



At 4,867 feet, Whiteface Mountain is the highest point along the Trans Adirondack Route.



DAY 1: It was a warm afternoon when I was dropped off with my mountain bike in Ellenburg Center, nine miles from the Canadian border. The blackflies were vicious, so I kept a fast pace along the county and town roads. It was sunset when I reached Lyon Mountain, where I spent the night in an old tailings pit.

DAY 2: I continued on bike along an old railroad bed, now a gravel ATV/snowmobile corridor. I rode through forest to Chazy Lake, then followed country roads, eventually descending toward the Saranac River. I hiked to calm, quiet Mud Pond. From there was the route's longest and, for me, the most difficult bushwhack, through blowdown, overgrown logging roads and swamps to Union Falls Flow. I eventually came out on a ridgeline on Duncan Mountain, overlooking the Taylor Pond Wild Forest, a beautiful place to spend the night.

DAY 3: From Union Falls dam, the route goes off-trail through the woods and cuts over to the southern end of Silver Lake. Then it picks up a snowmobile trail around to Taylor Pond. I emerged from the dense woods onto CR8, a snowmobile trail that crosses the entire park. I swam with a loon in Taylor Pond, then bushwhacked up the north ridge of Catamount Mountain. I slept on the summit beneath the stars.

DAY 4: I made a big push over Marble Mountain, the shoulder of Esther, where the trail was covered in snow, and on to Whiteface. By evening, atop Whiteface, there were stunning, 360-degree views across the region. I descended the peak's south face toward Whiteface Landing, to Connery Pond and then along River Road, using the moon to light my way.

Triple Dipping


THREE SUBLIME
SWIM SPOTS
THAT ARE WORTH
THE HIKE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHNATHAN ESPER

1

Cascade Lake TOWNS OF WEBB/LONG LAKE

It's only logical that a former girls' camp would be a good place for swimming. The 1.9-mile walk to the site of Lake Cascade Camp, built in the 1930s, follows an abandoned carriage road to the north shore of the lake. Primitive campsites are tucked in a clearing beneath towering white pines, the perfect spot for a picnic and a swim. A loop trail around the lake leads to impressive Cascade Lake Falls, which has a 35- to 40-foot, nearly vertical drop.

 **DIRECTIONS:** Take Big Moose Road from Eagle Bay. The trailhead parking lot is about a mile ahead on the right.

The Adirondack Park is dotted with lakefront beaches that have it all: playgrounds, lifeguards and, often, big crowds. But with a little bit of legwork, the following lakes reward with sandy shores, pristine views and—while we can't guarantee you'll have them to yourself—a quieter swimming experience.



Up the Chimney

A favorite local mountain in Indian Lake

Photograph by
Johnathan Esper

ROCKY PEAKS ARE A FAMILIAR FEATURE of Adirondack hikes—those bald, wind-swept domes that are the literal and figurative high point of many treks. But the 35-foot rock column that gives Chimney Mountain its name is unique within the Blue Line, looking more like the kind of jagged formation that might be found out West.

The chimney sits atop the east wall of a rift that formed as recently as the retreat of the last glaciers. Those same forces left behind numerous caves, making it a popular destination for experienced spelunkers.

The hike itself is a short one—about two miles round-trip—but fairly steep. To reach the trailhead, take Route 30 south of Indian Lake, turn left on Big Brook Road and follow it to the end, where there is a parking area on private property; the owners request a \$2 parking fee.