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*Backgrounder*

**ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION IN HARTFORD  
FACTS AT A GLANCE**

**PERFORMING ARTS VENUES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

**Artists Collective**

[www.artistscollective.org](http://www.artistscollective.org)

The only multi-arts and cultural organization of its kind in Connecticut, Artists Collective emphasizes the cultural and artistic contributions of the African Diaspora by exposing students and the community to great artists of the past and present. The collective continues to offer the highest-quality training in the performing arts – dance, theater, music and visual arts. It also offers a series of jazz concerts by nationally known artists.

**Austin Arts Center**

[www.austinarts.org](http://www.austinarts.org)

Located on the campus of Trinity College, the Austin Arts Center presents a lively mix of music, theater, dance and visual arts, featuring guest artists, faculty and students.

**The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts**

[www.bushnell.org](http://www.bushnell.org)

Connecticut's premier presenter of the performing arts, the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts has played a leading role in the state's cultural life for 75 years. Access information on upcoming shows and events online, as well as select seats and purchase tickets.

**Chamber Music PLUS**

[www.chambermusicplus.org](http://www.chambermusicplus.org)

Chamber Music PLUS, one of the most active and innovative chamber music organizations in America, is the resident ensemble of the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art.

**Charter Oak Cultural Center**

[www.charteroakcenter.org](http://www.charteroakcenter.org)

Through exhibitions, performances, in-school programs, lectures and workshops, the Charter Oak Cultural Center serves as an arts showcase for the exploration of cultures strongly represented in the Hartford region. It also hosts more dance programming than any other venue in the region.

### **Cheney Hall**

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

A National Historic Landmark, Cheney Hall is the oldest operating theater in Connecticut and home to the Little Theatre of Manchester. Since 1960, this theater of, for and by the community has produced 577 performances of 133 major works. It also offers an impressive jazz and blues concert series featuring national artists.

### **CineStudio**

[www.cinestudio.org](http://www.cinestudio.org)

CineStudio at Trinity College is a premier New England movie theater experience for new releases and cinema classics.

### **City Singers of Hartford**

[www.citysingers.org](http://www.citysingers.org)

City Singers of Hartford is a 20-voice ensemble made up of singers from a variety of professional and musical backgrounds with a repertoire of a *cappella*, as well as accompanied works taken from many cultures and musical style periods.

### **CONCORA**

[www.concora.org](http://www.concora.org)

Connecticut Choral Artists is a professional chorus that has built an extraordinary reputation for musical excellence in Connecticut.

### **Connecticut Classical Guitar Society**

[www.ccgss.org](http://www.ccgss.org)

This is the largest non-profit guitar membership organization in the country devoted to presenting guitar music of all styles, including classical, acoustic, jazz, flamenco and folk.

### **Connecticut Expo Center**

[www.ctexpocenter.com](http://www.ctexpocenter.com)

Take a virtual tour of the trade show facility or plan a weekend by checking the calendar of upcoming events.

### **Connecticut Forum**

[www.ctforum.org](http://www.ctforum.org)

The Connecticut Forum encourages the free and active exchange of ideas that inform, challenge, entertain and inspire. Past forums have featured celebrities and renowned panelists such as Walter Cronkite, Toni Morrison, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Gloria Steinem and Gene Wilder.

### **Connecticut Opera**

[www.connecticutopera.org](http://www.connecticutopera.org)

Get show, ticket and membership information for the nation's sixth-oldest professional opera company.

### **Connecticut Repertory Theater**

[www.crt.uconn.edu/](http://www.crt.uconn.edu/)

Connecticut Repertory Theatre, the professional production arm of the University of Connecticut Department of Dramatic Art, produces a wide range of material, including

premieres, contemporary plays, American musical theater classics and great works of dramatic literature.

### **Farmington Valley Symphony Orchestra**

[www.fvsoct.org](http://www.fvsoct.org)

The Farmington Valley Symphony Orchestra is a community orchestra that performs five or more times during the concert season in a variety of venues in and around Farmington, Connecticut.

### **Hartford Children's Theatre**

[www.hartfordchildrenstheatre.org](http://www.hartfordchildrenstheatre.org)

Connecticut's premier theater and drama school for youth and families has been enriching the lives of younger residents and visitors for 15 years with creative theatrical performances. This organization brings together children of all ages, social, economic and cultural environments in a safe, supportive and encouraging environment to produce award-winning theatrical productions.

### **Hartford Chorale**

[www.hartfordchorale.org](http://www.hartfordchorale.org)

The Hartford Chorale, founded in 1972, is a chorus of more than 130 men and women who are selected annually through competitive auditions. Singers come from Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island, and represent diverse occupations and backgrounds.

### **Hartford Civic Center**

[www.hartfordciviccenter.com](http://www.hartfordciviccenter.com)

The Hartford Civic Center is Connecticut's largest premier sports and entertainment facility, and a preferred venue for large concerts. Go online for event and ticket information.

### **Hartford Jazz Society**

[www.hartfordjazzsociety.com](http://www.hartfordjazzsociety.com)

Founded in 1960, it now boasts over 700 members, and is the oldest continuously operating jazz society in the country. For over 40 years, the all-volunteer Society has never waived from its founders' goals to nurture jazz as America's gift to the music world, and to foster in each succeeding generation an appreciation and love for jazz in all its many forms. It offers a series of annual events, including jazz cruises and concerts.

### **Hartford Stage**

[www.hartfordstage.org](http://www.hartfordstage.org)

Hartford Stage is one of America's most distinguished not-for-profit professional resident theaters, internationally known for producing a wide range of drama, classics, provocative new works and neglected works from the past.

### **Hartford Symphony Orchestra**

[www.hartfordsymphony.org](http://www.hartfordsymphony.org)

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra is Connecticut's premier musical organization, widely recognized as one of America's leading regional orchestras.

**Meadows Music Centre**

[www.meadowsmusic.com](http://www.meadowsmusic.com)

Meadows Music Centre is a state-of-the-art indoor/outdoor amphitheater that has the capacity to hold close to 25,000 patrons, and offers 7,000 reserved seats

**National Theatre of the Deaf**

[www.ntd.org](http://www.ntd.org)

National Theatre of the Deaf is the oldest continuously producing touring theater company in the United States. Its highly visual performances and signature style of visual language give the audience an appreciation that no other theater company can approach.

**New World Trio**

[www.newworldtrio.org](http://www.newworldtrio.org)

Through wide-ranging presentations of both classical and contemporary chamber music, the ensemble entertains and educates audiences about valuable compositions seldom heard elsewhere.

**Park Road Playhouse**

[www.parkroadplayhouse.org](http://www.parkroadplayhouse.org)

The Park Road Playhouse, established in 1997 as The City Repertory Company, Inc., is the community theater for the Hartford area. Performers and technicians alike are all members of the community who work as volunteers, simply for the fulfillment and satisfaction of producing theater.

**Real Art Ways**

[www.realartways.com](http://www.realartways.com)

Real Art Ways is an alternative multi-disciplinary arts organization that presents and supports contemporary artists and their work, facilitates the creation of new work, and creatively engages and informs audiences and communities through exhibitions and films.

**Rentschler Field**

[www.rentschlerfield.com](http://www.rentschlerfield.com)

This 40,000-seat, open-air stadium located on 75 acres in East Hartford hosts a variety of athletic, entertainment, cultural and community events.

**Saint Joseph College**

[www.sjc.edu](http://www.sjc.edu)

Saint Joseph College's Carol Autorino Center presents performing arts events, family theater and art gallery exhibitions.

**SummerWind**

[www.swind.org](http://www.swind.org)

SummerWind is home to a variety of seasonal concerts and events with canopied and lawn seating.

### **TheaterWorks**

[www.theaterworkshartford.org](http://www.theaterworkshartford.org)

Commonly known as Hartford's Off-Broadway theater, it has acquired a reputation for first-rate staging of edgy plays that have enjoyed success in New York's smaller theaters.

### **University of Connecticut – Jorgensen Auditorium**

[www.jorgensen.ct-arts.com](http://www.jorgensen.ct-arts.com)

Offering more than 40 performances from September through May, Jorgensen hosts professional touring attractions for every taste, ranging from Broadway musicals to symphony orchestras, recitals and chamber concerts, dance, opera, pop, country, jazz, cabaret, multi-cultural and children's events.

### **University of Hartford – Hartt School of Music**

[www.hartford.edu/hartt](http://www.hartford.edu/hartt)

The Hartt School is nationally recognized for its educational programs in music, dance and theater. Visitors are treated to an array of professional and student productions.

### **Webster Theater**

[www.webstertheater.com](http://www.webstertheater.com)

Hartford's premier rock venue, the Webster features the hottest national and regional touring acts.

### **West Hartford Symphony Orchestra**

[www.whso.org](http://www.whso.org)

This community orchestra is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the town of West Hartford by presenting the highest-quality orchestral concerts for people of all ages.

### **Woodland Scholars**

[www.woodlandscholars.org](http://www.woodlandscholars.org)

The Woodland Scholars is a unique mix of professional singers from Connecticut and Massachusetts, whose individual talents allow for an eclectic arrangement of music ranging from a Palestrina mass to a Billy Joel lullaby.

## **MUSEUMS**

### **American Clock & Watch Museum**

[www.clockmuseum.org](http://www.clockmuseum.org)

Located in America's great clock-making town of Bristol, the museum and its research library are in the colonial-style Miles Lewis house, the historic Ebenezer Barnes wing and the modern Edward Ingraham wing. Visitors enjoy viewing the finest collection of American-manufactured clocks and watches on public display and many foreign ones.

### **The Amistad Foundation at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art**

[www.theamistadfoundation.org](http://www.theamistadfoundation.org)

Founded in 1987, this museum presents a vital collection of art and artifacts that document the history of the African-American heritage.

### **Ancient Burying Ground**

[www.omaxfield.com/hartford/burying.html](http://www.omaxfield.com/hartford/burying.html)

Once Hartford's only graveyard, the Ancient Burying Ground is the city's oldest historic site, dating back to the 1600s.

### **Antiquarian & Landmarks Society**

[www.hartnet.org/als](http://www.hartnet.org/als)

The Antiquarian & Landmarks Society, Connecticut's only statewide museum-based historical organization, promotes interest in special places by preserving and interpreting properties and collections of importance to Connecticut's heritage.

### **Butler-McCook House & Garden and Main Street History Center**

[www.hartnet.org/als/alsprop.html](http://www.hartnet.org/als/alsprop.html)

Built in 1782, Hartford's oldest surviving house contains the city's earliest collection of art, antiques and household artifacts.

### **Connecticut's Heritage Gateway**

[www.ctheritage.org](http://www.ctheritage.org)

A comprehensive directory of Connecticut's history resources for teachers, students, researchers and others who want to understand the world around them by exploring the state's past.

### **Connecticut Historical Society Museum**

[www.chs.org](http://www.chs.org)

The Connecticut Historical Society, the seventh-oldest historical society in the nation, is renowned for developing interpretive exhibitions like *Amistad: A True Story of Freedom*. It also manages Hartford's Old State House, the oldest state house in the nation.

### **Connecticut Trolley Museum**

[www.ceraonline.org](http://www.ceraonline.org)

Rumble through New England's history on a variety of lovingly restored trolleys. Admire the handsome mahogany woodwork in an enclosed streetcar, or enjoy the gentle breezes on an open car.

### **Dinosaur State Park**

[www.dinosaurstatepark.org](http://www.dinosaurstatepark.org)

With more than 2,000 tracks, Dinosaur State Park is one of the largest dinosaur track sites in the country. Spend a day walking in 200-million-year-old shoes and exploring the nature trails and arboretum.

### **Harriet Beecher Stowe Center**

[www.harrietbeecherstowecenter.org](http://www.harrietbeecherstowecenter.org)

Visit the Connecticut home of the internationally acclaimed author of Uncle Tom's Cabin. Open year-round, the Stowe Center is on the Connecticut Freedom Trail.

### **Hill-Stead Museum**

[www.hillstead.org](http://www.hillstead.org)

Track the changing seasons on 152 spectacular acres of one of the country's finest examples of Colonial Revival domestic architecture. Enjoy a moment of repose in the Sunken Garden or take a guided tour and view major paintings from Hill-Stead Museum's Alfred Atmore Pope Collection.

### **Huntington House Museum**

<http://members.aol.com/huntingtonmuseum>

The 6,500-square-foot Huntington House Museum is an example of Neo-Classical revival architecture and was modeled after a mansion in Newport, Rhode Island. It includes breathtaking leaded glass, 12-foot ceilings, and spectacular staircases, woodwork, china cabinets, built-ins and marble.

### **The Mark Twain House & Museum**

[www.marktwainhouse.org](http://www.marktwainhouse.org)

Step back to the Gilded Age on a year-round, guided tour of the home of one of America's most beloved authors. The 19-room Tiffany-decorated mansion is where Mark Twain raised his family and created such classics as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.

### **Museum of Connecticut History**

[www.cslib.org/museum.htm](http://www.cslib.org/museum.htm)

Dedicated to Connecticut's government, military and industrial history, the museum is home to permanent and temporary exhibits that trace the growth of the state and its role in the development of the nation from the Colonial era to the present.

### **New Britain Museum of American Art**

[www.nbmaa.org](http://www.nbmaa.org)

The New Britain Museum of American Art features one of the premier collections of American art in the nation, with more than 4,300 pieces. Artists represented include such notable names as Norman Rockwell, John Trumbull, Raphaelle Peale and Theodore Robinson.

### **New England Air Museum**

[www.neam.org](http://www.neam.org)

Celebrate the centennial of flight with a visit to the New England Air Museum, which features authentic and replica aircraft from the dawn of aviation to modern-day military airplanes, helicopters, gliders, ultralights and flight simulators.

### **New England Carousel Museum**

[www.thecarouselmuseum.com](http://www.thecarouselmuseum.com)

The Museum is home to one of the largest collections of antique carousel pieces in the country, which is dedicated to the acquisition, restoration and preservation of operating carousels and carousel memorabilia, and the creation of new carousel material for the education and pleasure of the general public.

### **Noah Webster House/Museum of West Hartford History**

[www.noahwebsterhouse.org](http://www.noahwebsterhouse.org)

Costumed guides lead tours and provide hands-on activities and educational programs at the childhood home of Noah Webster, author of the first American dictionary.

### **Old New-Gate Prison & Copper Mine**

[www.chc.state.ct.us/old\\_new.htm](http://www.chc.state.ct.us/old_new.htm)

First opened in 1707 as a copper mine; the tunnels of Old New-Gate became a prison in 1773 and housed prisoners of the Revolutionary War. Visitors today can walk the

grounds, visit the guardhouse and go down into the dark mines that became the home and final resting place of so many men.

### **Old State House**

[www.ctosh.org](http://www.ctosh.org)

Explore the beautifully restored Old State House or take a virtual tour online. Designed by Charles Bulfinch, this is the oldest state house in the country.

### **Oliver Ellsworth Homestead**

[www.ctssar.org/sites/windsor\\_ellsworth\\_homestead.htm](http://www.ctssar.org/sites/windsor_ellsworth_homestead.htm)

Explore the life and times of Oliver Ellsworth, who helped frame the United States Constitution, served as Connecticut's first senator and authored the Judiciary Act, which forms the basis of our present day federal judicial system.

### **Stanley-Whitman House**

[www.stanleywhitman.org](http://www.stanleywhitman.org)

See how the Stanley-Whitman House preserves and interprets the history and culture of 18<sup>th</sup>-century Farmington and serves as one of the finest examples of Colonial life and architecture in New England.

### **Science Center of Connecticut**

[www.sciencecenterct.org](http://www.sciencecenterct.org)

This is Connecticut's largest children's museum, offering year-round, unique, hands-on permanent and traveling exhibits. Among permanent attractions are the UTC Wildlife Sanctuary with live, exotic animals from around the world; astronomy/laser shows in the Gengras Planetarium; World Weather Window TV studio; KIDS Factory; IdeaZone; PlanetCyber computer adventures and the Explore Store.

### **State Capitol & Legislative Office Building Tours**

[www.cga.ct.gov/capitol tours/](http://www.cga.ct.gov/capitol tours/)

Take a tour of the State Capitol, a national historic landmark, observe the proceedings of the General Assembly and learn about the legislative process. Year-round tours are available for groups of all sizes.

### **Vintage Radio & Communications Museum of Connecticut**

[www.nationalcommunicationsmuseum.org](http://www.nationalcommunicationsmuseum.org)

When the museum opens in 2005, visitors will be able to trace the development of electronic communications technologies, from Morse code to radio and television, and from telephone to advanced technology.

### **Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art**

[www.wadsworthatheneum.org](http://www.wadsworthatheneum.org)

The Wadsworth Atheneum, America's oldest public art museum, was the first American museum to acquire works by Caravaggio, Salvador Dalí, Joan Miró, Balthus and Frederic Church. Its important collection attracts art historians, students and visitors from around the globe.

### **Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum**

[www.webb-deane-stevens.org](http://www.webb-deane-stevens.org)

The museum presents engaging exhibits and programs developed through thoughtful scholarship in social history, architecture, historic landscape and other related fields.

### **Wethersfield Historical Society**

[www.wethhist.org](http://www.wethhist.org)

Access information on historic sites, exhibits and educational tours for one of Connecticut's oldest towns, home to the state's largest historic district.

## **ATTRACTIONS AND HISTORIC SITES**

### **Calder's Stegosaurus**

Alexander Calder's massive yet whimsical steel sculpture towers above Burr Mall, next door to the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art.

### **Cathedral of St. Joseph**

[www.cathedralofsaintjoseph.com](http://www.cathedralofsaintjoseph.com)

This site combines contemporary design with stunning glass windows and interesting artwork, plus the world's largest ceramic mural depicting Christ In Glory.

### **Cedar Hill Cemetery**

[www.cedarhillcemetery.org](http://www.cedarhillcemetery.org)

This fine example of a Victorian rural cemetery is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Center Church**

[www.centerchurchhartford.org](http://www.centerchurchhartford.org)

With Tiffany stained-glass windows, this 1807 church was made famous by Thomas Hooker, a minister instrumental in framing the Fundamental Orders, a precursor of the Constitution.

### **Christ Church Cathedral**

[www.cccathedral.org](http://www.cccathedral.org)

Completed in 1828 and now beautifully restored, this is one of the oldest Gothic churches in the U.S. It also offers a lively music program.

### **Elizabeth Park**

[www.elizabethpark.org](http://www.elizabethpark.org)

The park encompasses 102 acres and boasts many garden areas, pathways, greenhouses, lawns, a picnic grove, a pond and recreation areas. Its world-famous rose garden includes 800 varieties of roses that amount to 15,000 plants. It is one of only 22 public All America Test Gardens in the country.

### **Heritage Trails Sightseeing Tours**

[www.charteroaktree.com](http://www.charteroaktree.com)

Hop on board for tours of historic homes, graveyards or dinner tours through Hartford and the region.

### **Travelers Tower**

[falconcam.travelers.com](http://falconcam.travelers.com)

At 34 stories tall, the tower reaches 527 feet above street level and was once the tallest structure in New England. The Travelers Tower observation deck is open to the public on weekdays from May through October, free of charge.

## **SPORTS AND RECREATION**

### ***Parks and Golf Courses***

#### **Connecticut Parks**

[www.dep.state.ct.us/stateparks/index.htm](http://www.dep.state.ct.us/stateparks/index.htm)

Access this online directory for Connecticut's forests and state parks, offering photos, directions and information on each site and available activities.

#### **Colt Park**

[www.healthy.hartford.gov/OpenSpace/OSParks.htm#Colt](http://www.healthy.hartford.gov/OpenSpace/OSParks.htm#Colt)

On Wethersfield Avenue, this dynamic park offers a public swimming pool, multi-play apparatus, basketball courts, baseball diamonds, a running track, volleyball courts, a flag football field, and a soccer and rugby field.

#### **Hartford Parks**

[www.healthy.hartford.gov/OpenSpace/OSParks.htm](http://www.healthy.hartford.gov/OpenSpace/OSParks.htm)

Access this online directory for all parks in the city of Hartford. Click on the name or the map to get full details and directions for any of the parks.

#### **Riverfront Recapture**

[www.riverfront.org](http://www.riverfront.org)

Riverfront Recapture is the organization leading the effort to restore public access to the Connecticut River in the Hartford region. A network of parks and public recreational facilities is taking shape. Visit this site to find out about events and activities on the river, and much more.

#### **TheGolfCourses.net**

[thegolfcourses.net/golfcourses/CT/Hartford.htm](http://thegolfcourses.net/golfcourses/CT/Hartford.htm)

Visit this online directory and get information and directions to golf courses in the Hartford region, plus a description of each course, prices and lists of available lodging in the area.

#### **MDC Recreation Areas**

[www.themdc.com/recreation.htm](http://www.themdc.com/recreation.htm)

Get detailed information on where to hike, bike and swim in any of the three natural playgrounds maintained by the MDC.

#### **Ski Areas**

[www.newenglandski.com/ct/](http://www.newenglandski.com/ct/)

Go online for up-to-the-minute ski reports on Connecticut's ski areas.

### ***Arenas / Stadiums***

#### **Hartford Civic Center**

[www.hartfordciviccenter.com](http://www.hartfordciviccenter.com)

The Hartford Civic Center is Connecticut's largest premier sports and entertainment

facility, and the place to catch a Hartford Wolf Pack hockey match or a UConn Basketball game.

### **Rentschler Field**

[www.rentschlerfield.com](http://www.rentschlerfield.com)

This 40,000-seat, open-air stadium located on 75 acres in East Hartford is the home of UConn football, and hosts a variety of other athletic, entertainment, cultural and community events.

### ***Sports Teams***

#### **Hartford Fox Force**

[www.bluefoxent.com/foxforce](http://www.bluefoxent.com/foxforce)

The Hartford FOXFORCE, part of the World Team Tennis (WTT) Pro League, features tennis like you've never seen it. WTT showcases some of the biggest names in the world playing together in an innovative co-ed team format. Access schedule and ticket information online.

#### **Hartford Wolf Pack**

[www.hartfordwolfpack.com](http://www.hartfordwolfpack.com)

Check out Hartford's professional hockey team, the Wolf Pack (AHL affiliate of the New York Rangers), at the Hartford Civic Center. Access the roster, statistics and schedule, or purchase tickets online.

#### **New Britain Rock Cats**

[www.rockcats.com](http://www.rockcats.com)

The Rock Cats are the AA Eastern League affiliate of the Minnesota Twins and one of the hottest tickets in Connecticut. Access schedule and ticket information.

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