

Title:

Old Sturbridge Village is a Dose of Yankee Hospitality

Word Count:

628

Summary:

Old Sturbridge Village has both feet planted firmly in 19th century New England. You'll experience the dawn of prosperity and modern commerce and what life was like in a typical New England village of the time. Get a taste for what's in store for you from this article...

Keywords:

old sturbridge village, sturbridge village, meetinghouses

Article Body:

Old Sturbridge Village has both feet planted firmly in 19th century New England. You'll experience the dawn of prosperity and modern commerce and what life was like in a typical New England village of the time. Role playing staff in period costumes recreate authentic discussions, and demonstrations of thoughts and skills, found during this exciting era in American history.

Once described in a 1950 article as "The Town That Wants to Be Out of Date," Old Sturbridge Village in Sturbridge, Massachusetts is a lovingly recreated village of early 19th century New England. The Village opened to the public in 1946 and received 5,000 visitors in its first year of operation. Today nearly half a million visitors a year experience the authentic buildings and wonderful collections of artifacts on display.

OSV has been a survivor. New England weather and accidents can be destructive to outdoor museums and Old Sturbridge Village has seen blizzards, hurricanes, flooding, and the occasional fire. Look for the high water mark notched on Gristmill on the millpond from Hurricane Diane.

Located 60 miles west of Boston off exit 9 on Route 90, Sturbridge Village is set among 200 acres of rural Central Massachusetts. Many of the structures are original and moved here from villages in Vermont, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. Reconstructed and restored with painstaking care they tingle your senses with their rustic charm, and simple Yankee designs.

Unpaved country roads lead you around the common and to outlying areas of

inviting barns and craftsmen establishments, such as the shoe and tin shops. Here you'll see and talk to role-playing 19th century craftsmen. Marvel as they skillfully produce goods using only the tools and resources available in the 1830s. Take the opportunity to discuss with them their skill and work and what they think about life - just remember their response will be from a 19th century viewpoint.

Both a museum and educational resource, Old Sturbridge Village is primarily a place to explore for all ages. The centerpiece is the recreated New England town and outlying areas containing more than 40 buildings to visit, experience, and enjoy.

Sturbridge Village contains residential homes, a printing office, a bank, and stores and shops. You'll learn why banks didn't do personal loans in those days - but who did. And why the buildings called Meetinghouses, weren't called churches - even though each Sunday most villagers spent four hours worshipping in them.

Stop by the Salem household in their handsome Towne House, and then visit and have tea at the Parsonage before calling on the Fenno and Fitch dwellings. These residential homes on the common in Sturbridge Village are full of surprises and homely comforts. And they're always open and welcoming to you.

And if you need to stop for refreshment, Sturbridge Village has plenty of picnic areas if you've brought your own food, or you can purchase hot and cold fare at Bullard Tavern, or treats at Little Cakes. Options to eat change with the seasons so be sure to check the guide the day you visit.

The vision of the original founders of Old Sturbridge Village was for a place to learn by doing and direct experience - an active outdoors museum. I've always found Sturbridge Village a welcome change of pace and reminder that quality of life has nothing to do with the latest wide screen TV or iPod.

Plan to spend at least 3-4 enjoyable hours at Old Sturbridge Village. Remember a ticket to Sturbridge Village is good for two days within a 10-day period.

Old Sturbridge Village is one of my favorite three living museums in New England. The other two are Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth, eastern Massachusetts, and Mystic Seaport in Mystic, Connecticut. All three for different reasons are marvelous experiences of New England's contribution to American history.