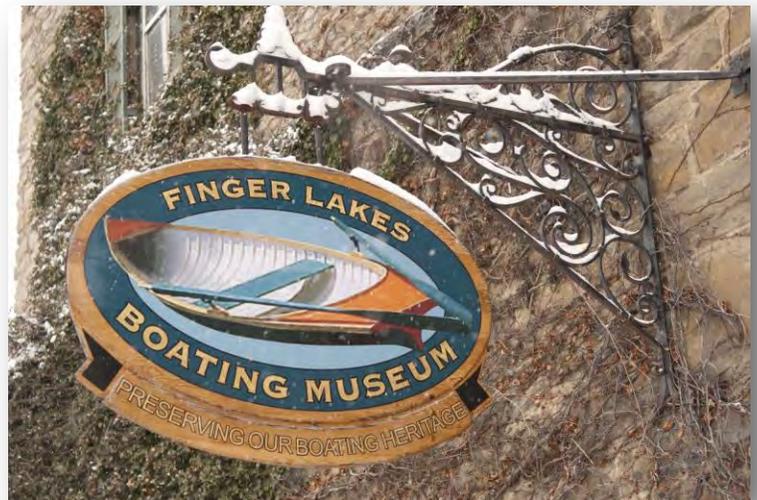
A new 61-room Best Western Hotel was under construction in the town by East Lake Holding Co. It will employ approximately 20 people when it opens in summer 2016.

The 44,000-square-foot hotel redeveloped a former machine shop property with the help of incentives from the Steuben County Industrial Development Agency, including PILOT tax abatement similar to Penn Yan. The hotel owner will pay taxes on the \$350,000 assessed value of the old machine shop, but will get relief on future increased assessment. In the first year of the agreement, the property will enjoy 90 per cent tax abatement. The amount lowers by ten per cent each year for ten years.



The \$6-million project also attracted a \$725,000 grant from the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council. The owners of the hotel specifically designed the property so it would not compete with restaurants and amenities in the Hammondsport village.

Hammondsport is home to the Finger Lakes Boating Museum (flbm.org), located in the former Taylor winery operation, which sat derelict for many years. Today, the 14-acre massive site with 18 buildings features more than 150 historical boats. Andrew Tompkins, the museum's director, gave us a tour of the former wine cellars, which are being converted into exhibit space.



Hammondsport is also the birthplace of Glenn Curtiss, who founded the Aerial Experiment Association with Alexander Graham Bell. Their innovations accelerated modern aviation. The town is home to a museum in Curtiss's name.

***"Very enlightening. Seeing the resources and ideas that have been implemented in communities from 700 to 11,000 offers some good take-always directly relevant to the communities I work in."***

# Three Brothers Winery



## Key Observations:

- One business offers four distinct experiences all in one place
- Winery offers “slushies” to expand options for consumers and enhance accessibility for those intimidated by wine tasting experiences
- Business tries to balance the motorcoach market with individual travelers by limiting the hours of operation for groups / buses
- Offering lots of merchandise has potential to add revenue streams

Three Brothers Wineries and Estates ([3brotherswinery.com](http://3brotherswinery.com)) is located on farmland across Seneca Lake from Geneva. The sprawling property includes three wineries, a microbrewery and 30 acres of vines.

Stony Lonesome Wine Cellars overlooks the lake and features traditional vinifera wines such as dry Riesling and Chambourcin. Passion Feet Wine Bar offers “refreshingly delicious wines” and is famous for its Wine Slushies. Bagg Dare Wine Company (see photo of entrance, above) is located in a bayou-style setting with rusty trucks sitting around a water hole, serving wines with unorthodox names such as Well Hung and Skirt Lifter. War Horse Brewing

Company offers ales, ciders and soda produced on-site. The business also operates a wine store in a shopping mall in the nearby city of Rochester. Three Brothers wines are available in 200 liquor stores across the state.

The current owner took a single vineyard and winery operation that existed since the 1980s and expanded the operations starting in 2007. The original plan for the property also included overnight accommodation for visitors, but that feature never became a reality. Weddings are not hosted on the estate. Group tours and buses are only welcome to visit the estate before 1 p.m., a rule put in place to control traffic flow in the tasting rooms.

There is a charge for tasting in all locations on the estate. All tasting rooms include extensive displays of merchandise for sale (see photo below), from clothing and home décor to glassware and locally rolled cigars ... and of course, wine and beer.



Jen of SWOTC at Three Brothers

### What Participants took away from this stop...

***"We have added slushy drinks to our mix and also better ways to entertain larger bus groups."***

*"I thought it was neat on the Three Brothers having several theme wineries. A niche for everyone. Brilliant for the winery for the slushies. That is my target group as well fun wines, and cocktails for ladies groups."*

***"I have always advocated doing a little extra with cocktails from our wines. I do our fruit wine sangrias and our wine smoothies are becoming popular."***



# Shtayburne Cheese



## Key Observations:

- Locating cheese factory near dairy barn boosts authenticity of experience
- Offering stand-out flavours of cheese curds, such as Buffalo Wing flavour
- Value-added food processing opportunity meant younger generation could return to farm

Lorin Hostetler was our host at Shtayburne Farm Cheese Store ([fingerlakesdairyfarm.com](http://fingerlakesdairyfarm.com)), open year round and co-located on a fourth generation 60-head dairy farm near Rock Stream, New York. Lorin's parents operate the dairy farm and the value-added operation was added in 2010 to allow Lorin, his wife Alisha and their family to move back to the farm. Milk is not a supply managed commodity in New York. By building a cheese factory and retail shop on the farm, the family is able to make cheese from excess milk and sell the products at a higher margin.

Shtayburne Farm makes 15 blends of farmstead artisan cheeses and sells them in blocks and in curd shapes. The family also makes and sells maple syrup, as well as gift baskets. Many other farm-made food products from the Finger Lakes are featured in the store. The business is one of seven "Destination Farms" that make up the Finger Lakes Cheese Alliance.

## Other Stops



### **New York State Wine & Culinary Centre**

The New York State Wine & Culinary Center ([nywcc.com](http://nywcc.com)) in Canandaigua (pop. 11,000) showcases the State's wine, craft beer and food. The centre is well known for its demonstration theatre and hands-on kitchen. Classes and workshops include everything from wine pairing and bread baking to sausage making and knife skills. A tasting room at the centre features a rotating array of New York wines, beers and spirits. The centre also has a gift shoppe, conference room, and a restaurant with a patio that overlooks Canandaigua Lake. Our group ate dinner here and were entertained in the theatre by a chef who prepared a dessert using local apples. The center opened its doors in 2006 after Constellation Brands, Wegmans Food Markets, Rochester Institute for Technology, and the New York Wine and Grape Foundation came together to create a gateway for the people to experience New York agriculture and viticulture. During our first tour, a participant comment: "If Norfolk County had a culinary centre much like the one we visited, it could become a valuable tool to promote the foods, wine, beer and spirits of our area, attract tourists and serve the local community as well." New development in Canandaigua includes a lakeside resort comprised of a 208-room four-star hotel and a 600-person ballroom.

## Myer Farm Distillers

Joe Myer gave us a tour of Myer Farm Distillers ([myerfarmdistillers.com](http://myerfarmdistillers.com)), located east of Ovid, N.Y. This farm distillery uses certified organic grain from the largest organic farm in the northeast United States to produce vodka, whisky and gin. The New York State Farm Distillery Act lets farms become small-batch distilleries and open their tasting rooms to tourists. The tasting room and still house is finished in hand-cut and chiseled wall stone. Farm distillery legislation in New York State has benefited this industry greatly. The legislation is similar to new laws that encouraged New York's craft beer industry. As a result, 200+ craft breweries were created with a total economic impact of \$3.5 billion, employing more than 11,000 workers. There are more than 80 craft breweries in the Finger Lakes alone.

## The Technology Farm

The Cornell Agriculture & Food Technology Park, also known as "The Technology Farm" ([thetechnologyfarm.com](http://thetechnologyfarm.com)), is a Certified Business Incubator located on 72 acres of former Cornell University research orchards in Geneva, N.Y. We met John Johnson, the Executive Director, who explained the history of this \$7-million complex. One of most successful businesses on The Technology Farm is Cheribundi, which processes local cherries into sports drinks. It started up in 2008, but will leave The Tech Farm in 2016 and move into an abandoned supermarket. Projected sales for Cheribundi for this year are \$16 million. Although The Technology Farm acknowledges that an incubator usually operates on the concept that new businesses will leave the nest, the food business requires more patience to develop innovative processes and enter very competitive markets.

### What Participants took away from this stop...

*"Was astonished at the percentage of failures with new business start ups."*

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## Farm Sanctuary

We had planned to visit the Farm Sanctuary near Watkins Glen, N.Y., but they could not accommodate our group. This charity provides care to rescued farm animals. Farm Sanctuary has a bed and breakfast program allowing visitors to stay overnight and experience the shelter. Guests are encouraged to pitch in as volunteers to connect with the animals. Three cabins on site are booked up well in advance.

## Lake Drum Brewing

Lake Drum Brewing ([lakedrumbrewing.com](http://lakedrumbrewing.com)) was the successful winner of the Race for Space contest in 2014 organized by the Local Development Corp. of Geneva. While meeting with Winewagen Tours, tour participants had the opportunity to taste the sour beers offered by Lake Drum. The Race for Space program offers entrepreneurial opportunities to build or expand in downtown Geneva. The program took a hiatus in 2015. In 2016, the Race for Space was awarded to Wicked Water, a farm winery and tasting room that is expected to open in the former YMCA building in the town in September. Wicked Water will receive a \$6,000 cash grant for readying business space, signage and marketing support from the city.

## Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel

### Key Observations:

- “Wow” customer service experience – delivering room keys to the bus at a stop earlier in the day to expedite check-in
- Aftercare: reaching out by cell phone to the group when Housekeeping found an item left-behind by a guest, then delivering the item personally to the next town

Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel ([watkinsglenharborhotel.com](http://watkinsglenharborhotel.com)) hosted the tour’s overnight stay. Many of the group relaxed in the downstairs bar and traded thoughts and reflections on the day. Several in the group visited the Rooster Fish Brewing ([roosterfishbrewing.com](http://roosterfishbrewing.com)), which had recently relocated in downtown Watkins Glen and spoke with the brew master there. Christine Peacock of Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel was our group’s contact. She provided excellent service in the planning leading up to our trip, prior to check-in, during our stay, and after our stay. Conceived in 2002 and opened in 2008, the hotel also caters to Watkins Glen International, an auto racing attraction south of town. The hotel is managed by Hart Hotels, a family-owned business in Buffalo operating 12 hotels in Maine and New York.

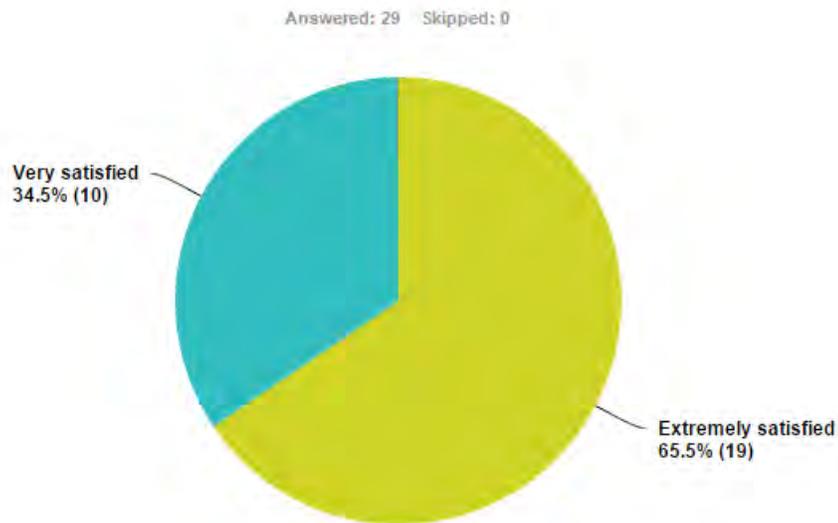
### What Participants took away from this stop...

***“We were running late and the hotel brought us our keys on the bus that was a “Wow” moment for me.”***

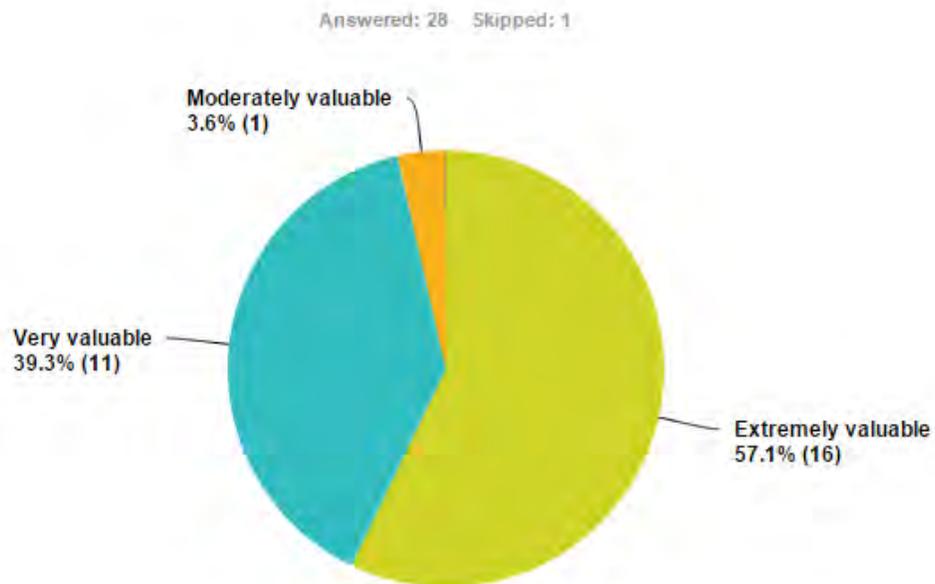
*“Thanks Watkins Glen Harbour Hotel for delivering our guest’s left-behind item to lunch in Ithaca. Excellent customer service!”*

# Participant Feedback

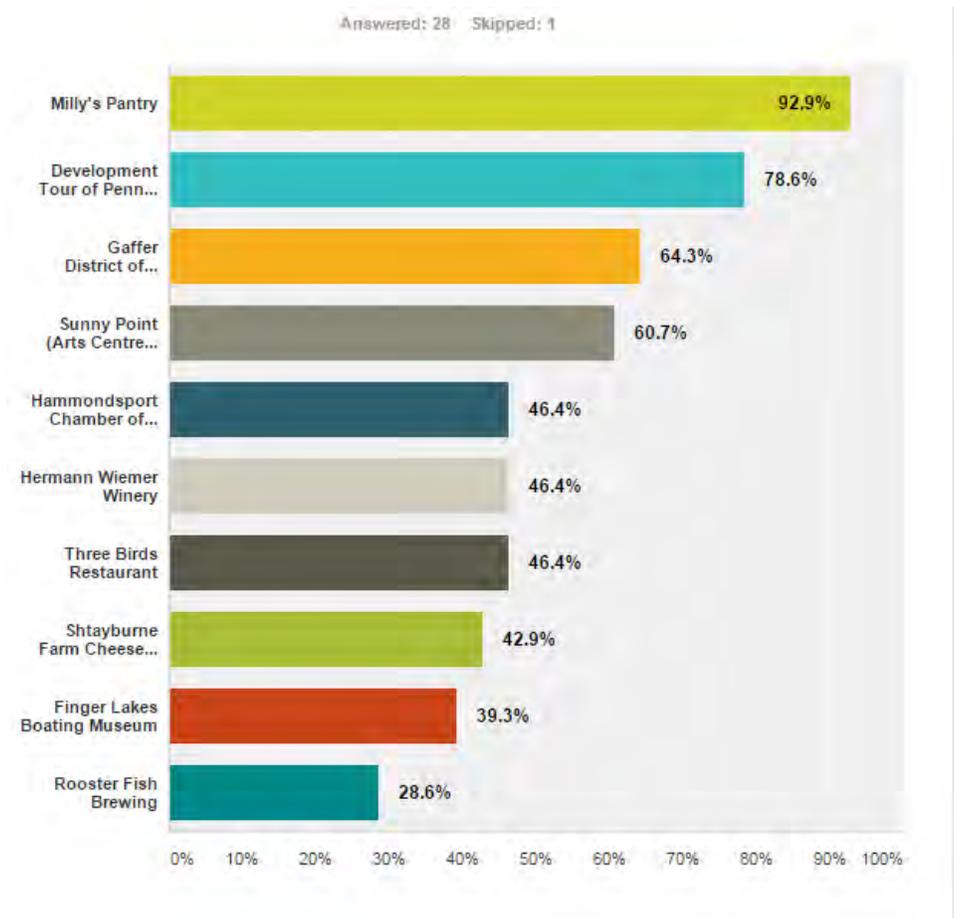
Overall, how satisfied were you with the Tour?



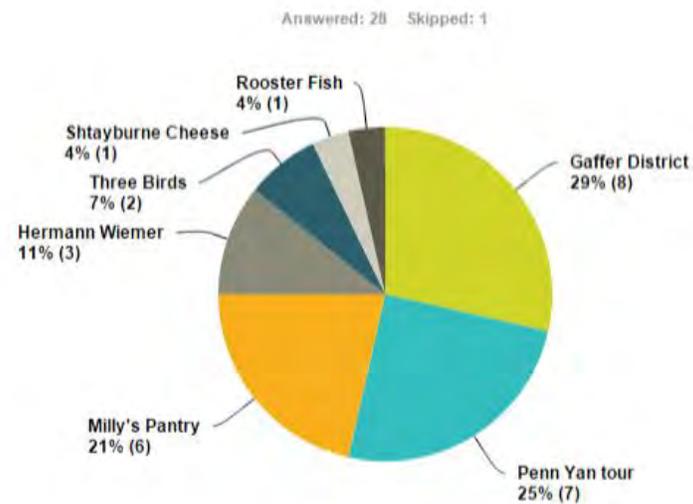
Was the tour a valuable investment of your time and money?



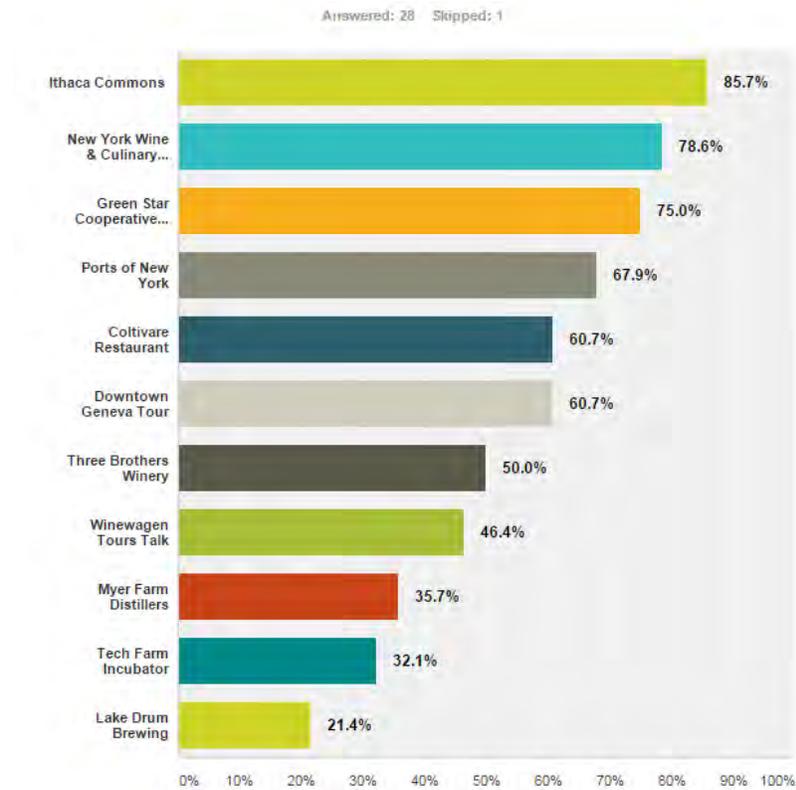
### Which stops did you find valuable on Day 1? (check any that apply)



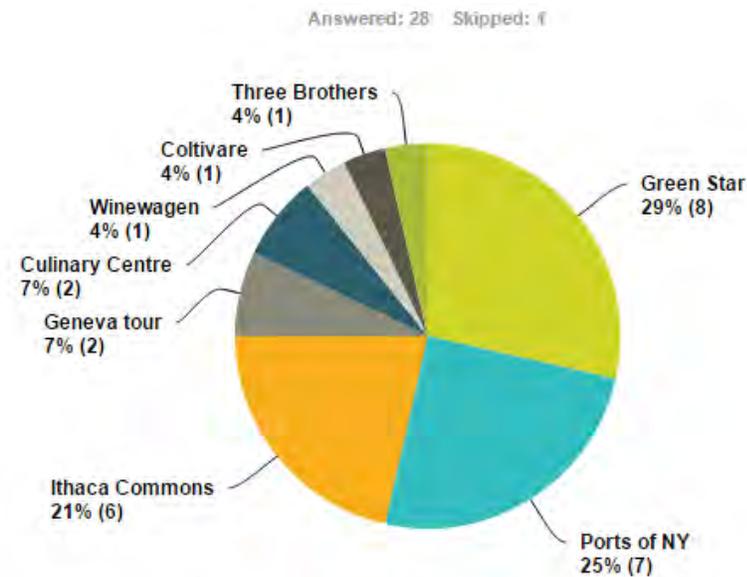
### Overall, which stop was your favourite on Day 1?



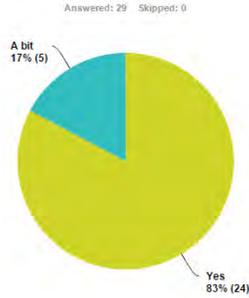
## Which stops did you find valuable on Day 2? (Check any that apply)



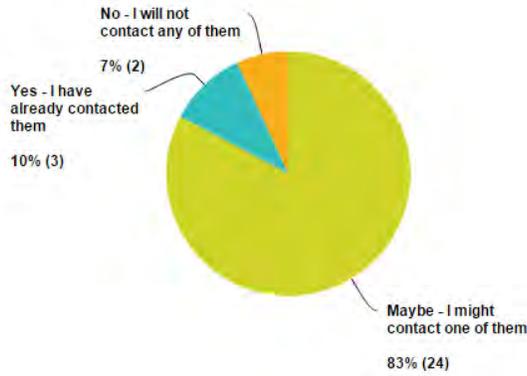
## Overall, which stop was your favourite on Day 2?



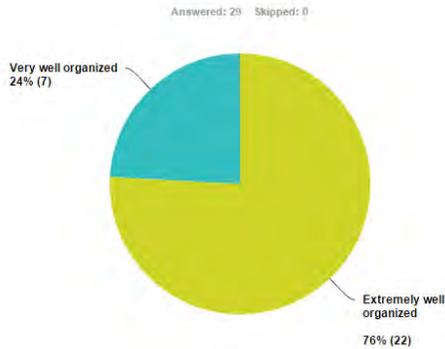
### Have you / will you talk about what you learned to others?



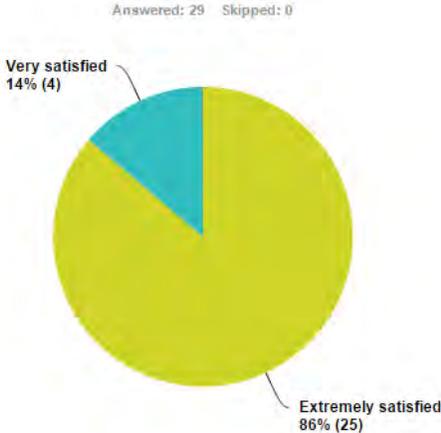
### Have you / will you follow up with representatives of any of the stops on the tour?



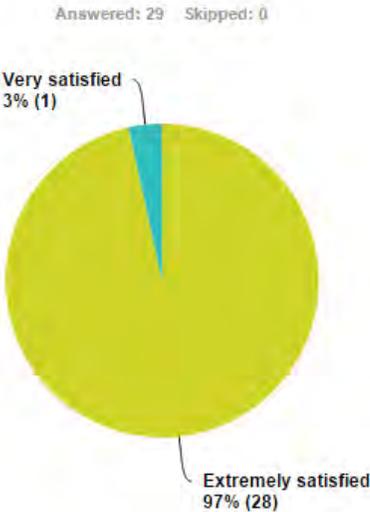
### How well organized was the Tour?



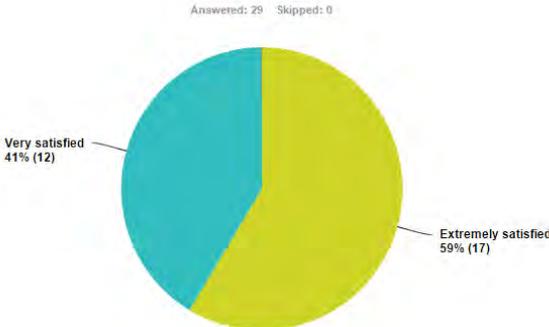
**How satisfied were you with the Attridge transportation / bus and driver?**



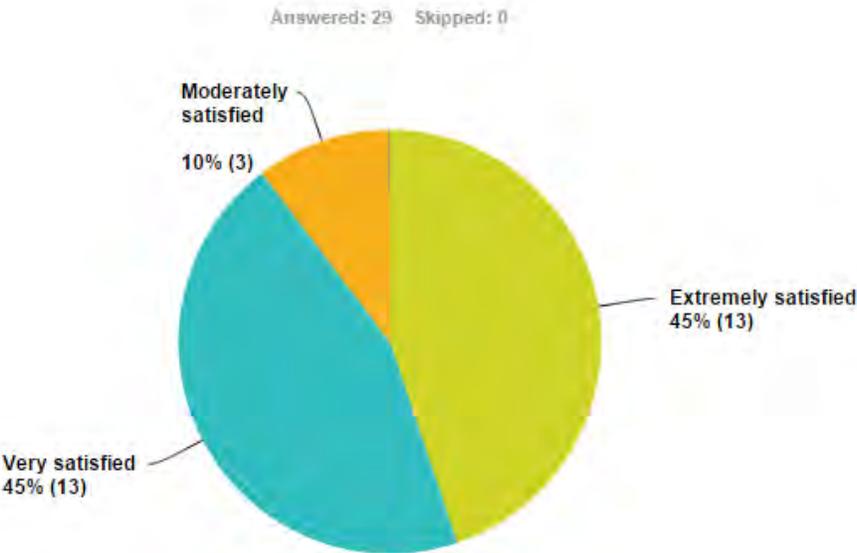
**How satisfied were you with your stay at Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel?**



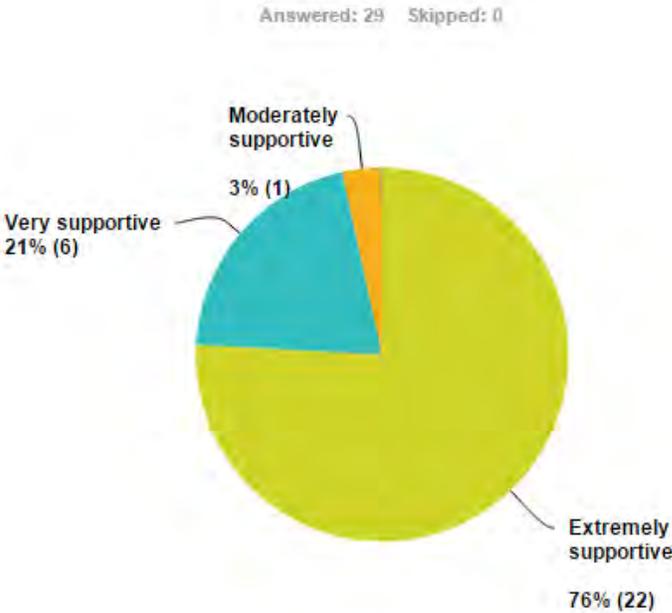
**How satisfied were you with meals provided?**



**How satisfied were you with networking opportunities on the tour?**



**Are you supportive of Southwest Ontario Tourism / Norfolk County organizing similar tours in the future?**



**Did you come across a bright idea during the tour? If so, describe what it is:**

"Yes - I would always want to go on these trips. Great organization and great networking was done. Yes there was a couple of ideas - but they are still in my planning stages."

"Yes! All about promotion."

"Yes! Still working out the details - would love to talk to you (Clark) about it!"

"Closing roads to promote walking, music on the front porch - relax rules and laws to create family lifestyle, use of space and having community groups take ownership - invest pride and increase ownership, changing on the fly and building policy with business minded people and their input implemented - ways to make it work and ways to say yes."

"Yes we are investigating making Port Wine. I think it would be a hit."

"Many! Still processing."

"Building on what resources and infrastructure we have."

"I tell you the Wine Wagon idea will become a reality ASAP."

"Love the "win this space" competition."

"It comes back to the vacant building that we own, and this trip has given me several ideas (outside from our original vision) of what the future use may be."

"I am going to push for making my wine smoothies and wine slushes more successful."

"Loved the porch music concept."

"I loved the idea [from Corning] of a storehouse of interesting objects that store owners could borrow like library books; of mobilizing students from local high schools to create interesting storefront displays; of building in an educational and creative component to changing storefronts. In Simcoe for example, with the High School so close by, there could be ways to bring the students downtown for more than lunch. This whole thing is a project that involves partnerships but it would be such a creative challenge that could enhance any vitality already present."

"More like stealing a idea. Shop small."

"Street festivals, closing a street and having businesses stay open longer to support the festival. - Perhaps extend the Lynn River Music Fest to the downtown :). We need a developer to come and renovate upstairs apartments. We need people who are able to spend money downtown."

"I have had an idea brewing for the past couple of months - Sidewalk Talks. Hosting a guest speaker/presenter in our downtowns across Norfolk County after business hours. That's all you're getting out of me right now :) [Note: this idea was launched by Norfolk County's Heritage & Culture Division in spring 2016.]

"I believe I've already mentioned the "Race for the Space" concept as well as the street closures for special events. But I'd also love to find an entrepreneur that would set up a winery/brewery/site-seeing tour company like Zak from Wine Wagon Tours. We could really market that!"

## What did you learn from the tour that you plan to implement at your business or organization?

"The tour provided great networking opportunities."

"To be passionate of where you live - talk that talk and you can feel the positive energy. To review the areas we stopped in and note 'how to' steps that were taken."

"We need to pass onto others what we saw & experienced - get the word out. Promote

business in the downtown. Work with the locals, having a meeting with the new Manager of BIA with local Realtors to see what they can do and what we can do to attract people into the area."

"Ways to engage and approach to business development in all sectors."

## If another study tour is planned in the future, where should it go?

"Finger Lakes was a great example what our area will become. I am sure we have only did a little in that region and I am sure there is more. Also - Prince Edward County is another growing area."

"Not sure...but think this is a very good tool and needs to be repeated."

"So many possibilities! Wondering about any similar regions that are within a reasonable driving distance, perhaps in Michigan or Ohio. Although I imagine there may be many more spots we could visit in the Finger Lakes."

"Somewhere in Ontario - similar to Norfolk County."

"Small town Ontario."

"More of the same, possible more diverse sectors such as Watkins Glen Speedway - value of tourism and value to Finger Lakes, Corning Museum of Glass - value of tourism and role it plays in Corning. Visit tour operators and event planners - research and development / rob and duplicate ideas to grow Norfolk sectors."

"I have no suggestion here - the stops were all great."

"Not sure! Perhaps an Ontario town; something immediately relatable."

"Pompton Lake NJ."

"Prince Edward County."

"Someplace Canadian ... Goderich? Prince Edward County to Kingston."

"Hard to think of another region that would offer so many direct parallels, perhaps locally Niagara, Prince Edward County or Windsor Essex."

"Perhaps an area within Ontario or Canada, simply because some of the legislation/funding that would be discussed could/would be perhaps more applicable and transferrable to our own area/businesses."

"I'm not knowledgeable enough to know this as I don't travel even around the province. I would suggest however that some biophilic (nature-centred) places are researched. "Shaped by Nature" and Ontario's Garden" slogans can be the guide. Where are there communities that can demonstrate how they have been shaped by nature? Where are there other "gardens" within driving distance? Downtown improvements can begin with the sensory."

"Prince Edward County or Detroit area."

"Portland."

## What other type of business/organization would you have liked to visit on the tour?

"Norfolk County - is known for agriculture - and some of our local farmers are changing direction. Anything that relates to what we in Norfolk County can do. Winery/Craft Beers/ Tourism."

"Co-working spaces, co-thinking, co-creative innovative housing reasonably priced."

"I think we did a great variety - perhaps getting a tour of the hotel or a golf course."

"Tour operators, event planners, different sectors that contribute to tourism and shoulder support businesses - chambers of commerce, non profit groups, youth."

"Performing Arts Centres/ Arts Centres."

"Nice variety from the trip."

"A few more planning-related things may have been nice but I understand it was more of a tourism/ec dev event."

"Farm tourism - adventure type facility."

"I would like to have talked to the store owners who were affected by conversions/updates in the downtown areas."

"Maybe spending some more time learning about the waterfront projects, perhaps how their parks and natural sites operate, market and interact together."

"Small Mom and Pops who are making a living despite big corps. Seems we all need big dollars to succeed."

"An elementary or secondary school that views its community as a classroom or 'laboratory'. Some of the projects done in cooperation with community partners. A hydroponic greenhouse. Many of our winter vegetables are grown this way. Organic seed savers. packagers and sellers."

"Culture. Spa."

"Perhaps a few less wine/brewer/cider for some other unique experiences that we could cultivate in Norfolk."

"A museum that is doing things differently. Collaborative anything."

"I feel the range of businesses and experiences were very well rounded. No complaints at all!"

## What would you like to see Ontario's Southwest / Norfolk County and its partners do related to culinary tourism development?

"Connection between farmers and chefs - what are their links?"

"YES - we are the Garden County - we grow everything - our local Entrepreneurs are using that and advertising that - we need to expand."

"It may be beneficial to sit down with business owners/ operators and find out their vision for their business, or ways they are looking to improve. With that information it would be easier to find solutions to help these businesses grow and succeed."

"Engage / encourage BIAs, members of council, and chambers of commerce boards to support and attend such tours to think outside the box."

"Continue with wine and food shows. They offer a great mix and provide a great opportunity to promote to a larger group of people and patrons."

"The county is doing a great job at putting culinary tourism in the spotlight. More education, promotion and collaboration between businesses would be ideal."

"Go Canadian so we can compare how it can really work in Canadian dollars and grants."

"I think continuing to showcase the local agricultural products from the region is important. Be that field to table restaurants,

wine cider and beer and other on-farm products."

"How about food truck festival in summer near beach or park. Maybe the porch project would add to summer festivities."

"Not sure what 'culinary tourism' means. However, it should not be separate from developing broader experiences for locals and tourists. Focus on the well-being of all and the wine and dine experience can be part of it."

"Norfolk County should develop a chocolate trail in Norfolk. Or other kinds of trails that identifies our unique stores in another way."

"Working to create more tours in the county itself, I feel this is probably already done but I am not sure to what extent."

"Link to other cultural assets whether they be built or natural to expand the experience."

"Continue to focus on culinary/wineries/breweries/distilleries. It's been working well for Norfolk and many other areas, and always allows us to talk about what makes us unique. Not sure if there are other food and beverage shows, but we should be looking at other centres outside of Toronto. I realize the major influences are in the GTA but there are most likely some smaller events that we could tap in to."

## Please provide any other comments or feedback you may have:

"Clark and Joanne did a fantastic job organizing this trip. I think it could benefit many around the region. I think SWOTC could do a better job of letting people know that this is open to the entire region."

"Would suggest a bit later start - 7 or 8am."

"This trip would be great in September - harvest season - see the other areas that I am sure they use for Tourism - Clark and team...(Joanne, Jen, and others) you did a great job in the overall management of this event. Well Done!...and fun, too. Thanks for the opportunity to go on this tour."

"Excellent 2 days away , fast paced informative."

"Great tour! I really enjoyed having the opportunity to participate! It was great to see everything the different towns are doing to improve their community. It may be more beneficial to tour somewhere in Ontario so the information is more relatable."

"Very well done."

"I can say enough good things about the experience. I am so happy year two was put together and we at Rush Creek were able to be involved."

"Great trip! Inspiring! Maybe a couple less stops on Day 2 so we can arrive before 9pm."

"Totally amazed by all the great suggestions talked about over the two days. Enjoyed talking to people in our County and finding out their suggestions on how to make ideas become a reality. Excellent tour! Very encouraging to see so many Norfolk staff on the trip as well so many local businesses and their staff – I feel this demonstrates that the community

really buys into this trip and the topics explored. I hope to come on it again (if there is another tour) with some of my colleagues next year. As someone who works directly in rural economic development, the importance of downtown revitalization, tourism development and value added agriculture are a core part of my responsibilities. This was a very eye opening experience!"

"Being outside the Norfolk county district, I am not as up to date on all your endeavours, but I can tell you that your county is certainly on the right track in developing a legitimate culinary destination. Pleasure to have spent some time with this group."

"The info we learned , I so hope, will help to rejuvenate all our local downtowns. We sure need some help."

"The widely varied landscape of the Finger Lakes district was spectacular at this time of the year. With so much deciduous forest cover, seeing through it offered a view that could not be had in other seasons when the trees are in leaf. I came home wanting to do research on the history of the land formation - hills, valleys, lakes.. a naturalist or geologist on board could reveal some of the hows. All in all, it was an educational two days and very affordable. Many thanks for top-notch planning."

"The bus driver was excellent and a pat on the back for Clark. He did an excellent job on the tour."

"Awesome tour! Extremely well organized and great fun! Just wish we could stay over one more night so we don't get in so late (and perhaps add a stop or two on the way back home!)."

# Tour Participants

Dan Barker	Clark Hoskin	Barb Rideout
Ron Barr	Frank Ihrig	Sharon Saunders
Sarah Bertling	Nicole Inglis	Todd Saunders
Gail Bouw	Sarah Judd	Emily Schoff
Melissa Collver	Susan Judd	Claire Senko
Alisha Cull	Kim Kirton	Jerry Sucharyna
Lorraine DeSerrano	Marguerite Larmand	Shannon VanDalen
Linda D'Hondt-Crandon	Donna Matthews	Mary Whitehead
Brendalee Engelhardt	Karen Matthews	Mike Whitehead
Fritz Enzlin	Grace McGartland	Ted Willey
Zach Gable	Jen Moore	Carrie Woolley
James Grant	Bradley Oke	Barb Worth
Andrew Gunn	Heather Pond	Teresa Wybo
John Harris	Manorome	Bruce Zantingh
Tracy Haskett	Bonnie Preece	Liz Zantingh

# Tour Stops

Birkett Landing ([birkettlanding.com](http://birkettlanding.com))  
Coltivare Restaurant ([coltivareithaca.com](http://coltivareithaca.com))  
Cornell Agriculture & Food Technology Park ([thetechnologyfarm.com](http://thetechnologyfarm.com))  
Corning's Gaffer District ([gafferdistrict.com](http://gafferdistrict.com))  
Finger Lakes Boating Museum ([flbm.org](http://flbm.org))  
Finger Lakes Economic Development Center ([fingerlakesedc.com](http://fingerlakesedc.com))  
Geneva Neighbourhood Resource Center ([genevanrc.org](http://genevanrc.org))  
Greater Hammondsport Area Chamber of Commerce ([hammondsport.org](http://hammondsport.org))  
Green Star Cooperative Market ([greenstar.coop](http://greenstar.coop))  
Hermann J. Wiemer Vineyards ([wiemer.com](http://wiemer.com))  
Ithaca Commons ([downtownithaca.com](http://downtownithaca.com))  
Lake Drum Brewing ([lakedrumbrewing.com](http://lakedrumbrewing.com))  
Milly's Pantry ([millyspantry.org](http://millyspantry.org))  
Myer Farm Distillers ([myerfarmdistillers.com](http://myerfarmdistillers.com))  
New York State Wine & Culinary Center ([nywcc.com](http://nywcc.com))  
Ports of New York ([portsofnewyork.com](http://portsofnewyork.com))  
Rooster Fish Brewing ([roosterfishbrewing.com](http://roosterfishbrewing.com))  
Shtayburne Farms Cheese Store ([fingerlakesdairyfarm.com](http://fingerlakesdairyfarm.com))  
Sunny Point ([artscenteryatescounty.org](http://artscenteryatescounty.org))  
TC3 Farm ([tc3.edu](http://tc3.edu))  
Three Birds Restaurant ([threebirdsrestaurant.com](http://threebirdsrestaurant.com))  
Three Brothers Winery ([3brotherswinery.com](http://3brotherswinery.com))  
Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel ([watkinsglenharborhotel.com](http://watkinsglenharborhotel.com))  
Winewagen Tours ([winewagentours.com](http://winewagentours.com))

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