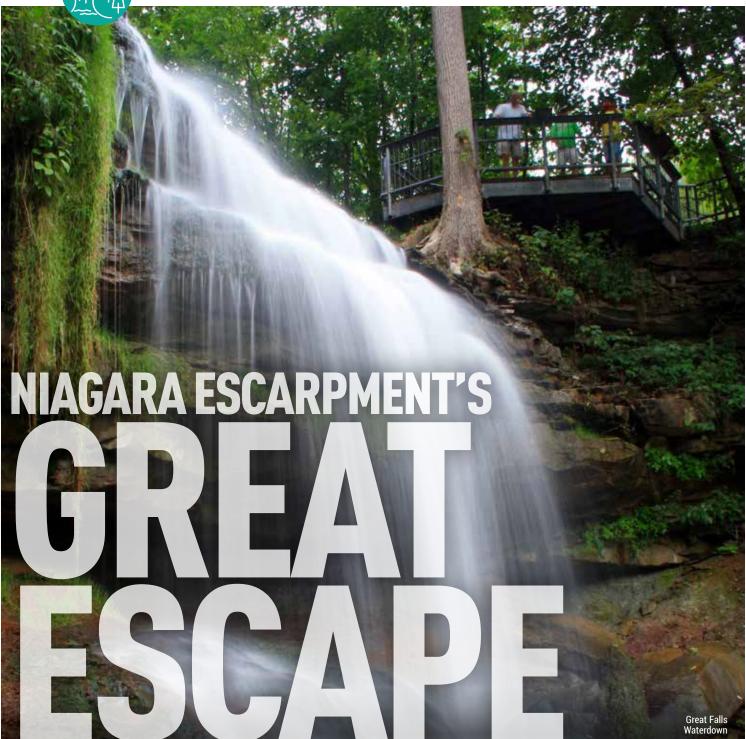
HAMILTON HALTON BRANT 2-DAY WATERFALL ITINERARY



Take a journey with mile-high views and celebrated trails. Explore history as it unfolds and hike to iconic waterfalls.

DISCOVER MORE AT theheartofontario.com





NIAGARA ESCARPMENT'S GREAT ESCAPE

Unique To The Heart Of Ontario

- Discover the Niagara Escarpment, a UNESCO Worlds Biosphere, which is the stunning backdrop of Grindstone Creek Escarpment Valley. Excavated by a succession of glaciers that disappeared some 10,000 years ago, the large glacial valley that spread out into Lake Ontario, emerged and shaped by glacial melt water and even more recently, by streams flowing through the valley.
- The wooded pathway of the Bruce Trail, Canada's longest footpath, is perfectly groomed with its rock formations and nature inspired path, leading you through the bends and turns of the trail.
- Flora and fauna is in abundance, including home to the Sassafras Woods as part of Carolinian Forest, recognizing the lush surrounding of Sugar Maples, Shagbark Hickory, and towering Red Oak Trees.
- Visit Great Falls at Smokey Hollow Park, celebrate its nod to the history and the rise of an economic and industrial story in Smokey Hollow, was a bustling mill location in the late 1800s, and was home to several mills.
- Immerse in the trails at Royal Botanical Gardens that graze Grindstone Creek. Discover its significance to the region, and to these lands and how the creek flows from Great Falls and Grindstone Cascade, in Waterdown, down the Niagara Escarpment, the lands at RBG, to Hamilton Harbour, and eventually to Lake Ontario.
- Explore the trails of Hendrie Valley for an unparalleled journey that introduces hikers
 to marsh lands, the preservation and conservation of nature, all while celebrating such
 beauty and appreciation of simple tranquility.
- Make a plan to stay longer, there is plenty to see and do in Burlington and Hamilton.

WATERFALL CHARACTERISTICS LEGEND

RIBBON: Greater height than its crest width, streams of flow form a thin ribbon.

CASCADE: The vertical drop is broken into a series of steps causing water to "cascade" down the incline.

CLASSICAL: The height and crest width are nearly equal.

CURTAIN: Opposite of the 'Ribbon' waterfall, the height is smaller than its crest width.



WATERFALL ITINERARY

TIPS & A HEADS UP

Welcome to Waterfall Hiking in The Heart of Ontario! This 2-Day experience features charming Waterdown and Lake Ontario's shorefront city, Burlington, Ontario!

Enjoy safely, while preserving our beautiful trails and the Niagara Escarpment's landscapes and natural areas. The routes are designed to offer you insight to the history and footprints of the past.

The **DAY ONE** itinerary begins at Smokey Hollow Park. The Bruce Trail, from Great Falls takes you along the Grindstone Creek, descending down the steps and rocks, showcasing the slopes and cliffs of the Niagara Escarpment. This section of your waterfall journey will lead you to Grindstone Cascade, as it trickles and tumbles the rocks along the creek. This loop leads you back up the escarpment and through a small urban section of Waterdown. Celebrate your day with a visit to the Community of Waterdown and its lovely downtown. Plan a stay, dine and discover some of the shops along Waterdown's Main Street.

DAY TWO highlights Grindstone Creek, and its connection the first day's experience. Grindstone Creek is found at Royal Botanical Gardens, particularly along the Hendrie Park Trails. It's a nature sanctuary, featuring more than 27 km of beautifully groomed trails, bridges and boardwalks. With two canoe launch sites, why not compliment your hike with a paddle experience, which would be something worth considering! Enjoy your RBG discovery and remember to stay or come back to hike the many other destinations at Royal Botanical Gardens.

Note: Trails are subject to change as alternate routes may be required. This could be due to maintenance, and other unforeseen circumstances. Bruce Trail Conservancy updates trails on a regular basis. Please check www.brucetrail.org.

ETIQUETTE ETIQUETTE

We want you to enjoy your adventure!

VIEW THE FALLS

- Check out the falls from a viewing platform, this is the best place to see the falls and enjoy the view!
- Stay away from the bottom of gorges, waterfalls or escarpment areas there is a chance of falling rocks and you could slip and fall on wet or algae-covered rocks.
- Stay away from slopes and edges of the escarpment ground can become unstable in these areas and pose a fall hazard.
- Whenever visiting water, always be mindful that some areas are prone to flash flooding pay attention to weather conditions.
- Stay at least one body-length back from the edge of gorges, waterfalls and escarpment areas. This is especially important for children and pets.
- Some Waterfalls in Hamilton have polluted water, do not swim or wade in them.
- Stay away from dangerous areas to take a photo your life is more important than a selfie or landscape shot.

TRAIL SAFETY

- Stick to the marked trails to access the waterfalls, creating your own trail is dangerous and is considered trespassing.
- Respect posted signage, stay on trails and do not climb or bypass fencing.
- Ensure you wear appropriate footwear and only visit the falls during the daylight hours.
- Do not consume alcohol or take medication that may affect your balance while walking near the falls.
- Enjoy the plants and wildlife near the waterfalls, do not litter or trample the delicate plants. Parents/ Guardians keep a very close watch on children and take the time to discuss safety concerns before and during your visit.

BE PREPARED

- Leave no trace leave what you find and take out what you bring. If you are packing food to enjoy on your hike, please be sure to pack it up and take the garbage with you.
- Weather, terrain, and various trail conditions can be challenging. Be prepared by packing drinking water, bug spray, sunscreen, light jacket, and even a first-aid kit. Minimize any risk by simply planning ahead.
- Bring change for parking meters, where applicable.

DAYONE

SMOKEY HOLLOW PARK, GREAT FALLS, GRINDSTONE CASCADE AND GRINDSTONE CREEK

DISTANCE:

5.25 km

TIME REQUIRED:

3 hours

DIFFICULTY:

Moderate to Avid

SEASONS:

Spring, Summer, Fall

GREAT FALLS, SMOKEY HOLLOW TO GRINDSTONE CASCADE



Great Falls Coordinates: 43.3309118, -79.887196

Distance/Timing: 1.8 km / 25 - 35 min.

Terrain: Groomed Trail, Natural Steps and Stairs, Packed Earth

Park at Smokey Hollow Park designated parking lot, the home of Great Falls. From the lot, follow the steps the viewing platform, but be sure to stop by the historical marker and discover the story of this location and its footprint on the local economy. From the lookout, notice the stones of the mill ruins, near the crest of the falls.

Great Falls, also known as Grindstone Falls, is a mighty 10-metre high ribbon terraced waterfall. It spans 5-metre wide and offers a rushing water spectacle. The viewing platform renders excellent perspective advantages and photo opportunities.

The Bruce Trail links from the waterfall, and begin your hike. Left of the parking lot, look for the main trail blazes to hike downstream. Follow the path as it leads you along the Grindstone Creek. The trail descends gradually in some areas and more obvious in others. Some of the features of this path include steps and stairs therefore, in some spots, be prepared to endure a more avid hike. It's an interesting hike, especially as you pass beautiful rock escarpment characteristics', and there are plenty of places to stop and enjoy the scenic views. As you hike, notice the Niagara Escarpment's commanding presence on the opposite side of this trail, which lends a geological reminder of the significance of the region. Consider bringing your camera for some remarkable nature friendly photos.

The Bruce Trail weaves along the Niagara Escarpment slope and the Grindstone Creek. Along the trail, arrive at the Grindstone Cascade. This curtain cascade is almost 3-metres high and 5-metres in width.

GRINDSTONE CASCADE TO BRIDGE OVER GRINDSTONE CREEK



Grindstone Cascade Coordinates: 43.328, -79.8869

Distance/Timing: 50 m / 8 - 12 min.

Terrain: Groomed Trail, Steps, Packed Earth

Along the Bruce Trail, you may see a glimpse of Lower Snake Falls at the tributary junction. This waterfall is a 5-metre classic cascade and emerges from Grindstone Creek Tributary. Once you arrive at the crossing of Grindstone Creek, pass over the creek by a man-made wooden bridge.

Grindstone Creek was conceived by glaciers with its rocky bed forming plenty of rushing waters and some rapids. It is over 90-square km, and flows from Flamborough through Waterdown, and into the Hamilton Harbour.

BRIDGE OVER GRINDSTONE BRIDGE TO SNAKE ROAD CROSSING



Snake Road at Bruce Trail Trailhead Coordinates: 43.317457, -79.892321 Distance/Timing: 1.8 km / 25 - 35 min.
Terrain: Groomed Trail, Semi-Groomed Trail

On the north side of the creek bank, continue on the trail. There are several side trails, and the West Waterdown Trails-J are the easier of trails. This is the Bruce Trail and the route is approximately 1.3 km, until the trail meets at the Fence to Fun Side Trail. Take this trail and turn right. It is a short hike, approximately 75-metres. This trail intersects with Pony Fields Trail, turn right. Hike approximately 400-metres until the trail meets West Waterdown Trail-I. There are several trail options in this section. This route will offer the easier trail option.

Continue, keeping left as it intersects with Upper Canyon Trail. On West Waterdown Trail/ Bruce Trail, hike to Snake Road. Cross the road safely.

SNAKE ROAD TO ROCKCLIFFE SIDE TRAIL



Distance/Timing: 1.2 km / 20 - 25 min. Terrain: Groomed Trail, Semi-Groomed Trail

The Bruce Trail continues through the Clappison Woods, which is part of the Grindstone Heritage Lands. This area provides unusual forested talus slopes and a diversity of species.

The Green Trail Side Trail is a left turn from the Bruce Trail. Follow it until it intersects with Rockcliffe Side Trail. This trail utilizes trails in the Rockcliffe Survey to give access to limited parking at Rockcliffe Road. This trail was created by local residents, as a labour of love for the outdoors and the enjoyment of their neighbours.

ROCKCLIFFE SIDE TRAIL TO ROCKCLIFFE ROAD TO DUNDAS STREET EAST



Rockcliffe Side Trailhead Coordinates: 43.322988, -79.901044 Distance/Timing: 400 m / 15 - 25 min. Terrain: Semi-Groomed Trail, Package Earth

Take the trail north until you reach Rockcliffe Road. This route will eventually lead you on a loop back to Smokey Hollow Park.

At the top of Rockcliffe Road, there is a parking lot. This would be another option for parking, if you want come back again, to take the trail in the opposite direction. Hike along Rockcilffe Road, turning right from the trail. To navigate this subdivision, follow the curve of the road and turn right onto Overdale Avenue. Turn left on Sunnycroft Court to Dundas Street East, which is the main road to downtown Waterdown.

Once on Dundas Street East, walk along this street until you arrive in the charming downtown core. There are plenty of restaurants to enjoy a well-earned and relaxing meal.



GETTING HERE



VEHICLE

Highway ON-403 from Toronto
Take ON-403 West. Take exit 78
for Waterdown Road. Turn right
onto Waterdown Road. Continue
onto Waterdown Road and will
turn into Mill Street South.
Smokey Hollow Park is located
on the left hand side.

Highway ON-403 from London
Take ON-403 East. Take
Waterdown Road exit. At the
intersection of Waterdown Road,
turn left onto Waterdown Road.
Stay on Waterdown Road as it will
turn into Mill Street South. Smokey
Hollow Park is located on the left
hand side.

ON-QEW from Niagara
Take ON-QEW toward Toronto/
Burlington. Use the right 2 lanes
to take exit 100 toward Brantford/
Hamilton. Merge onto ON-403
W. Take exit 78 from ON-403 W.
Continue on Waterdown Road.
Turn right onto Waterdown Road.
Continue onto Mill Street S.
Smokey Hollow Park is on the left.



HSR Routes

Waterdown, Ontario

Bus Stop #1808 and #1805

Mill at Mountain Brow Stop: Access Smokey Hollow – Great Falls, walk along Mill Street, heading north. Smokey Hollow Park is located on the left hand side of Mill Street

Bus Stop #1809 and #1884, Dundas at Main Stop

Bus Stop #1810 and #1807, Mill and Dundas

www.hamilton.ca



Smokey Hollow Waterfall Parking Lot,
Mill Street: approximately 20 parking spots
Great Falls Coordinates: 43.3309118, -79.887196

Waterdown Downtown: street parking along

Dundas Street

DAY TWO

GRINDSTONE MARSH, GRINDSTONE CREEK, ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS, BURLINGTON AND HAMILTON

DISTANCE:

6.3 km

TIME REQUIRED:

2.5 hours

DIFFICULTY: Moderate

......

SEASONS:

Spring, Summer, Fall

ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS, GRINDSTONE MARSH TRAIL TO HENDRIE PARK



Royal Botanical Gardens (Visitor) Centre Coordinates: 43.290686, -79.874573

Distance/Timing: 1.6 km / 30 - 40 min.

Terrain: Road Pavement, Groomed Trail, Packed Earth, Boardwalk

Begin at the Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG) Visitors Centre. Drop by the Visitors Centre for admission information and to pick up a Visitors Guide. From the parking lot, hike on Spring Gardens Road and travel south (right from RBG centre parking lot), following the road to Grindstone Marsh Trail. If you are parking at the RBG designated lot on Spring Gardens Road, begin your hike from this point.

This hike will take you along Spring Gardens Road, crossing the bridge that passes over Grindstone Marshes. This site is the mouth of Grindstone Creek and is the access point for both Laking Garden and the lower end of the Grindstone Marshes Trail, 170 m / 2 min. At Laking Gardens, collections of irises, peonies and a heritage garden are featured.

Once across the bridge, follow the Grindstone Marsh Trail by turning right. The trail will meander along the banks of the Grindstone Creek, and, as a point of interest, just hours before, these waters were once rushing over the Great Falls in Waterdown. The creek will flow into Lake Ontario just south of your current location.

Interest Notable

This section of the trail is known as the Grindstone Creek Delta. The site of an ambitious restoration project and stop-over point for migratory waterfowl. Imagine that more than 100,000 Christmas trees form the foundation of the restored river banks of Grindstone Creek. These trees protect the marsh areas by preventing carp from entering. Bring your camera and your binoculars, as they may be some bird-watching for bird enthusiasts.

As you hike along the creek, you will arrive at the Grindstone Marshes Boardwalk. From the Spring Gardens Road Trailhead, this is about 750 m / 12-15 min. trek. The boardwalk sits five metres high in the floodplain and leads to Snowberry Island. The island was named after a species of plant that grows here. The island is a block of un-eroded creek valley soil called a knoll. It's a stunning experience in any season - a natural sanctuary in the middle of an urban setting. The boardwalk offers benches to sit and reflect, enjoy the sights and sounds of birds playfully singing.

Continue on the Grindstone Marsh Trail and the boardwalk adventure to S. Bridle Trail. It's another 250 m / 6-8 min., and once you arrive at this trailhead, keep the hike on Grindstone Marshes Trail that will lead you to Hendrie Park. This trek to Hendrie Park and the Cherry Hill Gate is 400 m / 10-15 min

Interest Notable

The Hendrie Valley Sanctuary is surrounded by 100-hectres, centred on the Grindstone Creek Valley. Towering trees and forested slopes are featured in a 60-hectre river-mouth marsh complex. The lower portion of Grindstone Creek flows and is a highly productive, shallow wetland. Located just northeast of Cootes Paradise, this is home to an adult habitat of many native fish, crucial spawning nursery, as well as food and shelter for a variety of birds, mammals, insects and amphibians.

For ecological protection, Hendrie Valley Sanctuary stretches to Carroll's Point in Hamilton Harbour, and contains an extensive collection of floodplain wetlands.



HENDRIE PARK, ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDEN'S GARDEN DISCOVERY

(OPTIONAL EXPERIENCE)

This is considered the largest cultivated garden area at RBG and offers something for everyone. A haven of diverse plants and garden design invite garden aficionados to discover the collections in the valley.

Visit the Turner Pavilion Teahouse, an ideal spot to relax in nature's tranquility while enjoying a light snack and a refreshment. Leading you to the Teahouse is a charming reflective pool. The Teahouse is open seasonally, so check www.rbg.ca for current hours of operation.

While visiting Hendrie Park, you can enjoy a discovery tour of the park. Visit the Morrison Woodland Garden and experience the bloom and growth of various plants and species, including the Trillium. RBG works to continually protect these desired native plant species.

Explore the Lily Collection, and learn the diversity and divisions of the Lilium genus in accordance with the Royal Horticultural Society in the U.K.

Visit the Hendrie Gates at the South end of the Scented Garden, constructed to recognize the Hendrie family and their generous land donation. The Scented Garden is an avenue of Chinese Flowering Dogwood leading to the scents you will enjoy.

There is plenty to explore including, Global Garden, Medicinal Garden, Trails Garden, White Garden, Medieval Garden, Prehistoric Grove, Imagination Grove, Helen M. Kippax Garden, Veggie Village, and the new Rose Garden, which opened in 2018. Allow a few hours, if you wish to immerse yourself in the garden experience.

CHERRY HILL GATE, HENDRIE PARK TO SOUTH BRIDLE TRAIL TO CREEK SIDE WALK



Distance/Timing: 1.1 km / 15 - 20 min. Terrain: Groomed Trail, Packed Earth

Backtrack the Grindstone Marsh Trail to the trailhead of the South Bridle Trail, 350 m / 5 min. Make a right turn onto the trail and hike 700 m / 10 min., until you reach Creek Side Walk. Continue your chance meeting of resident critters and creatures – from mammals to birds. Pass by marshes and stop for a lookout and enjoy the tranquility.

Nearby, South Pasture Swamp is an oasis for endangered species. Look for the spring-fed oxbow pond on this walk, which is home to beaver, muskrat, Virginia rail and wood duck. One of the Project Paradise sites, work to restore this site began in 1994.

Option One: CREEK SIDE WALK



Distance/Timing: 2 km / 30 - 40 min. roundtrip Terrain: Groomed Trail, Packed Earth

Turning right at the Creek Side Walk Trailhead, continue the hike along Grindstone Creek to urban street, Unsworth Avenue. It is a one-way hike, as you will simply backtrack to the original Creek Side Walk Trailhead, where it intersects with South Bridle Trail.

With three pedestrian bridge crossings, the valley provides an intimate connection with the creek. Seasonal fish spawning runs include herring and spottail shiner in the spring, and salmon in the fall.

Option Two: NORTH BRIDLE TRAIL



Distance/Timing: 500 m / 6 - 8 min. Terrain: Groomed Trail, Packed Earth

From South Bridle Trail make a left turn at the North Bridle Trail Trailhead. This hike loops back to Grindstone Marsh Trail and to Laking Garden. It's a lovely trail with bridges crossing marshes and Grindstone Creek.

GRINDSTONE MARSH TRIAL TO ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS, LAKING GARDEN



Laking Garden Coordinates: 43.292248, -79.886178 Distance/Timing: 1.1 km / 15 - 20 min. Terrain: Groomed Trail. Packed Earth

The Grindstone Marsh Trail may be familiar, as you retrace back, although, this time you will likely discover more unique features of the trail. Enjoy the wildlife viewing opportunities and serving for a magnet for such species, perhaps you may get a glimpse of a Blanding Turtle, which is an endangered species, and one RBG is focused to protect. At the Grindstone Marsh Trail Trailhead, make a right onto Spring Gardens Road to access Laking Garden.

Open seasonally, this garden is set on a fertile terraced plain, which formerly was a market garden. Home to herbaceous perennial collections, stroll the garden's paths with an eye for plant specifics. The belvedere at the end of the path offers a panoramic view over the entire garden. Overlooked by a small charming cottage, visitors are treated to an insight into the depth and breadth of perennial plants.

GETTING HERE



Highway ON-403 from Toronto

Follow ON-403 West. Take exit 78 for Waterdown Road and turn left. Turn right onto Plains Road West. Turn left into Royal Botanical Gardens Centre (Visitor Centre).

Highway ON-403 from London

Follow ON-403 West. Take exit 74 for Ontario 6 toward Guelph North. Continue onto ON-6 North. Take the York Road exit toward Plains Road. Turn right onto Old York Road. Turn left onto Plains Road West (signs for Plains Road/ Burlington). Turn left and stay on Plains Road West, Turn right into Royal Botanical Gardens Centre (Visitor Centre).

ON-QEW from Niagara

Follow ON-QEW towards Toronto/ Burlington. Use the right two lanes to take exit 99 for Fairview Street toward Plains Road. Use the left 2 lanes to turn left onto Fairview Street. Continue onto Plains Road East. Turn left into Royal Botanical Gardens Centre (Visitor Centre).



PUBLIC TRANSIT

HSR Routes

Bus Stop #2979 and #2982. Strathcona at York

Bus Stop #2994,

Dundurn at Jones

www.hamilton.ca

Burlington Transit

Plains at RBG (699) (698) Plains at Botanical (700) (701) www.burlingtontransit.ca



Royal Botanical Gardens Centre,

680 Plains Road West, Burlington, Ontario (43.290686, -79.874573)

Valley Inn, RBG designated Parking Lot,

Spring Gardens Road (43.289293, -79.886106)

RBG's Laking Garden,

Spring Garden Road (43.292296, -79.886153)

Trailhead: From Plains Road, turn left just before the RBG Parking lot, Spring Gardens Road, Follow this road for 1.4 km /3 min, to the RBG designated parking lot The parking lot coordinates are 43.289293, -79.886106.

TRAIL GUIDELINES

Royal Botanical Gardens

These lands are part of Canada's biodiversity hot spot, open to passive recreation. Leave only footprints, take only pictures. Garbage receptacles are located at trailheads. There are restrictions, per RBG's bylaws: pets must remain leashed at all times; running/jogging and cycling are not permitted; motorized vehicles are not permitted; feeding the wildlife is not permitted; smoking is not permitted

STAY & PLAY

APRÈS WATERFALLING: RESTAURANTS, CAFÉS AND MUST-SEES

Royal Coachman

1 Main Street North, Waterdown, ON 905-689-5952 www.royalcoachmanpub.com Coordinates: 43.333424, -79.893391

Copper Kettle Café

312 Dundas Street East, #4, Waterdown, ON 905-690-3696 www.copperkettlecafe.ca Coordinates: 43.333498, -79.892442

Mariano's Pasta Café

5 Mill Street South, Waterdown, ON 905-689-6333 www.marcianos.ca Coordinates: 43.334388, -79.891392

Mill Street & 5 American House

324 Dundas Street East, Waterdown, ON 905-690-1058 www.millstreetand5.ca Coordinates: 43.333946, -79.891569



West Avenue Cider House

84 Concession Road East, Freelton, ON 289-324-0312

www.westavenue.ca

Coordinates: 43.370654, -79.982024

Royal Botanical Gardens

680 Plains Road West, Burlington, ON 905-527-1158 www.rbg.ca Coodinates: 43.290177, -79.875642



5 West Brew Pub & Kitchen

3600 Dundas Street. Burlington, ON 905-315-8782

www.5westbrewpubkitchen.ca Coordinates: 43.391552, -79.823529

STAY & PLAY

ACCOMMODATIONS

Waterfront Hotel Burlington

2020 Lakeshore Road, Burlington, ON 905-681-5400 www.thewaterfrontdowntown.com Coordinators: 43.32451, -79.795139

Holiday Inn & Conference Centre

3063 South Service Road, Burlington, ON 905-639-4443 www.hiburlington.ca Coordinates: 43.352779, -79.8000319

Admiral Inn, Hamilton

149 Dundurn Street North, Hamilton, ON 1-866-236-4662 www.admiralinn.com Coordinates: 43.26754. -79.885957

CAMPING

Bronte Creek Provincial Park

1219 Burloak Drive, Oakville, ON 905-827-6911 www.ontarioparks.com Coordinates: 43.40083, -79.76282

Flamboro Valley Camping Resort

1158 Regional Road 97, Flamborough, ON 905-659-5053 www.flamborovalley.com Coordinates: 43.388668, -80.07849

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Waterfall Itinerary was developed by Bev Scott, Tourism Product Development Specialist, Hamilton Halton Brant Regional Tourism Association (HHBRTA), in co-operation with some existing content that industry partners have developed and marketed for consumers.

Photographs used throughout this publication are both HHBRTA owned and courtesy of the attractions featured.