2-NIGHT, 3-DAY NATURE ESCAPE 3 days | Total Distance: 169km

Day One

Distance: 5km

Your journey begins in Canadian Shield territory, Frontenac County, a region with a topography that appeals to a rich diversity in wildlife, especially birds.



START OF DAY ONE

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Start Here: Sharbot Lake

North Frontenac's crown jewel, Sharbot Lake, is a small town that bisects the lake with the same name. The ample waterfront shoreline here makes for plenty of aquatic bird and wildlife viewing in spring and summer.

What to do here

• Hike the old railbed, the <u>K&P Trail</u>, as it passes through Sharbot Lake and look for black-capped chickadees, owls, and maybe even the bald eagle that's been spotted in the area (species will vary by season).

 Warm up with a homemade donut and a cup of coffee at <u>Cardinal Café + Shop.</u>

• Dine-in or pick up a chef-prepared dinner to go

from **Belong Sharbot Lake.** • Wander the shoreline at Sharbot Lake Beach to spot signs of wildlife like beavers, muskrats, or water fowl.

• Plan a stop at <u>Kick & Push Brewery</u> in Sharbot Lake to sample locally made craft beer.

• Make the short drive to Miesel Woods

<u>Conservation Area</u> for more hiking and bird watching opportunities.

About the area

Sharbot Lake

Frontenac County

🕓 From Toronto: 290km • 3 hr 20 min

From Ottawa: 120km • 1 hr 35 min

Time Spent Here: Plan for several hours to walk out and back on the K&P and to explore Sharbot Lake.

End Your Day: The <u>Cottages at</u> <u>Windrush</u>

This four-season cottage getaway is located on a private peninsula jutting out into Sharbot Lake, which makes for phenomenal views from virtually anywhere on the property.

What to do here

Get settled in your cottage before heading out to explore the peninsula and keep your eyes open for any unique bird species.
When booking, choose between one of two cozy

cottages. If this is all booked up, consider an optional accommodation at **Rockhill Bed and Breakfast**, right in the heart of Sharbot Lake.



Day Two

Distance: 139km

The second day of your journey will have more opportunities to centre yourself and breathe. From rugged Canadian Shield territory of Frontenac County to rolling fields and winding roads of Lanark County, your route today will be a scenic one.

START OF DAY TWO

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The Stirling

@ almontehotel

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Riverside Inn

Start Here: Sharbot Lake

Waken with the birds and watch the sun rise over Sharbot Lake. Dress in layers today as you will be spending time both indoors and outdoors.

What to do here

Savour a hearty homemade breakfast delivered right to your cottage door or stop by <u>Cardinal</u>
<u>Cafe + Shop</u> before you head out for the day and pack up some of their homemade donuts.
Take one last wander on the peninsula to see if any new bird species can be spotted.

38 KM • 29 MINS

Next Stop: McDonald's Corners

The quaint hamlet of McDonald's Corners typifies the types of small communities that make up Lanark County.

What to do here

Visit the <u>Highlands Country Store</u> right in McDonald's Corners and browse their selection of outdoor gear, fresh-baked goods, and anything else you can think of, including bird seed.
Pick up a cup of coffee and a sandwich to go from the Highlands Country store to savour on the road.

Time Spent Here: Less than an hour

47 KM • 41 MINS

Next Stop: Blueberry Mountain

Your next stop is a 1,250 acre nature reserve near Flower Station, part of the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust Conservancy, and is one of the best hikes in Lanark County. As you travel the two-and-a-half kilometre trail, keep your eyes peeled for birds, as the property is home to ample wildlife.

What to do here

 For safety reasons, check in by leaving your name before beginning your hike.

Look for birds at the pond on the trail, or in any of the forested areas. Depending on the season you could see anything from woodpeckers to chickadees, blue jays, warblers, and blue herons.
Feel the wind on your face and hear nothing but the trills of chickadees.

• Take a seat and enjoy at the view at the top of the mountain – this lookout is the highest in Lanark County. Take the time to breathe and enjoy the silence here.

• When you reach the lookout would be a good time to enjoy your sandwich or baked goods you picked up in McDonald's Corners.

• Keep watch for the 300-year-old cedar tree!

Time Spent Here: The trail is not overly challenging except for the last 100-metres, so plan on an hour to an hour-and-a-half, round trip – longer if you stop for a snack.

54KM • 47 MINS

1

Next Stop: Almonte

Known as "the Friendly Town" Almonte is worth taking the time to explore at your leisure.

What to do here

• Warm up with a cup of hot tea and a light lunch at **Tea and Cake** in downtown Almonte. Their homemade soups are the perfect antidote to a frosty nose.

 For more bird and nature watching, wander the abandoned rail bed, the <u>Ottawa Valley</u>
 <u>Recreational Trail (OVRT)</u> as it passes through Almonte. Bask in the solitude and beauty of nature

on this out-and-back trail. • The <u>Almonte Riverwalk</u> offers a pleasant scenic

stroll along the Mississippi River. As you wander, marvel at the silence.

 Another good lunch spot is the European style cafe, <u>North Market</u>, located right in the downtown core.

 There will be an option to dine at your accommodation, but you can also consider one of the popular eateries like <u>Café Postino</u>, Joe's <u>Italian Kitchen</u> or <u>The Sterling</u> for supper.

Almonte

Lanark County

From Toronto: 360km • 4 hr 30 min
 From Ottawa: 52km • 50 min

Dr. James Naismith, the founder of basketball, was born in Almonte, where the original homestead still stands today. Visit the Dr. James Naismith memorial statue on Mill Street, and get your picture taken with this Canadian legend.

Time Spent Here: Try to make it to Almonte at least a few hours before dinner so you have time to really explore here. The Mississippi River makes this a great spot to spot new species of birds or wildlife.

Next Stop: <u>Almonte Riverside</u> Inn

This boutique inn is located right on the Mississippi River as it winds through Almonte, and is within walking distance of the downtown core. Choose from six luxuriously appointed rooms in this historic inn and indulge in some quiet and contemplation here.

What to do here

After settling into your room, head to <u>The Monte</u> <u>Lounge</u> right in the inn to enjoy a pre-or-post dinner cocktail; their Lanark Maple is a popular choice if you're looking for some local flavour.
Reserve your spot at <u>The Monte Lounge</u> for dinner (or check out the other options above).
Their curried black bean stew is a must try.
Need a mindful moment? Visit the outdoor spa until 10 p.m. and sit back to gaze up at the stars in the salt-water Arctic Spa hot tub before accessing the barrel sauna right next to it.

Time Spent Here: Plan to arrive just before dinner (reservations for dinner anywhere in Almonte are recommended, including at The Monte Lounge).



Day Three

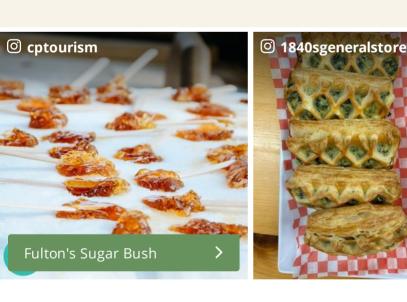
Distance: 25km

There is more opportunity for nature immersion in your future today as you

travel to the Pakenham Hills in Lanark

County. Dress warmly and eat a hearty

breakfast before heading out for the day.



START OF DAY THREE

2

Start Here: <u>Almonte Riverside</u> <u>Inn</u>

After a good night's rest at the inn you will be ready to tackle the outdoors, no matter the weather.

What to do here

Enjoy a continental breakfast in the on-site bistro overlooking the Mississippi River.
Head to downtown Almonte to the <u>Mill Street</u> <u>Crêpe Company</u> for an alternative to the continental breakfast at the inn. If you're not into crêpes, don't worry, they have everything from eggs benedict to French toast on their menu.

About the area

Almonte Lanark County

S From Toronto: 360km • 4 hr 30 min From Ottawa: 52km • 50 min

Dr. James Naismith, the founder of basketball, was born in Almonte, where the original homestead still stands today. Visit the Dr. James Naismith memorial statue on Mill Street, and get your picture taken with this Canadian legend.

Time Spent Here: Plan on an hour for breakfast and to pack up and hit the road.

Next Stop: <u>High Lonesome</u> <u>Nature Reserve</u>

At 200 acres, this nature reserve has everything you need for a lengthy walk and exploration of the wilderness. Situated in the Pakenham Hills and within the Pakenham Mountain Provincially Significant Wetland Complex, this property is home to an abundance of wildlife as well as at-risk plant life. This is one of those places you will want to leave nothing but footprints.

What to do here

Keep your eyes open for one of the seven species at risk and record your sighting at *iNaturalist*.
Hike, snowshoe, or cross country ski one of the 1<u>4 trails</u> of varying lengths and difficulties.
Stop for a peaceful picnic lunch at one of the scenic spots or lookouts along the trails. This is where your meal-to-go from North Market will come in handy.

 Keep your eyes open and your camera ready to capture new bird species that thrive in this pristine natural area.

Time Spent Here: Plan to spend roughly two hours here, depending on how long you want to travel on the trails and if you end up stopping for lunch.

7.5 KM • 11 MINS

Next Stop: Pakenham

The village of Pakenham is cute as a button and a must visit before you leave the area.

What to do here

• Make the short drive to **Fulton's Sugar Bush and** <u>Maple Shop</u>, just a few minutes from Pakenham, to ski, snowshoe, or hike on eight-kilometres of groomed trails that are open during sugar season (site passes required).

While you're at Fulton's, stop in at the shop to bring some maple syrup home with you!
You will want a warm drink after your day outdoors. Visit Keepers Coffee Bar to get a cup of coffee, hot chocolate, or something a little fancier.
Don't leave Pakenham without visiting the famous Five-Span Stone Bridge that spans the turbulent rapids of the Mississippi River here.
Do some shopping at 1840s General Store, known as the oldest continuously operating general store in Canada, having been operating for more than 170 years!

 Enjoy a gooey and cheesy pizza dinner at <u>Centennial Restaurant</u> and see why this restaurant is so popular with the locals.

About the area

Pakenham	
Lanark County	
١	From Toronto: 377km • 4 hr 40 min From Ottawa: 59km • 50 min
	<u>Cartwright Springs Brewery</u> takes locally- made to a whole new level, using natural water from an artesian spring located on the property, just 15 metres away.

Time Spent Here: This is your last stop of your journey so spend as long as your like before heading home.





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