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## Pick America's Scariest Haunted House: The Northeast Region

Posted 10/22/10 3:22 pm ET by Matt Thompson in News



Ah, the Northeast: land of maple trees, liberal arts colleges, and two of the most insufferable fan bases in professional sports (HINT: we're not talking about the Hartford Whalers faithful). But how are those East Coast elites at terrorizing people? Check out the region's entries on our search for [America's scariest haunted house](#) to find out.

### Nightmare: Superstitions (New York, New York)

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Leave it to New York City to take things to a whole new level of insanity. Built by a Broadway vet (and staffed by aspiring Broadway actors), Nightmare: Superstitions has the kind of art direction you'd expect in a city known for its art world weirdos (don't miss the robotic vagina that spurts out an actor in a baby diaper). Built around the theme of violating superstitious taboos, NS requires visitors to participate (who dares open an umbrella indoors?) before blindsiding them with horrifying effects and disturbing scares. Our favorites are the "Don't give away a rabbit's foot room" (filled, naturally, with skinned rabbits), and the "Don't break a mirror room" (a funhouse so confusing that visitors have been known to walk smack into their own reflection).

## Pennhurst Asylum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

They could have put anything in Pennhurst Asylum and it would have made this list — an ice cream parlor, a craft supply store, a DMV. The reason is simple: Pennhurst Asylum is a real, abandoned asylum. Think Arkham, with a bit of the Bates Motel thrown in for ambiance. Pennhurst Asylum the attraction plays this history to the hilt— its "morgue" is a real morgue, its "lobotomy room" is a real lobotomy room. This realism isn't without controversy, as mental health advocates have protested its opening. As a result, before you walk through the haunted house, you can check out a three room museum depicting the history of the institution. Talk about horror...

## Headless Horseman Hayrides (Ulster Park, New York)

Washington Irving's contributions to American culture were pretty random. Along with his world's-worst-hangover story "Rip Van Winkle," he pretty much invented our modern conception of Santa Claus, coined the phrase "the Almighty dollar," and, oh yeah, made up the headless horseman myth. Ulster Park's Headless Horseman Hayrides plays off this legend with one of the world's best haunted hayrides. Set in the same type of upstate New York town that Irving called home, the attraction combines crazy pyrotechnics, lavish ride-through sets, and custom-made costumes. Some might find the hayride format a tad underwhelming (it's kind of hard to sneak up on a giant tractor) but the awesome sets more than make up for the lack of surprise.

## Haunted Overload (Lee, New Hampshire)

Set on a working, 200-year-old farm in central New Hampshire, Haunted Overload combines the best of the haunted house and hayride formats. By setting the experience on the paths through the woods behind the farm, set designers are able to embrace the scope of the outdoors with the creepy intimacy of a haunted house. The results don't disappoint. Giant handmade wooden demon heads whose eyes are lit with fire snap at you as actors burst out of the woods dressed as witches. Even if you aren't freaked by the design, you'll be struck by the ridiculous number of jack-o-lanterns (it reportedly takes a team of 30 volunteers an entire day to carve them all). Definitely one of the classiest attractions on this here list, Haunted Overload has all of the best of New England — old farms, handmade craftsmanship, pumpkins — and none of the worst (Red Sox fans).

Which Northeastern haunted house is the scariest? ( Poll Closed )

Nightmare: Superstitions (New York, New York) 46.07%

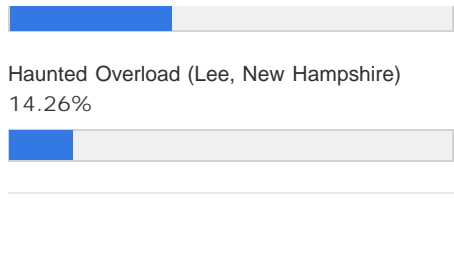


Pennhurst Asylum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) 2.87%



Headless Horseman Hayrides (Ulster Park, New York) 36.8%





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