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# WINTER MUST-DO'S

Let it snow. Ottawa is home to a flurry of winter pleasures. The city's winter wonderland includes frosty festivals, natural wonders, icy escapades, sizzling saunas, and cozy comforts.

## Ice Escapades

When life gives you winter, make **Winterlude!** The iconic winter festival includes must-visits like **Snowflake Kingdom** (slides, snow sculptures, mazes and more) and the magical ice sculptures of **Crystal Garden**. Other frozen bedrocks of Winterlude include an international ice-carving competition, snow sculptures, sleigh rides, and a bed race on the **Rideau Canal Skateway**. Speaking of the world's largest outdoor skating rink, you can glide 7.8 kilometres (nearly 5 miles) between downtown and **Dow's Lake Pavilion**, which is home to several restaurants, as well as skate and sleigh rentals. The Canal isn't the only reason to sharpen your blades. Hit the ice at the **Sens Rink of Dreams** at City Hall, the **Lansdowne** skating court or **Rideau Hall's** iconic rink, which dates back to 19th-century skating parties organized by Canada's governor general. For ice-loving spectators, check out a home game of the NHL's **Ottawa Senators** at the **Canadian Tire Centre** or the OHL's **Ottawa 67s**, who play at **TD Place** at **Lansdowne**.

## Gatineau Park

You can walk in this nearby Québec winter wonderland, but it is best explored on snowshoes, skis ... or even snow bikes. Embrace the traditional with 60 kilometres of snowshoe

trails or cross-country ski trails stretching 200 kilometres (124 miles). Looking to avoid people? Hit 50 kilometres of backcountry trails. Looking for new friends or refuge? Stop at a day-use shelter equipped with wood-burning stoves, picnic tables, and outhouses. Or stay in one of the four-season tents, yurts, or cabins for a winter camping experience. **Ottawa's Greenbelt** is also home to 150 kilometres of cross-country ski trails. For the more adventurous, try ice fishing on the **Ottawa River** or dogsledding in the Outaouais Region with **Escapade Eskimo**.

## Plant Your Poles

**Camp Fortune** in Old Chelsea, Quebec is the nearest ski hill with eight lifts and 24 runs.



Other day trip options include Ontario's **Calabogie Peaks** Resort, only 75 minutes away, with 24 downhill runs, and snowshoeing, hiking and cross country skiing trails.

## Feel the Heat

Warm up after a snowy adventure with steamy saunas and hot baths. **Nordik Spa-Nature's** fairy-tale setting near the entrance of Gatineau Park is only 20 minutes from downtown. Experience the magic of an outdoor massage in a heated, insulated wood pavilion. Or stay downtown to escape the frost with a frosty pint at a cozy **ByWard Market** pub, and warm up with the capital's fiery cuisine — from spicy international fare to gourmet BBQ and wood oven pizza. With places to chill and feel the heat, Ottawa is a prime destination to come out of winter hibernation.



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