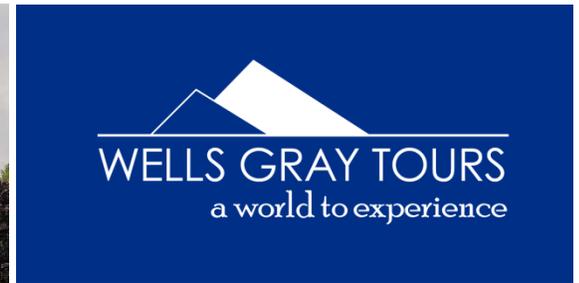




Kawartha Voyageur



ONTARIO WATERWAYS & CANALS CRUISE

June 23, 2023 – 11 Days

Cruise the Trent–Severn Waterway on the small ship Kawartha Voyageur

The Trent-Severn Waterway is a National Historic Site that extends 386 km from Trenton on Lake Ontario to Port Severn on Lake Huron's Georgian Bay. *Kawartha Voyageur* is a small ship that offers 5-day cruises through sections of this scenic waterway. Our route is from Peterborough to Big Chute, sailing through 21 locks and many canals, under dozens of bridges, and across the Kawartha Lakes. The ship carries a maximum of 45 people on this journey of exceptional scenery, so the experience is intimate and thrilling. Wells Gray owner Roland Neave took our Mystery Tour on *Kawartha* in September 2022, and was impressed with the ship, meals, and service. Prior to the cruise, we stay in Ottawa for 3 nights and go to Toronto afterwards for 2 nights. If you have enjoyed our *Canadian Empress* cruises on the St. Lawrence River, you are sure to love *Kawartha Voyageur*.

Activity Level: 2



22 Meals Included:

9 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 7 dinners

Fares per person:

\$6,095 double/twin; \$9,155 single

Please add 5% GST.

Early Bookers:

\$200 discount on first 12 seats; \$100 on next 8

Experience Points:

Earn 100 points on this tour.

Redeem 100 points if you book by March 21, 2023.

Departure from: Victoria, Nanaimo & Comox



Bobcaygeon Lock

ITINERARY

Day 1: Friday, June 23

A transfer is provided to Victoria Airport. We fly on Air Canada via Vancouver to Ottawa. Welcome to Canada's capital city. We stay three nights at the classic **Lord Elgin Hotel**. Its location is ideal, just blocks away from Parliament Hill, Major's Hill Park, the Rideau Canal, Byward Market, and Sparks Street. The hotel was built in 1941 and named for the first Governor General of the united Canadas.

Accommodation: Lord Elgin Hotel

Day 2: Saturday, June 24

Today we visit two of the most acclaimed national museums. First is the **Canadian Museum of History** with highlights such as the First Nations Hall, Canada Hall, and Canadian Personalities Hall. An Imax film is included here. This afternoon, we visit the **Canadian War Museum** which reflects on Canada's military history and how it shaped the country. The rest of the day is leisure time.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Lord Elgin Hotel

Day 3: Sunday, June 25

Today is a free day to spend in Ottawa as you wish, and your tour director can assist with suggestions. Take a tour of the Parliament Buildings (the Centre Block is closed for renovations). Join a fun tasting tour of Byward Market. Rent a bike and ride along the Rideau Canal. Visit more exceptional attractions, such as Museum of Nature, National Gallery or Royal Canadian Mint.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Lord Elgin Hotel

Day 4: Monday, June 26

A local guide joins us this morning for a tour of the city which passes the **Parliament Buildings**, other notable government buildings, Rideau Canal, Chateau Laurier, 24 Sussex Drive, Rideau Hall, and the fine homes of Rockcliffe Park. Leaving Ottawa, we stop at the **Diefenbunker**, an extraordinary project commissioned by Prime Minister John Diefenbaker and completed in 1961. It was a huge underground complex built as an emergency shelter from which the government could operate in the event of a nuclear attack during the Cold War. We drive to Peterborough and

board the **Kawartha Voyageur** this evening. The ship stays docked in Peterborough tonight. The impressive Centennial Fountain is visible, shooting up 76 metres and illuminated with different colours after dark.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Kawartha Voyageur*

Day 5: Tuesday, June 27

During breakfast, the *Kawartha Voyageur* casts off and we cross the Otonabee River to lock #20 and the entrance to the **Trent-Severn Waterway**. Be sure to be on deck soon after when the ship enters the amazing **Peterborough Lift Lock**. This engineering marvel, invented a century ago, lifts our ship 20 metres in just a few minutes using a counter-balancing system and it is the world's highest lift lock. We cruise past the riverside campus of Trent University, then up five locks to enter Lake Katchewanooka, the first of the Kawartha Lakes. The Young's Point lock is the entrance to Clear Lake, followed by Stoney Lake which is dotted by dozens of islands with many lakeside cottages and mansions. Here, we see the lonely **Church on the Rock** standing guard over Hell's Gate. The ship is lifted past Burleigh Falls, then we cross Lovesick and Lower Buckhorn Lakes to our overnight mooring at the village of Buckhorn. Join the cruise host for an evening walk to the **Adam and Eve Rocks**, two giant erratics carried here by Ice Age glaciers.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Kawartha Voyageur*



Lovesick Lock with bow folded up

Day 6: Wednesday, June 28

This is a leisurely cruise day travelling across another five Kawartha Lakes – Buckhorn, Pigeon, Sturgeon, Cameron, and Balsam. There are locks to lift our ship to the next level at the villages of Bobcaygeon, Fenelon Falls, and Rosedale. The captain may dock at one or more of these locks, so we can go for a short walk and watch the lock in action from shore. **Balsam Lake** is the highest point on the Trent-Severn Waterway at 256.3 metres above sea level, the highest point to which a vessel can be navigated in the Great Lakes–Saint Lawrence River drainage basin. From here, the locks are all descending. Our day's journey ends at the Kirkfield Lift Lock following a transit of the man-made Kirkfield channel.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Kawartha Voyageur*

Day 7: Thursday, June 29

Kirkfield Lift Lock is similar to the one at Peterborough, but not as high. We cruise downstream through Canal Lake and the Talbot River passing through five locks and several swing bridges before entering **Lake Simcoe**. During the afternoon, the ship crosses the lake for 24 km and docks on the north shore at Orillia.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Kawartha Voyageur*



Day 8: Friday, June 30

You may wish to do some shopping in **Orillia** or visit the Stephen Leacock home, a National Historic Site. Afterwards, we sail up Lake Couchiching to enter the **Severn River** at Washago. This section of the Severn to Sparrow Lake offers a fine display of magnificent homes and cottages. We dock overnight at Port Stanton on Sparrow Lake.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Kawartha Voyageur*



Day 9: Saturday, July 1

Happy Canada Day! This is a final day of awesome scenery, cruising down the Severn River with its rocky grandeur. A highlight is the impressive Swift Rapids lock where the ship descends 14.3 metres in a single chamber. Our cruise ends at **Big Chute** where the Marine Railway carries smaller vessels down 18 metres to the level of Georgian Bay. Our coach meets us here and we drive into **Toronto** for a two-night stay.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Chelsea Hotel

Day 10: Sunday, July 2

This morning, we explore **Little Canada**, an amazing new exhibit which features dioramas of five Canadian cities in miniature. Buildings and monuments are perfect scale models, while trains, buses, trucks, and cars all move around their cities, and the tiny people and animals have movements too. Later, a matinee show is planned at one of Toronto's theatres, but schedules are not yet available for summer 2023.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Chelsea Hotel



Day 11: Monday, July 3

A transfer is provided to Toronto Pearson Airport for a morning flight on Air Canada to Victoria. A transfer is arranged to your pickup point.

KAWARTHA VOYAGEUR

Our floating home for 5 nights is the *Kawartha Voyageur*, a ship specially built to cruise the Trent-Severn Waterway. The ship was built in 1983, then lengthened in 1995 and 2000 to its present 36.7 metres (121 feet). It is 6.7 metres wide (the beam), so these dimensions allow it to travel through most of the 43 locks on the canal with inches to spare. Lloyd and Helen Ackert built the ship and it is still in the Ackert family, operated by sons John and Marc and their wives Joy and Robin. The personal touch of a family business is very evident with the attention to detail and excellent service.



Kawartha Voyageur carries 45 passengers if all berths are occupied. There are 3 decks. The bottom deck has 23 cabins, 4 showers shared by all passengers, and an outdoor sitting area at the bow. The second deck has the dining room, lounge, library, and a bathroom. An elevator serves these two decks or there are stairs. The sun deck is reached by stairs from the lounge area and is an open area with lots of chairs and a canopy for shade that lowers when passing under a low bridge. The pilothouse is forward of the sun deck and visiting is allowed unless the captain is steering into a lock.

The cabins are tiny and all identical, measuring 2.9 metres long and 2 metres wide (9.5 feet by 6.5 feet). Each cabin has two single beds (with lots of space underneath for suitcases), a window with a roller blind, and a small desk. There is a clothes rack with hangers and two shelves above each bed. The toilet and sink are separated from the sleeping area by a curtain. Two people sharing a cabin probably need to take turns getting into bed. The cabins are typically used only for sleeping, dressing, and the toilet, and the rest of the time you will be in the lounge area or on the sun deck. The tap water in the cabins is not potable, but there is a drinking fountain and water bottle filler along the hall.

There are four showers at the stern end of the hall. Each has a locking door with a dressing area and a curtain separating the shower itself. Pick up a large bath towel from shelves in the hall. Soap is from a dispenser. Bring your own hair dryer.

Meals are served promptly at 8 AM, noon, and 6 PM. The menu is on the table and is fixed so there are no choices, but every meal is different. All meals are excellent quality and it is remarkable how the staff can produce so much from the small galley. Breakfast is typically muffins and porridge, followed by a hot dish that changes every day such as pancakes or omelette with toast, plus fruit, juice, coffee or tea. Lunch and dinner are usually a salad, hot dish, and dessert. Menus for every meal are on the website www.Ontariowaterways.com. All food is served from a trolley and the server asks what



you want and how much, then returns later to see if you want seconds. Most food allergies cannot be handled on board (more details on next page). In addition to the three meals, snacks are served at 10 AM, 3 PM and 10 PM and brought around to wherever you are sitting in the lounge or the sun deck. Wells Gray Tours provides an open bar, but the ship's selection is limited – Stella beer or Jackson-Triggs red and white wine (in 2022), or a few types of mixed drinks.

There are some very low bridges along the canal and sometimes the shelter canopy on the sun-deck must be lowered and the pilothouse flattens as well. One of the crew warns everybody sitting on the sun deck to stay sitting and don't stand up at the last minute. Some of the locks are too short to accommodate the ship, so the bow sitting area folds up. Sometimes the ship docks above a lock and you can get off, stretch your legs, take photos, and walk below the lock to reboard. The ship does not travel at night and usually docks by 4 PM, so there is time for a walk before dinner, sometimes led by the host.

TRENT-SEVERN WATERWAY

The Trent-Severn Waterway extends 386 km from Trenton on Lake Ontario to Port Severn on Lake Huron's Georgian Bay. With 43 locks, it provides uninterrupted water travel for small vessels between these two Great Lakes. Beginning with the construction of a small wooden lock at Bobcaygeon in 1833, the canal system was not completed until 1920, by which time its value for long-haul commercial transportation was outmoded. The entire system is a National Historic Site, managed by Parks Canada.

From Lake Ontario at an altitude of 74 metres, vessels ascend 182 metres to Balsam Lake, then descend 80 metres to Georgian Bay at 176 metres. Half the locks are 45 metres long and the rest are 36 metres long, and the standard width is 10 metres, so the *Kawartha Voyageur* just fits. The standard lock lift varies considerably, ranging from 1.5 metres to 8 metres. The Peterborough Lift Lock and the Kirkfield Lift Lock use different technology which can be likened to two counterbalanced bathtubs and one going down pulls the other one up. This cruise travels through both, with a lift at Peterborough of 20 metres and a descent at Kirkfield of 15 metres.

The Waterway has about 1,600 km of shoreline and 160 major islands. Dams are visible at most of the locks but altogether there are 125 dams maintained by the Waterway. The Rideau Canal took 7 years to build, the Erie Canal 8 years, the Suez Canal 10 years, and the Panama Canal 30 years, so the Trent-Severn Waterway holds the record at 87 years of construction. In 1976, over 18,000 pleasure craft travelled the canals and in 2019 there were 121,000 boats locked.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Transfer to/from Victoria Airport
- Flight from Victoria to Ottawa
- Current air transport taxes and security fees
- 5 nights of hotel accommodation & taxes
- Transfer from Ottawa Airport to hotel
- 3 days of coach transportation in Ontario
- Canadian Museum of History
- Imax Theatre
- Canadian War Museum
- Locally-guided tour of Ottawa
- Diefenbunker
- 5 days/5 nights on board *Kawartha Voyageur*
- Cruise gratuities
- Trent-Severn Waterway ship transit fees
- Entertainment and other services on the ship
- Open bar for wine, beer & cocktails on ship
- Little Canada
- A Toronto theatre show
- Transfer from hotel to Toronto Airport
- Flight from Toronto to Victoria
- Knowledgeable Wells Gray tour director
- Gratuities to guides and drivers in Ontario
- Luggage handling at hotels and ship
- **22 meals:** 9 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 7 dinners

TOUR NOTES

Please book early. Wells Gray Tours has booked all the cabins for this voyage on the *Kawartha Voyageur*. The ship will be entirely for Wells Gray customers, provided there are at least 25 bookings by December 1, 2022. The ship is extremely popular, so this is a rare opportunity to have an exclusive cruise. The ship gets many repeat cruise customers who book a year in advance, so Wells Gray is fortunate to have secured this cruise week. This tour can take a maximum of 45 people.

Most food allergies cannot be handled on board *Kawartha Voyageur*. You can request sugar-free syrup or jam, gluten free bread, and lactose free milk. This tour may not be suitable if you have other food allergies. (An allergy causes medical distress, a preference does not.) Please consider bringing your own snacks or food items, so you are not dependent on what the ship or other restaurants are able to serve. You must notify us no later than at final payment if you have a food allergy.

 **Activity Level 2:** Moderate activity including short distances to walk and stairs. On June 25, some of the optional activities require a walk from the hotel. Expect a walk of 2 blocks to Little Canada and 3 blocks to the theatre. There can be longer walks in the airports. There is an elevator on the ship which serves the first and second decks, and a stairway goes to the sun deck. Cabins on the ship are very compact (see description on page 4). This tour is not suitable for people who depend on walkers or have mobility challenges with a flight of stairs. The coaches and ship cannot carry a scooter or any type of wheelchair. If Activity Level 2 could be challenging, you must bring a companion who is able to assist you. The tour director, ship crew, and drivers have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance. If you are not capable of keeping up with the group or require frequent assistance, the tour director may stop you from participating in some activities or some days of the tour. In extreme situations, you may be required to leave the tour and travel home at your own expense; travel insurance will probably not cover you.

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$800 per person is requested at the time of booking and balance is due March 21, 2023. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined. Payments can be made by online banking, cheque, Visa or Mastercard (\$5,000 limit per person per booking on credit cards).

Discounts: Early bookers receive \$200 discount on first 12 seats and \$100 on next 8 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after March 21, 2023.

Cancellation Policy: Up to February 21, 2023, the cancellation charge is \$100 per person. From February 22 to March 21, the cancellation charge is \$400 per person. From March 22 to April 21, the cancellation charge is 50% of the tour fare. After April 21, there is no refund.

Itinerary and Fare Changes: As the world emerges from the pandemic, many of our suppliers such as hotels, restaurants, attractions, and transportation providers are struggling with shortage of staff, inflated costs, and supply line challenges. Sometimes we are notified about changes to the itinerary prior to departure and sometimes during the tour. We do our best to substitute a similar service if something cancels, but occasionally the only alternative is to provide a refund for the missed activity. Please note that if we are forced to cancel a component of an extensive tour due to an issue beyond our control, the current penalties still apply if you choose to cancel the entire tour. Fuel surcharges and changes to taxes or other tour costs can occur at any time, therefore Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes up to departure.

Flight seating: We are unable to take requests for window or aisle seating on the planes. The airline will not accept them, as group seating is assigned as a block. If this is important to you, we suggest you take the "No Flight" option with a fare reduction of \$987 and book your own flight which allows seat selection.

Travel Insurance: A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

Home pickups may be offered in Greater Victoria, depending on the number of people booked and coach size. Decision is made about 2 weeks before departure and you will be contacted about your pickup point and time.

Photo Credits: Roland Neave (all photos except Kirkfield Lock from Wikimedia)

Experience Points: This tour earns 100 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One e-point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until March 21, 2023.

Consumer Protection BC Licences: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924, Victoria 65842

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