



Thousand Islands Experience Guide

Explore a Storybook Archipelago Along the St. Lawrence River



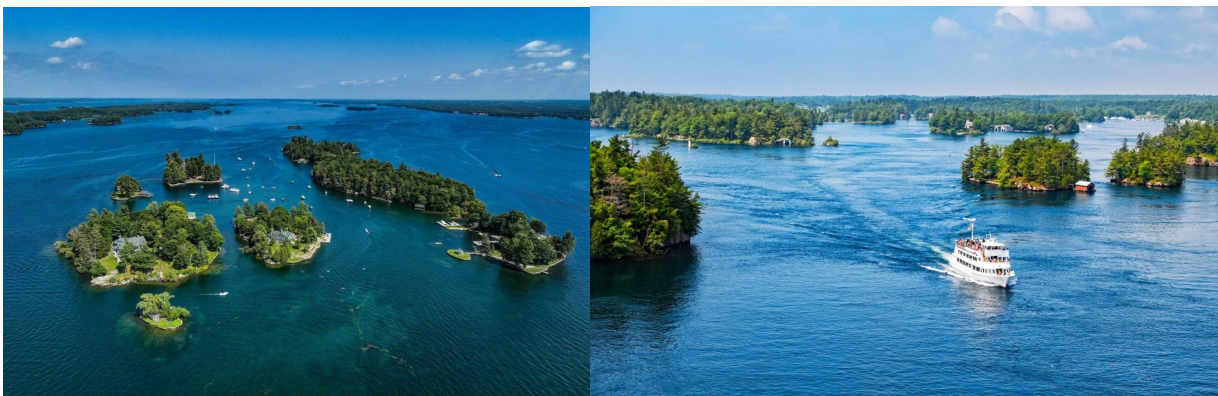
Stretching along the border between **Canada** and the **United States**, the **Thousand Islands** is one of North America's most beautiful river destinations. Scattered across the sparkling waters of the **St. Lawrence River** are more than **1,800 islands**, ranging from tiny rocky outcrops with a single tree to large islands featuring magnificent castles and grand summer estates.

For travelers extending a New England & Canada cruise before or after sailing from **Montréal** or **Québec City**, or combining a cruise with a Canadian land vacation, the Thousand Islands offer an unforgettable blend of history, natural beauty, and scenic cruising.

Whether you're gliding past elegant waterfront homes, touring a fairytale castle, or simply enjoying the peaceful river scenery, the Thousand Islands provide a relaxing and memorable escape.



Why Visit the Thousand Islands?



The region is famous for its unique mix of history and scenery.

Visitors come to enjoy:

- Scenic boat cruises
- Castle tours
- Waterfront villages

- River wildlife
- Historic mansions
- Beautiful photography
- Relaxing river views

It's one of the most picturesque waterways in North America.

What Are the Thousand Islands?



Despite the name, there are actually **1,864 islands** in the region.

To officially qualify as an island, it must:

- Remain above water year-round.
- Support at least one living tree.
- Have at least one square foot of land above the water.

These unique rules have created one of the world's most fascinating island collections.



Boldt Castle



The region's most famous attraction is **Boldt Castle** on Heart Island.

Built by hotel magnate **George C. Boldt** as a gift for his wife Louise, construction stopped in 1904 after her unexpected death.

Today visitors can tour:

- The grand castle
- Beautiful gardens
- Historic rooms
- Waterfront views
- Yacht House (on nearby Wellesley Island)

Its romantic story has made Boldt Castle one of the most visited landmarks in the region.



Scenic Boat Cruises



The best way to experience the Thousand Islands is from the water.

Boat tours offer views of:

- Private islands
- Luxury waterfront homes
- Historic castles
- Scenic bridges
- Forested shorelines
- Passing freighters on the St. Lawrence Seaway

Every cruise offers a different perspective on this remarkable landscape.



Thousand Islands International Bridge



Connecting Canada and the United States, the **Thousand Islands International Bridge** is both a transportation link and a scenic landmark.

The bridge system:

- Crosses several islands
- Offers panoramic river views
- Connects Ontario with New York State
- Is a favorite subject for photographers



Wildlife



The Thousand Islands region is rich in wildlife.

Keep an eye out for:

- Bald Eagles
- Great Blue Herons
- Ospreys
- River Otters
- White-tailed Deer
- Beavers
- Turtles

The islands provide excellent habitat for both birds and mammals.

Local Foods to Try



Regional favorites include:

-  Fresh Yellow Perch
-  Walleye
-  Lobster (seasonal menus)
-  The original Thousand Island Dressing
-  Maple desserts
-  Ontario cheeses

Many waterfront restaurants feature beautiful views of the river.



Best Photography Spots



Favorite locations include:

- Boldt Castle
- Heart Island
- Scenic boat tours
- Thousand Islands Bridge
- St. Lawrence River overlooks
- Waterfront villages

Sunrise and sunset create especially beautiful lighting across the islands.



Visitor Tips

- Boat tours are the best way to experience the region.
 - Bring binoculars for wildlife viewing.
 - Carry a light jacket—it can be cooler on the water.
 - Have your passport with you if your excursion crosses the international border.
 - Keep your camera ready throughout the cruise.
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Premium Travel Group Tip

If your itinerary includes a boat cruise with a stop at **Boldt Castle**, don't miss it. The castle's romantic history and beautiful setting make it one of the most memorable attractions in Eastern Canada. Even if you don't enter the castle, seeing it from the water is an unforgettable experience.



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Fun Facts

- There are **1,864 islands** in the Thousand Islands region—not just one thousand.
 - The islands stretch for approximately **50 miles (80 kilometers)** along the St. Lawrence River.
 - **Boldt Castle** was originally intended as a grand Valentine's Day gift from George C. Boldt to his wife, Louise.
 - The **St. Lawrence Seaway** allows massive ocean-going ships to travel from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes, passing through the Thousand Islands region.
 - The famous **Thousand Island dressing** is widely believed to have originated in this region during the late 19th century.
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Why You'll Love the Thousand Islands

The Thousand Islands offer a peaceful blend of natural beauty, fascinating history, and elegant waterfront scenery. Cruising through this island-studded section of the St. Lawrence River feels like entering a storybook, where castles rise from wooded islands and quiet coves hide charming cottages. Whether you're photographing Boldt Castle, spotting bald eagles overhead, or simply relaxing on a sightseeing cruise, the Thousand Islands create memories that linger long after your journey ends.

Joe's Logbook

The Thousand Islands is one of those destinations that's even more impressive from the water than it is on a map.

When you first hear there are nearly 1,900 islands, it's hard to imagine what that looks like. Then you board a boat and begin weaving through the channels, passing tiny islands with a single cottage, grand estates tucked among the trees, and eventually the incredible Boldt Castle rising from Heart Island.

One thing I always tell travelers is to spend as much time looking around as you do taking pictures. The scenery changes constantly, and some of the best moments come when you're simply sitting on the deck, feeling the breeze, and watching life unfold along the St. Lawrence River.

If you're extending your cruise vacation in Canada or sailing from Montréal or Québec City, the Thousand Islands make a fantastic addition to your itinerary. It's a destination that perfectly combines history, romance, and some of the most beautiful river scenery in North America.