



2020 Summer of Adventure!

LAKE HURON NORTH CHANNEL

Massey to Espanola

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Celebrate 25 years of trail-building and work to protect and connect our Great Lakes and St. Lawrence waterfront with the 2020 Summer of Adventure!

This week we head north with a wonderful ride from Massey to Espanola. Never mind the Big Smoke. Welcome to big northern hospitality. Ride through the gentle foothills of the ancient LaCloche mountain range, experience the breathtaking beauty of the falls at Chutes Provincial Park, swim in the Spanish River, take a dip into Espanola's Clear Lake, learn about the region's colourful heritage at local museums.

Terrain—Easy terrain, flat paved roadway. Lee Valley Road is very quiet. The 30 km between Massey and Espanola does not have any services—just lovely landscape.

Distance—32 km from Chutes Provincial Park, Massey to Clear Lake Beach in Espanola. Start in either Espanola or Massey. Both have a variety of accommodations. Chutes Provincial Park is open. During Covid, it is operating with some restrictions. We suggest spending a day or two in each community to enjoy all they have to offer. With 3 beach opportunities, this adventure is ideal for the beach-loving.

Township of Sables-Spanish Rivers — Massey You'll find tranquil northern roads guiding you through the LaCloche foothills and dancing along shores of the serene Spanish River as the Trail winds through the Township of Sables-Spanish Rivers. The Township is centred in Massey, a welcoming community with a variety of excellent local restaurants and eateries, a pair of motels, a quaint craft store and coffee shop, a fascinating local museum, a grocer, one of the most generous scoops of ice cream around, and a road that is (quite literally) Seldom Seen.

Heritage Park at the corner of HWY 17 and Imperial Road uses a variety of storyboards to share its heritage. Across the road is the [Massey Area Museum](#). The Museum is filled with exhibits, artifacts and stories from the earliest native settlement of the Sagamok Anishnawbek, early exploration, and the first European settlement leading to the founding of Sables Spanish Rivers. Exhibits also show the history of the timber, railway and mining industries.

Pack a picnic and head out **Mouth Park**, at the end of Carl Albert Street in Massey, known as “The Mouth” as it is where the Sables River empties into the Spanish River. The Park features a beautiful natural sand beach, natural clay embankment slide, shoreline fishing and great picnic areas for the family.

Visit [Chutes Provincial Park](#), **660 Imperial St. North, Massey, ON**. Spend a day or stay overnight. You will fall in love with Aux Sables River when you see the spectacular falls and Seven Sisters Cataracts. A viewing platform gets you up close to the falls, while a swimming area exists not far from their base. Hike the Twin Bridges Trail (6km/2hr return) to follow the shores of the Aux Sables. The entrance to the park is about 650m north of Highway 17 on Route 553.

Ride to Espanola: Crossing the bridge over the Spanish River you'll be treated to an incredible view as you enter the Lee Valley and travel the final stretch to our overnight in Espanola. Don't worry about "foothills" it is not very hilly and affords views of stark bluffs.

32 km Espanola— Espanola, a town with a city feel, was founded in the early 1900s as a company town for the Spanish River Pulp and Paper Company. Today, the Domtar's Espanola Mill and dam provide an impressive view from the bridge spanning the Spanish River just north of town. Be sure to visit [Espanola Heritage Park](#) to learn about the City's history including a WWII prisoner of war camp that was located in the pulp and paper mill. Espanola is the first major northern hub on the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail, created during the first and second phase of the Trail's expansion efforts to circumnavigate Georgian Bay. It's roughly 50km from the junction on Barber Rd to Little Current on Manitoulin Island!

Stay on the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail / Al Secord Fitness Trail along Highway 6 to Clear Lake Beach and for an afternoon on the beach. The Al Secord Trail begins at Queensway Avenue near Tim Horton's and Clear Lake Beach is visible from Highway 6 at Foster Drive, in the south end of town.

While in Espanola visit any one of the 13 restaurants, pubs, and eateries for something to eat. Make reservations if you're going to Cortina (vegan pasta available)! Curious about the history, visit the Espanola Heritage Park for a window into local history (Located at Barber and Main).

Download the Printed Maps:

Map 11 and 11A in this bundle for Massey- https://waterfronttrail.org/maps/LHNC_05_Spanish_Massey.pdf
Maps 12 and 12 A in this bundle for Espanola- https://waterfronttrail.org/maps/LHNC_06_Espanola_Nairn.pdf
Use our custom interactive Google map to check distances. And points of interest. <https://waterfronttrail.org/map/interactive-map-2/>

What to bring:

Don't forget your sanitizer, snacks and water as facilities are not fully open. Please respect physical distancing protocols and call accommodations and facilities in advance to confirm hours.

Learn More About the Communities

Massey Community Profile- <https://waterfronttrail.org/places/communities/sables-spanish-rivers/>
Espanola Community Profile- <https://waterfronttrail.org/places/communities/espanola/>

Accommodations

Massey- <https://www.masseymotel.com/>
Camping at Chutes Provincial Park open with restrictions- <http://www.ontarioparks.com/park/chutes>
Espanola- <https://espanola.ca/accommodations>
This route is also part of Canada's Trans Canada Trail-[Great Trail](#).

If you have more time, we recommend you either explore more of the Lake Huron North Channel (see links below) or continue the ride to Manitoulin Island. [Click here](#) for maps and info on Manitoulin Island.

WHY NOT EXPLORE THE FULL LAKE HURON NORTH CHANNEL?

If you are heading north, we strongly recommend you think about exploring the more of the Lake Huron North Channel. The Massey to Espanola itinerary is just a taste of what awaits you. But you could easily spend a wonderful week taking in Northern Ontario communities.

[Download the Lake Huron North Channel Mini-Guide](#): Two-page description with overview map of the entire Lake Huron North Channel route of the Trail from Sault Ste. Marie to Sudbury. This is an excellent bike ride and would work well as a "drive and ride" holiday. Northern Ontario has so much to offer.

[Download the detailed daily itinerary](#): Itineraries including camping, hotel and motel recommendations, suggested stops, local history and gravel riding tips.

Daily Route Maps:

[Day 01 – Sault Ste Marie](#) (Up to 50km)

[Day 02 – Sault Ste Marie to Bruce Mines](#) (73-115km)

[Day 03 – Bruce Mines to Blind River](#) (96km)

[Day 04 – Blind River to Espanola](#) (115km)

[Day 05 – Espanola to Sudbury](#) (81km)

GPS Routing: GPS data is hosted on [Ride with GPS](#). Enter the site, click “find” and enter the keyword “GWTA19”