



Ontario

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Lee (p103)
- ➔ Allen's (p109)
- ➔ ND Sushi (p104)
- ➔ Beckta Dining & Wine (p219)
- ➔ Buoys (p172)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Trump Toronto (p95)
- ➔ Drake Hotel (p99)
- ➔ Taboo Resort (p159)
- ➔ Three Houses (p145)
- ➔ Planet Travelers Hostel (p99)

Why Go?

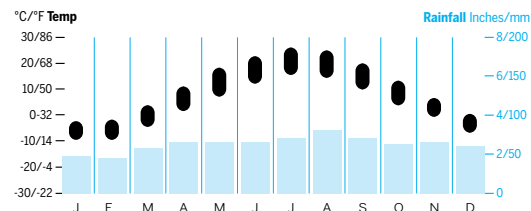
The breathtaking four-seasonal palette of Ontario's vast wilderness, endless forests and abundant wildlife awaits. Almost 40% of Canada's population lives here for good reason: Ontario is larger than France and Spain combined. Over 250,000 lakes contain a third of the planet's fresh water.

Most Ontarians call behemoth Toronto or Ottawa, the nation's cosmopolitan capital, home. Foodies, fashionistas and funsters converge on Toronto's vibrant multicultural neighborhoods. Both cities have hopping arts and entertainment scenes, kept current by the neighborly influences of New York and Montréal.

Whether you want to reconvene with nature or lose yourself in the excitement of the most multiculturally diverse and socially cohesive region on earth, you've come to the right place. Let Ontario surprise you with the striking beauty of her scenery and welcome you with the warmth of her people.

When to Go

Toronto



May-Jul Celebrate spring, marveling at moose, trilliums and loons in Ontario's parks.

Jul-Sep Join the frenzy of Toronto's festival mania or savor summer in cottage country.

Sep-Nov Unleash your inner artist as the maple leaves turn provincially.

Don't Miss

The **Niagara Peninsula** (p122) is *the* day trip out of Toronto's hustle and bustle, but stay a few days if you can. Once you've experienced the awe-inspiring power of the world-famous falls and maxed out on gaudy tourist attractions, head up the road to the photogenic township of **Niagara-on-the-Lake** (p132) and its many wineries, galleries, boutiques and bistros. There's no shortage of delicious rooms in which to lay your weary head.

Consider scooting east to **Prince Edward County** (p196), Ontario's emerging culinary destination, where vineyards and organic farms dot the landscape. Here you'll also find **Sandbanks Provincial Park** (p197), with some of Lake Ontario's best swimming beaches.

Hungry for more? For a quaint riverside romp within an hour and a half of Toronto, try the neighboring historical villages of **Elora** and **Fergus** (p141). Get your Puck on at the **Stratford** (p143) Shakespeare Festival. If you really want to get away, head north to **Thunder Bay** (p182) and the wild shores of **Lake Superior** (p178), or the magnificent scenery of the **Bruce Peninsula** (p167) flanked to the west by the sandy beaches and warmer waters of **Lake Huron** (p146), and to the east by the stunning **Georgian Bay** (p162).

WHAT TO EXPECT

Ontario is Canada's breadbasket, cheese plate and salad bowl, and its plethora of breweries and wineries will exercise your drinking arm and whet your appetite for some seriously good food. When you're ready to burn off all those calories, why not hit a stretch of the many thousands of kilometers of scenic cycling trails? Of course, you may need to be adaptable and have a sense of humor in the face of temperamental weather, whatever the season. And remember, wildlife abounds – bring your binoculars to spot birds and beavers, moose, otter and deer.

For indoorsy days, almost every significant town sports a museum – Ottawa's and Toronto's are some of the world's best. Make sure you pack your patience – Toronto transit and traffic frequently grinds to a halt. You've got lots of ground to cover, so allow yourself time to explore and prepare to be surprised!

PLANNING

Ontario is alive with activity during the long days of the short summer, when there's always a festival or something fun going on. Be sure to book your accommodations in advance.

Ontario weather can change rapidly. If you're camping, or planning outdoor pursuits, pack for variations in temperature and remember the bug spray.

Fast Facts

- Population: 13,505,900
- 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.

Divine Wine...

Ontario's wines improve with every vintage. Delve into the lovely vineyards of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Prince Edward County.

Resources

- Ontario Travel Information Centre (www.ontariotravel.net) Has offices throughout the province.
- Toronto Tourism (www.seetorontonow.com) Run by the Toronto Convention and Visitors Association.
- Ottawa Tourism (www.ottawatourism.ca) Ottawa's official tourist site.

Ontario's Top Parks

- Algonquin Provincial Park (p190)
- Lake Superior Provincial Park (p179)
- Killarney Provincial Park (p174)
- Bruce Peninsula National Park (p169)
- Pukaskwa National Park (p181)
- Quetico Provincial Park (p185)