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CATSKILLS

**Borscht Belt
Museum**

**COMEDY. TALKS.
ART. MUSIC. FOOD.
FAMILY FUN.**

★ **Borscht Belt**
Fest 2025 ★
ELLENVILLE, NY

JULY
26-27

**SUNDAY
STREET
FAIR**



BORSCHTBELTFEST.ORG

**GET YOUR SHOW &
PANEL TICKETS**

DISCOVER THE
BORSCHT BELT MUSEUM
in Ellenville, NY!

CATSKILLS
**Borscht Belt
Museum**



Immerse yourself in the golden age of the Catskills resort era and its rich legacy as a refuge from bigotry, the cradle of stand-up comedy, and a cultural catalyst that changed America.

borschtbeltmuseum.org



@borschtbeltmuseum

BE A MENSCH: SUPPORT THE MUSEUM

ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE
Donate online at borschtbeltmuseum.org/donate.

Please make checks payable and mailed to:

Catskills Borscht Belt Museum
P.O. Box 45, Ellenville, N.Y. 12428



DONATE NOW!

CATSKILLS
**Borscht Belt
Museum**

**CURRENT
EXHIBIT:**



FOOD AND COMEDY IN
THE CATSKILLS RESORT ERA

OPEN
SATURDAY & SUNDAY
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

The Borscht Belt was a beloved summer escape for Jewish families from New York in the 20th century, offering relief from city heat with scenic resorts, traditional foods, and comedic entertainment. Many guests were Eastern European Jewish immigrants who brought with them kosher food customs and cultural traditions. The region became a symbol of assimilation and community, where food and humor came together to help shape a lasting Jewish American identity.



NOW ON VIEW
IN THE BACK GALLERY

NEW ARRIVALS!

SELECTIONS FROM THE MUSEUM'S COLLECTION



**JOIN CURATOR
DEBRA SCHMIDT BACH, PH.D.
FOR A GUIDED TOUR OF
"AND SUCH SMALL PORTIONS!"**

With her curatorial team, Schmidt Bach offers a flavorful and entertaining look at how meals and humor shaped the unforgettable culture of the Borscht Belt.

**SATURDAY, JULY 26
11:30AM & 2:00PM**

**SUNDAY, JULY 27
10:30AM & 2:00PM**



SATURDAY SCHEDULE

BLUE COMEDY: WHEN COMICS CROSSED THE LINE WITH LENNY DAVE

What made 1950s audiences gasp and roar? Borscht Belt comics who shattered taboos and redefined comedy. Audiences craved bold voices who turned stand-up into cultural rebellion. Their sharp, fearless humor exploded on stage, transforming polite society's limits and launching a revolution in what America finds funny. Join Host and Comedian historian Lenny Dave.

SATURDAY – 11:00 AM-12:00 PM, *The Annex: 83 Canal Street*



BORSCHT BELT CLASSIC

The latest and greatest in the grand tradition of standup comedy returns! Delivering the unmistakable flavor of Catskills comedy performed by comedians of all generations. Hosted by Bob Greenberg, featuring Beth Farber, Robin Fox, and Willie Zabar.

SATURDAY – 12:00-1:15 PM, *Studio at Shadowland Stages: 14 Market Street*



PUNCHLINES WITH CHUTZPAH: JEWISH WOMEN COMICS SMASHING BARRIERS

Join us for You Can't Teach a Fish to Whistle, a sharp, funny short play by Joey Novick starring Carole Montgomery, Ellen Karis, Nancy Redman, and Marla Schultz as four bold women at their weekly mahjong game. Also featuring Jason Pollack. Packed with wit and heart, this is a must-see celebration of friendship, humor, and fierce female voices.

SATURDAY – 12:30-1:45 PM, *The Annex: 83 Canal Street*



IMMIGRANT JAM

New York's longest running immigrant comedy show. It features a few of NYC's funniest immigrant and 1st gen comics who will make you laugh so hard you'll wish you were born somewhere else. Hosted by Lucie Pohl, with performances by Natan Badalov, Salma Hindy, Cansu Karabiyik, and Marcela Onyango.

SATURDAY – 3:00-4:15 PM, *Studio at Shadowland Stages: 14 Market Street*



BORSCHT BELT STORY HOUR

Come share your favorite Catskills memory at our Borscht Belt-themed Story Slam. Inspired by The Moth, storytellers will be selected to tell true, personal five-minute tales—funny, touching, or nostalgic. The audience will vote for their favorite, and the winner will receive a prize. Hosted by Joey Novick.

SATURDAY – 3:00-4:15 PM, *Tony & Nick's: 162 Canal Street*



FROM SHTETL TO STAGE: YIDDISH MUSIC OF THE CATSKILLS

Drummer Eve Sicular explores the vibrant music of the Borscht Belt where Yiddish melodies blended with Hollywood style to shape summer romance and Jewish identity. As leader of the band Isle of Klezbos, she shares clips and live demos that reveal how these unforgettable sounds became the soundtrack for Catskills life, from theaters, dance halls, and dining rooms to poolside lounges.

SATURDAY – 3:30-4:30 PM, *The Annex: 83 Canal Street*



LEGACY OF LAUGHTER: HONORING ROBERT KLEIN

The Borscht Belt Museum proudly honors comedy icon Robert Klein at our signature fundraising event. Enjoy a festive cocktail reception, followed by a special screening of the acclaimed documentary *Robert Klein Still Can't Stop Shaking His Leg*. Then, dive into a lively panel discussion featuring Robert Klein himself, director Marshall Fine, and Andrew Jacobs, New York Times journalist and Borscht Belt Museum Board President. The night culminates with a celebratory award presentation by beloved comedian Josh Gondelman, paying tribute to Klein's indelible mark on American comedy and his deep ties to the Borscht Belt legacy.

SATURDAY – 4:30-7:30 PM, *Borscht Belt Museum: 90 Canal Street*



BLIND COMEDY AUCTION

Ellenville native David Lonstein hosts a one-of-a-kind show where comedians perform, then auction off mystery items, without saying what they are. Think charades meets treasure hunt, featuring quirky artifacts donated by local businesses. Featuring standup from: Jason King, Hannah Lieberman, Igor Martinez, and Matt Storrs.

SATURDAY – 5:00-6:15 PM, *Studio at Shadowland Stages: 14 Market Street*



SCHTICK IN THE FAMILY

Sandy Hackett, Guy Richards, and Jeff Capri perform stand-up and share backstage stories in a lively Q&A. As sons of comedy legends Buddy Hackett, Sal Richards, and Dick Capri, they reflect on growing up with humor at home and in the Catskills. This heartfelt tribute honors family, legacy, and the golden age of American comedy.

SATURDAY – 5:30-6:45 PM, *The Annex: 83 Canal Street*



THE JEWISH DATING GAME

Not Your Motha's "Dating Game!" The Jewish Dating Game is a hilarious interactive dating game show with delicious prizes. Hosted by modern matchmaker, Linnea Sage. Watch people fall in love! A show for Jews and allies, singles and couples, all are welcome to this night of joy, fun, and love! The show will be from 6-7:30, and stick around after the show for a single-mingle and raffle with more fun and delicious prizes from local Jewish vendors!

SATURDAY – 6:00-9:00 PM, *The Common Good: 119 Canal Street*



ALEJANDRO PRESENTS: BORSCHT BELT COMEDY CLUB

Retired Nevele bellhop Alejandro Morales has some very special guests to check in to the festival! Share some laughs with a handful of talented out-of-towners hand-picked by the Borscht Belt Museum's own comedy curator. Featuring standup comedy from: Rachel Barnes, Emily Epstein White, Matt Hyams, Alejandro Morales, and Dorian Vasquez.

SATURDAY – 7:00-8:15 PM, *Studio at Shadowland Stages: 14 Market Street*



HEADLINER: JOSH GONDELMAN

Josh Gondelman is a comedian and writer known for his work on *Desus & Mero*, *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, and *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, where he won multiple Emmys and WGA Awards. His debut stand-up special *People Pleaser* (2022) showcases his sharp, kind-hearted humor and is available to stream now.

SATURDAY – 9:00-10:15 PM, *Studio at Shadowland Stages: 14 Market Street*





SUNDAY SCHEDULE

BORSCHT BELT STORY HOUR

Come share your favorite Catskills memory. Inspired by The Moth, storytellers will be selected to tell true, personal five-minute tales—funny, touching, or nostalgic. The audience will vote for their favorite, and the winner will receive a prize. Hosted by Pearl Lau.

SUNDAY – 11:00 AM-12:00 PM, *The Common Good*: 119 Canal Street



SOUP TO SCHMALTZ: THE DELICIOUS LEGACY OF BORSCHT BELT CUISINE

Discover the hidden culinary treasures of Upstate New York. Author June Hersh reveals how Jewish kitchens in the Catskills created uniquely American cuisine—from Borscht Belt brisket to iconic bagels. With serial entrepreneur Mike Dalewitz and legendary baker Seth Greenberg, they'll share stories, reinvented recipes, and insider knowledge from the hills where food history was made.

SUNDAY – 11:00 AM-12:00 PM, *The Annex*: 83 Canal Street



BORSCHT BELT CLASSIC

Another generous helping of the old-school comedy you know and love. Sunday's Borscht Belt Classic features a chuckle-worthy mix of the past and the present of standup comedy. Hosted by Ron MacCloskey, featuring performances from Ben Asher, Linda Belt, Allen Frishman, and Ivan Richter.

SUNDAY – 12:00-1:15 PM, *Studio at Shadowland Stages*: 14 Market Street



FROM BORSCHT BELT TO BIG TIME: INSIDE TELEVISION'S COMEDY FACTORY

Join comedy veterans Eddie Brill (Late Show with David Letterman), J.R. Havlan (The Daily Show), Rich Francese (Saturday Night Live), and Periel Aschenbrand, a bold voice in today's comedy and podcasting worlds, as they take you behind the scenes of TV's toughest and funniest creative spaces. Hear what it takes to write the jokes that keep America laughing.

SUNDAY – 12:30-1:30 PM, *The Annex*: 83 Canal Street



AUTHOR GARY SHTEYNGART & AARON HICKLIN IN CONVERSATION

Join acclaimed author Gary Shteyngart in conversation with Deep Water Literary Festival director Aaron Hicklin as they explore writing, Jewish identity, and cultural memory. From his early days in Leningrad to his rise as a celebrated novelist, Shteyngart shares stories, insights, and humor shaped by his heritage and the Catskills.

SUNDAY – 1:00-2:00 PM, *The Common Good*: 119 Canal Street



HEADLINER: COMEDIAN RABBI BOB ALPER

Get ready for smart, uplifting, and hilarious comedy from Bob Alper, an ordained rabbi with a doctorate from Princeton Theological Seminary and a veteran stand-up with 38 years of experience. Bob blends spiritual insight with sharp humor, delivering a performance that is both heartfelt and funny. He brings a truly one-of-a-kind voice to the comedy world.

SUNDAY – 2:00-3:15 PM, *Studio at Shadowland Stages*: 14 Market Street



DRAWING FUNNY: JEWISH HUMOR AND THE ART OF THE NEW YORKER CARTOON

Join moderator, Emily Nussbaum, critic and staff writer for The New Yorker along with New Yorker cartoonists Liana Finck, David Ostow, Asher Perlman, and Avi Steinberg for a lively conversation on Jewish humor's influence in American comedy and cartooning. Hear how they develop ideas and captions, navigate cultural references, and walk the line between clever and confusing in their work. A sharp, funny look inside the cartoonist's creative process.

SUNDAY – 2:30-3:30 PM, *The Annex*: 83 Canal Street



FICTIONALIZING THE CATSKILLS

Fiction writers Eileen Pollack and Lily Barrish Levner, both of whom grew up in the Catskills but in different generations, discuss how the resort era shaped their identities and their storytelling. Thea Wieseltier, director of public programs at 70 Faces Media, moderates this lively discussion about family, community, and nostalgia, and their power to spark and shape our imagination.

SUNDAY – 3:00-4:00 PM, *The Common Good*: 119 Canal Street



HEADLINER: SARGE

Meet SARGE: a larger-than-life, biracial Jewish comedian who went from homeless addict to headlining Radio City Music Hall. Now, he's a rapid-fire comic compared to Don Rickles, a self-taught piano savant, and a motivational speaker bringing "Comedy Therapy" to recovery centers nationwide.

SUNDAY – 4:00-5:15 PM, *Studio at Shadowland Stages*: 14 Market Street



HEADLINER: ELON GOLD

Elon Gold is a comedian, actor, and writer whose one-hour Netflix stand-up special *Chosen & Taken* received acclaim from audiences and peers alike. Known for his sharp wit and spot-on impressions, Gold blends clever observations with hilarious characters, delivering high-energy, smart, and relatable comedy.

SUNDAY – 6:00-7:15 PM, *Studio at Shadowland Stages*: 14 Market Street



10:00 AM - 4:00 PM, CANAL ST.

Featuring local artisans, nostalgic merchandise, and delicious food.

Events on the Hunt Memorial lawn:

DANNY LIPSITZ'S HIGH ANXIETY BRASS BAND

11:00 AM-12:30 PM

SIMON SEZ WITH STEVE MAX

12:30-1:00 PM

RUGELACH BAKE OFF

1:00-1:30 PM

KLEZMER BERL'S HOTSIE TOTSIE ORKESTER

2:00-3:30 PM

Visit **MIKE'S AMAZING FAMILY ACTIVITIES TENT** – fun for the whole family!

MULTI-DAY EVENTS



THE BORSCHT BELT TCHOTCHKE ROAD SHOW

BOOK YOUR TIME SLOT

Location: Lot next to the Borscht Belt Museum

SATURDAY, JULY 26 – 3:00-5:00 PM
SUNDAY, JULY 27 – 10:00 AM-12:00 PM & 1:00-3:00 PM

Got a Catskills keepsake? Bring it to the Borscht Belt Tchotchke Road Show — our donation event in partnership with the Barter Boat! The Borscht Belt Museum is collecting Borscht Belt memorabilia — from hotel matchbooks and expired resort IDs to camp T-shirts, family recipe cards, postcards, viewfinders, old vacation photos, and glamorous gowns from Catskills resort shows.

ART EXHIBITION: THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF LARRY RACIOPPO CAPTURING THE CATSKILLS: A CROSS-GENERATIONAL PLAYGROUND

SATURDAY & SUNDAY – 10:00 AM-4:00 PM, Hunt Memorial: 2 Liberty Square

PERFORMANCES BY:

BLUE FLAME

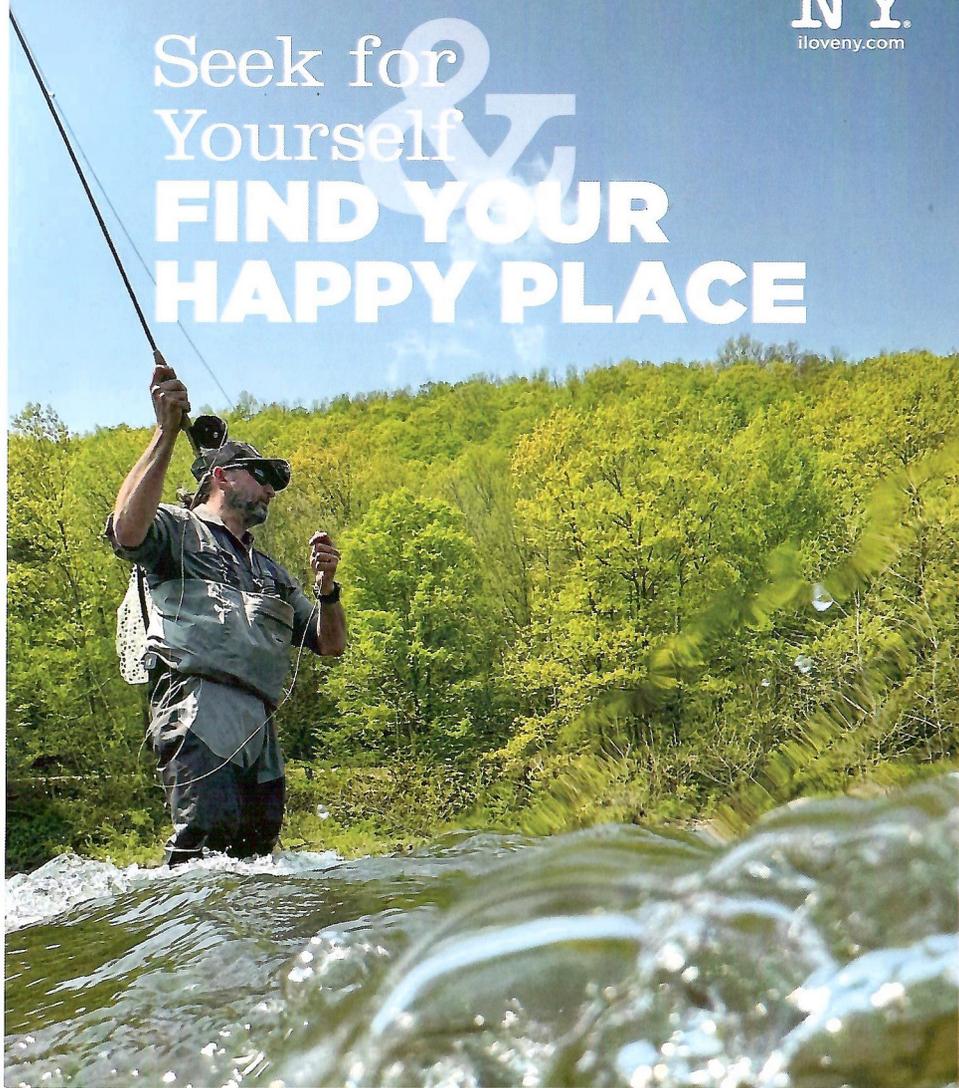
SATURDAY & SUNDAY – 12:00-2:00 PM,
In Front of The Methodist Church: 85 Canal Street



- 1 BORSCHT BELT MUSEUM: 90 CANAL ST.
- 2 HUNT MEMORIAL BUILDING + MIKE'S AMAZING FAMILY ACTIVITIES TENT: 2 LIBERTY SQ.
- 3 SUNDAY STREET FAIR: CANAL ST. & LIBERTY SQ.
- 4 TONY & NICK'S: 162 CANAL ST.
- 5 THE COMMON GOOD: 119 CANAL ST.
- 6 STUDIO AT SHADOWLAND STAGES: 14 MARKET ST.
- 7 THE ANNEX: 83 CANAL ST.



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And a HUGE THANK YOU to all of the volunteers and staff at Borscht Belt Museum & Fest!