

Quetico Canoe Trip Guide

Once you launch your canoe into the waters of [Quetico Provincial Park](#) you will find it easy and natural to forget the stresses of the modern world. Stress wanes as the days go by as the simple routines of canoe travel bring you closer to the land and the waters of the Quetico wilderness. You can fish, swim, set up a hammock after lunch or just sit on a rock and watch the sun set over the pines of Quetico. These special moments will coalesce into memories that will remain with you for the rest of your life.

When to Visit [Quetico Provincial Park](#)



Chatterton falls

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When To Visit Quetico

The lakes tend to shed their ice around between mid and late May which gives the early bird visitor a chance at hungry fish with a brief cool bug free experience. If you are looking to visit in May be sure to call a us to ensure that the ice is out. If not, you may find yourself watching the ice melt.

June offers amazing fishing with warmer days with some rain and few visitors. The mosquitoes and black flies are definitely out so choose open campsites with a breeze and bring a bug tent to enjoy the solitude. If you re enjoy fishing, June is the month for you with lots of bass, lake trout and walleye waiting for you. Reservations are easy to get for any access point in June and the [outfitters](#) have lots of gear available. The pines beach ([Video](#)) on pickerel lake is a great, portage free, place to enjoy a nice breeze as you explore the area.

July: Early July is similar to June with warmer weather but with diminishing bugs as the month progresses. The fishing is still very good but I would bring a bug tent to lounge and cook in. The last two weeks of July are a nice time to visit Quetico. You will have to make sure to get your [park reservations](#) at least 5 months ahead of time. Remember that Quetico has very low [fishing pressure](#), as most visitors don't fish, and those who do fish might take one or two fish for a shore lunch. Seriously, fish die of old age in Quetico Provincial Park. Be sure to arrange to get an Ontario zone 5 [fishing permit](#).

August: Is the peak season, especially so around the first Monday in August which is a civic holiday in Ontario. You will need to [reserve well in advance](#) to secure your Quetico Provincial Park reservation and if you are renting gear from an [outfitter](#) be sure to reserve your canoe and shuttle well in advance. Expect excellent weather with low to no bugs, great swimming and yes the fish will take still take your lure. You will see your fellow paddlers but there is plenty of campsites and you can still enjoy the quiet solitude that Quetico offers. On a side note, this is the best time to introduce a friend or family to the wonders of Quetico.

September: Is very busy around the labor day weekend, which falls on the first Monday of September. Again, park reservations are definitely required as are reservations with local Quetico outfitters for boats and shuttles. Beyond labor day the park visits drop off as people go back to work and school. This makes the last two middle weeks off September a fabulous time to explore Quetico park. You will enjoy moderated temperates with no bugs and few visitors.

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Quetico Canoe Routes

Once you have decided on a time frame and recruited some friends or family members, it's time to choose your canoe route. At this point you should consider giving us a call for some advice on your route to discuss your schedule, permits and especially your groups goals and capabilities. It's very important to choose a route that is right for you and your fellow paddlers. Consider the weather; as a hot July trip can significantly reduce the number of miles you can do in a day!! Try to remember that you are on vacation so consider adding a few days to relax and enjoy the Quetico wilderness.

These Quetico canoe trip routes contain detailed route information, basic maps with camp sites and a GPX file for your GPS. The routes are based on paddling 10 miles (16 km) / day. Times vary by group and how much stuff you bring but with double portaging expect to spend 4-5 hours paddling and portaging each day. Early risers could easily finish by lunch. With that being said, it is always nice to add extra days to fish, swim or just to setup a hammock.

<https://queticooutfitters.com/quetico-quiet-lakes-trip/>

Quetico Bays Trip (3 Days)

Rawn Lake Trip (3+ Days)

Beaverhouse Loop Trip (5 Days)

Quetico North Trip (5+ Days)

Chatterton Falls Trip (6 Days)

Tranquility Trip (6 Days)

Quetico Traverse (7 Days)

Figure 8 Route (14+ Days)

Other Quetico Canoe Routes (Ontario Parks)

These canoe routes are suggested by Ontario Parks. Visit [Ontario Parks](#) for more information.

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Other - Quetico Canoe Routes

Dawson Trail Ranger Station:

Baptism Creek-Cache Lake Loop

123 km (6 days) 18 lakes, 20 portages, challenging

Baptism Creek is accessible from French Lake in the northeast corner of Quetico Provincial Park. Few visitors venture southeast of the lake. This route is recommended for seasoned trippers who are physically able to surmount two of the park's most formidable obstacles - the Cache Lake portages. For those who don't mind backtracking or rugged portages, this entry point offers canoeists a quick escape into wilderness solitude and isolation not found at many other entry points.

Atikokan Ranger Station:

Batchewaung-Twin-Jean-Jesse Loop

112 km (6 days) 14 lakes, 18 portages, challenging

This popular route features large and small lakes, creeks and easy portages. Upon reaching Pickerel Lake from Batchewaung, steer an easterly course through Pickerel Narrows then head south and southwest through Dore and Twin lakes to gigantic Sturgeon Lake. Near its west end, enter Jean Creek. After paddling north through Burntside and Jean lakes, bear east on Quetico Lake and continue through Oriana, Jesse and Maria lakes. From there, portage back to Pickerel Lake and return to Nym Lake by reversing the route you followed on the first day.

Beaverhouse Ranger Station:

Cirrus Lake-The Sue Falls Loop

40 miles (4 days) 5 lakes, 7 portages, easy

This loop is ideal for those who prefer long, uninterrupted stretches of paddling, with only an occasional portage for leg-stretching. You paddle from the northeast corner of Beaverhouse Lake and then portage east, first to an unnamed lake and then to Cirrus Lake. With nearly half of the route's portages behind you, paddle to the east end of Cirrus for a view of scenic Sue Falls. Steer south to the longest and most difficult portage of the trip. Upon reaching Kasakokwog Lake, plot a westerly course down McAlpine Creek to another enormous lake. Paddling close to the north shore of Quetico Lake, don't miss ancient rock paintings (pictographs) on the sheer granite cliffs. From the west end of Quetico Lake, the Quetico River carries you back to Beaverhouse Lake.

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Prairie Portage Ranger Station:

Carp Lake-Hunter's Island Loop

379 miles (13 days) 25 lakes, 29 portages, easy to challenging

If you have two full weeks to spend on the water, this route is scenic, historic and one of the most varied. The lakes and rivers along this loop were part of the Voyageurs' Highway - the route of the fur traders between Lake Superior and Rainy Lake. Throughout the loop are historic sites where natives, prospectors, settlers, and loggers left their marks. Counter-clockwise is the best direction to paddle the loop, allowing you to take advantage of the Maligne River's occasional swift current. You should allow one layover day, just in case you get held up by high winds on a large lake.

Cache Bay Ranger Station:

Falls Chain-The K-K-K Loop

168 km (8 days) 26 lakes, 37 portages, challenging

Doing this route in eight days is recommended for strong and experienced paddlers. Most groups average 10 days. From Cache Bay, paddle to the northeast end of Cache Bay. View Silver Falls at the first portage, then paddle to the north end of Saganagons Lake and begin the journey to the Falls Chain to Kawnipi Lake. After paddling Kawnipi to its northwest end, go south along Kahshahpiwi Creek, through Cairn, Sark, and Keefer lakes, all the way to Kahshahpiwi Lake. From there, portage to McNiece Lake. A chain of smaller lakes and streams leads south to Basswood Lake. From there, paddle northeast along a series of international border lakes back to Saganaga Lake.

Ontario Parks Reservations and Penalties

Reservations can not be made earlier than five months before your planned park entry date. E.g. Reserve on March 5th for for entry on August 5th. Note that the period between July 15th and the first week of September can be busy. A park reservation will require a deposit of \$100 plus a reservation fee of between \$11 to \$13. **Note: You will need to decide on your canoe route before you reserve as park reservations are for a specific day at one of the 21 park entry points.**

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Quetico Park Reservation vs Quetico Permit



Dawson Creek Ranger Station - get your Quetico Permits here

The reservation is just that, a reservation to enter the park on a given day at a given entry point (E.g. Beaverhouse lake, Pickerel lake etc). When you arrive you will have to go to one of the six official park ranger stations to secure a park entry [permit](#). To avoid this we highly recommend that you have your [outfitter](#) arrange your reservation date and pick up your entry permit so that it is ready and waiting for you when you arrive.

Once you or your outfitter has secured your park entry date you will need to decide if you will be bringing your own boat(s) and gear. If not, it is a good idea to reserve [whatever gear, canoes and shuttles](#) you may need.

Note: [Canoes](#) can be scarce in high season (Mid July - The week of labor day) so if you need to reserve canoe(s) do so once you or your outfitter has secured your park entry date reservation.

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Quetico Park Rules

Quetico is a wilderness park with restrictions that protect the delicate ecology of the park. These common sense rules go a long way towards keeping Quetico pristine.

- Quetico visitors are not allowed to have non-burnable and non reusable food items and beverages. E.g Tuna cans, beer cans etc.
- Group size may must not exceed more than 9 members.
- Glass bottles and can are forbidden with the exception of fuel bottle, insect repellent, personal care items such as medications, and toiletries.
- Motorized tools or vehicles off any kind.
- It is furthermore illegal to damage live trees and other plants.
- Only barbless hooks and artificial baits are permitted.
- No organic baits such as worms, salted minnows etc.
- You can bring barbed hooks into the park but you must crimp the the barbs with pliers before you attach them to your fishing line.
- Quetico park recommends the use of lead free fishing tackle.
- Only dead wood must be used for your camp fire.
- Respect the fire notices and bring a stove as needed so that you can comply with fire restrictions.
- No fireworks, guns, bows or any hunting gear.
- [Quetico Park Fees 2020](#)

Quetico (except South Access Points), (Non-residents of Canada)	
Regular - Per Person (Age 6 - 17)	\$6.50
Regular - Per Person (Age 18 +)	\$14.97
Quetico - South Access Points (Cache Bay, Prairie Portage & Kings Point) (Residents and non-residents of Canada)	
Regular - Per Person (Age 6 - 17)	\$8.48
Ont. Persons with Disabilities * - Per Person (Age 6 - 17)	\$4.24
Regular - Per Person (Age 18 +)	\$21.47
Ontario Senior - Per Person (Age 65+)	\$17.18
Ont. Persons with Disabilities * - Per Person (Age 18 +)	\$10.74

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Dawson Creek Campground



Main Entrance At Dawson Creek

The vast majority of the visitors to Quetico visit to enjoy a Quetico canoe trip. However, the park has a full service campground that has many things to see and do. These amazing sites are divided into the Chippewa area which is closest to the main entrance and the Ojibwa section which is deeper into the campground. The sites can be reserved the Ontario Parks Site.

The Dawson Creek Pavillion is an official entry point to the park where you can get your backcountry park permits. The John B. Ridley library is housed in the pavilion and is accessible to all visitors as is the gift shop. You can purchase books and Quetico maps featuring the ecology and history of the park.

You can use the hot showers, laundry facilities, hike one of many trails, rent a canoe or kayak, enjoy several beaches, enjoy one of the many parks staff interpretative shows and events. rent one of the three rustic cabins.

Here is a great idea: You can use the "Canoe Parking Area" located in the Ojibwa area to park your car. Just be sure to display your backcountry permit. Better yet, if you are working with a local outfitter, you can drop off your car at the parking area and have them shuttle you to your put-in. When your canoe trip is finished simple load your car, grab a shower on the way out. This allows you the luxury of not having a specific time to exit the park.