

# ONTARIO

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THE POSSIBILITIES  
IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

DISCOVER NORTHERN ONTARIO'S  
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## CONTENTS

Planning your Northern Ontario getaway just got a lot easier with this handy guide. Within these pages you'll find all the details you need to plan your adventure. We've got it all covered—attractions, events, shopping, restaurants, hotels, inns, cottages, historical sites—if you can find it in Northern Ontario, you'll find it here. Although, with a sprawling area of over 800,000 square kilometers, maybe we missed a few details. But don't worry. You can always visit us online at [ontariotravel.net](http://ontariotravel.net) to explore even more great ideas and insights.

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To find out about Northern Ontario's Great Outdoors, just







# FRESH FROM THE LAKE

Food just tastes better outdoors. And as my wife and family are discovering, actually angling for the main course adds a whole new dimension to the experience.



By James Smedley



If you're interested in catching your own meal, Northwest Ontario offers an abundance of challenging (and delicious) possibilities. Covering over 120,000 square miles, this Northern Ontario region boasts over 150,000 lakes, rivers and streams, and all teeming with fish. Species are just as varied—walleye, northern pike, muskie, small and large mouth bass, and trout. Is it any wonder why the Northwest has earned a reputation as the most popular fishing destination in Canada?



It's certainly one of my top spots, a thought that's present as we drift over a rocky shoal of a large Northwest Ontario inland lake casting jigs for walleye. My wife and I are in one boat, my parents in another and my daughters are in a third boat with our guide. It's been a busy morning—catching and releasing large fish from shoals, shoreline and weed edges.

As breakfast starts to wear off, the focus shifts to the shore lunch our guide has promised. He's situated the girls right over the fish, and an instant later, my 12-year-old swings a 17 inch walleye into the boat. Even my mother

gets into the action, contributing several of the 14 to 17 inch fish our guide says are best for eating.

By the time we nose the boats onto a sundrenched sandy beach our attention is squarely on lunch. While our guide fillets a mountain of fish, the girls collect firewood and the rest of us watch the deep iron pan of oil heating as fish fillets are dredged in a mixture of flour, salt, and pepper, and other spices.



Only after the oil is smoking hot does the cooking start, with the union of hot oil and coated fillets producing an audible sizzle. Within minutes, crispy golden-brown chunks of fish emerge from the pan.

After the corn, beans and coleslaw have been set out, and the potatoes and onions have accepted a light dusting of salt, we line up and load our plates. A notable silence falls over the group as we sit on a log on the warm sandy beach and savour the classic Northern Ontario shore lunch.



## Monster hunting.

Once you've filled up at your shore lunch, it's time to burn off those calories. With thousands of fishable lakes teeming with virtually every species in the province, Northwest Ontario will give you a great workout as you hunt down your next trophy catch. And remember—when angling for these big fish, the region has a catch and release policy in effect.

### Walleye

Typical walleye stretch from 15-17 inches long, and trophies can exceed 10 pounds.

### Trout

From lunker lakera to speckled and rainbows, a good day on the water in Northwest Ontario is the norm. Brookies at eight pounds are possible on remote arctic waterways. The Nipigon River has the Ontario record brook trout at 14.8 pounds. The region also boasts hundreds of cold, deep lakes where lake trout over 30 pounds can be found.

### Muskie

With waters such as Lake of the Woods, Eagle Lake and Lac Seul, the region produces a great number of muskie, along with many super-sized catches. It's not unusual for anglers to haul in fish exceeding 50 inches in length and weighing over 40 pounds.



### Northern Pike

This fighting fish is a favourite for many anglers, with some of the largest fish exceeding 45 inches in length and tipping the scales at over 30 pounds.

### Bass

With both small and large mouth bass, Northwest Ontario is home to some of the biggest bass tournaments in Canada.



# SOMETHING FOR EVERY 'TASTE'

by Elle Andra-Warner

Art, history, culture and great food. Northwest Ontario has it all—rock art created thousands of years ago, award-winning museums and art galleries, festivals celebrating everything from blues and folk music to multiculturalism, Norseman bush planes (Red Lake is the Norseman Capital of the World), and, of course, great restaurants to sample and savour.

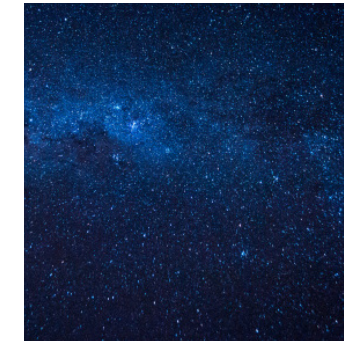


It was right here in the Northwest where First Nations artists developed the stylized paintings of the 'Woodland School of Art' led by the legendary Ahnissnabae trailblazers; Norval Morrisseau and Roy Thomas.

Woodland School is a visionary art style using bold colours in dramatic representations of the spirits, legends and traditions of Ojibwa culture. Norval Morrisseau founded the school in the 1960s while he was working the gold mines in the Northwest community of Red Lake. A permanent exhibit, housing his famous painting Thunderbird, is housed in the world-class Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre.

About 20 years later, the self-taught Longlac-born artist Roy Thomas, guided by memories of his grandmother's teachings and stories of Ahnissnabae culture, brought his own distinctive influence to the Woodland School of Art. His interpretation of the 'Life Spirits of Air, Land, Water and Fire' have placed him as an icon in the Woodland art movement.

Go stargazing using one of the largest telescopes in Central Canada, or take a Star Walk at Fort William's new David Thompson Astronomical Observatory.



Fur-trade history continues to be a big part of the Northwest art, culture and heritage. To bring that history alive, visitors can step back into 1815 at the 25 acre Fort William Historical Park in Thunder Bay (the world's largest reconstructed fur-trade post) and experience the fur-trade era through its 42 reconstructed historic buildings.

Gain a better sense of the region's history at Kenora's award-winning Lake of the Woods Museum; Nipigon Historical Museum (love the building's front mural); Dryden Museum with its "Dryden Buck" and 10,000 artifacts. The uniquely-designed Geraldton Interpretive Centre situated beside the highway on the site of an old gold mine; Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre with its cool multi-media exhibits and historic displays; and the innovative exhibits at Thunder Bay Museum.

After you've taken all of that in, you'll probably want to stop off for a bite to eat. The only difficulty you'll have is choosing what to enjoy. There are many restaurants to choose from that offer an equally diverse range of cuisine. The multitude of grilles, restaurants, bistros and bars have every palate covered with dining experiences inspired by Japanese, East Indian, Thai, Jamaican, Lebanese, Polish and Portuguese cultures.

For more information go to [visitnorthwestontario.com](http://visitnorthwestontario.com)



## Down by the T-Bay

Thunder Bay's awe-inspiring landscapes and rich cultural history make it a must stop. Northern Ontario's second most populated city has a lot to offer, including attractions like Fort William Historical Park and the awesome Sleeping Giant. Thunder Bay is also unique, as it's the only Northern Ontario city that features an International airport, so getting there is made that much simpler.

Then there's Prince Arthur's Landing at Marina Park—Thunder Bay's signature recreation destination. This \$130 million development is a mixed-use village and animated waterfront park that's reconnected Thunder Bay's downtown core to the glistening shores of Lake Superior. Prince Arthur's Landing features 22 art installations including eight major sculptures, along with restaurants, accommodations, shops and more coming in Phase 2 of the expansive development.

You can find out more about the Waterfront District and Thunder Bay by checking out [visitthunderbay.ca](http://visitthunderbay.ca)



# A SUPERIOR STRETCH OF ROAD

by Rick Vosper



Photo credit : Ethan Meleg



The drive through Algoma Country along Highway 17 from the Big Goose (located in scenic Wawa to the waterfront in Sault Ste. Marie) should take two and a half hours. I've never been able to do that. There are too many trails to hike, waters to fish, views of Lake Superior to gasp at, historic sites to see, Native pictographs to marvel, craft shops to frequent, art galleries and restaurants to visit, beaches to lay on, cabins to stay in, canoes and kayaks to paddle, birds to watch... okay, you get the picture (oh and hundreds of pictures to take). This is a "Superior" stretch of highway.

You pull away from the shadow of Wawa's Big Bird and head south on King's Highway 17. Perhaps you're still savouring the memory of paddleboards on Michipicoten Bay and the morning sun at your lakeside lodge.

As you descend the hill at Old Woman Bay, the World's largest lake flashes diamonds and distracts you from finding the face of the Old Woman Nokomis, hidden in the towering cliff. She entices you in to the pebble beach guarded by her stony gaze.

Something, Nokomis perhaps, gently tugs you into the campgrounds and trailheads of Lake Superior Provincial Park (LSPP) and onto the beaches at Katherine's Cove and Sand River. She leads you to ancient rock paintings and into the Agawa Bay Visitors Centre, where you can hear all her stories.

## WE PUT THE 'AWE' IN AWESOME!

Whether it's exploring the Great Outdoors or enjoying some unique urban attractions, Algoma Country has what you're looking for.

### NATURE AND ADVENTURE

Backpacking, hiking, canoeing, kayaking, golfing, cycling, wildlife viewing, skiing, snowshoeing—there are so many ways to explore this beautiful region of Northern Ontario.

### FISH & HUNT

Drive, fly or train in, Algoma has some of the best fishing in Ontario. Cast your line for wallopig walleye, powerful northern pike and bodacious bass. For hunters, the region has healthy populations of, wolf, deer, smaller game and wild fowl.

## Amazing vistas and stunning panoramas are your constant companion as you cruise slowly south towards new discoveries.

At Montreal River Harbour, the highway dips down to the lake 500 feet below, revealing rocky outcrops and cozy cabins nestled in the protected cove.

Boat launches and canoe rentals provide admission to the canvas you've been admiring from above. Kayaks now beach along three kilometres of sand at Pancake Bay, where voyeurs in Montreal Canoes once tarried over lunch. You can tarry too—over fresh whitefish and lake trout in Batchawana or overnight at one of the motels, cabins or campgrounds.

So much to see and do! At Chippewa Falls, the halfway point of the Trans-Canada Highway, the trout and salmon battle the raging water as they head home for spring or fall spawning. Beautiful beaches at Harmony and Haviland, plus mountain biking and hiking with rooms and food nearby.

You savour one more glimpse of that marvelous lake as you climb the Mile Hill and onto more memory making moments in Sault Ste. Marie. The trip only took me eight hours this time. You can linger even longer on King's Highway 17.

### GRAND ALGOMA DRIVE

For the second year, this Hwy 129 / Hwy 17 tour has been named the number one weekend motorcycle route in all of Ontario.

### DEER TRAIL TOURING ROUTE

Hike along ancient lake bottoms, pass cascading waterfalls, and check out the view from 100 foot cliffs on this breathtaking 120 kilometre (72 mile) journey.

**Algoma**  
That real.





# AN ARTISTIC JOURNEY

Truly Inspirational

By: Conor Mihell

Between 1918 and 1922, five members of the Group of Seven—Lawren Harris, J.E.H. MacDonald, A.Y. Jackson, Arthur Lismer and Frank Johnston—retreated to Northern Ontario to paint the rugged scenery east of Lake Superior. Boxcars on the Algoma Central Railway served as their mobile studios and overnight residences while the artists spent their days sketching from canoes and atop high rocky vistas.

Not so long ago, riding the rails was how most people travelled. While trains have taken a backseat to other modern modes of transportation, many look forward to experiencing a journey that takes them down this particular memory lane.

This holds especially true for the Agawa Canyon Tour Train. A one day excursion that carries you 114 miles north of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario – culminating in an hour-and-a-half-stop-over in a wilderness park. Along the way, you’ll cross impressive trestles, glide alongside shimmering waters, chug through ancient granite rock formations, and witness the vast mixed forests of the Canadian Shield.



The journey is made even more captivating with some recent improvements made to the train cars. These include larger windows, GPS triggered narration in various languages and a locomotive mounted camera for a bird’s eye view of what lies ahead. It’s a truly remarkable adventure, which explains why some of the famed Group of Seven’s most renowned works were inspired by the rugged landscapes you’ll witness during your tour.

## Historical Beauty

Even a passing visitor would agree that Sault Ste. Marie lives up to its motto of “Naturally Gifted.” To the north and east, the Trans-Canada Highway bisects a rugged gauntlet of Canadian Shield hills; from atop the International Bridge, Lake Superior gleams like quicksilver and the St. Mary’s Rapids race between sandstone shores. The signs of human occupation appear minuscule alongside the Algoma region’s endless sprawl of lakes, rivers and trees.

Now Imagine over a century ago when this was truly a frontier. Early painters captured tantalizing scenes on canvases: Ojibwa paddlers navigating birchbark canoes through wild rapids, a log fur-trading post set on the fringe of dark forest, and a shanty town of French Canadian voyageurs. Artists like Anna Jameson, George Catlin, Paul Kane and William Armstrong travelled through the Algoma region in the 19th century.

The area’s first resident artist was F.J. Falkner, who moved to Sault Ste. Marie in 1863 and called it the prettiest place he had ever seen. His oils and watercolours, many of which are stored in trust for the museum at the Art Gallery of Algoma, capture scenes of a waterfront village, including the Government Dock, the Ermatinger Old Stone House, and the town’s original pulp mill.

**“I believe there are healing powers in nature. When you’re inspired by the beauty around you, there is a very profound effect.”**



## Ride the Rails

If you want to get inspired just like those renowned artists that formed the Group of Seven, it’s time to catch a ride on the fabled Agawa Canyon Tour Train. You can choose from some great two or three-night packages that include accommodations, train tickets and passes to some great local attractions.

**Booking your trip is as easy as visiting [saulttourism.com](http://saulttourism.com)**





# BIG ADVENTURE IN NORTHEASTERN ONTARIO

by Laura Gregorini

## BIG Attractions

Get up close and personal with nature's scientific wonders at Science North in Sudbury. Science North is Northern Ontario's largest attraction, and offers hands-on experiences like defying gravity in the gyroscope, handling a flying squirrel, or being surrounded by butterflies in the butterfly gallery.

The Big Nickel is another BIG attraction in Sudbury, which is literally 64 million times larger than the nickel you'd find in your pocket.



It towers over Dynamic Earth, a facility that brings you underground to discover what cataclysmic events shaped the Sudbury Basin.

Further north, you'll find a centre dedicated to the well-being and preservation of polar bears. The Cochrane Polar Bear Habitat is home to resident polar bears, Ganuk and Inukshuk. During the summer months, you can join Ganuk for a swim in an adjoining pool, separated by a large plate of reinforced glass.

## BIG Heart

Every summer, the city of Timmins comes together to organize a series of events. Whether it's the Summer Concert Series, the Timmins Rotary Ribfest, or the Great Canadian Kayak Challenge, the city has a way of pouring their heart into every event.

The city is framed by nature, and you'll find countless ways to experience it outside of the festivals. Take a guided wildlife tour, kayak Mattagami River, or wakeboard on Gilles Lake. Your options are only limited by your imagination.

Find a full listing of festivals and events on [northeasternontario.com](http://northeasternontario.com)

## BIG Highways

The call of the open road is strong. Sweeping expanses of highways connect the cities in Northeastern Ontario, and they're just waiting to be explored. There are five touring routes: The Georgian Bay Coastal route, Manitoulin Island Tour, Lake Temiskaming Tour, Lake Nipissing Circle Tour and Great Legends Tour, will expose you to the majesty and mystery of "The North." You need only visit [ridethenorth.com](http://ridethenorth.com) to find out more.

## BIG Tours

North Bay, which is nestled on the shores of Lake Nipissing, seems to be built for touring. A walking tour of the vibrant downtown, or the Kate Pace Way to North Bay's waterfront, are simple ways to uncover the city's true beauty. Along the waterfront, you'll find the Heritage Railway & Carousel, as well as the Chief Commanda II cruise line. You can choose from cruises navigating the Manitou Islands, the French River, or Callander Bay by the light of sunset.



## BIG Gatherings

Cities in Northeastern Ontario tend to do festivals in a BIG way.

New Liskeard Bikers Reunion rings in the summer on the last weekend in June. It is arguably the biggest motorcycle event in Northern Ontario, packed with live performances, family-fun activities and camping. It ends on a high note with a freedom ride to raise funds for community cancer care.

Hawewater Festival takes over Manitoulin Island on the first weekend in August. Hawewater was a name given to people from the island, who regularly ate the Hawberry. The Wikwemikong Annual Cultural Festival and Pow-wow takes place on the same weekend, and ushers in traditional Aboriginal drummers and dancers from around the world.

Ribfest says it all, doesn't it? Sudbury's Ribfest on Labour Day long weekend has gotten so BIG, they shut down Elgin St. for three days. Six professional rib teams, family fun zone, demonstrations, live music and a huge car / motorcycle show, make this event a perfect summer send-off.

*Northeastern  
Ontario*  
CANADA



# THE (REALLY) GREAT OUTDOORS

By Laura Gregorini



With its borders stretching over 184,000 square kilometres, or nearly 71,100 square miles, Northeastern Ontario is undeniably BIG. But more than being just a big region, Northeastern Ontario also boasts BIG outdoor experiences and bucket list worthy wilderness experiences.



We begin our journey in Killarney Provincial Park—renowned as an outdoor adventurer’s paradise and a haven for those who love paddling on tranquil waters. With crystal blue lakes, towering white quartzite ridges, and iconic windswept pines, it’s no wonder why it’s considered the crown jewel of the Ontario Parks system. Take the day to hike or canoe and enjoy the solitude and stark beauty of this untouched natural setting. For avid adventurers, visit one of the area’s guides and outfitters who are waiting to customize your outdoor experience or take the short drive to the Town of Killarney for world-famous Georgian Bay fish and chips, cozy accommodations and unparalleled hospitality.

Next it’s on to Temagami—a Northern hotspot for outdoor enthusiasts. Cruise or paddle the waters of Obabika Lake in search of ancient pictographs (Indian rock paintings) or set your sights on

Caribou Mountain and the Fire Tower and test your comfort with heights. The 100 foot tall tower stands on the summit of Caribou Mountain—400 feet above the town and 1,300 feet above sea level. It’s an ideal spot to take in the majestic old growth pines that make Temagami a sight to behold.



Your Northeastern Ontario journey continues as you’re taken back in time to ride the rails of the Polar Bear Express to the towns of Moosonee / Moose Factory. Nestled along Moose River, which connects to James Bay, Ontario’s saltwater coast, these unique communities are only accessible by air or by rail, both of which depart regularly from Cochrane, Ontario. If you venture out to Moose River where it empties into James Bay, you can drop a line in the water for a chance to reel in the ‘big one’ or view playful seals as they cut through the northern waters. Take a guided boat tour to James Bay for a breath of the fresh saltwater air and a glimpse of the region’s beluga whale population when in season.



## A Treasure of an Island

Whether arriving by crossing the iconic 100+ year-old swing bridge in Little Current, or by boarding the MS Chi-Cheemaun ferry (also known as the BIG Canoe) in Tobermory, Manitoulin Island is a must stop. The largest freshwater island in the world has more than 100 inland lakes and offers plenty of hiking trails, like the famous Cup and Saucer Trail. For those who are looking to enjoy nature from a comfortable seat, Manitoulin’s long, winding roadways and breathtaking scenery are perfect for slow scenic drives and motorcycle touring.

If you’re interested in exploring the Island’s unique geological formations, visit Misery Bay Nature Preserve. The animals, plants and glacial features found in this provincial park are among some of the rarest in the province – the perfect place to geocache a little relic



of your own. Stop in at the eco-friendly visitor centre or enjoy the fresh air on one of the park’s numerous hiking trails.

To immerse yourself in the Island’s rich heritage and culture, visit the Great Spirit Circle Trail, which specializes in authentic Aboriginal experiences that embody the traditions of the Anishinaabe people of Manitoulin Island. This nature-based attraction offers wilderness eco-adventures and educational tours. Led by Aboriginal hosts, guides, and storytellers, the Great Spirit Circle Trail is truly an authentic experience that can’t be missed.





EXPLORERS' EDGE

# THE GREAT CANADIAN WILDERNESS

With something for everyone the Explorers' Edge region of Ontario is the ideal destination for folks who want to get away from it all – without having to go far.

By Kate Monk



## How Do You Like Your Wilderness?

For generations, the Explorers' Edge region of Ontario has welcomed visitors who seek to experience the Canadian wilderness in all its magnificence – without having to travel long distances to get to it.

Located just two hours north of Toronto by car, easy access to Canada's sparkling blue waters and lush forests isn't the only distinct feature of the region.

Here, in every season, you can enjoy the wilderness in your preferred style of travelling, from being pampered at exclusive accommodations to relaxing in a resort cottage, to indulging at a spa and roughing it at one of the many wooded campgrounds.

Options for experiencing the incredible landscape are unlimited, too.

Head off the beaten path and explore over a dozen national and provincial parks, as well as the 'Amazing Places' of the UNESCO-designated Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve. Kayak, canoe and stand-up paddle boarders have their pick of thousands of miles of waterways to discover, including the stunning Pickerel River system in Loring-Restoule and the portage routes of Algonquin.

Snowmobilers, motorcyclists and ATV fans can tour exceptional loops and trails, developed and recommended by fellow motorsports fans (visit [ridetheedge.ca](http://ridetheedge.ca) for details).

No need to travel to the North Pole for an adrenaline-filled dogsled expedition either. Dozens of mushers in Explorers' Edge are waiting to introduce you to the winter activity on everyone's bucket list. (Something to add to your winter bucket list as well: the Ice Trail at Arrowhead Park – a mile-long loop that takes skaters through a picturesque snow-tipped forest.)

And it's only natural that a landscape that inspires all who visit (including Canada's Group of Seven painters) feel at home in a thriving, year-round arts scene. Creative studios and galleries dot the towns, villages and countryside, and the live performances are second-to-none, including the Muskoka Sound outdoor modern music festival, and the Festival of the Sound in Parry Sound – Canada's favourite summer classical event.

With something for everyone, Explorers' Edge region of Ontario is the ideal destination for folks who want to get away from it all – without having to go far.

Home to some of the most iconic landscapes in the nation, including beautiful Algonquin Park, the rugged shores of Georgian Bay and the renowned lakes of Muskoka, a getaway to Explorers' Edge will introduce you to unforgettable adventures in Canada's (seriously) Great Outdoors.



## PLAN YOUR GETAWAY - IN EVERY SEASON



**SPRING**  
Enjoy the return of warmer weather on hundreds of multi-use trails (including the 200-mile Park to Park Trail), on a fabulously muddy ATV tour, or join the spring cycling peloton at the Spin the Lakes ride.



**SUMMER**  
Enjoy the return of Ontario's summer hotspot, which is headquarters for outdoor adventure on the region's famous lakes. From paddling to swimming, boating to fishing, hiking, biking and more, endless discovery awaits. Raise a glass at one of four award-winning craft breweries and the Muskoka Lakes Winery, cruise the lakes on beautiful historic vessels, and spend a day with the kids at Santa's Village.

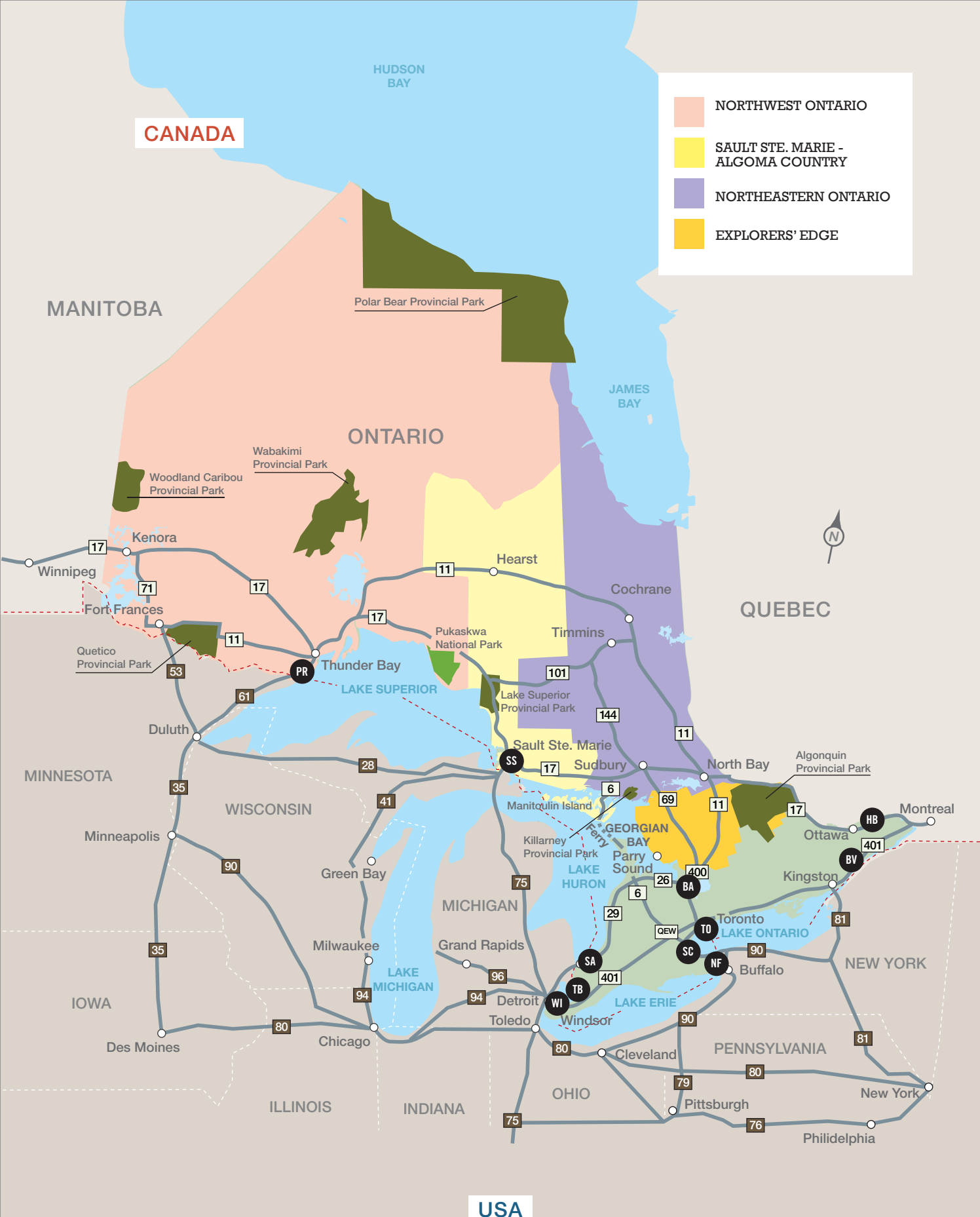
**FALL**  
Algonquin Park is recognized as one of the top spots to view the spectacular fall colours in Canada. And the oranges, yellows and reds are twice as mind-blowing here because they're reflected in thousands of blue lakes and rivers. Autumn in Explorers' Edge is doubly impressive – a gorgeous display of mirrored perfection.



**WINTER**  
Winter turns up the fun in Explorers' Edge with some of the best snow in Ontario for snowmobiling, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, pond hockey, skating, ice climbing, dogsledding and more. And be sure to inquire about 'fat biking' – Ontario's hot, new cold-weather adventure.

Plan your exciting adventure at [explorersedge.ca](http://explorersedge.ca)





## Exploring the Possibilities of Northern Ontario, Canada



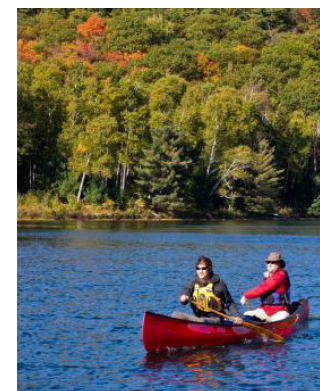
### Northwest Ontario

With over 70,000 freshwater lakes and countless lodges and resorts, Northwest Ontario epitomizes Canada's Great Outdoors. You can also explore more urban fare in any of the region's cities including Thunder Bay and Kenora.



### Sault Ste. Marie - Algoma Country

Framed by Lake Huron and Lake Superior, Algoma is home to 25,000 square miles of Northern Ontario wilderness. Whether it's a fishing, hunting, kayaking, a canoeing getaway, or an urban experience in Sault Ste. Marie, Algoma Country must be experienced to be believed.



### Northeastern Ontario

Unique is often a word used to describe this region of the province. And for good reason. Visit the polar bears in Cochrane or learn something new at Sudbury's Science North. Or experience Canada's renowned outdoor adventures in Timmins and beyond.



### Explorers' Edge

Explorers' Edge is home to some of the most iconic landscapes in Northern Ontario. From Algonquin Park and Pary Sound to Loring and the lakes of Muskoka, Explorers' Edge embodies the best of Canada's Great Outdoors.

Use this guide to plan your adventure. You can also learn more by visiting us online at [ontariotravel.net](http://ontariotravel.net)

### TAKE OFF!

If a road trip doesn't suit your style, you can always take to the air. Visit these airlines to start your journey today.

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The travel experts at Ontario Travel Information Centres look forward to helping you customize a Northern Ontario getaway. You can find our Centres at [ontariotravel.net/ind/plan/otics](http://ontariotravel.net/ind/plan/otics), or contact the one that's closest to you.

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people from all over the globe keep coming back to explore our  
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To explore Northern Ontario's regions



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# PICTURE PERFECT

Top Photo-Ops For Motorheads in Ontario

Ride Northern Ontario for some picture-perfect winding roads, awesome dirt and snow trails, and gorgeous waterways. Here are some of the best stories told in photos across the province to help you plan your own adventure.

By: Mike Jacobs

Photo credit : Virgil Knapp



## The Muskoka Lakes by Personal Watercraft

There's really no easy way to convey this 'downtown-on-the-water', as one personal watercraft rider put it. Martin Lortz travelled with Craig Nicholson this summer and perfectly captured the feeling of doing the Muskoka Lakes by PWC:

"A PWC tour in Muskoka is much like exploring the different neighbourhoods of a city but at a much grander scale. Here, the neighbourhoods are lakes and towns, and instead of a few blocks, it's 200 miles! Lake Muskoka, Rousseau and Joseph are all within reach of a day's ride."

Find pics of powersports touring in Ontario by searching these hashtags on Twitter and Instagram:

- #OntarioMotorroads for motorcycle touring
- #OntarioQuadTrails for ATVing
- #OntarioWaterWays for PWC and powerboating
- #OntarioSnowTrails for snowmobiling



## ATV All-Stars on the VMUTS Trails in Mattawa

Ontario's diverse geography is a big show-off in this section of Northeastern Ontario. Here, two of the most historically important (and stunning) rivers connect at the foothills of the Laurentian Mountains. Three summers ago the YouTube 'All-Stars of ATVing' descended on this trail system. One rider said this about their fall tour:

"As we zipped through the yellow-leaved canopy of birch trees, the fallen leaves caught air on the trail behind the ATVs. If there's a finer sight in this world, I don't want to know."



## The Pijitawabik Palisades by Motorcycle

When it comes to scenic roads, the stretch between Nipigon and Geraldton is likely the most grandiose. This photo was snapped on a monumental 60-day road trip where 'yours truly' tried to ride every paved road in Northern Ontario. One of the most memorable sections was cruising between two huge billion-year-old cliff faces as we crossed from the west of the province to the east.



## The Abitibi Canyon in Northeastern Ontario by Snowmobile

There are dozens of hidden gems throughout Northern Ontario's snowmobile trails. Perhaps one of the most rewarding, both for its size and remoteness of the trail, is the Abitibi Canyon Loop. One adventurous snowmobiler commented:

"When you're riding the wide trails, you zone out. You don't think about work, or anything else — just when the next corner is coming, or the next hill. It's beyond freeing."

## Snapshots of Northern Ontario

If you're looking for some great photo ops during your Northern Ontario adventure, here are a few suggestions that will give your scrapbook some "oomph!"

### Northeastern Ontario

- Guy Paul Treefall in Iroquois Falls
- Big Joe Mufferaw in Mattawa
- Ms. Claybelt in Temiskaming Shores
- The Big Nickel
- The Towne House (where Stompin' Tom Connors got his start in)
- The Moonbeam UFO in Moonbeam

### Sault Ste. Marie - Algoma

- Winnie the Pooh in White River (home of the original Winnie the Pooh)
- The Wawa Goose in Wawa
- Old Woman Bay south of Wawa
- Katharine Cove and Agawa Bay in Lake Superior Provincial Park
- The Sault Locks in Sault Ste. Marie
- The Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre in Sault Ste. Marie

### Northwest Ontario

- Husky the Musky in Kenora
- Kakabeka Falls just outside Thunder Bay (More total volume of water than Niagara Falls!)
- The Terry Fox Monument in Thunder Bay
- The Hoito Restaurant in Thunder Bay

For more information visit [gorideontario.com](http://gorideontario.com)



# ALL TERRAIN ADVENTURES

By Mike Jacobos



## Riding Lake Superior

There's only one word to describe riding Lake Superior—epic. It's a route best suited for touring riders who aren't afraid to put on some miles. Long sweeping curves through stunning mountains that surround the world's largest freshwater lake explains why so many make it a point to ride Lake Superior. The route crosses through Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, but it's the contrast between the two sides that will amaze you most. Bonus points go to riders who check out the Grand Algoma Loop, Highway 129 and Algoma's burgeoning ADV scene.



## A Passion for Powerboating

If you're serious about powerboat cruising, there's no match for Lake of the Woods. With 14,000 islands and more shoreline than Lake Superior, these waters offer unlimited discoveries. The city of Kenora is home base for the lake; the gas station, restaurants, and grocery store all have docks! Locals generally congregate at the beaches, but first timers should indulge in a weekend of exploring. Massive rock faces are plentiful, as are lodges that cater to captains and crew.



## Snowtrails in the North

When people think of winters 'the way they used to be' you can bet they're imagining a place exactly like Northeastern Ontario. Home to the most legendary snow trails in the province, the Great White North is just that—legendary. With the most snow, the longest loops, and most pristine forests, it's no wonder the locals live on snowmobiles here.



## Dirt, Mud, and ATVing

Explorers' Edge is home to the best ATV trails this side of the Hatfield-McCoy. For those who want wide open, straight trails perfectly suited for side by sides, check out the Park to Park trails. For technically challenging terrain, make a run for the Algonquin West trail system, with the town of Kearney and its ATV friendly resorts as your home base. For the truly adventurous, there are thousands of miles of Crown land trails that the lodge owners in Loring-Restoule will guide you through.

## Discover Your Next Adventure Online

### GoRideOntario.com

Literally everything you'll ever need to know about powersports in Ontario. Everything.

### GoTourOntario.ca

Plan your motorcycle trip in Ontario with this comprehensive trip planner. Take a recommended tour or customize every detail. Eight pre-loaded tours (with more to come).

### RideLakeSuperior.com

Riding the Big Lake in Maps, Lists and Trip Planning Tools – if you can't find it here, you don't need to know it. Look for information on the NorWester loop if you're looking to extend your trip even further.

### RideTheEdge.ca

ATV, motorbike and sled trips in Explorers' Edge. Check out the Algonquin West ATV trails and the Big Motorcycle Loop through Algonquin Park (Ontario's oldest).

### Kenora.ca

Get on the water on Ontario most rewarding waterway. Details on exploring Lake of the Woods are all found here; local beaches, restful coves, detailed nautical charts and channel information, and resources for the boater who's up to the challenge.

### OFSC.on.ca

Info on every trail around the province, where to get permits, free weekend dates (who doesn't love free) and maps for every district and club in the province, including our pick for the die-hard sledder who craves long distance trails: Northeastern Ontario.

### Besttrails.ca

Get the ultimate Northeastern Ontario snowmobile experience; along with information on local restaurants, accommodations and more.

### Ridethehighlands.ca

Ride The Highlands is the newest area to offer motorcycle routes. Try the Rideau Canal for history buffs or the dynamite alley routes for those who like twisties.

For more information visit [gorideontario.com](http://gorideontario.com)





ANGLING

# PLENTY OF FISH IN THE NORTH

*By Gord Ellis*



There are a lot of very good places to fish on the globe. Yet, when it comes to accessibility and sheer numbers of large fish, Northern Ontario rules. There are tens of thousands of lakes, rivers and reservoirs. Picking which of these great waters to fish in is a difficult assignment, but here are a few that stand out.

In the far northwest corner of the province is Lake of the Woods. This enormous body of water is really several different lakes sewn together by channels and narrows. Lake of the Woods may have more trophy-sized fish than any other lake in Ontario. From walleye to muskie, largemouth bass to lake trout, it would be nearly impossible to find a place where you could conceivably catch trophy-sized specimen of each in the same day. You can here.

If world fishing on legendary waterways full of big trout is your thing, you should take a hard look at Lake Nipigon and the Nipigon River system. The world record brook trout was caught here in 1915. Amazingly, that 14.8 pound trout hasn't been surpassed in 100 years. Lake Nipigon is the most pristine cold-water fishery in the world, with enormous brook trout, lake trout and pike. The lower Nipigon River features hard fighting species like Chinook salmon, steelhead and lake trout. It's a trout angler's paradise.

Lake Superior, the greatest of lakes, is more than just a beautiful vista along Highway 17. Superior has fantastic fishing for both cold water and warm water species. Lake trout, Chinook, rainbows and coaster brook trout are the main quarry, and thrive in these ice-cold waters. Some of the larger shallow bays, like Black Bay, have great opportunities for perch, bass and huge northern pike.

At Sault Ste. Marie, the St. Mary's Rapids are famous for fly and spin-fishing opportunities. This churning section of river takes runs of Chinook salmon, rainbows and Atlantic salmon from Lake Huron. There's also a great walleye fishery directly below the rapids. Every angler should have the St. Mary's on their list.

Lake Nipissing, at North Bay, is another Northern Ontario fishery with a world-class reputation. Superb bass, northern pike, giant muskie and walleye fishing are all in the mix.

**For more information visit  
[gofishinontario.com](http://gofishinontario.com)**

**Northern Ontario is home to the most unique and healthiest freshwater fisheries in the world.**



## Tackling Those Fish

For most angling in Northern Ontario, you can use a medium-action spinning rod of about seven-feet, coupled with a quality spinning reel and eight-pound test monofilament line. This set up can land everything from big pike to little creek trout.

For larger fish like muskellunge, salmon or lake trout, a baitcasting rod of about eight-feet matched with a baitcast reel and 30-pound test braided line will do the trick. Telescoping baitcast rods, called "flippin' sticks" are a fine all-around big fish rod, and stow well in a boat.

For panfish and small trout, an ultra-lite spinning combo with six-pound test monofilament is ideal. The Northern Ontario tackle box will include a variety of leadhead jigs with a selection of scented grub, twister or shad bodies in both natural and bright colours. Add some minnow shaped crankbaits like the Rapala Husky Jerk. Crankbaits catch almost every species of fish.

Trout like flashy spoons including the Krocodile, Little Cleo and EGB. Both the Mepps and Panther Martin brand spinners are great for trout and bass. Muskie hit large buck-tail spinners and oversized top-water lures. Make sure you have a few steel leaders on hand when fishing toothy critters like muskie and pike.





ANGLING

# HOOK, LODGE AND SINKER

By James Smedley



There is no shortage of fish in Northern Ontario. Along with a seemingly endless procession of lakes and rivers holding some of the world's most sought-after game fish, there are outfitters ready to provide the angling adventure of a lifetime.

At one end of the spectrum is the fly-in, full-service lodge, where we only need our fishing gear, clothes and an appetite for guided fishing on a lake accessible solely by floatplane. Three meals a day and luxury accommodations round out an experience that nourishes mind, body and angling soul.

For independent anglers looking for a more remote experience, a fly-in outpost camp delivers. We prepare our own meals in the fully equipped kitchen of a cabin built on the shores of a remote lake loaded with fish. An outpost is often the only cabin on the lake. We plan our own schedule around the phenomenal fishing and the only other anglers we'll see for our entire stay are those in our own party. In the past, outpost camps were pretty basic but today luxuries like hot running water, propane lights, fridge, stove, flush-toilets, solar powered lighting and even Wi-Fi are common.

If we really want to fend for ourselves there are outfitters who will drop us off by floatplane along a remote river system with a canoe, camping gear, and food—picking us up days later at a rendezvous point downstream. Days are filled with deep woods paddling and casting for fish that may have never seen a lure.

The quality and quantity of Northern Ontario waters ensures that we don't have to leave the ground for great fishing. There are many full-service lodges we can simply drive to. We can even bring our own boat and enjoy a full-service lodge on accessible waters where the fishing often rivals that of a remote fly-in.

If time is limited, we can jump aboard a charter boat for a day of downrigging on the Great Lakes. Fishing guides are also available to impart their knowledge of spin-casting or fly-fishing destinations for a few hours or a few days.



While walleye, pike and bass are among the most popular, the list of Northern Ontario game fish does not stop there. Lake trout, brook trout, rainbow trout and steelhead join Chinook, coho and pink salmon as well as white fish and muskellunge—providing more angling options than we could experience in a lifetime.



For more information visit [gofishinontario.com](http://gofishinontario.com)

## A Day At The Lodge

The bacon and eggs fill you up before a morning of plucking fat walleye from a rocky shoal. By noon we're sitting on the granite of a pine-capped island, watching our guide expertly fillet, season and fry our catch. Coffee, golden fillets and sweet pickles never tasted so good.

An afternoon nap on a warm, flat rock is perfect prep for casting spoons into thick weeds for toothy northern pike. Eagles soar overhead and loons ply the waters. We even spot a moose feeding on aquatic plants. Under the warm afternoon sun my partner catches a pike almost four feet long and we hoist the trophy for photos.



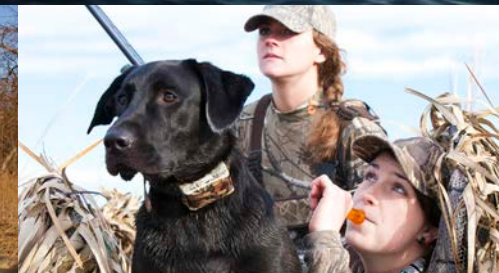
The smell of prime rib wafts across the water as we approach the lodge in the late afternoon. We tie up at the dock and head to our cabin for happy hour before sharing dinner (and stories) with other guests. The hard-core anglers return to the lake for an evening fish while others play cards or shoot pool. We gaze at the map of the lake. So much water to cover and only six more days to go.



HUNTING

# IT'S ALL IN THE GAME

By Paul Beasley



Trophy hunter or adventure-seeker; these are the categories hunters typically get lumped into. When I began hunting, I was just looking for the experience. However, I quickly morphed into a trophy hunter and now, I seek great adventure along the way; that's why I look to Northern Ontario each fall to live out my dreams!

My first experience hunting in Northern Ontario was near the borders of the Thunder Bay District and the Algoma District. My brothers and I all shot great bears within a few miles of each other on our first evening hunt — we were hooked. Bears are growing older and bigger so the opportunity for a trophy has never been better. Most bear hunting in Ontario is done from a tree-stand as the rugged country is so thick that spot-and-stalk hunting is only effective in the logged or clear-cut areas.

The northwestern corner of the province (between Thunder Bay and the Manitoba border) is the best area to look for an abundance of whitetails and the trophy quality is world-class. The deer hunting experience in Northwest Ontario is very unique. Hundreds of thousands of acres of nothing but solid deer habitat broken up by rivers, streams and lakes make it a true deer haven allowing bucks to grow old and supporting more balanced buck-to-doe ratios than anywhere else I've seen in the country. Tree-stand hunting and still-hunting (mixed with rattling and calling) are extremely effective in these parts.

Much like the black bears, moose inhabit the entire northern reaches of Ontario in very stable and consistent numbers, making for many great hunting opportunities. Fly-in hunts offer the ultimate in remote hunting.

However, many great areas, accessible by truck and ATV, shouldn't be overlooked. With many Ontario bulls scoring in the 180's to 200's B&C each year, I have never found a more affordable moose hunt, with such high trophy potential, anywhere in North America.

I'm more of a big game hunter, but I'm also limited in my time away each fall, so the opportunity to combine a great hunting adventure with great fishing is always a big factor for me. Ontario is so full of incredible fishing destinations that when hunting, you're never far from a great place to cast a line. With excellent hunting, fishing, ATV'ing, and scenery, I'm able to make the most of my 'trophy-hunting' adventures all in one spot — Northern Ontario.

## Hunting for your next adventure

If you're wondering where to begin planning your Northern Ontario hunting excursion, here's a quick guide to help get you started:

### Northwest Ontario

This region of the province has a wide range of game, including moose, bear and deer. This is where you can find some of the very best big game hunting in all of Ontario. Northwest Ontario's dense tree cover provides these species with an abundance of food and shelter, allowing them to thrive.

### Sault Ste. Marie - Algoma

The Sault and Algoma Country are popular hunting destinations. And for very good reason. Majestic bull moose and black bear are the main attractions. But if you prefer smaller species, you can hunt a wide variety of smaller game as well.

### Northeastern Ontario

This expansive region stretches from Georgian Bay to James Bay, and has some of the most beautiful landscapes you'll ever hope to see courtesy of the Canadian Shield. Deer, moose and bear can all be found in abundance, along with small game and waterfowl populations.



# A MAN of the NORTH

Viewed from the air, the landscape north of Thunder Bay, Ontario reveals itself as a tapestry of trees, rock, lakes and rivers. This is the boreal forest—a broad band of spruce, birch, glacier-scoured granite and interconnected waterways that span Canada's midriff like a sash. It's the place where Ray Mears says he feels most at home. That's because the boreal was the homeland of his heroes—indigenous Ojibwa and Cree people who developed survival strategies for this harsh land and European explorers who adopted native traditions and founded Canada.

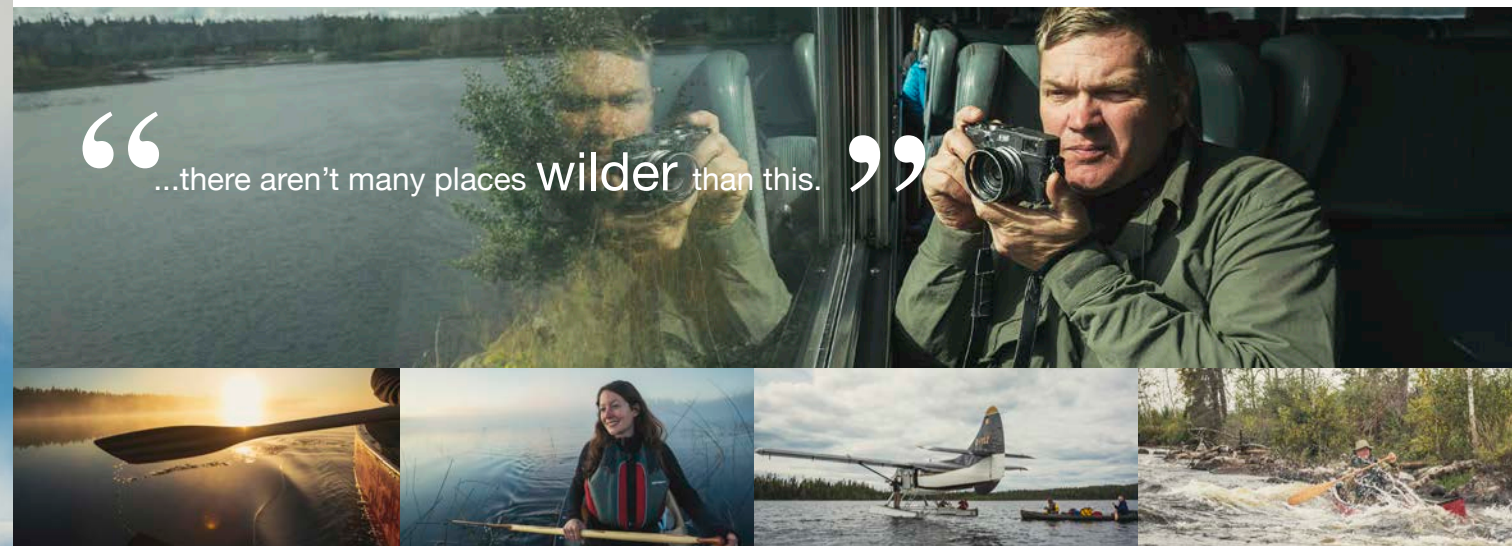


**RAY MEARS**

British adventurer, author and outdoor skills guru.

Last September, Mears explored the boreal wilderness of Northern Ontario, which he describes as world-class. He paddled Wabakimi and Kopka River provincial parks and practiced the ancient skills of his mentors. Canoes were fastened to the struts of a Beaver floatplane and camping gear crowded the fuselage. The engine roared as the pilot prepared to land on a backcountry lake. The floats touched down in a spray of water, beginning the reconnaissance.

“...there aren't many places wilder than this.”



**From his home in Southern England, Ray Mears reflected on his experience in Northern Ontario:**

### First Impressions

The minute you step foot in the boreal forest it requires you to be calmer. The force of the forest demands your respect. My whole life has been studying skills of the bush. Survival is the alphabet. What I focus on is something more—the language and poetry of life on this land.

### Honouring History

If you look closely in Wabakimi, you can see signs First Nations inhabitants have left markers denoting good places to fish and old campsites. I have a great interest in First Nations' techniques and knowledge. I learn from the past and project these teachings into the future. When you learn the skills of the forest, the forest will adopt you. It's important for me to validate the old skills, using them on my journeys. There's an old saying, 'Hunters keep their knowledge in the forest.' The land itself teaches me.

### Noteable Moments

I like it best two days into a canoe trip, when the outfit gets settled in and everyone is relaxed. My favourite moment is when you become adapted to the environment. On the Kopka we came across the royal fern, an incredibly rare plant. To me, it was the justification of wilderness and proof that there aren't many places wilder than this. A bald eagle soared through the dawn sky on the last morning—you only have these kinds of moments when you're in a canoe.

### An Explorer's Guide to Thunder Bay

Thunder Bay has always been a gateway for travellers. This thriving city of over 100,000 is a jumping off point for outdoor enthusiasts, but there are also plenty of attractions to make it worth a stay.

**Stay:** Whatever your style or budget, Thunder Bay can accommodate you. Full service hotels, motels and inns, bed and breakfasts, cottages, and resorts in the city and the surrounding area. The choice is yours.

**Play:** The fur trade comes alive at Fort William Historical Park with in-character interpreters in a reconstruction of Thunder Bay's original settlement; sign up for an outing with Sail Superior and make friends with the wind on Lake Superior; and celebrate the Northern Ontario winter by registering for the annual Sleeping Giant Loppet, a recreational Nordic ski race held each March.

**Eat & Drink:** Thunder Bay has an eclectic mix of dining choices to complete your stay. From fine dining and authentic ethnic cuisine to heartier casual fare at a roadhouse, café, or bar and grill, your taste buds will be satisfied.

For more information visit [ontariotravel.net/wateradventures](http://ontariotravel.net/wateradventures)

## WIN a Great Canadian Boreal Forest Adventure

This once-in-a-lifetime adventure is led by Ray Mears, and courtesy of the team from Wabakimi Wilderness Outfitters:

Your epic 8-day adventure includes:

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- Floatplane into Wabakimi Provincial Park for 5 days of guided wilderness camping, paddling, bushcraft and wildlife tracking with Ray Mears and his team
- 1 night at Wabakimi Wilderness Eco-Lodge
- Tour of the Fort William Historical Park
- All meals
- Plus \$2,000 in outdoor gear from Mountain Equipment Co-op

Get all the details and **ENTER FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN** at [ontariotravel.net](http://ontariotravel.net)

No Purchase Necessary. Contest closes 11:59PM (EST), May 31, 2015. Prize redemption August 6-13, 2015. This contest is open to legal residents of Canada and the United States (48 contiguous states) who are at least 21 years of age or older at the time of entry. See [www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net) for full contest rules and details.



# STAND UP PADDLEBOARDING!

By Michelle McChristie

Exploring Northern Ontario by SUP

## Where are you going surfing?

Asked the young man at the park gate when we checked into a site at Quetico Provincial Park.

There are about 250,000 lakes and over 100,000 kilometres (62,000 miles) of rivers in this province, so a paddler is never far away from a playground. The outdoor industry has responded swiftly to meet the demand for this Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP); with retailers adding SUP gear to their inventory, and outfitters and paddling clubs adding introductory and advanced lessons to their paddling curriculum.

My family grew to love this sport after renting a board in 2009 and then buying one the following summer. After spending a weekend at Rock Island Lodge in Wawa in 2011, we were hooked. With an array of boards and paddles at our disposal and a warm sheltered bay in which to paddle, we spent a weekend teaching our kids the basics. As their confidence grew, they ventured farther out on the bay and out to the mouth of the Michipicoten River to play in the surf created by the clashing currents of the river and Lake Superior.

Accessibility and versatility are part of what makes SUP so popular. The boards are light and easy to carry and most people have the skills and intuition to manage basic paddle strokes. For those looking for a little more finesse, an introductory or advanced course provides the tools to paddle efficiently, confidently, and safely.

**More ways to explore.** Let's face it, the paddling season is short up here; our lakes and rivers are either icy cold or ice covered from October to May. Don't let that deter you from exploring their rugged shorelines, with the right gear, every season offers opportunities for adventure.

**Hiking** can be enjoyed year-round, but you might need to strap on a pair of snowshoes when the white stuff accumulates.

**Mountain biking** is best in the summer and fall and fatbiking is gaining popularity, particularly in winter.

**Backcountry skiing and snowshoeing** offer an opportunity to explore frozen shorelines and discover gigantic icicles and ice caves, or get a better view of rock formations and pictographs.

**Ice climbing** offers a unique experience as frozen waterfalls and seeps make for ideal routes.

For more information visit [ontariotravel.net/wateradventures](http://ontariotravel.net/wateradventures)



Boards come in a variety of shapes and sizes, ranging from wide and stable recreational and fitness boards (SUP yoga, anyone?), to long and sleek racing boards. There are even inflatable boards that fit into a backpack.



Exploring Northern Ontario's lakes and rivers by SUP gives an entirely new vantage point to familiar kayak and canoe routes. Standing means you can see further and have the freedom to move around. It's a great workout because the power in a paddle stroke comes from the paddler's core muscles while a variety of muscles are involved in balancing on the board (if balance is not your forte, think of the SUP board as a swim platform!). Whether at a campground in Quetico, or on the North Shore of Lake Superior, stand up paddleboarding is an easy way to get on the water and discover a new corner of Northern Ontario.