



# Going Georgian A Long Weekend Tour You Can Do!

*Story and photos by Craig Nicholson*

**I**f you're interested in a long weekend of scenic, accessible fun, look no farther than this trailer boating getaway.

Day one, we rode our six Sea-Doo watercraft from Sparrow Lake (just north of Orillia, Ontario) to Parry Sound; we towed our Triton trailers to Lauderdale Point Resort, where facilities include a launch, secure parking and fuel. Day two, we headed north to Pointe au Baril and back; and day three, we backtracked to Sparrow Lake with plenty of time left to trailer home. We stayed two nights at the charming Bayshore Inn which overlooks the Parry Sound harbour.

This article will focus on the Sparrow Lake – Parry Sound leg of our trip; for details on the day ride to Pointe au Baril, check out my article “Finding Ojibway” in the Spring 2009 issue at [www.trailerboatingcanada.ca](http://www.trailerboatingcanada.ca)

Our ride from Sparrow Lake to Parry Sound followed the navigation markers. They are plentiful in some places and far apart in others. Generally, a series of markers guides you through a tight



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channel or takes you through a change of course. If the next marker is not immediately visible, then your course is likely straight ahead and could be denoted by either buoys and/or shore markers. It's always a good idea to carry charts with you; I study them the night before and make note of the key buoy numbers where significant changes of course occur. There are plenty of rocks and shoals between Severn Sound and Parry Sound, but as long as you stick to the main channels as we did, you shouldn't have a problem. Usually, many

other boats are making a similar journey, so when in doubt you can easily follow their lead.

The first part of our tour follows the western most section of the Trent-Severn Waterway until it spills into Severn Sound. Along the way, we followed the markers along the rock cuts and meanderings of the Severn River and through the picturesque Gloucester Pool (check out the falls at the north end!). The shore along this route is a mix of Canadian Shield wilderness interspersed



with clusters of cottages. Fuel and food are available at numerous marinas along the way.

The beauty of riding PWCs is that every lock has room for you, even when other boats have to wait for the next lock-thru! Good thing, because this stretch also includes a massive lock at Swift Rapids (#43) and a smaller one at Port Severn (#45), but the real eye-popper is the Big Chute Marine Railway (#44). Our PWCs floated on to this engineering marvel and were lifted clear of the water (larger boats are in slings); then the whole rig descended over 17 metres on rail tracks down a hillside before re-entering the water again where we floated off. If you think a big cruiser dwarfs you on the

water, try sitting dry-docked almost under one on the marine railway!

We passed under Highway 69 at Port Severn and followed the buoys into the channel that arrows west into Severn Sound. This is where the waterway changes from river to open water. The secret from here to Parry Sound is to follow the inland route that winds behind islands and remains largely protected from the big waves of Georgian Bay proper. That's why we made a sharp turn to starboard about half a nautical mile past marker C50 to swing north toward Moore Point and follow the channel into Honey Harbour. Once you pick up the row of markers near Moore Point, keep a sharp eye out to stay between them; they meander around a bit to avoid shoals. Once again, plenty of marinas offer fuel and food in the Honey Harbour area; just be careful to obey the slow speed zones as the marine patrols are active here.

An hour or so north of Honey Harbour is THE place to stop for lunch. The world famous Henry's Fish Restaurant is located on Frying Pan Island at Sans Souci (on your port side, just past marker C180). This is the heart of Georgian Bay's equally renowned



30,000 Islands and home to the best pickerel eating you'll ever experience. The generous portions, excellent quality and outstanding hospitality of owner Paul Elliot and his staff make Henry's an unforgettable treat that's worth the journey all on its own.

The 21 or so kilometres from Henry's to Parry Sound follows channels through many of the 30,000 Islands. It's well marked with buoys and its Group of Seven shores are dotted with cottages. Before long, we crossed under the swing

bridge to Parry Island and swung into the Town of Parry Sound harbour. We fuelled up at Parry Sound Marina and docked for two nights at Big Sound Marina.

Parry Sound is the area's main commercial hub. A town of 18,000 permanent residents, it swells to about 60,000 in the summer and boasts attractions like the Stockey Centre for the Performing Arts and the Bobby Orr Hall of Fame. It also boasts some mighty fine dining and we sampled two exceptional choices: Wellington's Bar & Grill; and the



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Bay Street Café. So after a full day of boating, Parry Sound is an ideal stopover; we took in a free jazz concert on the patio at the Stockey Centre and admired vintage vehicles at a waterside classic car show.

As previously noted, we spent day two riding to the Ojibway Club near Pointe au Baril and back. Alternatively, some of your group might choose to sit that day out to explore Parry Sound instead. Also, if you only have two days available or want a more leisurely cruise, simply do the return ride from Sparrow Lake to Parry Sound, without Pointe au Baril, as a shorter option. Whichever you choose, this popular trailer boating getaway will be the highlight of your season! ●

*Known as "The Intrepid Cottager", Craig Nicholson is a powersports writer who rides his Sea-Doo GTX about 2,500 kilometres each summer and tows with a Triton PWC Trailer. Thanks to Anna Marie Harris for tour assistance.*

### FAST FACTS

<b>Visitor Centre</b> <a href="http://www.gbcountry.com">www.gbcountry.com</a>	(888) 229-7257
<b>Bayside Inn</b> <a href="http://www.psbaysideinn.com">www.psbaysideinn.com</a>	(705) 746-7720
<b>Bay Street Café</b>	(705) 746-2882
<b>Big Sound Marina</b> <a href="http://www.bigsoundmarina.com">www.bigsoundmarina.com</a>	(705) 746-7642
<b>Henry's Fish Restaurant</b>	(705) 746-9040
<b>Lauderdale Point Resort</b> <a href="http://www.trentsevern.com/lauderdale-resort.cfm">www.trentsevern.com/lauderdale-resort.cfm</a>	(705) 689-2104
<b>Parry Sound Marina</b> <a href="http://www.parrysoundmarine.com">www.parrysoundmarine.com</a>	(705) 746-5848
<b>Wellington's Bar &amp; Grill</b>	(705) 746-1333