

Cooperstown

Seventy miles west of Albany, sitting gracefully on the wooded banks of tranquil Otsego Lake, is the almost aggressively pretty COOPERSTOWN, christened "Glimmerglass" by novelist James Fenimore Cooper, son of the town's founder. The fact that baseball is said to have originated here on Doubleday Field is commemorated by the inspired and spacious National Baseball Hall of Fame, on Main Street. Everything is displayed in such an attention-grabbing manner that even if you know nothing about the game it's difficult to remain uninterested. Babe Ruth gets a whole display to himself, while more of the greats are shown in action in photographs and videos (daily: May-Sept 9am-9pm; Oct-April 9am-5pm, Fri until 8pm; \$9.50; tel 607/547-7200). In summer, Cooperstown hosts classical concerts and the Glimmerglass Opera, north on Hwy-80 by the lake.

The local chamber of commerce runs a really helpful little visitor center

at 31 Chestnut St (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm; tel 607/547-9983,). If you're here June through August, leave the car at one of the free parking lots on the edge of town and take the trolley around the various sights (trolley runs 8am-9pm; \$2 all-day pass). Accommodation in the town itself is expensive, but there's a cluster of clean motels right on gorgeous Otsego Lake, a few miles north on Hwy-80; the Lake'N Pines (tel 607/547-2790 or 1-800/615-5253; \$50-75) offers superb value. For eating

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Clete Boyer's

, three miles south on Hwy-28 (tel 607/544-1112), serves gimmicky but tasty American food.