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## BLOG

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## CANADA



Image: iStockphoto

### Olivia Greenway explores Canada's desolate Thousand Islands Parkway

The sun has made a welcome, if brief, appearance. Warming my back as I walk down to the narrow bridge to see the river, it's not enough to completely melt the ice that now lies in clumps of what look like broken slabs of thick glass. However, spring is on its way

**EMILY BAMBER**

and after a long, hard winter, the relief is almost palpable in the small town of Gananoque.

**EMILY ROSE  
MAWSON**

From here, in a few weeks, there will be boat trips to visit the many islands in this treacherous part of the St Lawrence River. Hundreds of shipwrecks, some dating from centuries ago, may be seen using underwater cameras. And it's the best place in the world for freshwater diving for those who want to get up really close.

**EMMA RUBACH****GARY NOAKES**

The nondescript Stonewater pub feels warm and cosy after a couple of beers and it's the sort of place where strangers are welcomed, not shunned. A live band start to tune their instruments and check the sound system. Eating fish so fresh, it tastes of the sea, I mentally pat myself on the back for deciding to drive and not fly from Toronto to Montreal. If I had, I'd also have missed the 25-mile Thousand Island Parkway drive, my plan for the next morning.

**GLEN MUTEL****HALIMA ALI****JO GARDNER**

Just outside the town, the road dips to follow the river and hugs the northern bank, the mighty St Lawrence a mere few steps away. There's a bridge to the US, with the middle of the river being the country border, but I stick with the maple leaf.

**JOHN LAW****JULIA BUCKLEY**

There are no other cars anywhere; a few summer homes up the bank on the opposite side of the road appear wrapped up for winter, shutters closed, no sign of life. This will change, when, like a hibernating bear awakening, the whole area comes alive with summer trippers.

**KARL CUSHING****LUCY GREWCOCK**

For now, the raw beauty of the place strikes me. There are more than a thousand islands (the place gave its name to the famous salad dressing); nearer two thousand all told; seemingly floating on the ice. Some are large, with a stone-built house, a few trees and a boat glued to the side; others are tiny, with a tree and a lone seabird. I'm completely alone in this almost-surreal world of islands and ice.

**MARIA PIERI****MARK EVELEIGH****NICKY TRUP****OLIVIA  
GREENWAY**

I drive on for a while and it appears there's still nothing but the river and me. I want to capture this, not just with my camera. I stop and see a bench and crunch across the gravel; although it's not warm, I sit. I look out across the ice to the horizon, an eerie silence allowing uninterrupted thoughts. I imagine the tales the islands could tell; of shipwrecks, lives lost — and possibly saved. I gaze out until the chilly wind persuades me to move on.

**PAUL  
O'CALLAGHAN**

[ontariotravel.net](http://ontariotravel.net)

**PAUL OSWELL**

**POSTED ON 12 JUNE 2014**

**PETRA SHEPHERD****ROSE DYKINS****SARAH BARRELL****SEAMUS  
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