

 Ontario



The Awareness and Ratings of Ontario's Outdoor Destinations by American Travellers

**Ministry of Tourism
Tourism Branch
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Introduction

This report is extracted from the database of the Travel Intentions study that the Ministry of Tourism has been conducting for almost 2 years now. Specifically, it is based on a number of questions that were asked during the February 2005 wave.

The total US sample of the study in February 2005 was 3,816 of which 2,875, or 75%, are defined in this report as “travellers” because they have taken at least one overnight trip over the past 2 years, or intend to take an overnight trip over the next 12 months or both. On a weighted basis, 56.4 million Americans aged 18 years and over fall into the “traveller” category of this report.

Although this reports talks about “American travellers”, the study covers only the following US states:

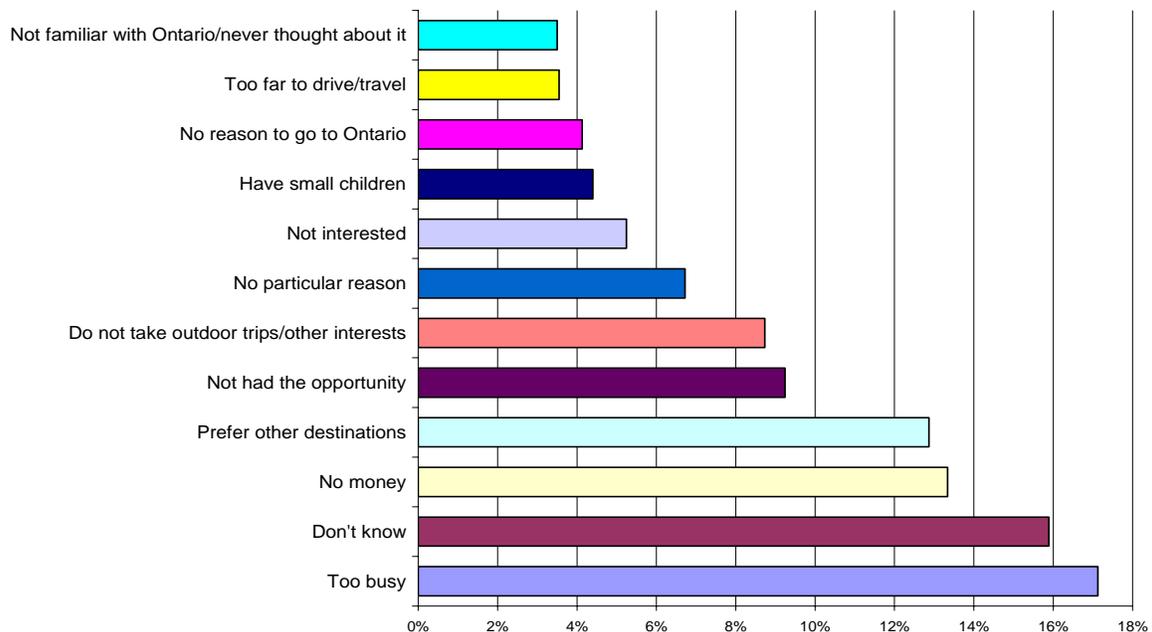
- New York State
- Pennsylvania
- Ohio
- Indiana
- Michigan
- Illinois
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota
- Massachusetts
- Washington DC/ Maryland

❖ **Americans have, relatively, a good opinion of Ontario as a nature and outdoors destination:**

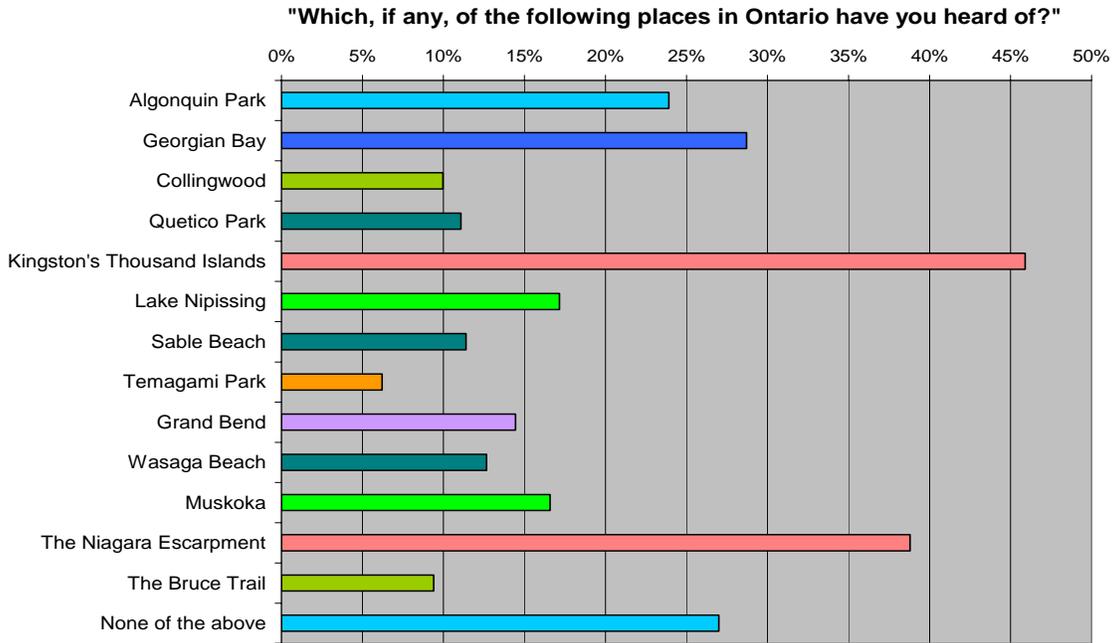
- ✚ On a 10-point scale, where 1 means very poor and 10 means excellent, the average rating of Ontario as a destination for enjoying nature and the outdoors was 7.4 points;
- ✚ Compared to other aspects of Ontario as a travel destination, its reputation as a destination for nature and the outdoors gets the highest ratings. For example, the average rating for “arts, culture and history” was 6.8 points, for “a resort trip” was 6.5, for “a touring trip” was 7.0 and for “a big city trip” was 6.7;
- ✚ 72% of American travellers gave Ontario a rating of 7 or higher “as a destination for enjoying the nature and the outdoors”;
- ✚ Of those who rated Ontario 7 or higher on nature and the outdoors, 55%, or approximately 23 million, had been to Ontario at some point in the past.
- ✚ And of those who rated Ontario 7 or higher on nature and the outdoors and had visited Ontario in the past (23 million), 56%, or approximately 13 million, had been to Ontario for “a trip that was primarily to enjoy nature and the outdoors”.

❖ **...So why did 10 million American travellers who had been to Ontario and rated it high as a nature and outdoor destination not take a trip to the province for the reason of enjoying the outdoors?**

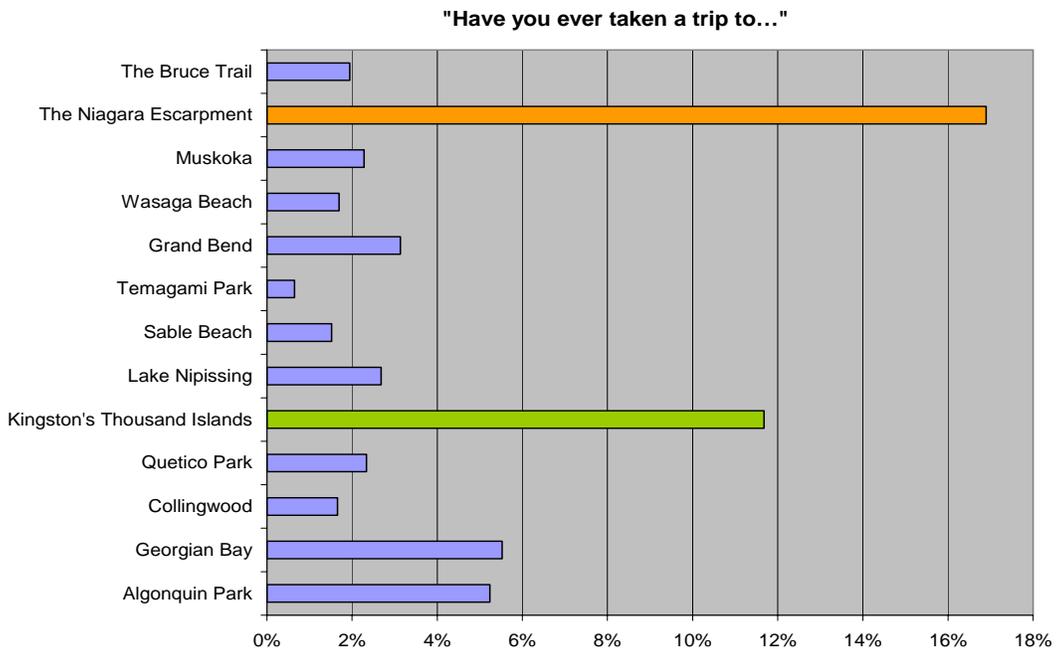
"You indicated that Ontario is a good destination for enjoying nature and the outdoors. Are there any specific reasons why you have not taken a trip in Ontario to enjoy nature and the outdoors?"



- ❖ As far as Ontario's icon outdoors destinations are concerned, Kingston's Thousand Islands, the Niagara Escarpment and the Georgian Bay are the most well known among American travellers:



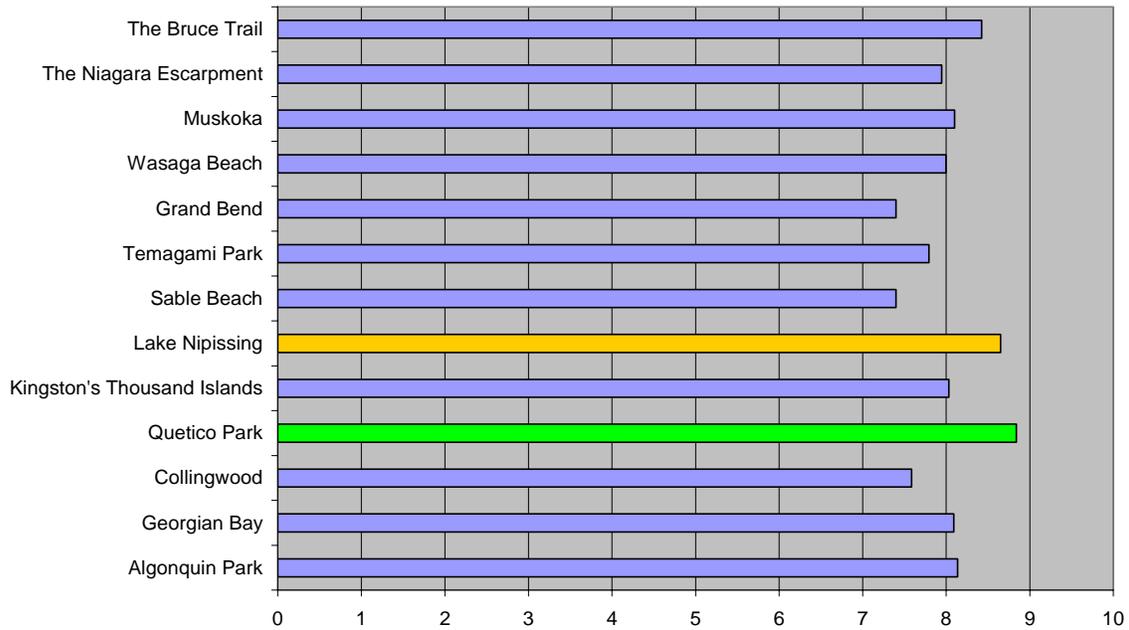
- ❖ ...But it is the Niagara Escarpment that is the most visited place, followed by Kingston's Thousand Islands:



❖ **Ontario's rating as an outdoors destination improves significantly among those who had visited one of the 13 outdoors destinations:**

"Using a 10-point scale, how would you rate Ontario as a destination for enjoying nature and the outdoors?"

Average ratings among Americans who had been to one or more of the destinations listed below



✚ It appears that once tasted, Ontario's outdoors product delivers a high level of satisfaction. The ratings of the province as an outdoors destination are significantly higher among those who had visited one of the 13 outdoor destinations than among those who had visited the province, but not these destinations;

✚ Those who had visited Quetico Park and Lake Nipissing gave Ontario the highest scores as an outdoors destination. Given that awareness and visitation are correlated, improving the awareness of these destinations among American travellers may improve their visitation levels and therefore Ontario's rating as an outdoors destination.

❖ **...In fact, the Americans who visited Ontario's outdoors destinations liked the product so much that 4% of them bought a cottage and 1% bought a time-share unit in Ontario, as opposed to 1.4% and 1%, respectively, of the overall American residents who own a cottage or time-share unit in Ontario.**