



Ontario

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Why Go?

When it comes to culture, cuisine and sophistication, Ontario is on top of its game. When you're here, you can't help but feel a palpable connection with the rest of the planet. Forget ice fishing, conifers and bears for a minute – this is global Canada, big-city Canada, sexy, progressive, urbane Canada.

Toronto, Canada's largest city, is a blazing metropolis overflowing with multicultural arts, entertainment and eating opportunities. Ottawa, Canada's capital, is no longer a steadfast political filing cabinet: contemporary Ottawa is as hip as you want it to be.

Not far from the madding crowds, low-key agricultural towns and historic settlements define Ontario's country civility. And if you're into wildlife, excellent national parks abound. From arctic Hudson Bay in the north to the temperate Great Lakes in the south, you'll find more than enough boreal forests, undulating hills and vineyards to keep you feeling green.

Best Places to Eat

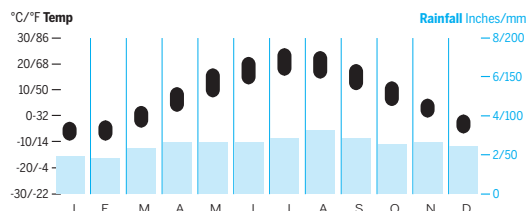
- » Blümen (p182)
- » Bijou (p128)
- » The Swan (p88)
- » Zen Kitchen (p202)
- » Respect is Burning (p157)

Best Places to Stay

- » Gladstone Hotel (p83)
- » Three Houses B&B (p127)
- » Bayside Inn (p150)
- » Green Door (p190)
- » Thunder Bay
International Hostel (p167)

When to Go

Toronto



January Ice skate on the world's largest rink, the Rideau Canal in Ottawa

July Cool off on Lake Ontario's oasis, Pelee Island, with beaches and warm water

September Enjoy Ontario's harvests; follow Prince Edward County's Taste Trail for a sample

DON'T MISS

Only an hour's drive from Toronto, the **Niagara Peninsula** is usually a day-trippers' destination, though it has plenty to keep you occupied for days. Known first for the massive Niagara Falls and second for its wineries, the peninsula also offers plenty of recreational activities including biking, rafting, kayaking and sailing. Niagara-on-the-Lake bursts with boutique shopping and bistro dining, and Niagara's old downtown is in the midst of a revitalization that is attracting art galleries and coffee shops. There's so much to do here, in fact, that you could stay on the peninsula and make a day trip to Toronto!

Prince Edward County is about to steal some of Ontario's food and wine spotlight. Still relatively unknown to outsiders, this island boasts nearly identical soil conditions as France's Bordeaux region. Wineries sprawl throughout the terrain, but the food scene is equally intoxicating: cheese makers, bread bakers, and those who simply take advantage of the great growing conditions by sourcing locally-grown produce all make for a sumptuous visit.

Ontario's Top Parks

- » Algonquin Provincial Park (p175)
- » Killarney Provincial Park (p151)
- » Fathom Five National Marine Park (p140)
- » Lake Superior Provincial Park (p162)
- » Pukaskwa National Park (p164)
- » Quetico Provincial Park (p169)

Don't Forget

- » Binoculars – spot birds, moose, otters and deer
- » Your drinking arm – wineries in the south and breweries throughout
- » Your appetite – Ontario is Canada's bread basket, cheese plate, and salad bowl
- » Your biking muscles – with hundreds of kilometers of trails, including the Bruce Trail, Ontario is ready for you to spin your wheels from one side of the province to the other.
- » Your inner history buff – every town sports a museum, and Toronto's and Ottawa's are home to some of the world's best.

Planning Your Trip

During summer and major festivals, you must reserve your accommodation in advance. If places are booked, local tourist offices can often help out.

Weather can change rapidly, so pack accordingly if you're planning any outdoor activities.

Fast Facts

- » Population: 12,753,700
- » Area: 1,076,395 sq km
- » Capital: Toronto
- » Quirky fact: The longest street in the world, Yonge St, begins in Toronto and runs 1896km to the border of Ontario and Minnesota.

Resources

- » Ontario Travel Information Centre (www.ontariotravel.net) has offices throughout the province
- » Toronto Tourism (www.seetorontonow.com) is run by the Toronto Convention and Visitor's Association and is an excellent resource for the city.
- » Ottawa Tourism (www.ontariotourism.ca) is Ottawa's official tourist site.

Top Wineries in Ontario

- » Norman Hardie Winery & Vineyard (p181)
- » Stratus (p103)
- » Pelee Island Winery (p133)