

Lake Muskoka Loop

DRIVE-AND-RIDE SELF-GUIDED ITINERARY

Ride the inspirational landscape, winding roads and rolling Canadian Shield connecting four incredible communities surrounding iconic Lake Muskoka, each with their own vibrant history, culture and stories. Chase waterfalls through Muskoka's waterfall capital in **Bracebridge**, roll into **Port Carling**, the Hub of the Lakes, where the Indian River locks connect three legendary Muskoka lakes and a century of cottage country history comes alive. Pedal on to **Bala**, where Lake Muskoka meets the Moon River, home to Ontario's cranberry capital, and legendary live music at The Kee; visit **Gravenhurst**, the Gateway to Muskoka, where historic steamships and the stunning Muskoka Wharf boardwalk await at the water's edge.

EXPERIENCE LEVEL

Best suited for experienced cycle tourists comfortable riding with traffic. Much of the route around Lake Muskoka follows Muskoka Road 118 West and 169. Both are important arterial roads connecting Bracebridge and Gravenhurst on Highway 11 to Highway 69. While much of the route on 118W has paved shoulders and the route on 169 between Bala and Torrance has the same, other sections presently have narrow-to-no shoulders and require cycling alongside traffic, including truck traffic. District of Muskoka is improving conditions annually.

TERRAIN

This route includes several hills, specifically on the north side of Lake Muskoka. Stage Coach Road south of Bracebridge is very scenic, but narrow and unpaved.

TIPS

Expect 25–30 km between major amenities on the route and plan ahead. Carry extra water and snacks. Terrain can be hilly; E-bikes help with hills. Some businesses close for the season starting in September. If cycling in September or later, we recommend calling the businesses you hope to visit in advance.

START LOCATION

Park at the public parking lot across from 99 Hiram Street, Bracebridge. Alternate parking is available at the George Rd terminus near the public boat launch on Lake Muskoka (recommended for a 2-day trip).

94-99 km

TOTAL DISTANCE

7-10 hrs

SUGGESTED RIDE TIME

TO ENJOY STOPS IN EACH COMMUNITY (CAN BE EXTENDED TO 2 DAYS WITH AN OVERNIGHT IN BALA OR TORRANCE. THOSE WISHING FOR A QUIETER, MORE RURAL EXPERIENCE CAN CYCLE THE SIGNED ROUTE ON FALKENBURG ROAD, ADDING 5 KM TO THE EXPERIENCE AND BYPASSING MILFORD BAY.)

ROUTE MAPS

Ride with GPS

(94–99 km, +/- 1052 m elevation)

Great Lakes
Waterfront Trail
PDF maps



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Disclaimer: This route is a suggested route only. The route incorporates on-road riding. All cyclists are responsible for their own safety and must use both trails and streets with caution and do so at their own risk. Always wear the proper safety gear when cycling, ride sensibly and abide by all laws. Each route should be evaluated by each individual cyclist based on their level of experience, comfort level in cycling on trails and roads, weather conditions, time of day, and any road obstacles. Waterfront Regeneration Trust and all others involved in the development of this route do not assume any liability whatsoever for cyclists using this information and travelling upon this route.

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THE RIDE

START LOCATION

Public parking lot across from 99 Hiram St, Bracebridge.

RIDE HIGHLIGHTS

Downtown Bracebridge:

Manitoba St, Bracebridge

Bala & Kee to Bala: Cranberry capital of Ontario, Scenic, excellent overnight. Famous concert venue.

Beach: Baycliffe Park (1148 Milford Bay Rd, Milford Bay.)

Winery: Muskoka Lakes Farm and Winery (1074 Cranberry Rd, Bala)

Muskoka Steamships: Historic steamship tours (185 Cherokee Ln, Gravenhurst)

Bike Shops: Liv Outside (271 Ecclestone Dr, Bracebridge), Ecclestone Cycle & Swim (230 Ecclestone Dr, Bracebridge), Nielsens Bicycles (43 Dominion St, Bracebridge)

0 km – Downtown Bracebridge *(Manitoba St)*

Immediately adjacent to the public parking lot on Hiram St you'll find Downtown Bracebridge, bustling with amenities including multiple restaurants and unique shops. Closest to the Parking Lot you'll find a restaurant, café, bakery, deli and local coffee. There are three local bike shops in Town. See above for their addresses.

16 km – Recommended Stop—Baycliffe Beach Park *(2605 Muskoka Rd 118, Milford Bay)*

Small and picturesque sandy beach on Lake Muskoka with parking and public washrooms. The Beach is a short (600m) walk from the trailhead of the popular Huckleberry Rock Lookout hiking trail, considered to have one of the best sunset views in Muskoka.

18 km – Valley Green Beach Park

(1148 Milford Bay Rd, Milford Bay)

Scenic beach with parking and portable washrooms. Excellent spot for a break and to take in the views.

26 km – Port Carling / Hanna Park

(Hanna Park: Bailey St terminus, Port Carling)

Port Carling is the Hub of the Lakes and centrally located on both the Lake Muskoka Loop and the Lake Rosseau Loop. Port Carling is bustling in summer, with scenic lakeside views, plenty of history, culture, restaurants and shops. Hanna Park, located at the terminus of Bailey St, is a little more intimate for a rest and refuel.

39 km – Window onto Lake Muskoka

Short but scenic window downhill and alongside Lake Muskoka. Beautiful opportunity to enjoy a slow roll.

~43 km – Muskoka Lakes Farm & Winery

(1074 Cranberry Rd, Bala)

Located just off route at Medora Rd, Muskoka Lakes Winery is scenic, with excellent food, wine and hiking trails. Their shop has an amazing array of cranberry products and excellent local goods. Great spot for an early lunch.

48 km – Cacao Boys *(1004 Elm St, Bala)*

Artisan chocolatier and coffee!

48–49 km – Bala

The Cranberry capital of Ontario is home to scenic waterfalls and dams, is flanked on both sides by Lake Muskoka, and includes heritage buildings, local shops and eateries, and the famous The Kee on Bala concert venue. Note:

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Many businesses in Bala are seasonal. Being half-way along the route, Bala is an ideal spot for an overnight should you want to make this a two-day trip. Bala and Torrance both provide excellent lunch options.

53 km – Clear Lake Brewing Co and Muskoka Beer Spa *(4651 Southwood Rd, Torrance)*

Craft brewery and restaurant, spa and lodging. Another ideal overnight location if you're making this a two-day trip. The Brewing Co also opens early for breakfast should you want to grab something on the way out of Bala.

73–76 km – Gravenhurst

Home of the Muskoka Wharf and Discovery Centre, historic steamships, the Bethune Memorial House National Historic Site, and unique shops and restaurants including Sawdust City Brewing Co. If splitting this trip into a two-day excursion, consider a steamship tour!

80 km - Muskoka Beach Park

(1141 Muskoka Beach Rd, Gravenhurst)

Public beach, washrooms and parking.

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THE DRIVE

The Drive section of the itinerary provides suggestions for experiences to add on to your trip once your bikes are stowed and you are back in the car. Many experiences are not directly on the itinerary route but are nearby, ideal for travelling by car. Each is an opportunity to celebrate the communities and landscape of Ontario Cottage Country.

With the Lake Muskoka Loop being almost 100km long, extend your stay to two days with an overnight in Bala for additional time to really explore and experience more of what Muskoka has to offer.

Cruise Muskoka: Bracebridge, Gravenhurst and Port Carling

Cruise operators in these key Lake Muskoka communities all offer scenic boat tours allowing you a curated tour of the Muskoka River (Bracebridge), Lake Muskoka (Gravenhurst) or Lake Rosseau (Port Carling). Tours are ~90-120 minutes long. Book these experiences in advance, especially if it involves a meal.

Muskoka Cruises operates from Bracebridge (300 Ecclestone Dr) and Port Carling (7 Lock St E.)

Muskoka Steamships operate from Gravenhurst (185 Cherokee Lane) and conduct their tours on historic steamships located at the Muskoka Wharf. Tours on Muskoka Steamships can include, lunch, dinner or high tea.

Hike Muskoka: Muskoka has an incredible amount of hiking trails with exceptional views on offer. The below list is not exhaustive and includes a few locations on or closer to the Lake Muskoka Loop. Discover Muskoka maintains a [website](#) with information on hiking in Muskoka more broadly.

Hardy Lake Provincial Park (near 58 km marker on Loop) *(Muskoka Rd 169, Torrance)*

Hardy Lake Provincial Park offers beautiful hiking around Hardy Lake. The park has a small parking lot access located ~4.5km east of Torrance on Muskoka Road 169. There are three main hiking loops ranging from 3-9km in length. There are no washrooms or amenities, so pack accordingly. The park is increasing in popularity, so going early ensures a better chance to park. The hikes are rugged, but not exceptionally challenging.

Huckleberry Rock Lookout Trail (17 km marker on Loop) *(Milford Bay Rd, Milford Bay)*

Considered one of the best sunset locations on Lake Muskoka, the Huckleberry Rock Lookout Trail. The Huckleberry Rock Lookout Trail is 2.5km, located in Milford Bay. Muskoka Lakes maintains a [hiking trail brochure](#) that offers helpful maps for Huckleberry Rock, Hardy Lake and Torrance Barrens, amongst other locations.

Walkers Point Lookout Trail (1470 Walkers Point Rd, Torrance)

Walker's Point Lookout Trail is a short 1 km hike to an outlook on Lake Muskoka from Walker's Point Road and accessible from Muskoka Rd 169.

Bracebridge Waterfalls Tour:

There are a number of waterfalls located in and around Bracebridge, each adjacent to a short walk or hiking trail. Each is an exceptional location to visit.

Bracebridge Falls is located right along the route, just outside downtown Bracebridge with parking off 39 Wharf Rd. The Falls and bridge are lit at night.

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Wilson's Falls: Located at 461 Wilson Falls Rd. Adjacent to a 3.6km hiking trail.

High Falls: Located at High Falls Rest Area at the Cedar Lane Exit of Hwy 11. The rest area has picnic tables, parking, vault toilets and a short rugged hiking trail that is also part of the Trans Canada Trail.

Muskoka on the Water

There are several locations that offer canoe and kayak rentals along the Lake Muskoka Loop including **Liv Outside** (271 Ecclestone Dr, Bracebridge). Liv Outside is well situated near the Muskoka River and is a short paddle to the base of Bracebridge Falls.

For boats and more unique watersports consider a class with **Muskoka Wake**, whose offerings include flyboarding and e-foils.

Torrance Barrens Dark Sky Reserve

(Southwood Road, Gravenhurst)

The world's first permanent Dark Sky Reserve, located on Southwood Road, and accessed from Muskoka Rd 169 in Torrance. The Reserve has several kilometers of hiking trails. Tucked away from light pollution it is an amazing location to stargaze, especially during the Perseid Meteor shower in July/August.

Kee to Bala Concert Hall

(1012 Bala Falls Rd, Bala)

The **Kee to Bala** is a historic concert venue and bar located in Bala right on Lake Muskoka that has been operating and hosting performances for almost a century. Visit the website for a listing of current shows.

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ACCOMMODATIONS

There are numerous roofed accommodations and cottage rental locations located throughout Muskoka. Discover Muskoka maintains a **valuable website listing accommodations.**

We've listed a few on or near the Loop:

There are plenty of cottage rental experiences along the Lake Muskoka Loop.

Bracebridge:

Quality Inn: 300 Ecclestone Dr. Located right on the Muskoka River and right on the Loop. Onsite restaurant includes a discounted breakfast.

Tru by Hilton: 320 Taylor Rd Building B, Bracebridge. Located near Hwy 11.

There are also numerous smaller hotels and motels located in Bracebridge.

Bala:

Bala Bay Inn: 3063 Muskoka District Rd 169, Bala. Historic hotel with on-site restaurant and complimentary shuttle to Muskoka Beer Spa in Torrance for those staying overnight.

Gravenhurst:

Residence Inn Gravenhurst: 285 Steamship Bay Rd, Gravenhurst. Located right along the route. Gravenhurst has a number of other larger hotels and smaller motels.