

HOTEL INTEL

# BRIDGE CONNECTS TWO VACATION EXPERIENCES

Going traditional in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, trendy in Prince Edward County



ROCHELLE LASH

Traditional meets trendy in two very different vacation experiences in the lake country of southeastern Ontario.

Lil Crow Cabin Courtyard is a domain on the outskirts of Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory (about four hours west of Montreal), where you can while away laid-back days and nights on the tranquil shore of Lake Ontario's Bay of Quinte.

To experience a totally different lifestyle during the same trip, visitors can hop across the Bay of Quinte Skyway Bridge to Prince Edward County (PEC). Southeast Ontario's bucolic farmland-turned-hipster haven is booming with gastronomy, vineyards, brew pubs, boating, stylish resort boutiques and cannabis shops.

A few years ago, PEC was named one of Time magazine's top 50 places to visit. It's so popular that during the height of summer, visitors are advised to plan carefully and reserve dining and lodging in advance.

**Traditional:** David Maracle operates Lil Crow and the Eagle POD Gallery, which showcases his work (mostly sculpture).

The domain is home to four lodgings — one cabin and three glamping units — on a secluded inlet of Lake Ontario. It's a peaceful waterfront retreat for adults only (21 and older), and is popular with artists, nature lovers and others looking for R&R.

"We have spectacular moonscapes in the evenings and a light show of reflections on the water," said KimberLee Maracle, David's wife, "so it's incredibly romantic."

Lil Crow is simple, picturesque and oriented to the outdoors. It has its own dock and loans kayaks and canoes so visitors can enjoy the relatively warm, calm waters of the bay. Guests have access to lakefront lounge chairs and sun-brellas, and there are bicycles for riding the area's excellent cycling paths.

"We are tiny but mighty," said KimberLee Maracle. "Our beautiful cabins and pods are directly on the bay's edge, on our very own peninsula of the Bay of Quinte."

The main cabin is studio-style — one large room featuring a queen bed, a living area and a kitchenette — and reflects First Nations culture, with a hint of retro. Outdoors, the cabin has its own barbecue and firepit, as well as a patio, screened gazebo and hot tub. The three glamping units have double beds, electric fireplaces, mini-fridges and firepits. Each has its own shower-



The peaceful Lil Crow Cabin Courtyard is a short hop from Prince Edward County. LIL CROW CABIN COURTYARD

sink-and-loo combo a short walk away.

The community is popping with galleries, gift shops, food trucks and cannabis outlets. The art scene around Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory is very much a family affair, and gallery-hopping is a great way to appreciate local Indigenous culture.

Stops include Rebecca Maracle Mohawk Feathersmith (rebecamaracle.com), Native Renaissance with works by Thomas B. Maracle (nativerenaissance.com) and the newest, David Maracle's Eagle POD Gallery (davidrmaracle.com).

**Trendy:** Throngs of visitors descend on Prince Edward County for sporting and cultural activities. Outdoor life is unlimited, with cycling along the splendid Great Lakes Waterfront Trail, boating, walleye fishing in the Bay of Quinte and family fun at Sandbanks Provincial Park and Beach.

If you love to shop, the Local Store — operating in a vintage barn in Picton — is a must-stop for crafts, souvenirs, antiques and books. And the Spring Antique Show at Crystal Palace on the Picton fairgrounds (May 21 and 22) will bring together more than 30 dealers from Quebec and Ontario.

The flourishing food and wine scene is a major draw. The Maracles recommend several stops with a mix of character, history and good food: the Lunch Box, Stella's Eatery, the Acoustic Grill, Picton Harbour Inn and the new Groovy Gravy.

To sample wine and beer routes, you can leave the driving to My County Wine Tours, which packages visits to vineyards and breweries, adding meals and pickup from certain locations, including Lil Crow.

Karlo Estates (613-399-3000, karloestates.com), an award-winning winery in Wellington, pops with events: Dinner and a Show Tastings on Saturdays led by vintner Sherry Karlo; Sunday's Bubble Brunch featuring sparkling wine; and Friday Night Wine Lounge tarot readings, comedy, dancing and karaoke.

A visit here offers both entertainment and an eye-opening education.

Karlo produced among the first certified vegan wines in the world in 2012; that means wines made without animal byproducts such as fish bladders or scales, powdered milk or egg whites that are often used to clarify wine, and aged without proteins such as pigs' blood.

IF YOU GO

Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory and Prince Edward County are approximately 350 kilometres west of Montreal.

**Southeastern Ontario tourism:** southeasternontario.ca. Prince Edward County tourism: visitpec.ca. Ontario tourism: destinationontario.com.

**Lil Crow Cabin Courtyard:** 613-391-5132, lilcrowcabin.com. 216 Bayshore Rd., Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. Reserve via airbnb.ca. Prices fluctuate: until mid-October, approx. \$285 for glamping (bring bedding, towels, firewood) and \$325 for cabin (with air conditioning, linens) per night for two (two-night minimum), plus \$75 cleaning and plus Airbnb fee.

**Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada:** indigenoustourism.ca; more than 800 outfitters, resorts, lodges, restaurants, cultural experiences.



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