



FAB EXPERIENCES

Eastern Ontario, Canada

Short Countryside Cruise



The countryside of the Frontenac Arch Biosphere is a rural area quite unlike anything else you'll encounter. The Frontenac Arch rises up like a northern Ontario landscape through the lowland plains that border Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. Your countryside cruise takes you through those very different landforms.

Most of Ontario is a land of square fields and straight fences. The Frontenac Arch has fields bounded by rocky ridges and forests, and where fence lines are anything but straight, aside from those at road-side. Roads seem to wander at random as they climb and descend hills, bending around ridges, wetlands lakes and towns that sprang decades before road networks were imagined.

Most farming regions dedicate large tracts of land to a few crop types. Here, it's quite the opposite. The soil types in these small and irregular fields are often vary considerably, from soft organic soils, to clay, and sandy loam. Soils reflect the type of forests and marshes here before settlers cleared the land. Since crops favour some soil types more than others, there is a great variety of crops and produce, and livestock, on the fields of the Frontenac Arch. This land has lots of tastes to offer.

Note: The farmers' markets are operating on specific days. This tour requires a little setting up, calling in advance to the Amherst Island locations. The ferry to the island, a short ride, leaves Millhaven on the Loyalist Parkway at half-past the hour; and returns from Stella on the hour. The fee for a round trip for cars is \$9.00.

1. Kingston Public Market

Lat: 44.230136
 Long: -76.481166
 Tel: 613-546-0000

Ontario's oldest farmers market hosts dozens of vendors of local food and crafts, three days each week, from April to November. Here is a great sense of what's available in production from farm fields throughout the region.

Springer Market Square, Market Street, Kingston

Notes:

2. Memorial Centre Market

Lat: 44.239113
 Long: -76.500059
 Tel: 613-876-3125

Run entirely by producers, the emphasis is on local and sustainably produced food.

303 York Street, Kingston

Notes:

3. Old Farm Fine Foods

Lat: 44.228948
 Long: -76.491092
 Tel: 613-546-3276
 Email:
 oldfarm@sympatico.ca

This store on Barrie Street specializes in local and organic foods. Here is variety in produce that is rare in regular grocery stores—200 varieties of heirloom tomatoes, 20 of basil, 30 of peppers, cucumbers and squash – as well as local meats and cheeses. Such variety reflects the niche farms and passion of the producers in the region.

204 Barrie Street, Kingston

Notes:

4. Island Growing Company

Lat: 44.170573
 Long: -76.699037
 Tel: 613-887-2342
 Email:
 laird.leeder@me.com

Amherst Island is the definition of a pastoral landscape. The lake-moderated climate and soils over limestone bedrock add their own flavour to crops. The Island Growing company farms a variety of vegetables, veal and eggs. 5605 Front Rd, Stella. Call before going to Amherst Island

Driving directions: Follow Bath Rd. in Kingston approx. 20.3 km. to Millhaven, and Amherst Island ferry dock; turn left at Front Rd.; approx. .5 km. to farm. There is a small fee for a round trip crossing.

Notes:

Explore more at: frontenacarchbiosphere.ca

<p>5. Topsy Farms</p> <p>Lat: 44.143952 Long: -76.782795</p> <p>Tel: 613-389-3444</p> <p>Email: info@topsyfarms.com</p>	<p>Near the west end of the island, Topsy Farms is a sheep farm, and knitters turn the wool into dozens of products, from blankets to socks. The drive down the island's country lanes is a great view of island and country living, close to the city, but with a character entirely its own.</p> <p><i>14775 Front Rd, Stella. Call before going to Amherst Island.</i></p> <p><i>Driving directions: Follow Front Rd. 8.3 km. west to Topsy Farms</i></p> <p>Notes:</p>
<p>6. Wilton Cheese Factory</p> <p>Lat: 44.325579 Long: -76.722268</p> <p>Tel: 613-386-7314</p> <p>Email: davelarkin@live.ca</p>	<p>A little northwest of Kingston, the village of Wilton is in rolling countryside, just off the Frontenac Arch. Like so much of this part of eastern Ontario this was once the region that produced vast amounts of cheese to supply eastern Canadian cities, and for export to Europe. The Wilton Cheese factory was established in 1867, and still produces fine cheddar and several other types of cheeses today.</p> <p><i>5605 Front Road, north of Odessa</i></p> <p><i>Driving directions: From Topsy Farms, follow Front Rd. back to Stella and ferry, cross to mainland; turn right onto Hwy. 33, approx. 350 metres; turn left onto Cnty. Rd. 4; approx. 4 km., turn right onto Millhaven Rd./Cnty. Rd. 28 for approx. 7.3 km.; becomes Wilton Rd. and Cnty. Rd. 6, for approx. 4.7 km.; turn right onto Simmons Rd, approx. 1.5 km. to cheese factory.</i></p> <p>Notes:</p>
<p>7. Limestone Organic Creamery</p> <p>Lat: 44.347657 Long: -76.564001</p> <p>Tel: 613-542-0732</p> <p>Email: info @limestonecreamery.ca</p>	<p>This on-the-farm dairy and processing plant is new, and at the same time takes you back to the fresh taste of milk and cream, in glass bottles, and butter churned every week. The store has many other local products such as honey and local flour as well – and great ice cream.</p> <p><i>3127 Sydenham Rd., Elginburg</i></p> <p><i>Driving directions: From Wilton, continue north on Simmons Rd for 700m, take a slight left onto Fisk Rd, and then right onto Wilton Rd. After 4.3km, turn right onto Yarker Rd, and then right onto County Rd 38. After 3.5km, turn left onto Orser Rd. In 5.3km, turn right on Sydenham Rd.; approx. 2km to Limestone Organic Creamery</i></p> <p>Notes:</p>

Explore more at: frontenacarchbiosphere.ca

8. Garlic Fields Garden Market

Lat: 44.356522
Long: -76.513488

Tel: 613-353-4462

Email:
bjkar02@sympatico.ca

The usual garlic of grocery stores is imported from the other side of the globe, and simply can't compare with the incredible tastes of home-grown varieties. Here, on the edge of the Arch, the garden market has many other organically grown vegetables – and a great selection of oven ready foods.

3380 Latimer Rd, Elginburg

Driving directions: From Limestone Organic Creamery, north on Sydenham Rd. approx. 1.7 km. to Latimer Rd., turn right; approx. 3.5 km. to Garlic Fields, on right down laneway.

Notes:

8. Sun Harvest Greenhouses

Lat: 44.324513
Long: -76.502815

Tel: 613-546-6541

Email:
info@sunharvest.ca

A hydroponic greenhouse operation, and fields for asparagus, beans and potatoes, Sun Harvest shows production at a scale that serves the market of a small city. But, they go a little further than most, with workshops and events about growing, tasting and adding more to life through green living.

2542 Perth Rd, Glenburnie

Driving directions: From Garlic Fields Farm, north on Latimer Rd. 200 metres, turn right down laneway approx. .5 km.; onto Old Boy Rd., approx. 1 km., turn right onto Perth Rd.; approx. 2.5 km. to Sun Harvest Greenhouses

Notes:

Return to Kingston

From Sun Harvest Greenhouses, continue south on County Rd 10 for 10.5km (County Rd 10 turns into Division St). Turn left onto Queen St, follow Queen St back into downtown Kingston.

Your Trip Notes:

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