

Case study

Nacadia Healing Garden: A Case Study on the Benefits of Forest Bathing



Nacadia Healing Garden, nestled in Hørsholm Arboretum near Copenhagen, Denmark, stands as a modern-day Arcadia, offering a tranquil and therapeutic environment. Developed by Associate Professor Ulrika K. Stigsdotter and partners, it's a space where nature's healing powers are embraced and utilised, especially for soldiers with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This case study delves into the unique aspects and benefits of forest bathing at Nacadia.



[Adirondack Website](#)

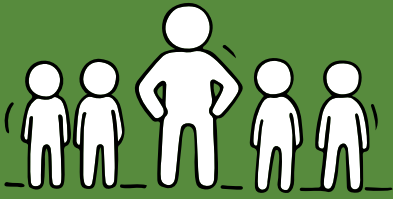


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Geographic and Environmental Context

The Adirondack Park covers over six million acres in New York State, making it the largest protected area in the contiguous United States. This expansive park features over a hundred peaks and approximately 2,000 miles of hiking trails. The park's native evergreens, including spruce, eastern hemlock, balsam, and pine, are not only aromatic but also release phytoncides. These airborne essential oils are known to boost natural immunity. Additionally, the evergreen needles, rich in antioxidants and vitamin C, can be used to make healthful teas.



Health Benefits

The primary health benefit of forest bathing in the Adirondacks comes from the inhalation of phytoncides. These natural compounds have been shown to offer a "shower" of benefits that can persist for weeks. Regular exposure to these compounds can lead to reduced stress, enhanced mood, and a stronger immune system. The consumption of tea made from evergreen needles adds to these benefits, providing a rich source of antioxidants and vitamin C.

More than 30 years of research studies into the health benefits of Forest Bathing have identified the following:

1. Reduces stress and anxiety as measured by lower levels of the stress hormone Cortisol
2. Lowers blood pressure and heart rate
3. Improves heart rate variability, a sign of reduced stress
4. Increases immune system T cells, which are responsible for fighting infection
5. Facilitates anti-cancer protein production





Local Expertise and Activities

Certified forest therapy guides Helene Gibbens and Suzanne Weirich from Adirondack Riverwalking offer year-round guided forest bathing experiences. These are available in locations such as Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, and the Wild Center, an award-winning natural science museum. These guided sessions provide structured experiences in forest bathing, ensuring participants gain the full therapeutic benefits.

Seasonal Highlights

The Adirondacks offer unique experiences throughout the year. Autumn is particularly notable for the stunning fall foliage, which adds a visual component to the forest bathing experience. In winter, snowshoeing becomes a popular activity, combining the benefits of forest bathing with the physical exercise of trekking through the snow-covered landscape.



The Adirondack Mountains provide an ideal setting for forest bathing, with their vast expanses of natural beauty and rich environmental features. The practice, supported by local experts, offers significant health benefits, including stress reduction and immune system enhancement. Seasonal changes in the region add variety to the experience, making forest bathing in the Adirondacks a year-round activity. This case study highlights the unique blend of natural beauty and health benefits that make the Adirondack Mountains a prime location for forest bathing.

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