

Guidebook: Great Houses

Upper Hudson

Olana

<http://www.olana.org/>

5720 Route 9-G

Hudson, NY 12534



Hours: The house is open by guided tours only; From the first Wednesday in April through Memorial Day, Wednesday-Sunday 10:00-5:00, June 1 through October 1, Wednesday-Sunday 10:00-6:00, October, Wednesday-Sunday 10:00-5:00, and November, Wednesday-Sunday 10:00-4:00. There is a minimal admission fee and special rates are available for school groups.

Notes: Group tour reservations for 15 people or more are accepted throughout the season.

Phone: (518) 828-0135

Historical Description:

Frederic Church, a Hudson River artist, laid out roads, planting thousands of trees, and dredging a marsh to create a reflecting pond. On a journey to the Middle East and Europe, the Churches were captivated by the Moorish architecture, which they felt provided a sense of permanence, rich associations with the past, and splendid decorative potential. Church personally created the interiors and exteriors of Olana. Construction began in 1870 and the family moved into the second floor in late 1872. Isabel Church died in 1899; Frederic the following year. Olana remained in the family until 1964 when plans were made to sell the carefully preserved house at auction. Soon after, Olana Preservation, Inc. was formed by art historian David Huntington (1922-1990). Under his leadership, Olana Preservation purchased the property in 1966. Olana was transferred to the State of New York later that year.

The Site:

On-site and outreach enrichment programs, slides, and lectures are available for school groups, community interest groups, college and university classes and clubs. Programs from the education or curatorial departments give interesting perspectives about Olana, Frederic Church, Victorian America, and the American Art scene in the nineteenth-century.

Directions:

Take the New York State Thruway (Route 87) to Exit 21/Catskill, then follow signs for Route 23 East/Rip Van Winkle Bridge. Cross the bridge and bear right on NYS Route 9-G South. The Olana entrance is 1 mile south of the bridge on the left.