



Weekend Tour Itinerary – Barrie or Orillia

The Huronia district of Simcoe County is one of the most historic and scenic parts of Ontario. French explorers, led by Samuel de Champlain, made contact with the Huron Indians in 1615 near Penetanguishene. Jesuit missionaries subsequently moved into the area establishing many missions in their attempts to “convert the natives”. The Hurons were an agricultural tribe spread out in many villages across the region. Unfortunately, they were eventually all but wiped out by disease and the Iroquois.

Huronia covers the area of land between Penetanguishene, Midland, Orillia and Barrie. It is characterized by a variety of geological features including rolling forested hills, large freshwater lakes (including Georgian Bay), flat expanses of farm land and the Niagara Escarpment to the west. The cycling routes in this region provide great beauty along with great challenges.

Day 1 – Intro Ride (25 - 50 km optional)

The tour starts in Oro Medonte (either Forks in the Trail B&B or MoonStone B&B). Depending upon your arrival time, you can complete a short cycle loop before dinner. The routes are all on paved quiet country road passing through forests and agricultural land. There are many rolling short hills which can make even a short ride challenging.

Dinner can be reserved at one of the Horseshoe Valley or Coldwater area restaurants.

Option 1 - Day 2 – Horseshoe Valley to Orillia (42 km)

Today’s ride starts in the Oro Moraine with its hills and rolling paved country roads. The route initially travels north and then east towards Orillia. The terrain becomes flatter agricultural land passing a variety of farms and large homes.

The suggested route is on paved road in Severn township, but there is rail trail option available. As you approach Orillia, the rail trail takes you under Hwy. 11.

The route continues into the north end of Orillia bringing you to Couchiching Beach Park on the Orillia waterfront. The Orillia waterfront trail is named the Lightfoot Trail after well-known singer Gordon Lightfoot. It is paved bike path along the waterfront to the Narrows (where Lakes Couchiching and Simcoe meet). In addition to being Gordon Lightfoot’s home town, Orillia was

immortalized as the “fictional” Mariposa by humorist Stephen Leacock. Don’t miss the statue of Champlain in Couchiching Beach Park or the stores lining Orillia’s main street.

Enjoy the Stone Gate Inn, a small boutique hotel in Orillia. They can assist you with dinner reservations in either downtown Orillia or at Casino Rama.

Option 2 - Day 2 – Horseshoe Valley to Barrie (65 km)

Today’s ride starts in the Oro Moraine with its hills and rolling paved country roads. The route travels south reaching flatter agricultural land passing a variety of farms and large homes.

You will ride east and then south towards Lake Simcoe connecting with Ridge Road (a favourite ride for local cycling clubs) or the Oro-Medonte Rail Trail (crushed limestone surface). Both routes are quite flat as they follow in close proximity to the lakeshore.

Continue east following Lake Simcoe until you reach Carthew Bay store, a good spot to stop from an ice cream. Complete a loop around 8 - mile point and then head back west towards Barrie.

Ride a combination of Lakeshore Road West and Ridge Road until eventually connecting with the Barrie waterfront trail which follows the lakeshore directly into downtown Barrie. There is approx. 5 km of waterfront park along Kempenfelt Bay.

There are several B&B options in Barrie (Richmond Manor or Three Wishes B&B), both located close to the many downtown restaurants.

Day 3 – Departure (40 km)

After breakfast, depart from Orillia or Barrie (depending upon which Day 2 option is selected) and ride back to Oro Medonte to pick-up your car for your return home. Both routes follows Lake Simcoe and the Oro-Medonte Rail Trail. Once in Oro Medonte, you will turn north cycling on paved township roads through reasonably flat agricultural areas until the uphill climb back up the Oro Moraine.