

ONTARIO
Yours to discover

Discover Ontario, create a memory.

Shared with friends and family, our Ontario travel discoveries make magical memories. Here's the ninth in a series of 12 explorations.

Exploring Ontario's autumn palette

Fall colour adventures with a twist



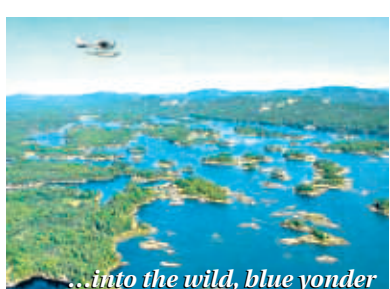
Cleared for takeoff...

It's autumn. Let's get out of town," my husband suggests. "The kids are back at university, the woods are gorgeous, so let's take a few days to share an adventure." Adventure is the key word. This fall we're enjoying the colours from a new point of view. Blue water and pink islands are not autumn's traditional hues, but Georgian Bay's windswept pines and smooth granite rocks provide some of Ontario's most famous scenery. We take off from Parry Sound in a locally built 4-passenger Found Bush Hawk float plane, flying north over Killbear Provincial Park and the ghost town of Depot Harbour. Our flight follows the rugged shoreline southward to the Sans Souci district, soaring above the 30,000 Islands, a UNESCO biosphere reserve. Sun glints off the water as we watch yachts tacking toward remote Frying Pan Island and Henry's, a restaurant known and loved for its fresh fish and chips dinners. The 35-minute trip is such a thrill that we decide that Georgian Bay Airways' new fly-and-ride horseback adventure is a must.

This time we fly inland for 30 minutes, over deciduous forests turning red and yellow in the autumn sunlight, landing at Clear Lake Farm near Magnetawan for a two-hour ride on Icelandic horses. These sturdy descendants of Viking mounts are known for their flowing

Our flight out of Parry Sound soars above the 30,000 islands of Georgian Bay

gait. We have to agree. Our two-hour ride through the forest trails is remarkably smooth. Having shared my dream adventure on horseback, my husband is keen for me to experience autumn his way—on four wheels. So we head for Elk Lake Eco Resource Centre on the shores of the Montreal River. The river may be known



...into the wild, blue yonder

for its historic role in the fur trade, but we'll be exploring former rail lines on ATVs. As we ride through open fields skirting boreal forest, a ruffed grouse leads her family across the trail. The climax though comes when we see a moose grazing at the edge of a marsh, weeds dripping from its mouth.

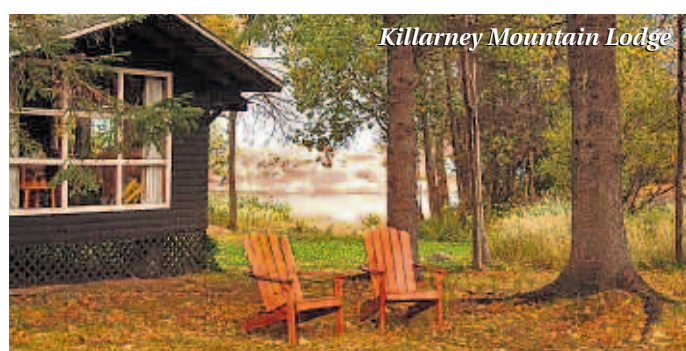
Later, we opt for a 90-minute hike guided by Executive Director Pamela Hamel who shows us how to identify wild edibles, like cattails, to use in a salad. Back at the resort we dine on organic Muscovy duck and bison raised on a nearby farm. The dining room embodies northern luxury: heated slate floors, rustic stone fireplace, cathedral ceilings and towering



All-terrain vehicle fun

windows that give us views of the stars and treetops. This award-winning building is a showcase for Canadian wood products, including majestic B.C. fir timbers stretching 20 metres into the grand hall.

After dinner, we walk the woodland trail back to our chalet bedroom. Next morning, we wake to the sound of a loon's call and the splendid sight of migrating Canada geese. I can't wait to tell the kids about our autumn adventures!
www.georgianbayairways.com
www.elklakeeco.ca



Killarney Mountain Lodge

Autumn romance, northern beauty in two iconic parks

For my husband and me, Algonquin is synonymous with romance. As university students, we paddled its famed canoe routes and toughed it out together along the portages. At night, we watched the sparks from our bonfire fly up into the starry sky as we listened to the haunting call of a loon.

Two children and two decades later, Algonquin still beckons, so we'll be heading north to enjoy orange maples reflecting in still black lakes and walk trails with leaves crunching underfoot. But today's outdoor adventures come with a dose of well-earned luxury. Tents have given way to the indoor comforts of the Couples Resort near Algonquin Park, where I'll happily forsake the portage in favour of a pedicure.

Still, early morning paddles

through autumn mists rising off the lake prove irresistible so we'll borrow a couple of kayaks to explore Galeairy Lake, and maybe spot a beaver before breakfast.

The resort has its own 2.7-km trail, but we're just a five minute drive to Algonquin's western

Today's outdoor adventures comes with a good dose of luxury

entrance, where some of Ontario's best hiking awaits. Perhaps we'll do the short but rugged 1.9-km walk along the Lookout loop, or follow the abandoned railway line on the Booth's Rock loop. Working up an appetite is easy on scenic trails like these.

Back at the resort we'll dine on roasted quail and wild mushroom risotto. We've booked one

of the luxurious boutique chateaux with a two-sided stone fireplace, lake views and our own steam bath. We'll enjoy the stars from our own private hot tub. Ah, the woods never felt so good.

Like Algonquin, Killarney Provincial Park has long been a favourite destination for fall colour hikes, painting excursions and canoe trips. The park's white quartzite mountains are at their best against an intensely blue September sky so we'll paddle and hike to Silver Peak, the highest point in the La Cloche range, for a spectacular view. By booking our getaway through Killarney Mountain



La Cloche Mountains

Lodge, we'll have trail guides to carry the lunch, and a comfortable bed waiting back at the lodge.

www.couplesresort.ca
www.killarney.com

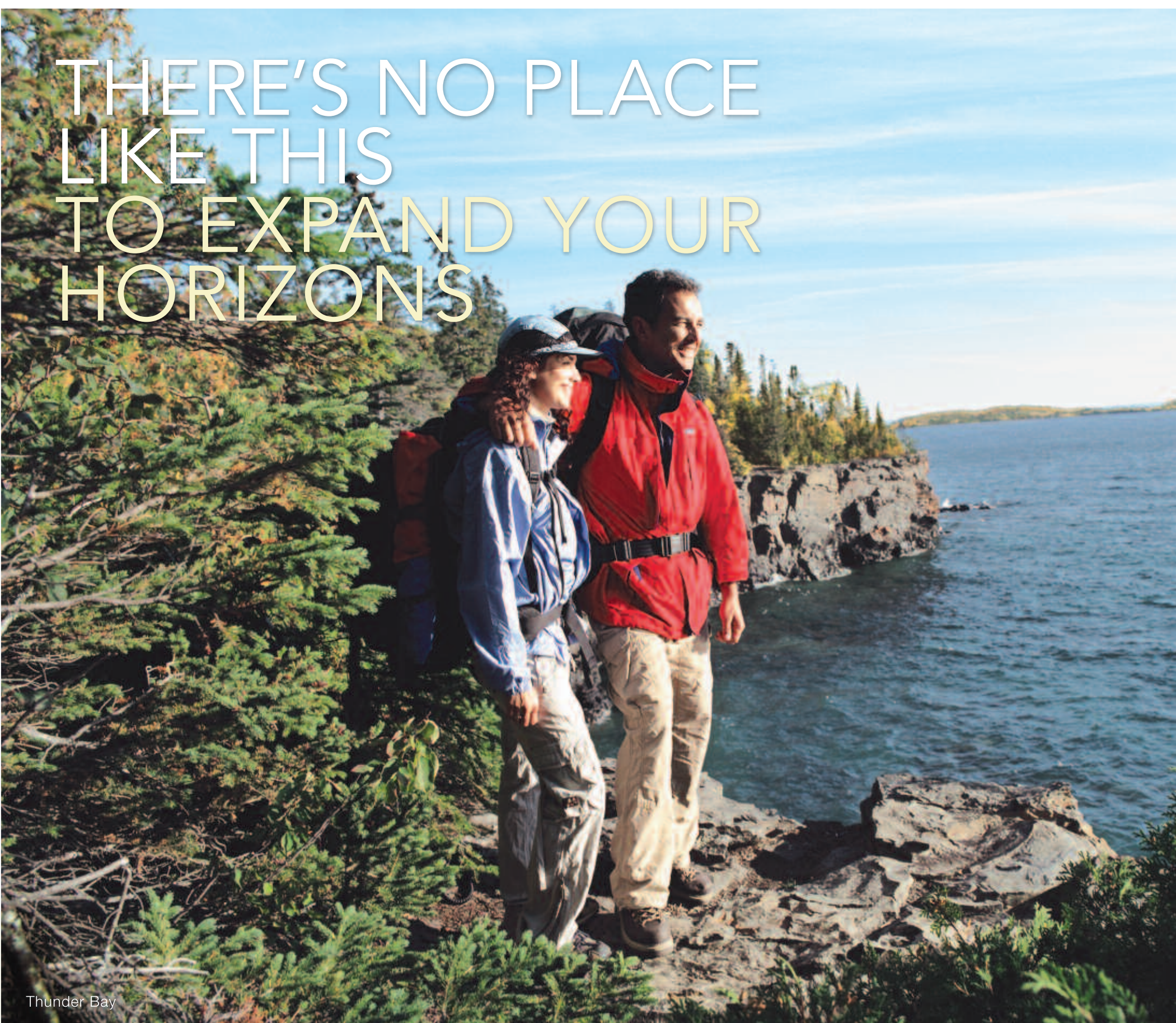


Couples Resort

WIN A REJUVENATING RETREAT FOR FOUR

Whitewater thrills meet spa indulgence on the banks of the Madawaska River. Win your own rejuvenating retreat for four at Madawaska Kana Centre.

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