

**City of Utica History** - Utica was first settled in [1773](#), on the site of [Fort Schuyler](#) which was built in 1758 and abandoned after the [French and Indian War](#). The city's name was said to have been picked out of a hat; named after [Utica, Tunisia](#). During the [American Revolution](#) the original settlement was destroyed by [Tories](#) and [Native Americans](#). The settlement was eventually rebuilt. Utica was incorporated in [1832](#).

**Waterways:** Utica's location on the [Erie Canal](#) stimulated its industrial development. The middle section of the Canal, in the Utica/Rome area, was the first portion to open in 1820. The [Chenango Canal](#), connecting Utica and [Binghamton](#), opened in 1836, and provided a further stimulus for economic development by providing water transportation of [coal](#) to Northeast Pennsylvania. The Erie Canal (currently part of the New York State Canal System) is a canal in New York State that runs from the Hudson River to Lake Erie, connecting the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean. The Chenango Canal was a towpath canal that existed in the middle 19th century in upstate New York in the United States.

The [Erie Canal](#), the [Mohawk River](#), and [New York State Thruway](#) pass through the north part of the city. The Erie Canal (currently part of the New York State Canal System) is a canal in New York State that runs from the Hudson River to Lake Erie, connecting the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean. The Mohawk River is a major waterway in north-central New York. The New York State Thruway (officially the Governor Thomas E. Dewey Thruway) is a limited-access toll highway in New York State.

**Industries:** [F. W. Woolworth](#) opened his first store in Utica in 1878. By late 19th century, Utica had become the home of the textile industry of the U. S., but, by the mid-20th century, virtually all of the textile mills closed and migrated South. In the wake of the demise of the textile industry, Utica became a major player in the tool and die industry, which thrived in the late 19th & early 20th centuries, eventually declining in the late 20th century.

In the early and mid-20th century, Utica had become a major manufacturing center for radios, manufactured by the [General Electric](#) company, which, at one time, employed some 8,000 workers there, known as: "The radio capital of the world." By the mid-1960s, General Electric had moved its radio manufacturing to the Far East. In the early 1990s, GE's Light Military Electronics operation in Utica was sold to [Lockheed Martin](#) and soon closed altogether. In 1996 the facility was purchased by Oneida County's Industrial Development Association for lease to ConMed Corporation for use as a manufacturing facility and the company's worldwide headquarters, bringing 500 new jobs to the area.

The [Utica Psychiatric Center](#) has been open in Utica since [1843](#). It was New York's first state-run facility designed to care for the mentally ill and was one of the first such institutions in the United States. Because of the decline of industry and employment in the mid to late twentieth century, Utica became known as "The City that God Forgot."

**Weather:** Utica enjoys the four seasons. The nearby Adirondacks, numerous lakes and parks draw people and recreational boaters in the summertime. In the winter, with the average snowfall nearly 99", Utica hosts Central New York's largest winter festival, [Snowfari](#), drawing winter recreational enthusiasts while raising funds for the Utica Zoo.

**Populations:** in the year 1840, the population of Utica was 12, 782. In 1960, Utica's population was 100,410. As of the [2000 census](#), there were 60,651 people, 25,100 households, and 14,231 families residing in the city. The [racial makeup](#) of the city was 79.42% [White](#), 12.92% [African American](#), 5.79% [Hispanic](#) or [Latino](#), 2.21% [Asian](#), 0.05% [Pacific Islander](#), 0.28% [Native American](#). The median income for a household in the city was \$24,916, and the median income for a family was \$33,818. Males had a median income of \$27,126 vs. \$21,676 for females. The [per capita income](#) for the city was \$15,248. 19.8% of families & 24.5% of the population were below the [poverty line](#), including 38.0% of those under age 18 & 12.1% age 65 or over.

The arrival of a large number of [Bosnian](#) immigrants over the past several years stanchd a population loss that had been steady. Bosnian immigrants constitute 10% of the total population of Utica. The city's economy is heavily dependent on commercial growth in its suburbs, a trend characterized by development of green sites in neighboring villages, doing little to revitalize the city itself.

**Cultural Venues:** Utica contains several different music venues. Throughout the summer, Utica has a celebration of Visual Arts, Performing Arts, History and Heritage, called Utica Monday Nite. Utica is also home to the Utica Symphony Orchestra and home of the Stanley Theatre for the Performing Arts, a 2,945 seat Mexican-baroque movie palace, built in 1928, and designed by theater architect Thomas Lamb, that is fully restored and serves as the premier cultural showcase for the region. The theatre is undergoing a major renovation to enlarge the stage area and attract large productions.

**Museum's:** Utica is the home of the [Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute](#) Museum of Art, housed in an imposing International-style building, built in 1960, designed by noted architect [Philip Johnson](#), who considered it to be his finest work. Open throughout the year, [The Children's Museum of History, Natural History, Science & Technology](#), located at 311 Main Street in Utica, NY, attracts local visitors and global tourists. Built in the 1890's, the museum is housed in an historic building.

Utica is home of the Utica Memorial Auditorium, a 4,000 seat multi-purpose area, built in 1959, fully renovated in the 1990s. The "new" Madison Square Garden, in New York City, was modeled after it. Utica also has an impressive public library founded and funded locally, now a [Carnegie library](#). Founded in 1838, its current home, a handsome structure on Genesee Street, dedicated in 1903, extensively renovated in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

**Hotels:** Utica is home of the Radisson Hotel & Conference Center, a world-wide chain, and of Hotel Utica, a Renaissance Revival structure, built in 1912, that was meticulously restored in 1999-2001, patterned on the restoration of The Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C., at a cost of \$13 million, currently part of the Clarion Collection hotel chain.

**Utica's Universities** include [Utica College](#), [State University of NY Institute of Technology](#), Pratt at [Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute](#), [Mohawk Valley Community College](#), and [Utica School of Commerce](#). Nearby colleges include [Hamilton College](#) in Clinton, [Herkimer County Community College](#) in Herkimer, and [Colgate University](#) in Hamilton.

**Annual Events:** Utica is the site of the annual [Boilermaker Road Race](#) (the largest 15K road race in the United States), and the [National Distance Running Hall of Fame](#).

Utica's sole remaining public high school is [Thomas R. Proctor High School](#), its original public high school, Utica Free Academy, founded in 1814, having shuttered its doors in 1987. Utica is also home to Notre Dame High School, a small parochial high school, founded in 1959 by the Xaverian Brothers.

**Utica, New York** is a [city](#) in the state of [New York](#), and the [county seat](#) of [Oneida County](#). The current mayor of Utica is David Roefaro. The City of Utica is situated within the region referred to as the [Mohawk Valley](#) and the Leatherstocking Region in Eastern New York State. The Mohawk Valley region of the state of New York includes the industrialized cities of Utica and Rome, along with other smaller commercial centers.

Like many industrial towns and cities in the northeastern [Rust Belt](#), Utica experienced a major reduction in manufacturing activity in the past several decades, and is in serious financial trouble; many public services have been curtailed to save money. Suburbs in Utica have begun to experience [suburban sprawl](#); this is common in many [Upstate New York](#) cities. Recently notable efforts have been made to revitalize the Downtown and Oneida Square areas of Utica by planning the construction of quality apartment housing.

**Popular Culture:** In an episode of *The Office*, the stars drive to Utica, NY. Although they did not actually film this in Utica, Utica locals had to send in actual objects to decorate the set in order for it to look like an actual Utica Branch.

**Local Inventions:** The first color newspaper, "The Utica Saturday Globe" was published in Utica. The "Union Suit" - a long red underwear jumpsuit with a buttoned flap on the backside was invented in Utica. The first International telegraph was sent by Moses Bagg from the historic Baggs Square Park, located on Main Street in downtown Utica, next door to The Children's Museum.

**Food:** Utica has many offerings of ethnic food, mostly Italian and Polish but also Greek and Lebanese. There are many Vietnamese, Bosnian, Puerto Rican and Dominican stores and restaurants in the city. Popular are: Tomato Pie (a pizza like food served at room temperature), Chicken Rigatoni; Jelly Buns, Greens, Sausage & Peppers.

**Brewery:** Several widely distributed beers are brewed at the historic F.X. Matt Brewery including the Saranac line of beers, and [Utica Club](#), a naturally-aged pilsner beer, which was the first beer to be sold in the United States after Prohibition was repealed. Other famous sites include Baggs Square, the Val Bialis Alpine Ski Area, in Roscoe Conkling Park in the heart of Utica, one of the few municipal ski areas in the US.

**Notable Uticans:** Dave Cash, Major League Baseball player; Gary Chalmers, superintendent on *The Simpsons*; Roscoe Conkling, US Senator and 19<sup>th</sup> century Republican party leader; Annette Funicello, Former Mouseketeer, actress; Robert Esche, NHL hockey player; Ward Hunt, Supreme Court Justice; Mark Lemke, Major League Baseball player; Mark Mowers, NHL hockey player; Tiffany Pollard, reality star ('New York'); Horatio Seymour, 1868 Democratic Party presidential nominee; James Sherman; 27<sup>th</sup> Vice President of the United States; Isaac Singer, inventor; Will Smith, NFL football player; Andy Van Slyke, Major League Baseball player; Steve Wynn, Las Vegas developer; James Zogby, founder of Arab-American Institute; John Zogby, pollster & founder of Zogby Int'l.