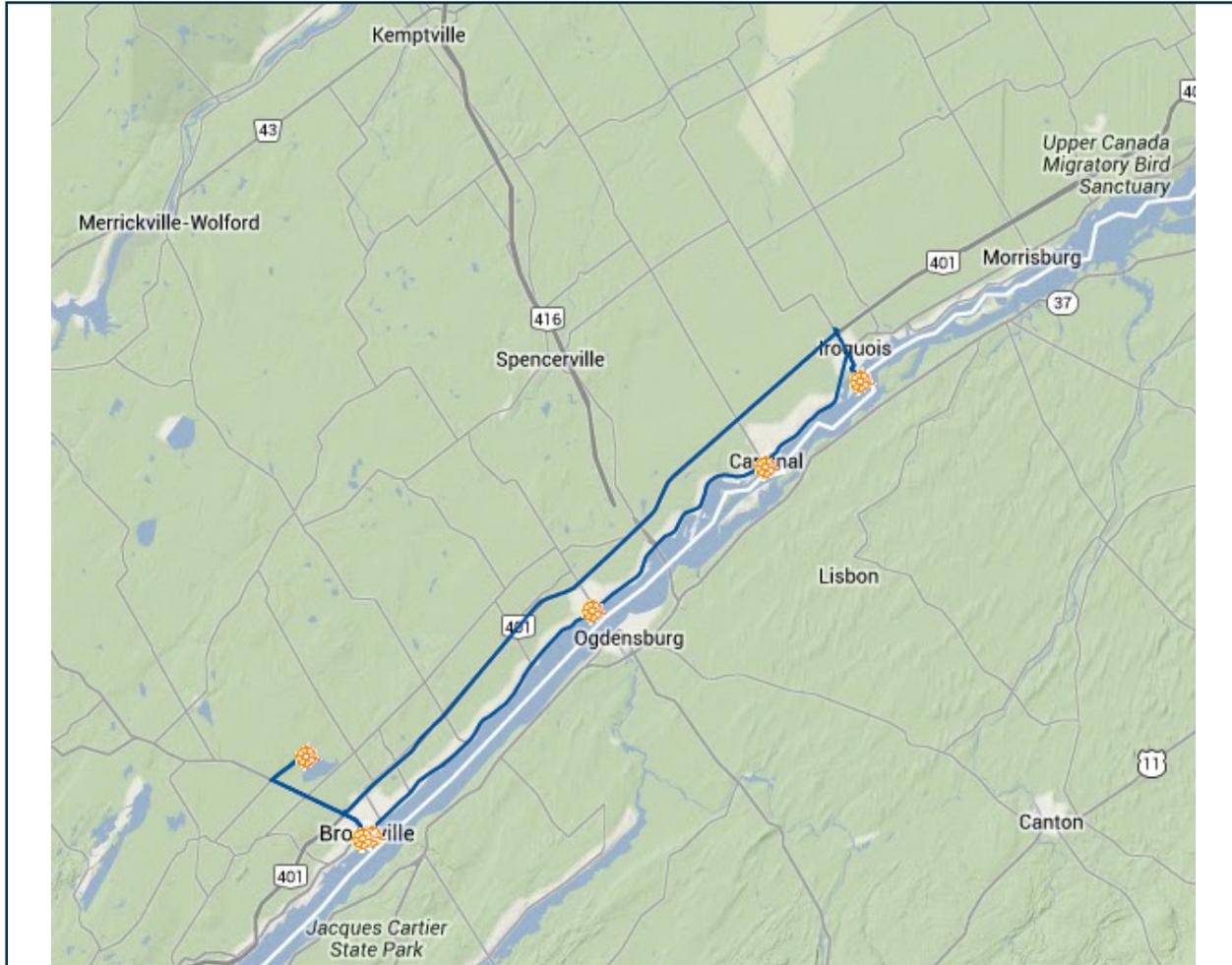




FAB EXPERIENCES

Eastern Ontario, Canada

Wild About Water



Tour Description

Amazingly, 60% of all the lakes on the planet are in Canada. The Frontenac Arch Biosphere is a sample of this Canadian fresh water landscape: over 30% of FAB is lakes, rivers, streams, marshes, lakes and bogs. There are near 3,000 islands, and close to 1,000 lakes and ponds in the Frontenac Arch Biosphere.

Tour from the FAB Brockville Gateway

fabbrockville.ca

1. The Mill Restaurant

Lat: 44.58615
Long: -75.687595
Tel: 613-345-7098

Water shaped the history of many communities and Brockville was no exception. This was an ideal settlement site in the 1780s, when United Empire Loyalists were granted land after exodus from the US. Buell's Creek was once a tumbling stream into the St. Lawrence, fed by lakes and marshes inland. There were at one time eight water powered mills and factories harnessing the creek. Sometime before 1800, first settlers William Buell and Daniel Jones built a sawmill on the creek, opposite the site of this mill, which was built in 1852 by Robert Shepherd, who acquired these properties. The flow of water from the shallow lakes and wetlands that feed Buell's Creek varied greatly in volume, season to season. Dams were built to make the water flow more dependable. A large impoundment was created at the north edge of the present day city, at the Back Pond, in what is now the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area managed by the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority.

Driving directions: The Mill Restaurant is located at the west end of Water Street. The Brockville Museum is one block west of the Mill Restaurant, at the corner of Water and Henry Streets.

Notes:

2. Brockville Museum

Lat: 44.58623
Long: -75.68648
Tel: 613-342-4397

The Brockville Museum, near downtown on the waterfront, occupies in part the house built by Isaac Beecher in 1824. It is operated today by the City of Brockville. The Museum displays a wide-ranging collection of artifacts and displays of the history of the city, including the role and impact of the river on the developing community.

Driving directions: Follow Water Street west to Paul St, one block; turn right on Paul St. which become Perth St.; drive north 400 metres to Pearl St., turn right; drive 400 metres to Stewart Blvd., turn left at lights; drive north 6.2 km. to Tincap, turn right at lights to Debruge Rd., 2 km. to conservation area entrance and parking.

Notes:

Explore more at: frontenacarchbiosphere.ca

3. Mac Johnson Wildlife Area

Lat: 44.58623
Long: -75.73028

The Mac Johnson Wildlife Area has a reservoir that maintains water levels for the Buells Creek System which flows through the Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley and the City of Brockville. The reservoir is a 532 hectare wetland, a Class 1 provincially significant wetland with a high diversity of plant and animal life.

Also known locally as the Back Pond, the Wildlife Area was renamed by the by the Cararaqui Region Conservation to recognize the efforts and achievements of a Brockville resident, Mac Johnson.

A visit to the walkways in the wetland shows how rich in wildlife such places can be, and the quantity of water that is “stored” to prevent flooding downstream.

Driving directions: Follow the route back to the Brockville waterfront, to Blockhouse Island and the cruise line office.

Notes:

4. 1000 Islands Seaway Cruises

Lat: 44.587525
Long: -75.68104

The “Jewels of the St. Lawrence” cruise rambles along the waterfront of Brockville and the eastern Thousand Islands. This is a great introduction to the look and feel of the St. Lawrence River. It departs from the Brockville waterfront at Blockhouse Island, every two hours, starting at 11:30 am.

Driving directions: From Blockhouse Island, drive north one block on Market St. to King St, turn right. King St. becomes Cnty. Rd. 2; continue 17.5 km. east to Prescott, turn right at Centre St. to Water St. and museum.

Notes:

5. Forwarders Museum

Lat: 44.70904
Long: -75.51389

In the early days of communities developing along the St. Lawrence, Prescott played an important role in transportation of both people and goods. Not far east of Prescott, the river began to tumble in long series of rapids, and forced cargo going both up and downstream to be unloaded to bypass the rapids. Above Prescott, sailing and steam-powered ships could safely navigate.

Cargo needed a place and facility to be stored for a period until shipping connections could be made. In 1820, William Gilkison built the stone building that is now the Forwarders Museum. The museum tells this era's story.

Driving directions: Return to King St. by way of Centre St. in Prescott, turn right; follow Cnty. Rd. 2 for 14 km. to Cardinal, turn right on Dundas St., to waterfront.

Notes:

6. Galop Canal

Lat: 44.785595
Long: -75.38399

The St. Lawrence River we see today is very different in character than the one seen by explorers, centuries ago. From Prescott to Montreal, this 11th largest river in the world dropped some 70 metres—roughly 75% the height of Niagara Falls—over a series of wild rapids. For explorers, this meant long portages. As settlements grew, canals and locks became front of mind developments.

The first locks were built in 1844, 115 years before today's St. Lawrence Seaway was opened. The first canals and locks in the Galop Canal between Cardinal and Iroquois were built in 1846-1847, and then enlarged and deepened several times over the decades to come.

Driving directions: Continue east on County Road 2 for about 8.3km. Turn right onto Carman Road, continue south for about 2km. Turn left onto Hadley Street to the Lock Station.

Notes:

Explore more at: frontenacarchbiosphere.ca

7. Iroquois Lock Station

Lat: 44.83189
Long: -75.31266

From Cardinal, and along County Road 2 to Iroquois, vestiges of the last version of the Galop Canal can still be seen and visited. They are partially drowned by the river, raised to present levels in the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway in the 1950s. The raised levels had an enormous impact on both the environment and communities along the Montreal to Prescott section of the river. "The Lost Villages" as they are called were communities abandoned or literally picked up and moved inland, as much as a kilometer, or more.

While well east of the Frontenac Arch Biosphere, the canals and seaway system has had a profound effect on the ecology and community of the region. Where water levels once changed seasonally as much as three metres, the dams associated with the seaway lessen the change to a metre or less. The ecological impact continues to change the nature of the Great Lakes, with hundreds of invasive species brought in with shipping from ports around the world.

Driving directions: Follow County Road 2 back to Brockville; or alternatively by way of Carman Road north from Iroquois to Hwy. 401 west, to Exit 696 at Brockville.

Notes:

Explore more at: frontenacarchbiosphere.ca