



Killarney Mountain Lodge and Outfitters

The white quartzite hills of Killarney Provincial Park, so lovingly painted by A.J. Casson, have long been a mecca for canoe trippers, most of whom stop at Killarney Outfitters for rentals, outfitting or guiding services. Now Outfitters has expanded its repertoire with a series of packages designed to provide some sybaritic comforts in addition to the park's scenery. Gourmet delights are the focus of a three-day Georgian Bay tour featuring feast after feast in the wilderness. For old-fashioned camp comfort, choose the Fabulous Foil–Wilderness Cuisine Getaway weekend, enjoyed on a quiet, sandy point in the park at Johnnie Lake Wilderness Lodge, accessible only by boat. Little has changed since the cabins were built in the 1950s (when Jimmy Hoffa was a frequent guest). The golden glow of propane lamps still illuminates pine-paneled rooms as guests snuggle under Hudson's Bay

blankets. On a massive stone barbecue, Georgian Bay Gourmet cookbook authors Anne Connell and Mary Hunt rustle up lavish but health-conscious antipasti, pear and blue cheese salad, fresh-caught whitefish, grilled vegetables, foil-baked potatoes, carrot cake and fresh fruit with almond cream—and share their outdoor cooking secrets. The lodge has its own canoes and kayaks; instruction is included in the package. A half-kilometre hiking trail leads up a hill for sunset viewing from Killarney's highest point, Silver Peak. Another package, the Georgian Bay Gourmet–Fine Dining in the Wild, treks to the bay's north channel, where mini-islands of skin-smooth pink granite are surrounded by impossibly blue water. After spending a night at Killarney Mountain Lodge, guests set out on a guided overnight sea kayak excursion. A morning of hard paddling is rewarded with a Provençal picnic lunch (perhaps three-vinegar chunky gazpacho, grilled veggies on focaccia and homemade cookies) waiting on a set table in the watery wilderness. The Mountain Lodge remains popular with pleasure boaters cruising the north channel. Unlike so many Muskoka resorts that are quickly

being absorbed into chains and renovated to the max, this family-run lodge still has a folksy feel. There's the kitschy 1950s decor in the Carousel Lounge, where orange vinyl couches encircle a giant fireplace. Dining rooms sport mounted trophies, wood panelling and stone fireplaces. Even the most basic guest rooms are finished with pine panelling; for the ultimate vista, book the Pilot House, a two-bedroom, two-bathroom cottage with stone fireplace and screened porch overlooking the Killarney Channel and Georgian Bay.

Where: Killarney, 705-287-2242 or 1-800-461-1117, www.killarney.com.

When: packages offered May to October. Georgian Bay Gourmet July 11–14, Fabulous Foil Aug. 23–26.

How Much: Georgian Bay Gourmet \$700, Fabulous Foil \$605; includes accommodations, all meals, instruction, equipment and activities. Other packages are available for \$435–\$1,639. Pilot House cabin costs \$120–\$150 per person per night, depending on season and number of meals.

Driving time: under five hours.

by Betty Zywatkauskas



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