

From left: Kenoza Hall and its leafy grounds; rooms at Urban Cowboy feature summer-camp-inspired décor.



The Catskills Come Up

Three design-minded retreats offer fresh reasons to explore this bucolic corner of New York State.

BY SARAH BRUNING

THIS SCENIC MOUNTAIN region about two hours north of Manhattan has always been about rest—and reinvention. From the 1920s to the 60s it boomed as the Borscht Belt, full of sprawling resorts catering chiefly to summering Jewish families. Today, young urbanites and others fleeing the frenzy of the Hamptons are snapping up weekend houses in the area at an ever-increasing rate, and entrepreneurs are following their lead by opening small, design-y hotels all over the region.

The **Shandaken Inn** (*shandakeninn.com*; doubles from \$180), in the village of Shandaken, is set inside the 1920s-era clubhouse of the former Rip Van Winkle Golf Course. This rustic yet refined getaway—the brainchild of Catskills resident Jay Jacobs—has graphic textured wallpaper and restored wood-burning stoves. The 15-room property puts outdoor enthusiasts within 25 minutes of the popular zipline canopy tours on Hunter Mountain and 35 minutes of the hiking trail to Kaaterskill Falls, the tallest cascading waterfall in the state.

Seven miles down the road, near the Big Indian Wilderness forest preserve, is the third outpost from **Urban Cowboy** (*urbancowboy.com*;

doubles from \$245). Founded by former minor league hockey player Lyon Porter and his business partner Jersey Banks, the boutique-hotel group is known for its stylish B&Bs in Brooklyn and Nashville. Despite its rural setting, this 28-room lodge stays true to the brand's communal spirit: guests mingle at the nightly bonfires or over meals at the live-fire restaurant, which highlights foraged, seasonal ingredients. On-site pursuits include swimming and fishing for trout in the Esopus Creek, which runs through the grounds.

Located near Callicoon, about an hour and a half southwest of Big Indian, **Kenoza Hall** (*kenozahall.com*; doubles from \$409) began as a boardinghouse in the early 1900s, then served as a family home for about 60 years. Now Sims Foster and his wife, Kirsten Harlow Foster, who own the nearby DeBruce inn, have overhauled the building, marrying historic touches like the original hardwood floors with custom elements, including sleigh beds. As a complement to hiking, canoeing, and other vigorous activities, daily programming focuses on wellness (yoga, hydrotherapy, meditation).

Peak Picnic

“I’m not the most seasoned of campers, and the thought of having to shoulder a backpack full of cooking supplies kind of turns me off the experience. So I’m excited to know that, the next time I hit the trails, I can try Patagonia Provisions’ new Meal Kit (*patagoniaprovisions.com*, \$89), a selection of camp-ready staples like smoked fish and precooked grains that’s meant to sustain two active travelers on an overnight adventure. The kit comes with recipe cards, so you can even use the ingredients to whip up banana pancakes and seafood paella.” — Siobhan Reid

