

The Northeast Region

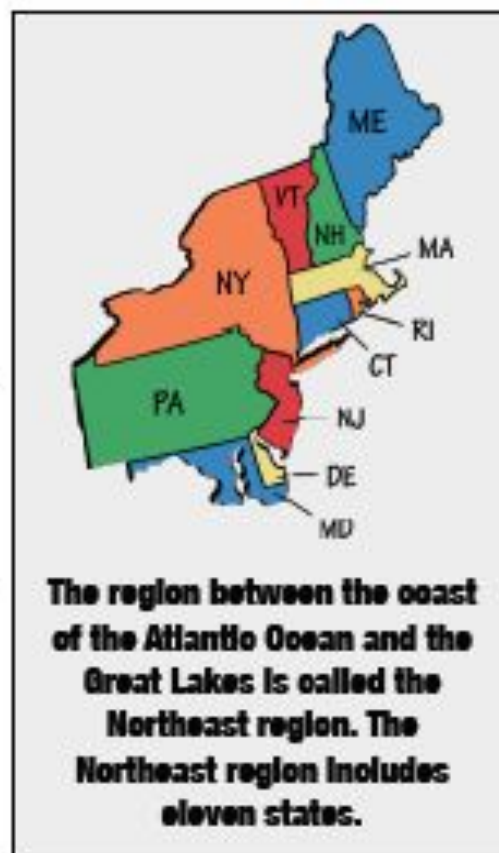


The Northeast has the largest city, New York City, and the smallest state, Rhode Island. Although it's the smallest region in size, it is home to the most people. And it's home to our nation's capital.

Land and Water

The Northeast region has broad valleys, rolling hills, and low mountains. The Appalachian Mountains stretch from Maine in the Northeast region down to Alabama in the Southeast region. Several different mountain ranges make up the Appalachian Mountains, including the Allegheny Mountains, the Pocono Mountains, the Adirondack Mountains, and the Catskills.

The longest hiking trail in the world is the Appalachian Trail. It goes from Maine to Georgia, along the spine of the mountain range, through more than 2,000 miles of valleys, hills, and rivers. The Appalachian Trail is a very popular place to hike. Many people have hiked the entire trail!



The region between the coast of the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes is called the Northeast region. The Northeast region includes eleven states.



The Appalachian Mountains are one of the oldest mountain ranges in the world. Although they used to be very tall, they are much smaller now. Over time, water, wind, and ice have caused the rock of the mountains to slowly break down. Now the peaks of the Appalachian Mountains are smooth and rounded.

Mount Washington in New Hampshire is part of the Appalachian Mountain range. At 6,288 feet tall, Mount Washington is the highest peak in the Northeast. The peak of Mount Washington is one of the windiest places on Earth. The highest wind speed ever recorded there was 231 miles per hour. Winds exceed hurricane force (75 mph) over one hundred days a year.



From the top of Mount Washington, visitors can see for a hundred miles.

The land in the lower part of the Northeast is good for farming, but the upper part of the region is not. The soil in the upper part is very rocky. Long ago, mile-thick sheets of ice called glaciers covered much of the land. As the glaciers moved across the land, they wore down mountains, carved deep grooves into the coastline, and carried away most of the fertile soil. The melting glaciers formed many lakes. Rocks and sand left behind by glaciers formed islands and capes.



Today, jagged cliffs rise up to a hundred feet above the ocean on the northern coast.

The most important waterway in the region is the Erie Canal, which connects the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean. A canal is a ditch dug across land to connect one waterway with another. The Erie Canal is 363 miles long. Before the Erie Canal was dug, there was no waterway that crossed the Appalachian Mountains. Moving goods by boat is faster and cheaper than traveling across land, so it was very difficult and expensive to move goods from the Northeast to other parts of the country without the Erie Canal.

Lake Ontario and Lake Erie form part of the border of the Northeast region. Lake Ontario and Lake Erie are two of the five Great Lakes. The Great Lakes are a group of five freshwater lakes located in eastern North America, on the border between Canada and the United States. The Great Lakes are so large they can be seen from the moon! The Great Lakes hold one-fifth of all the fresh water in the world.



There are many lighthouses along the rocky coastline of the Northeast region. Their lights and foghorns keep ships from crashing into the rocky shore. The most well known lighthouse is in West Quoddy Head, Maine, the most northeastern point of the United States.



As water flows out of Lake Erie into Lake Ontario, it flows over Niagara Falls. Niagara Falls is a 160-foot tall waterfall, the second largest waterfall in the world, on the border between the United States and Canada.

Climate

The Northeast region is about halfway



between the North Pole and the equator, so the climate is very different throughout the year, with four distinct seasons ranging from warm, sunny summer months to bitterly cold winter months. Winters in the Northeast are long and cold, with many snowstorms. One kind of snowstorm, called a northeaster, can bring over a foot of snow at one time. During the cold winter months, Lake Erie may freeze over completely.

The climate affects the people, animals, and plants that live there. People have to cope with cold winters. Animals' food supplies change with the seasons. Squirrels bury nuts to dig up in winter. Bears and other animals hibernate. They sleep for up to 100 days. Trees like maples and oaks drop their leaves each winter to survive the lack of water.

Products and Natural Resources

The Northeast region has many forests, and logging is an important industry there. Trees



are cut down to make houses, paper, furniture, and fuel. Vermont is known throughout the world for its delicious maple syrup produced from the sap of the sugar maple tree.

Some of the resources of the Northeast come from underground, like granite, marble, and coal. Granite and marble are used to make buildings. Vermont has the largest granite quarries in the country.



Cranberries grow in damp bogs and soft marshy areas. Most cranberries are harvested when growers flood their bogs and use harvesting machines that loosen the cranberries from the vine. With small air pockets in their center, cranberries float to the water's surface. Growers corral the berries, and then conveyors lift them from the bog onto trucks and then to processing plants.

The soil in parts of the Northeast region is rocky and the growing season is short, but some fruits and vegetables are grown in the Northeast. Farmers grow blueberries and potatoes. Other farms produce chickens, milk from dairy cows, and flowers. Cranberries are grown in sandy marshes in the Northeast region. Massachusetts is called the Cranberry Capital of America because it produces nearly two million barrels of cranberries a year, which are used to make juice and cranberry sauce.

The Northeast region has many rivers and waterfalls. This was very important in the growth of the region because the power produced by the running water made it possible for people to build mills, or factories. By using water driven power, people could run machines and make things much faster than people could at home by hand. Today, factories use other sources of power instead of waterpower, but the Northeast region continues to be an important manufacturing center in the United States. Iron, glass, steel, and many chemicals such as shampoos, paints, and medicines are manufactured in the Northeast.

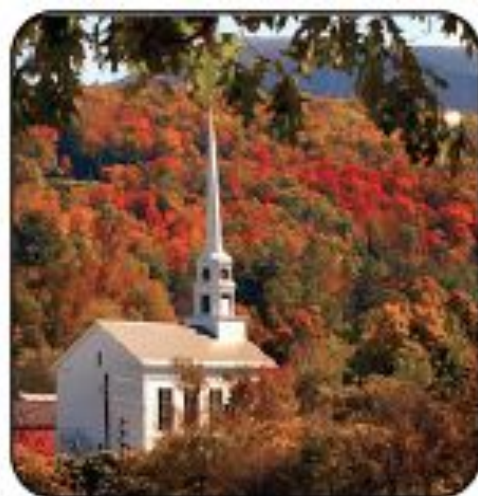
The Atlantic Ocean is an important resource for fish, lobster, and shellfish. Once these shellfish are caught, they are shipped to food stores and restaurants all over the country. Fish farming is called aquaculture. Fish are raised on farms and are sold for the purpose of eating. This helps protect the populations of fish that are born in a natural environment.



Lobsters are harvested year-round in Maine, although most are caught between late June and late December when the lobsters are most active.

Landmarks

There is beautiful scenery throughout the Northeast region. Many tourists visit the Northeast region in the fall to see the brightly colored autumn leaves. These tourists are known as "leaf peepers."



The capital city of the United States is located in the Northeast region. The capital city is called Washington,

D.C. "D.C." stands for

District of Columbia. The

White House, the Capitol, the Supreme Court, and many other government buildings are located in Washington, D.C.



Philadelphia's historical museums welcome people from around the U.S. each year. You can visit Independence Hall where the U.S. Constitution was written. The Liberty Bell, Betsy Ross's house and Ben Franklin's Post Office are also located in Philadelphia.

Tourists can also visit Hershey, Pennsylvania, "the sweetest place on Earth." A hundred years ago, Milton Hershey started a candy business using mass production, a way of making large amounts of the same product. The Hershey bar was America's first mass-produced candy bar. Today, Hershey's factory is the largest chocolate factory in the world. Visitors can design their own candy bar, work in the factory packaging Kisses, and ride the roller coasters at Hersheypark. Because of the factory, the whole town smells like chocolate.



New York City, New York is the largest city in the United States. It is home to over 8 million people. To make room for all of these people, New Yorkers began building skyscrapers. The first skyscrapers were built over a hundred years ago. People live and work in these very tall buildings. The Empire State Building is New York's most famous skyscraper. This office building has 102 floors. Millions of tourists visit New York every year. They enjoy museums and plays. They visit famous places like the Statue of Liberty.

Culture

Food

Clam chowder, crab cakes, lobster and other seafood are among the region's most popular foods. Lobster rolls, made with lobster meat mixed with mayonnaise served on a hot dog bun, and fluffernutters, sandwiches made with peanut butter and marshmallow creme, are often eaten for lunch.

Northeasterners eat a lot of dairy products, too. They eat more ice cream per person than any other region in the United States. Blueberry pie made with wild Maine blueberries, whoopee pies, and salt water taffy are other popular desserts. Baked beans, potato chips, and buffalo wings were all invented in the Northeast region.

Fun

Two of our most popular sports were invented in the Northeast region. Dr. James Naismith invented basketball in 1891. You can visit the Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts. Four years later, William



Morgan invented volleyball in Holyoke, Massachusetts.

Many people in the Northeast enjoy contra dancing and square dancing. People also enjoy hiking and snow skiing in the Appalachian Mountains. They enjoy going to museums, plays, and musical performances, too.

People

The Northeast coast of the US was one of the first places to be settled by Europeans. The Pilgrims were among the first when they arrived on the Mayflower. Most of the states in the Northeast region were among the thirteen original colonies.

Millions of other immigrants settled in this region of the country, too, making this area "The Melting Pot of America." From 1892 until 1954, over 12 million immigrants passed through Ellis Island, an immigrant processing center, and many of them stayed in the Northeast.



Today, the Northeast region has many of our country's largest cities. It is called a megalopolis, or megacity, because Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, DC blend into each other. Over 50 million people live in the megalopolis. That's 17% of the US population in only 2% of the land area.