



Meet Cameron Adams and Christine McAfee, owners, Seneca Sol

Tell us your story:

Our story is a bit more like a fairytale than a standard bio. Let's start this tale with a brief background of Cameron and Christine. Before coming to upstate New York eight years ago, Cameron was eco-camping his way up and down the Pacific Rim. Christine had just gotten back into town from island hopping and glamping through Central America. Christine had a good job in the Finger Lake wine industry and a beautiful piece of property overlooking Seneca Lake in Burdett, NY and Cameron was taking classes at Binghamton University. In less than a month after meeting and finding out we were pregnant, life sped up.

Both being entrepreneurial at heart, Cameron and Christine quickly decided they needed to start a business. Cameron's background in carpentry and hotel/restaurant management; combined with Christine's beautiful property and many years in the hospitality/wine industry led them to starting Seneca Sol.

They needed help. A conversation began with Judy McKinney Cherry at SCOPED in Watkins Glen. With help from SCOPED, some retirement dipping, and guidance from their CPA, Seneca Sol was started.

Seneca Sol opened Memorial Day weekend in 2016. We now offer six sites that are pet -friendly, family-friendly and eco-friendly. Christine offers guided wine tours for up to 6 guests in her luxury SUV as "Seneca Sol Guide Wine Tours". Couples, families, and groups are our target demographic. Currently sitting on 25 acres, Seneca Sol is growing. We recently added a fishing pond and outdoor kitchen while future plans include an alpaca farm, a loft overlooking Seneca Lake, a whole house rental, and a treehouse.

What has helped you succeed and gain experience?

Glamping is a relatively new business concept so there aren't many business models to follow. Glamping, or luxury camping, is a concept of combining all the amenities of a hotel hidden within a densely wooded ecosystem. Asking ourselves the question what we would want out of a luxury camping experience helped us to build this business: attention to every detail and a long list of amenities were both key. Manicured hiking trails, custom roast coffee at the complimentary breakfast, a campfire with s'mores, an outdoor kitchen, fishing pond and a large, modern bathhouse with all toiletries provided are many of the outstanding feature at our facility. Every day is a learning experience. Listening to our guests' suggestions and ideas has been very helpful in growing this business. Guests love meeting us and our babies, and provide wonderful feedback.

What inspires you?

Our guests inspire us. Guests from all over the world and different backgrounds all seem to enjoy glamping. Our demographic is young and old, families, retirees, newlyweds and international glamping enthusiasts. It's such an inspiration and driving force for us to dazzle them with all that the Finger Lakes has to offer: wineries, waterfalls, horseback riding, hiking, sailing, dining and just soaking in the views.

What keeps you up at night? What are your challenges?

This region has experienced an incredible amount of rainfall in recent years. We love rain, but the amount of rain has made it very challenging. When there is a rainstorm or a cold weather spell we get very nervous that our guests may not have the best experience. Though we cannot control the weather we do offer complimentary umbrellas, wellies, and extra blankets, as well as extreme cold blankets. It's not easy running a business completely contingent upon the weather.

What is your favorite local activity?

We have two toddlers that take up every minute of our spare time. On the rare occasion that we can get away, we love to have a fine meal and glass of wine at many of the farm to table restaurants in the area.

Is there anything else we should know about you?

Cameron grew up in Kansas but would vacation in Burdett, because his grandparents lived on Tug Hollow Road. He never thought he would wind up settling down in the same small town he visited in his youth. Christine used to own a certified organic farm specializing in grass fed beef and pork. She has managed a number of wineries on Seneca Lake and is WSET certified through advanced level. Cameron and Christine first met at Two Goats Brewing and the rest is history.

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