

LOOSE IN THE BORSCHT BELT

The blink-and-you'll-miss-them communities along the eastern bank of the Delaware River have seen good times and bad, but an influx of exurbanites from Brooklyn is breathing new life into these faded lumber towns. Follow Route 97, a seductive jaunt that clings lovingly to the Delaware before the river vistas give way to tumbledown farms and picture-perfect woods.

—AARON HICKLIN



Nine River Road

Foundry 42+



Stickett Inn

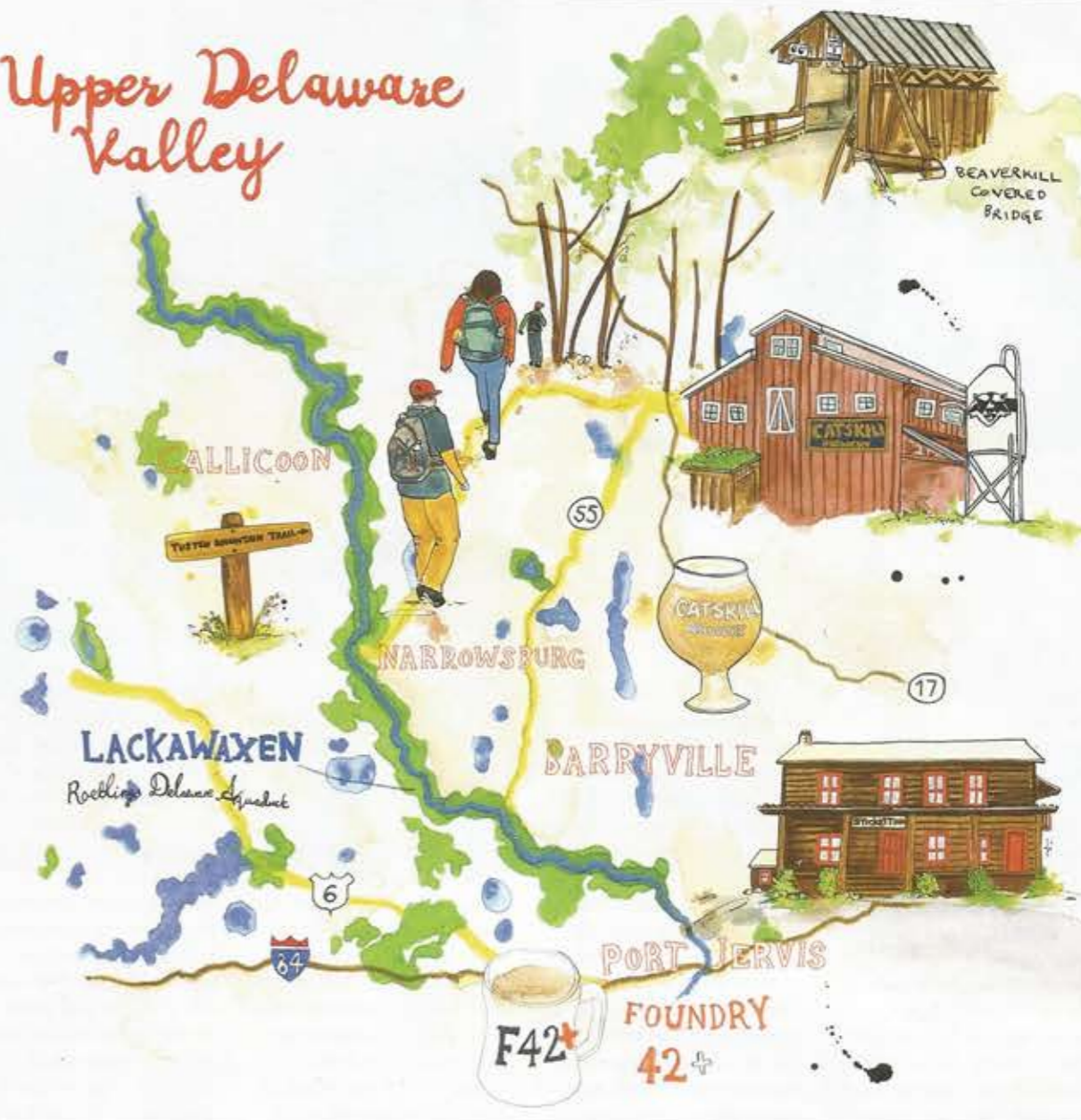


Narrowsburg



The Heron

Upper Delaware Valley



BEAVERKILL COVERED BRIDGE

CATSKILL BREWERY

F42+

FOUNDRY 42+

START: Port Jervis, New York
END: Roscoe, New York
TOTAL DISTANCE: 100 miles
SUGGESTED LENGTH: 2–5 days

1. FOUNDRY 42+, PORT JERVIS

It's taken a while, but there are finally signs of "rejuvenation," to use Cooper Boone's phrase, in this old industrial town 90 miles northwest of the city. Boone, a clinical psychologist, singer-songwriter, and foodie, is the kind of local pioneer who sees an opportunity and runs to it. His new venture, Foundry 42+, occupying a two-story 1940 building with tin ceilings, is a miniature ABC Carpet & Home, with furniture, antiques, grooming products (created by Boone's husband, Mark Veeder), a café, and—because why not?—handmade unicorns. [F42home.com](#)

2. STICKETT INN, BARRYVILLE

Owners and partners Roswell Hamrick and Johnny Pizzolato have turned this former canal house into an eclectic Aladdin's den of whimsical art and woodsy comforts. Each of the four suites is themed—Soak, Drink, Eat, and Steam—so choose your poison wisely. Unwind in a spacious trough

tub in Soak, or throw a party in Drink (it comes with a wet bar). For a gentle hike, the town is close to the Minisink Battle Ground, a half-mile trail commemorating American soldiers who perished in a 1779 raid led by Joseph Brant, a Mohawk colonel in the British Army. [StickettInn.com](#)

3. ROEBLING'S DELAWARE AQUEDUCT, LACKAWAXEN

John Roebling, best known for building the Brooklyn Bridge, designed this crossing—the oldest wire suspension bridge in the country—to connect the parts of the now defunct Delaware & Hudson Canal. Built in 1846, it's now a road bridge, but still retains its original appearance. On the other side is the house, now a small museum, where author Zane Grey lived from 1905 to 1918.

4. TUSTEN MOUNTAIN TRAIL

Midway between Barryville and Narrowsburg, this trail is a three-mile loop of pristine woods overlooking the river. Hike through eastern hemlocks and white pines and, when in season, a plethora of wildflowers including violets, red columbines, and pink lady's

slippers. [Trailkeeper.org/trail/tusten-mountain-trail](#)

5. NARROWSBURG

At the narrowest point of the Delaware River (hence its name), Narrowsburg is a happy hunting ground for birders scanning the skies for bald eagles, especially in winter and early spring before the tree canopy grows back. In summer, scramble down the river bank under the bridge and swim off the large flat boulder before hitting one of the town's bustling restaurants.

Try the Heron, on Main Street, for comfort classics like buttermilk fried local chicken, or The Laundrette, for inventive pizzas baked in an imported Italian wood-fired oven. Wash them down with a New York Sour on the outdoor terrace. [TheHeronRestaurant.com](#) and [TheLaundrette.xyz](#)

6. NINE RIVER ROAD, CALLICOON

With its wide main street straddling the railway line and the imposing mansard roof of the Western Hotel, Callicoon could be the setting of a Zane Grey novel (see #3) if a tumult

of new ventures hadn't blown away the tumbleweeds. Building on their success with boutique hotels in nearby Livingston Manor and North Branch, Sims Foster and Kirsten Harlow Foster have brought their cozy aesthetic to Callicoon with the eight-room Nine River Road. Guests are greeted by the inkeeper in the kitchen, and the down-home vibe continues with porch swings and hammocks. Grab one of the bikes and cycle along River Road for bucolic views and unlimited opportunities for a pre-cocktail dip. [NineRiverRoad.com](#)

COURTESY OF NINE RIVER ROAD, COURTESY OF FOUNDRY 42+, COURTESY OF THE HERON, COURTESY OF AARON HICKLIN, COURTESY OF STICKETT INN

CATSKILL BREWERY, LIVINGSTON MANOR

A brewery can represent the future of this region, as is it. Apart from crafting a sport hooch, the state-of-the-art facility—which includes solar panels, natural lighting, and green roofs—makes it among the best eco-friendly beer makers in the nation. Nearby resident and environmental activist Mark Ruffalo is a fan. Quench your thirst with a growler of Devil's Path, an IPA named for a brutal Catskills trail. It's so much easier to drink it than hike it. [CatskillBrewery.com](#)

8. BEAVERKILL BRIDGE, CATSKILL PARK

Hallowed in the annals of fly-fishing (the great sports writer Red Smith described being there for the opening day of the season as "a little like observing Christmas in Bethlehem"), Beaverkill is possibly the most famous trout stream in America. This spot, next to a 150-year-old covered bridge, is picnic nirvana. There are tables and grills along the river—and you can always fish for your supper. [792 Berrybrook Road Spur, Roscoe](#)



The Laundrette