

Ottawa outdoor-themed itinerary ideas for packaged travel

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DAY 1—Parks, ziplines and caves

Just 10 kilometres (6 miles) from downtown Ottawa, across the Ottawa River in Gatineau, Quebec, is the second most visited park in Canada. Year-round activities in [Gatineau Park](#) include snowshoeing, cross country skiing, hiking, rock climbing, swimming and fishing over a huge area of 361 square kilometres (139 square miles).

At the visitor centre located on Scott Road in Chelsea, Quebec, independent travellers can hire equipment, check maps and ask advice from the knowledgeable staff. There are also washroom facilities, a museum exhibit and picnic areas to enjoy your lunch outdoors. Find the high ground at the Champlain Lookout, or the Pink Lake Lookout for a scenic overview of the vast and beautiful wilderness which impresses whatever the season, all year long.

Next, head to [Camp Fortune](#)'s aerial park for a fun tree-top activity featuring suspended walkways suitable for families and thrilling ziplines that adventure seekers will just love. Try new exciting options like the Peak to Peak Dual Ziplines and the pipe mountain coaster (both scheduled to open in summer 2021)!

True thrill-seekers can stop at [Great Canadian Bungee](#) on the way back to Ottawa. At the highest bungee jump in Canada, you can experience a 61-metre (200-foot) head or body dip into the waters below if you're brave enough!

Go underneath the Gatineau Hills at [Arbraska Laflèche](#). Following a safety demonstration, you will get outfitted with a helmet and headlamp before descending down into the cool caves where you might even see bats! Dress warm as the temperature inside the cave stays at a stable 4 degrees centigrade (39.2 degrees Fahrenheit) all year long. Arbraska Laflèche also features eight giant zip lines and an aerial tree course with simple courses suitable for children, up to extreme adventures.

Get back into the air and soar above the Ottawa River between both provinces with [Rogers Interzip](#). Be part of history with a ride on this first-ever interprovincial zipline, opening in summer 2021. Special rates are available for group bookings.

After all your active pursuits today, you deserve to rest and relax at North America's largest outdoor spa, [Nordik Spa-Nature](#), in Chelsea, Quebec. Here you can benefit from the 2,000-year-old Nordic practice of thermotherapy, whereby you repeatedly dip into cold then hot pools and saunas before spending time resting. On-site restaurants provide tasty options into the evening.

DAY 2—Cycling, hiking and paddling

The Ottawa region is a cycling-friendly city with over 800 kilometres (497 miles) of recreational pathways—236 kilometres (146 miles) of which form the [Capital Pathway](#) network. Cyclists, runners and rollerbladers share the maintained, multi-use paths that line the Rideau Canal, the Ottawa River and connect major attractions in the downtown core and beyond.

Stop by [RentABike](#) or [Escape Bicycle Tours](#) to rent your bicycles, helmets, accessories and to pick up trail maps. You can also book a guided tour, available for groups of up to 70 guests.

Take a self-guided bike tour around the [Garden Promenade](#), a showcase of more than 75 beautiful and unique garden attractions, art installations and historic landmarks located near major attractions. Independent travellers can use the online tools for self-guided tours, while tours and step-on guides are available for groups.

For more natural landscapes, you could go [cycling in rural Ottawa](#). Enjoy countryside views and visit quaint businesses such as breweries, wineries and artisans along the way.

Prefer a fun and unusual city experience? [Thirsty Pedaler](#) invites you to collaboratively pedal a 15-person bike to three pubs and craft breweries in Ottawa's trendy Glebe neighbourhood. There's also a tasty non-alcoholic coffee-themed tour during which you get to nibble on donuts and bagels!

If you prefer keeping your feet on the ground, do some light hiking, walking and birdwatching on the 150 kilometres (93 miles) of nature trails in the [Greenbelt surrounding the city](#). [The numerous](#) protected lands are [home to](#) some of the most ecologically diverse natural spots in Ontario, including sand dunes, pine forests, bogs, and wetlands.

For a refreshing experience, take a 3-hour urban whitewater rafting excursion with [Ottawa City Rafting](#), which departs just a 10-minute drive west of downtown Ottawa. First, you'll learn paddling techniques and safety precautions on flat water before travelling down the Ottawa River with Parliament Hill in view. The expert guides steer the raft over either gentle or more challenging rapids, making this tour perfect for a range of abilities.

To get the full rafting experience, choose an all-day adventure or even an overnight stay just over an hour west of the city at [Owl Rafting](#) (designated a Canadian Signature Experience) or [Wilderness Tours](#), or at [Rafting Momentum](#) on the Quebec side of the Ottawa River. You can customize the tours to your unique group needs with options ranging between a leisurely

gentle float to an adrenaline-pumping intense ride over class V waves culminating with a heart-pounding cliff jump! You'll certainly sleep well tonight after this day of adventure thrills.

DAY 3—Take to the skies

Start the day by exploring the country's fascinating aviation and aerospace history through a large collection of real aircraft and artifacts at the [Canada Aviation and Space Museum](#). Then enjoy an unforgettable birds-eye view of Canada's capital from the aircraft of your choice which depart from the museum or nearby Rockcliffe Airport:

Look down through the clear windows of a helicopter on a tour with [Héli-Tremblant](#), which takes up to three passengers. Choose from a ten-minute experience with views over downtown Ottawa, Parliament Hill and Rideau Hall, or the full 30-minute tour which adds on the beautiful Gatineau region.

If you prefer a more vintage option, you can fly over the city in an authentic 1930s biplane with [Ottawa Biplane Adventures](#) (up to two passengers). The company also offers tours in small Cessna airplanes that are more suitable for families or groups of up to three passengers.

Take a day trip (1.5-hour drive) to Gananoque, Ontario, to view the unique Thousand Islands region from above. [1000 Islands Helicopter Tours](#) takes you over the many islands found in this section of the St. Lawrence River, as well as the five bridges that connect Canada and the United States. Special group and FIT packages include views of island castles, shipwrecks and a light meal.

For the ultimate luxury tour, choose a custom charter from [Kouri's Kopters](#), perfect for special occasions or even heli-fishing trips where you can scout out the perfect angler spot before you land!