

Time Travel to Amish Country
By Chris Marek

Wishing for time to stop is something I often do, especially during my busiest days of necessary responsibilities. If only I could have more opportunities to reflect and savor the moments in my life that are so good, sweet and incredibly invaluable.

Recently I had that chance to actually turn the clock back when I journeyed to Ohio's Amish Country, located in Wayne and Homes Counties. It is the largest Amish community in the world. A place where the old meets the new on a daily basis, and the two peacefully coexist.

It was there that I found a people who purposely intend on living a lifestyle locked in time. They try to live in 20th -century America as their predecessors lived in 16th century Europe. It is the mission of the Amish culture to forever capture a simplicity of being that prioritizes community, family and resourcefulness of a time long ago.

The Amish do not choose to use many modern conveniences such as televisions, telephones or dishwashers. They also do not use motorized cars. Instead they travel mainly by horse drawn carriages. Their lives are based on agriculture, although many Amish have undertaken other occupations in recent years. Many are fine craftsmen, skilled in woodworking carpentry and cabinet-making, while others run their own businesses, including blacksmith, buggy repair shops and furniture stores. Still others run shops and restaurants that are popular with tourists.

The Amish Country offers a traveler a chance to widdle away life's complexities and apprehensions with its rolling hill forests, dairy cow farms, craft markets and carriage drawn buggies that are seen bumping along the rural roads.

Honeymooners to large families can enjoy a plethora of things to experience and discover. A good place to start and find lodging for a truly unique Amish Country experience is in the Loudonville-Mohican area.

The quaint town of Loudonville is located only 90 minutes from Cleveland and Columbus and about 3 hours from Detroit and Pittsburgh. Besides being a great resource for lodging it also provides a central meeting destination for reunions with friends and family who reside in the Midwest or East Coast.

It is in Loudonville that I found one of the best B & B's in the Midwest, according to the Chicago Tribune, which is called the Blackfork Inn.

The Blackfork Inn has two buildings for its guests and is only three blocks from Loudonville's pretty Victorian Main Street. Blackfork I is a 3-story 1865 French Empire home with a great front porch. Inside are high ceilings, original hand-grained woodwork, reproduction wallpapers, some made with silks and linen. The furnishings include the innkeepers' 40 years of collecting, including some early English and American treasures and loads of Victoriana, plus a wonderful collection of books. This house has six guest rooms, each with private baths.

Blackfork II is an 1847 house that was once a saloon for the railroad. Its décor is Early Victorian/Country, with original wood floors and Greek-Revival woodwork. It has two guest suites and an antique shop in front. Herb gardens and outdoor seating give guests a wonderful view of small-town activities and train passing the neighboring former station site.

Request for children and pets are considered on an individual basis.

For a more rustic experience in the Amish Country you can stay in the many cabin accommodations that are offered also in Loudonville. Particularly suited for families is the

Mohican Campground and Cabins with its choice of Log Cabins, A-Frame Chalets, RV Sites or camping. This place definitely is a wonderland for people who love the outdoors. It is within walking distance to mini-golf, go-karts, canoeing,, volleyball , beach area for swimming, fishing, hiking and planned activities. They even have horse stables nearby.

But if your taste is for refinement where only adults are welcome, then Landoll's Mohican Castle is the place to be. Landoll's Mohican Castle. located at 561 TR 3352 Loudonville is a new exclusive hotel but looks to me more like a very large alpine chalet. The castle is on a secluded 1100 acre resort with luxurious suites and cottages on beautifully landscaped grounds. The heavily forested property has springs, streams, golf cart and hiking trails, indoor pool and many amenities. It is definitely the place for romance and perfect solitude. Experiencing the Amish way of life can be found at Yoder's Amish Home and Working Farm. Located in Millersburg Ohio, the Yoder's have no overnight accommodations but this place does allow you insight as to who the Amish people are and how they live. You can tour two homes on a 116 acre working farm. Also on display is the large barn with animals, petting area, horse drawn hay rides and buggy rides are available. Special events for this farm include an Old-fashioned Butchering Days in late October and an Apple Butter Stirring event in September.

The Prairie Peddler Old West Festival in Butler, Ohio is a special event that occurs three times a year June, Oct. and Sept. At this event you can watch as costumed craftsmen demonstrate their trade. There are thousand of handcrafted items, pioneer foods cooked over open fires and plenty of entertainment.

From April to December, the Amish Country has all kinds of events. My favorites include the Amish Quilt Auction during June in Charm, the Mohican Music and Blues Festival in August at Loudonville and the Annual Shakespeare Festival that returns each October on the Wayne College Campus in Smithville.

The list of things to do in this part of the world is boundless. Choose from a never ending supply of unique attractions, shops, auctions and festivals, literally anything your heart desires can be discovered here. Plus, the homemade food restaurants are incredibly reasonable for the quality and delights that are served throughout the whole area.

It's a travel destination that can offer reflection. One cannot help but wonder how the Amish live without the modern conveniences so close to their homes and be so committed to their simplistic priorities. This beautiful, picturesque place gives you more than Amish material gifts. It lingers in your memories and thoughts for time to test until you wish to revisit its wonder again.

End

Word count 1036- (Edit away what you do not need.)

Amish Travel Resource Guides

Ohio Bed and Breakfast

www.ohiobba.com

Loudonville- Mohican Area Guide

www.loudonville-mohican.com

Ohio Amish Country

www.amish-heartland.com

