

Sault Ste. Marie and the Algoma Region, Ontario

Bawaating – The Heart of Turtle Island

September 5-9, 2020

Theme

Indigenous Tourism Experiences in Sault Ste. Marie and the Algoma Region of Northern Ontario.

Description

In the centre of the North American Great Lakes, Sault Ste. Marie and the region of Algoma are located on the shores of both Lake Superior (Gitchi-Gami in Ojibwe) and Lake Huron, along the St. Marys River. Named Bawaating in Ojibwe by the Anishinaabe peoples of the Great Lakes, the Soo (Sault Ste. Marie) has been a traditional gathering place since the beginning of time.

While exploring Sault Ste. Marie and the Algoma Region, you will participate in an engaging cultural trip along the North coast of the world's largest freshwater lake – Lake Superior/Gitchi-Gami and the St. Marys River. This magnificent waterway tells the story of incomparable ecology, history and heritage, and is combined with a memorable adventure and cuisine to portray the significant importance of the Indigenous culture in one of the oldest settlements in Canada. Guided by our friends from Canoes for Conservation, who believe in connecting people back to the waterways that were historically integral to all peoples, we will learn how this area was used for trade, travel, fishing, gathering and meeting.

An educational and adventurous trip, you'll discover this region and its vital role in the Anishinabee culture and livelihood. Take a leisurely stroll on 'Turtle Island' with an Indigenous Elder followed by an immersive cultural experience at a traditional Pow Wow, explore the largest freshwater lake in the world 'Gitchi-Gami', and complete your experience by paddling along an Indigenous archeological site and down a historic voyageur route. This interactive and exploratory tour will leave you entranced. Hear the stories of the past, feel the power of the waterways, follow in the footsteps of the heritage and ignite your senses through cultural participation.

Considerations

- While this tour is not overly strenuous, participants must be of "fair" physical fitness. There are two freighter canoe paddling experiences included and some walking.
- There is limited internet access outside the city and hotels, and no service in Provincial Parks.
- Cellular phone service may be limited during the longer driving sections.
- Day Three has a long drive along the coast of Lake Superior, however there will be stops along the way.
- Participants are requested to advise of dietary restrictions and food allergies.
- The itinerary includes three meals a day, dinner on the welcome night, and breakfast on the day of departure. Alcoholic beverages are not included.
- Transfer to and from the airport are included.
- With the exception of internet access, you are responsible for all incidental expenses.
- A credit card will be required at the hotel(s) at check-in for incidental charges such as mini-bar, movies, phone, etc.
- Travel/accident insurance is your responsibility and highly recommended.
- Please note that we do not provide interpreters – tours will be conducted in English.
- Itinerary is subject to change due to weather.

Itinerary

Day 1 – Saturday, September 5

- Afternoon Flight to Sault Ste. Marie. Please arrange to arrive by 3:00 pm. An additional night can be arranged if required.
- 3:00 pm Tourism Sault Ste. Marie will meet guests at the airport for transfers to the hotel.
- 4:30 pm Meet a local Indigenous representative for a walk and talk on [Whitefish Island](#). Learn how this island in the centre of St. Marys River played an important role for the Anishinaabe peoples of the Great Lakes. Chosen by their Creator as the original meeting place and surrounded by an abundance of natural resources, this sacred land continues to serve as a location for cultural ceremonies - the heart of Turtle Island. The Island is a self-navigational experience with a complete set of boarded walking trails and informative panels that explain the historical significance to the Anishinaabe peoples.
- 6:30 pm Dinner at [The View Restaurant](#) with views overlooking the St. Marys River.
- 7:30 pm Free time.
- Overnight Local hotel in Sault Ste. Marie.

Day 2 – Sunday, September 6

- Morning Breakfast at hotel.
- 7:00 am Enjoy a sunrise paddle with [Canoes for Conservation](#). Paddle back in time as we glide into the historic canal, drift along the shores of an ancient Anishinaabek community, float below the mighty rapids, and flow along Sault Ste Marie's downtown. Along the way our guides will teach us how to maneuver a freighter canoe and share their knowledge of the river as it relates to the ecology, culture, and heritage of this place. You'll learn to paddle as a team as we connect special points of interest on the river. Sharing local perspectives and stories, you will be immersed in the diversity of our local cultures. A focus of the tour will be Indigenous culture and its deeply rooted connection to the river. Snacks and non-alcoholic beverages are provided.
- 11:00 am Head to the annual [Batchewana Pow Wow](#) for an afternoon of immersive culture. Showcasing the Anishinaabe culture through dancing, drumming and singing, you'll participate alongside during an intertribal dance. The day will provide an opportunity to enjoy authentic foods, browse handmade crafts and learn the Anishnabek ways of life, which highlight the pillars of the community and culture.
- Lunch Lunch provided on site.
- 5:00 pm Dine at a favourite - [Chummy's Grill](#), a local Indigenous restaurant known for their homestyle cooking and hearty portions.
- 6:30 pm Free time.
- Overnight Hotel in Sault Ste. Marie.

Day 3 – Monday, September 7

- Morning Breakfast at a local restaurant.
- 9:00 am Start the day by high calibre [Fishing in the St Marys River](#), with your choice of fishing from a boat or wading. The St. Marys River Rapids are legendary and located in the core of Sault Ste. Marie.

The original gathering place for our First Nations peoples, this historic location is renowned as an international fishing community. It was once said that the fish in this river were so plentiful that one could walk across the backs of them to the other side of the river. Ernest Hemingway is quoted, "The best rainbow trout fishing in the world is in the Canadian Soo."

- 12:00 pm Picnic lunch along the shores of the St. Marys River.
- 2:00 pm [Shingwauk Residential School Centre](#) and [Shingwauk Kinnoomaage Gamig](#). We will visit Shingwauk Hall, a central and integral part of the Algoma University campus that was first established in 1873 as a residential school for First Nations children and operated as such until the Shingwauk Indian Residential School closed in 1970. The building is one of the oldest landmarks in the Sault Ste. Marie area. An amalgamation of a museum, interpretation centre and memorial, you'll learn about the reality of a vision corrupted and see firsthand the important impact of human perseverance and resilience. Following the tour, we will make an Indigenous keepsake.
- 5:00 pm Free time
- 6:30 pm Dinner at a local restaurant
- 7:30 pm Free time
- Overnight Local hotel in Sault Ste. Marie

Day 4 – Tuesday, September 8

- Morning Breakfast at hotel
- 8:00 am Depart for a day of sightseeing and history along the shores of [Lake Superior/Gitchi-Gami](#). (Drive time: 6 hours in total)
- Named as one of the top ten drives in North America, this spectacular adventure takes you along the Canadian Shield and Canada's Voyageur Route.
- 9:00 am Arrive at [Chippewa Falls](#) where we'll stop and stretch our legs at the centre of the Trans-Canada highway. This iconic location of the famous painters, the Group of Seven, provides a perfect photo opportunity.
- 10:30 am Arrive at the [Lake Superior Interpretive Centre](#) located in Agawa Bay. The displays highlight how the power of Lake Superior has influenced the culture and natural features of the park and Algoma Region.
- 12:00 pm Picnic lunch provided along the shores of Lake Superior
- 1:00 pm Arrive at [Agawa Rock](#) in [Agawa Bay](#), a historic pictograph site found within Lake Superior Provincial Park. Meet back up with our friends from [Canoes for Conservation](#) as they link the past by telling the story of the canoe as it relates to the land, the water and the pictographs. We will board our freighter canoe and paddle along one of the most visited Indigenous archaeological sites in the country where most paintings are said to date from the 17th and 18th centuries. Pictographs are surviving messages from the past and this is a sacred site where generations of Ojibwe peoples have come to record their dreams, visions and events.
- 5:00 pm Arrive at [Voyageurs Lodge and Cookhouse](#) and a greeting by François the Voyageur! Dedicated to Métis culture, heritage and cuisine, we'll have a personal Métis Voyageur, followed by an authentic French Canadian meal. We'll be in Batchewana Bay, one of the original villages of the Batchewana First Nations along the coast of Lake Superior. Don't forget to check out the gift shop!
- 6:30 pm Transfer back to local hotel in Sault Ste. Marie.
- 7:30 pm Free time.
- Overnight Sault Ste. Marie

Day 5 – Wednesday, September 9

Morning	Breakfast at hotel.
	Check out of the hotel
	Transfers are provided to the airport.
10:05 am	Depart on AC 8322 Sault Ste Marie (YAM) to Toronto (YYZ) -Arrive 11:33 am (1 hour 28 minutes)
2:00 pm minutes)	Connecting flight AC 115 Toronto (YYZ) to Vancouver (YVR) -Arrive 4:12 pm (5 hours 12
5:05 pm	Connecting flight AC 8075 Vancouver (YVR) to Victoria (YYJ) -Arrives 5:34 pm

Recommended items to bring

- A varied wardrobe including pants, shirts, sweaters, jacket and comfortable, sturdy footwear, a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen
- As there will be activities on the river, please bring waterproof rain gear
- All fishing equipment is provided
- Recommend waterproof footwear
- The weather can change quickly and most experiences are nature based
- Camera and a smile