



# GREAT LAKES & CANADA

DISCOVER NATURAL WONDERS, HISTORIC CITIES  
& FIRST NATIONS TRADITIONS



“Take comfort in knowing the  
indoors are designed for  
appreciating the outdoors.”

– Meagan Spurrell, Senior Editor at Condé Nast Traveller





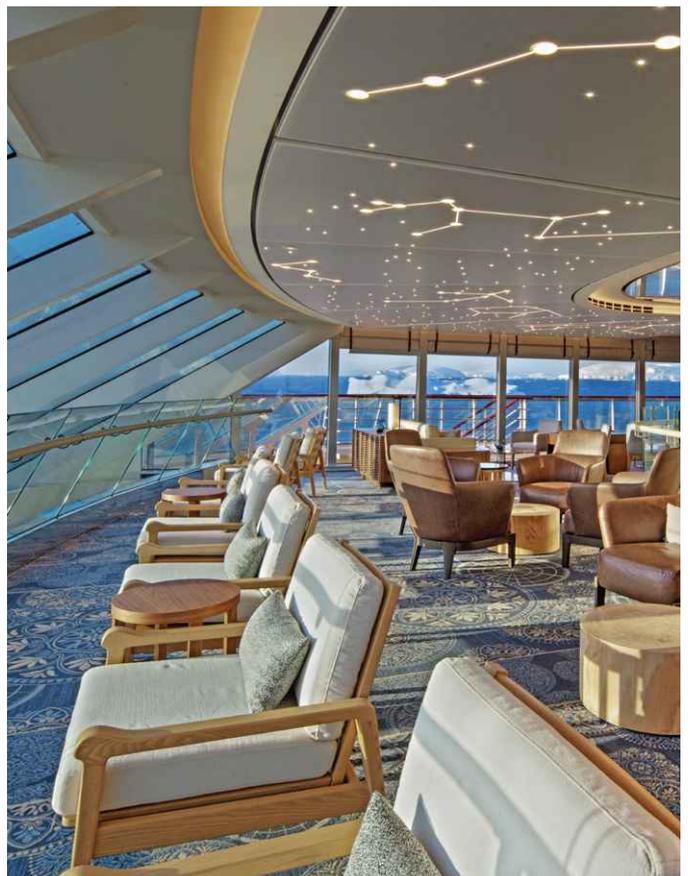
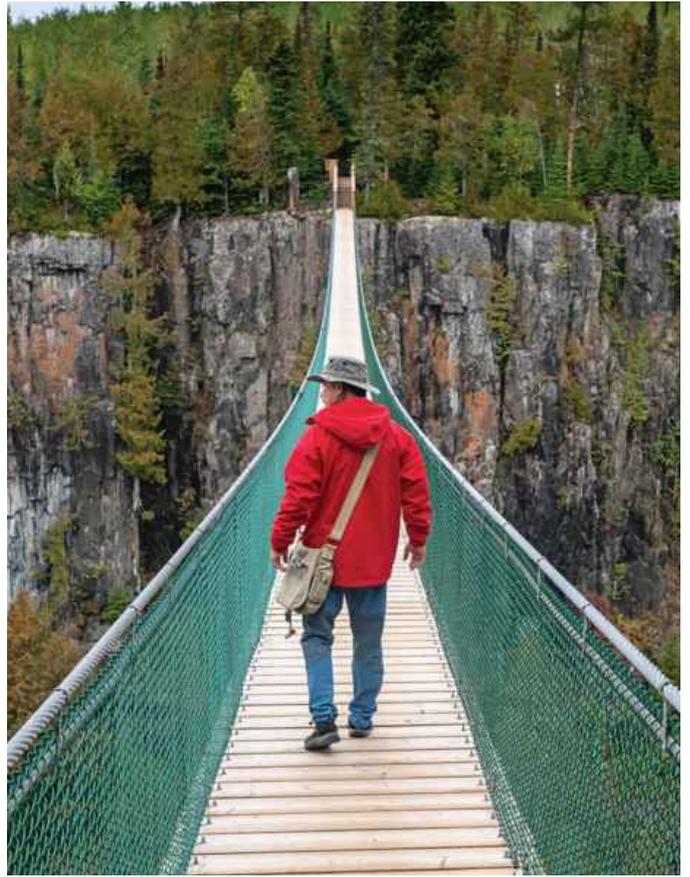
As a Viking explorer, you've probably visited countless countries, engaged with dozens of fascinating cultures, and taken home more treasured memories than you ever thought possible.

But as every modern explorer knows – no matter how many magnificent places you visit, there is always another one out there, just waiting to be seen.

A Viking voyage opens up the possibilities of where that next destination might be, putting some of the planet's most wondrous, once-out-of-reach places firmly in your grasp.

Indulge your senses in the magnetism of the Great Lakes and Canada, where you'll unveil grand marvels, quaint towns and pristine landscapes. Immerse yourself in the extraordinary riches and encounter treasures that have been witnessed by only a privileged few.

In this e-book, you will find pages brimming with inspiration to ignite your explorer spirit. Join us on a journey to Canada and the Great Lakes of North America, an experience sure to transform you.





# Wildlife

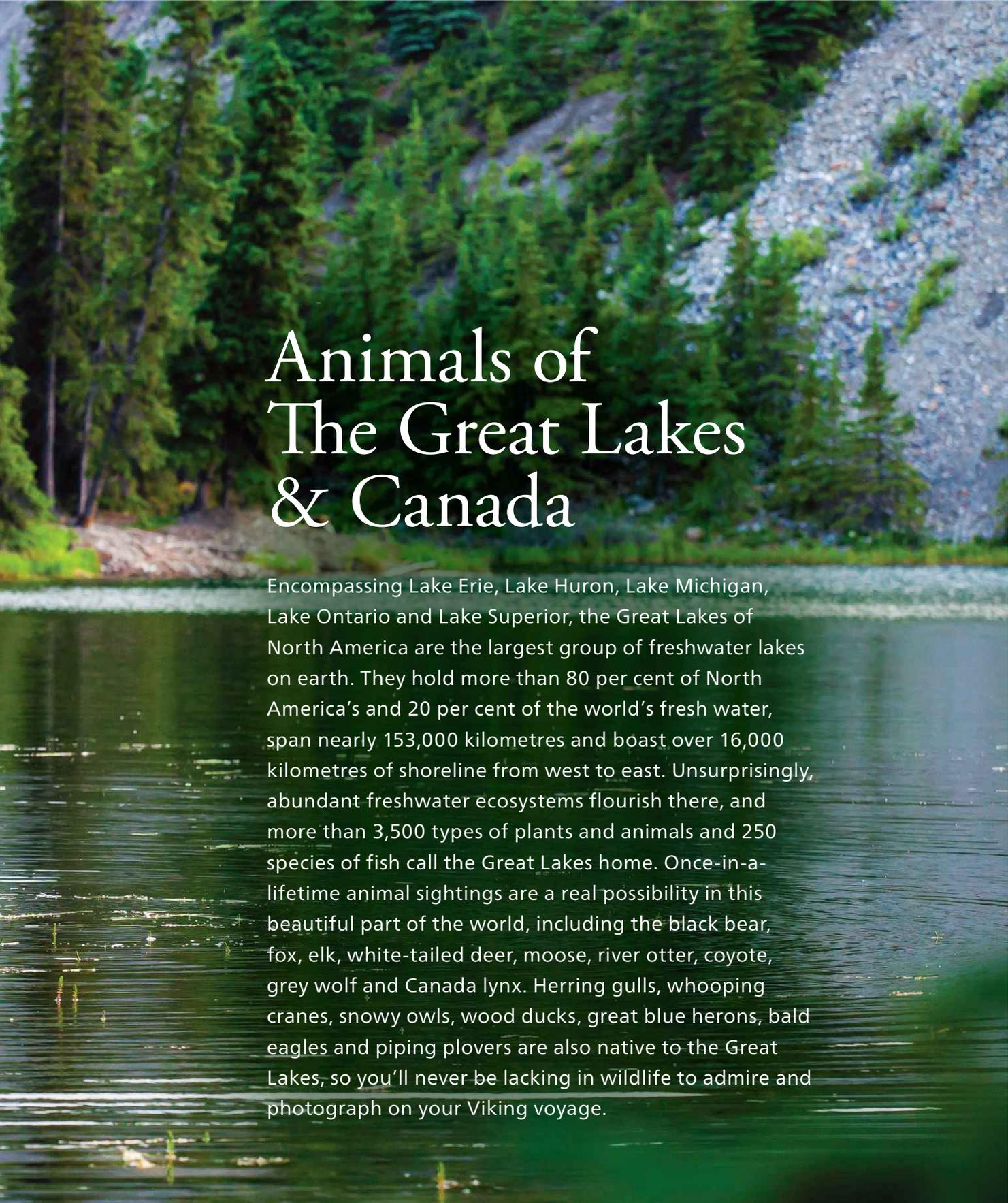
At Viking, we are passionate about delivering unforgettable encounters with wildlife in their natural habitats. Our commitment to creating immersive experiences led us to design innovative ships perfectly suited for remarkable journeys.

Embarking on the state-of-the-art *Viking Octantis* and *Viking Polaris* is an unparalleled opportunity to witness wildlife. These remarkable ships redefine the concept of viewing platforms, as every room becomes an observation room, boasting floor-to-ceiling windows inspired by Norway's bird hides. Whether indoors or outdoors, guests are immersed in breathtaking panoramas, ensuring you never miss a moment of the most extraordinary wildlife encounters.

As guests of nature, we follow its lead. We let the wildlife and the things we observe, set our flexible agenda. We strive to capture incredible moments as they occur, resulting in a unique experience every time we set sail.

Prepare to be captivated by The Great Lakes and Canada's majestic creatures against the backdrop of Earth's natural wonders.

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# Animals of The Great Lakes & Canada

Encompassing Lake Erie, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Lake Ontario and Lake Superior, the Great Lakes of North America are the largest group of freshwater lakes on earth. They hold more than 80 per cent of North America's and 20 per cent of the world's fresh water, span nearly 153,000 kilometres and boast over 16,000 kilometres of shoreline from west to east. Unsurprisingly, abundant freshwater ecosystems flourish there, and more than 3,500 types of plants and animals and 250 species of fish call the Great Lakes home. Once-in-a-lifetime animal sightings are a real possibility in this beautiful part of the world, including the black bear, fox, elk, white-tailed deer, moose, river otter, coyote, grey wolf and Canada lynx. Herring gulls, whooping cranes, snowy owls, wood ducks, great blue herons, bald eagles and piping plovers are also native to the Great Lakes, so you'll never be lacking in wildlife to admire and photograph on your Viking voyage.



## Grey Wolf

Famous for their haunting howl, grey wolves are the largest living wild canine species. These canines have long bushy tails that are often black-tipped, with a grey-brown coat. They roam long distances in search of prey and can reach speeds of 64 kilometres per hour. You'll typically find grey wolves in packs of six to ten animals, where each pack is a complex family structure with strict hierarchies, individual personality traits and roles.



## Canada Lynx

Most abundant around Lake Superior, Canada lynxes are solitary predatory cats recognisable by their long, dense fur, triangular ears with black tufts at the tips, and broad, snowshoe-like paws. In the north, the lynx feeds almost exclusively on the snowshoe hare. As a result, their population numbers are closely tied to the natural cyclical patterns of the hare. In the southern regions, their diet is more diverse preying on rodents, squirrels and birds.



## Black Bear

Forest-dwelling American black bears are the continent's smallest and most abundant bear species, with a population estimated to be twice that of all other bear species combined. It is one of only two modern bear species not considered endangered. Despite their name, only 50% of Black Bears are black, their fur can range in colour from pure white to a cinnamon colour to very dark brown. They are solitary animals and opportunistic eaters. As omnivores, the Black Bear will eat a variety of things, including both plants and meat.



## Bald Eagle

The iconic bald eagle is the only eagle solely native to North America. They have been the national emblem of the United States of America since 1782 and a spiritual symbol for native Americans much longer. Thanks to protection programs, the once-endangered bald eagle thrives and can be recognised by its brown body and wings, white head, hooked yellow beak, and large predatory claws. Bald eagles love fish but will eat any small creature they can catch. They are often seen going after other creatures' catches rather than fishing or hunting themselves.



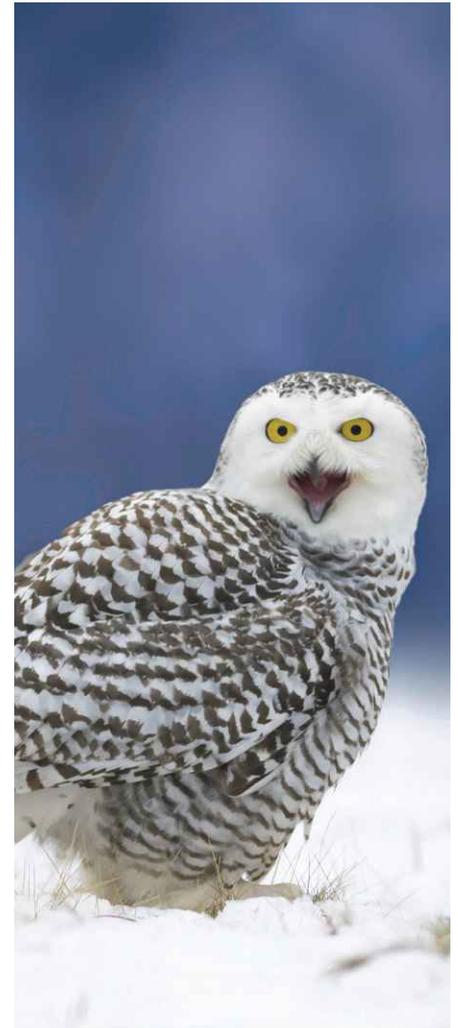
## Moose

With its distinctive broad, palmate antlers, it's impossible to mistake the male moose for any other mammal on the planet. Also known as elk, moose are the largest and heaviest existing species in the deer family and the males are easily recognised by their large antlers. In summer, you'll find moose lingering by the shoreline to graze on aquatic plants both above and below the surface. Making it the perfect time of year to spot these magnificent creatures.



## Whooping Crane

Tall, regal, eye-catching and dramatic, the highly endangered whooping crane has captured the fascination of ornithologists and twitchers alike for good reasons. Standing an impressive 1.5 metres high, it is the tallest bird in North America and one of the most beautiful with brilliant white plumage, black feathers, a large red cap and bright yellow eyes. When it's time to choose their mate, the crane enacts an elaborate dance flapping their wings and making a loud, bugle-like whooping call.



## Snowy Owl

The enchanting snowy owl is the only owl with white plumage and is, aptly, also known as the polar owl, the white owl and the Arctic owl, and can be seen in Southern Canada on rare occasions. The adult males are almost pure white, while the females have white feathers with bars of dark brown hues. Snowy owls are one of the heaviest and largest of the North American owls and can stand nearly half a metre tall with a wingspan of almost 1.5 metres. While most owls sleep during the day and hunt at night, the snowy owl is diurnal and will hunt all hours during the daylight - making them easier to spot.



## Beaver

A quintessential North American animal, beavers are easily distinguished by their flat, scaly tails, hand-like front feet, webbed back feet and long chisel-like teeth. The world's second-largest living rodents, beavers are an important part of the ecosystem thanks to their habitat structures, dam building and diverting of streams. You'll find beavers most active in the early morning and late evening, and as semi-aquatic herbivores you'll spot them travelling from water to land to collect materials and food.



## Great Blue Heron

The largest of the North American herons is a predatory bird with long legs, s-shaped neck, and dagger-like bill which makes them excellent hunters. Their preferred diet is fish, so you'll find them gracefully pacing shorelines of the Great Lakes and patiently waiting for their next meal to swim by. Once they spot their prey, they will freeze waiting for the moment to strike with lightning speed and perfect precision.



## Snapping Turtles

As their name suggests, these turtles defy the gentle giant stereotype of the turtle family, demonstrating combative behaviour when out of the water with their powerful beak-like jaws and highly mobile neck. In the water, if a predator appears, they will often swim away or hide but can also be known to act aggressively to protect themselves. The snapping turtles are omnivores; their strong jaw gives them the ability to eat a large variety of animals and plants. You'll often spot them basking in the sun on the water's edge or fallen logs in spring and summer.

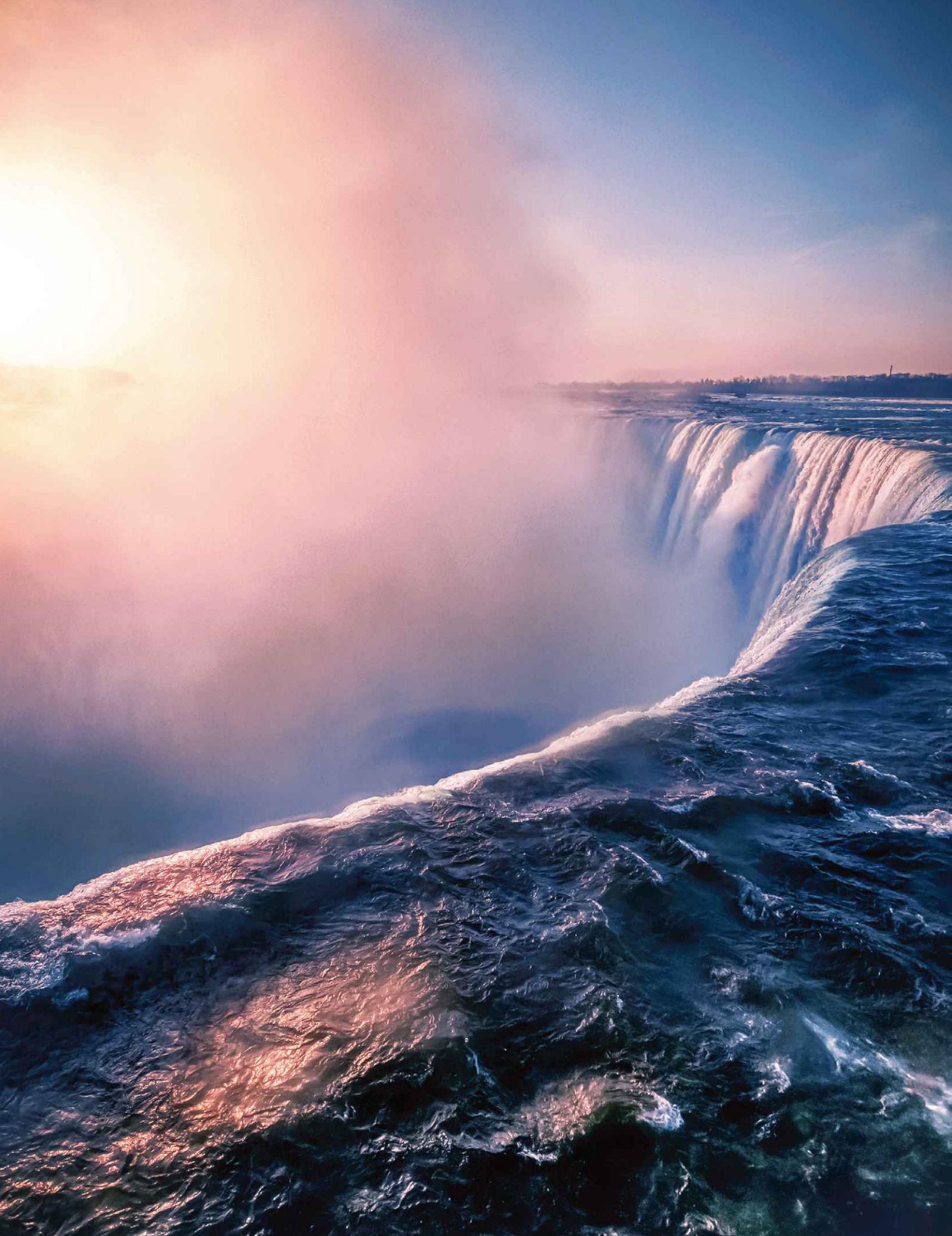


# Landscapes

On a Viking voyage, we give you more ways to explore more often. Whether you are captivated by tranquil shores, majestic vistas or enchanted by the fascinating tales of nature, Viking is dedicated to delivering an exceptional experience.

Encounter the majestic grandeur of the Great Lakes and Canada, where shimmering waters and limitless horizons mesmerise. Uncover pristine forests, cascading waterfalls, and vast plains that exhibit nature's splendour. Face towering mountains, tranquil lakes, and vibrant coastlines as they seamlessly blend to form a visual masterpiece that ignites the spirit of exploration. Traverse in a captivating blend of urban skylines, wetlands, and intricate ecosystems. This region epitomises nature's diversity, a captivating symphony for the soul.

Zodiac, kayak excursions and shore landings give you unparalleled opportunities to view and photograph landscapes, while optional excursions such as submarine rides give a different perspective of your destination. Participating in ongoing scientific research with our Viking scientists will get you closer to your destination and provide a deeper understanding of your environment.





## The Great Lakes

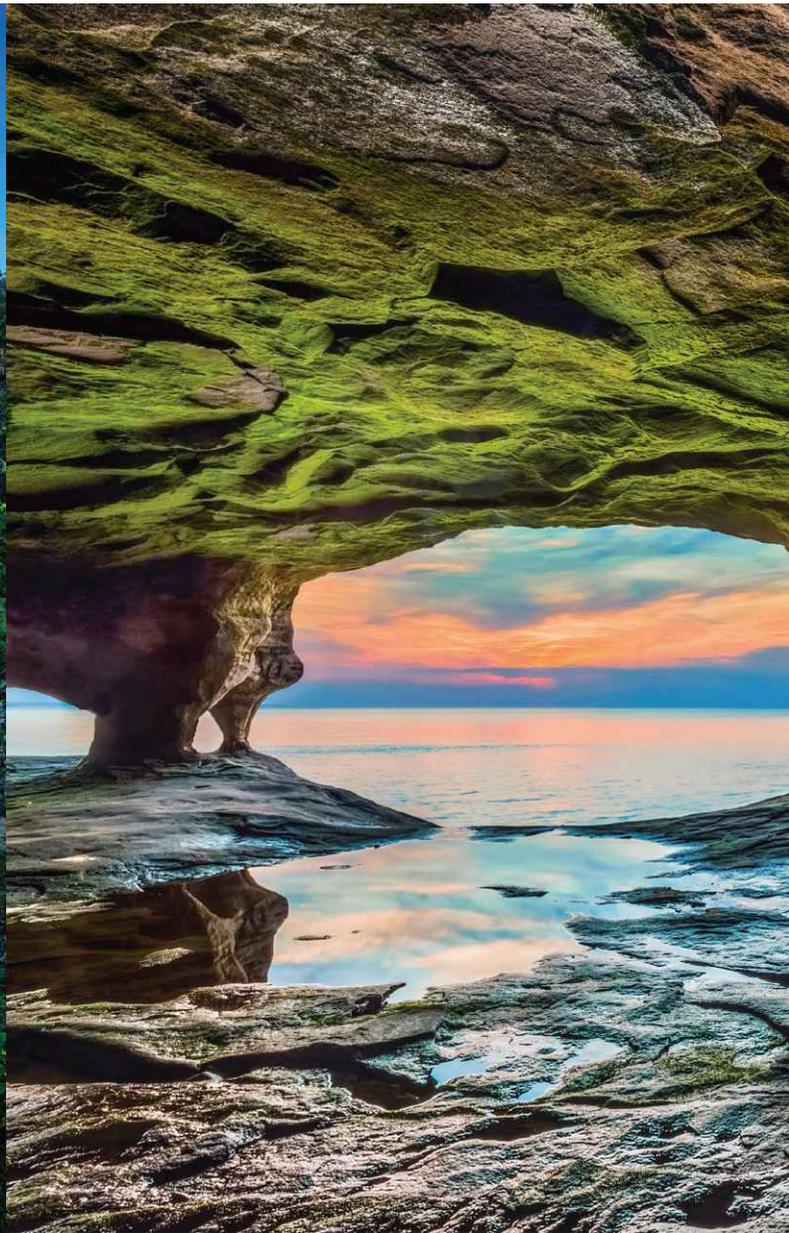
A little-known and unspoiled wonder, North America's Great Lakes might not be the first destination that comes to mind, but it is undoubtedly one of the most surprising and rewarding. As the largest freshwater ecosystem on Earth, the Great Lakes are a dream for nature lovers, with a rich ecosystem of animal and plant life on show across an area that is roughly equal to the size of the United Kingdom. But it's not just natural beauty you'll find in the Great Lakes. This region is also home to some of the most interesting cities in North America, including Chicago, Milwaukee, Toledo, Cleveland, Toronto and Detroit.

*Viking Octantis* and *Viking Polaris* cruise the Great Lakes between April and October, when the weather ranges from cool and mild to hot and humid. In this untouched wilderness, spend your days kayaking glassy waters alongside acrobatic otters, hiking verdant national forests and visiting some of North America's most astonishing natural marvels, including magnificent Niagara Falls. Drop by one of the apple and cherry orchards or picturesque wineries peppered around the lakes. Visit Canada's esteemed museums, rich with art inspired by the scenery, and transit feats of engineering such as the Welland Canal and Soo Locks. With so much to see, do and experience, expect a journey full of thrills and delights as you sail your way across the Great Lakes.

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**Left:** Niagara Falls, Canada

**Top:** Lake Superior coastline, Thunder Bay



## Spring: April to May

While the Great Lakes' frozen winter surfaces offer some of the season's best leisure activities including skating, skiing and sledding, few can resist the fresh optimism that comes with the onset of spring. By the end of March, the spring thaw is well underway, with the ice cover gradually melting to reveal the brilliant blue of the Great Lakes' depths beneath. With the plants and trees budding, wildflowers blooming and warblers singing, spring is a beautiful time to enjoy the rich biodiversity of the Great Lakes.

## Summer: June to August

In the sun-soaked days of summer, cruisers can enjoy high temperatures in the 30s and tropical conditions. The scenery of the Great Lakes is a sight to behold in summer, with the long, sultry days perfect for water pursuits, whether in the form of kayaking on stunning Georgian Bay, meandering pristine beaches or exploring coastal wetlands. By late August, the leaves on the trees in the most northern areas of the lakes will begin transitioning to fiery autumn hues.



## Autumn: September to October

Autumn in the southern parts of the Great Lakes is a season made for photographers, with the golden leaves of sugar maple, basswood, oak, beech, birch and aspen trees lighting up the lakes' hardwood forests. This dreamy time with cooler temperatures is also ideal for hiking the Great Lakes' stunning boreal forests such as the Sleeping Giant Provincial Park on Lake Superior's northern shore.

**Left to right:** Arch Rock, Mackinac Island, USA; Sandstone sea cave, Lake Superior, USA; Keweenaw Peninsula in Michigan, USA



Sleeping Giant Provincial Park in Thunder Bay, Canada

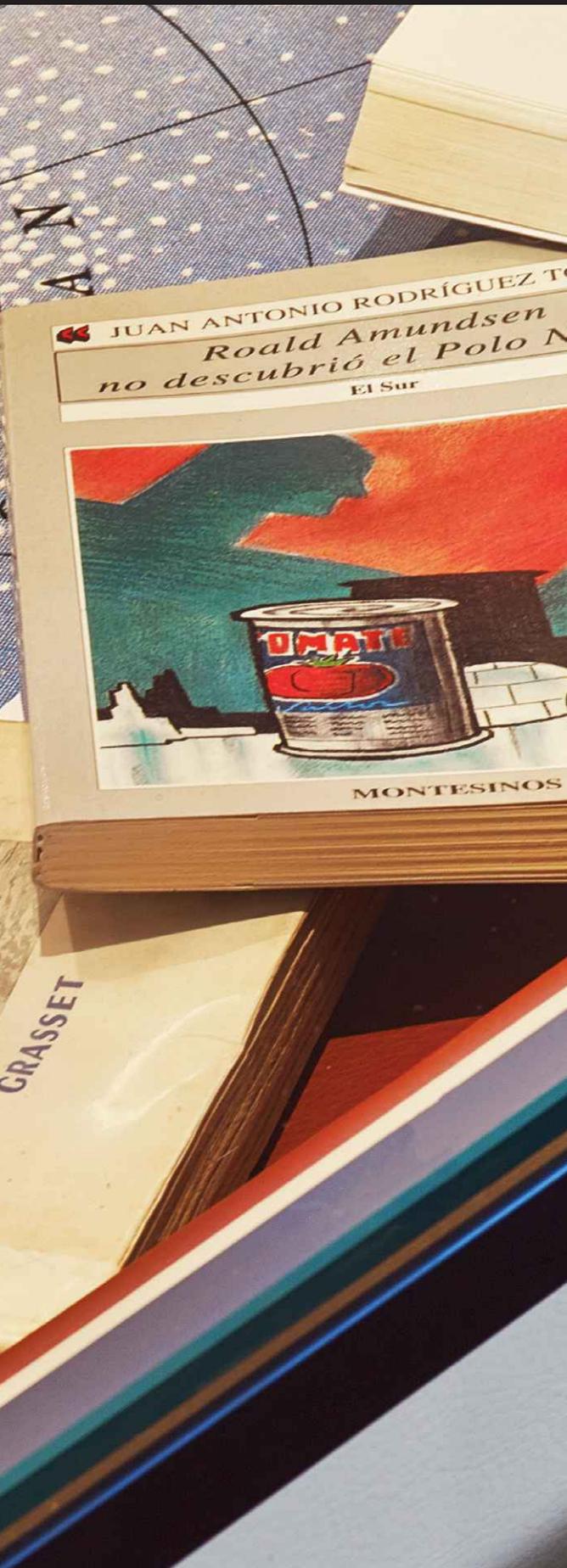
# History

At Viking, we believe that history is not just a subject of the past, but a living tapestry woven into our present.

As you delve into the history of the Great Lakes, you'll uncover their vital role in shaping North America. Formed by glaciers over 10,000 years ago, these interconnected freshwater lakes have been home to indigenous peoples for millennia. European exploration, led by French voyagers in the 17th century, influenced the region's development and colonisation. The Great Lakes have since played a crucial role in the continent's economy through shipping, industry, and leisure, leaving a lasting impact on the cultural and economic fabric of the United States and Canada.

As The Thinking Person's Cruise Line we know you travel to explore learn and understand more about the world around us. Which is why up to 36 experts will accompany each voyage as part of the Viking Expedition Team, including an Expedition Leader and staff, photographer, field research scientists, general naturalists, mountain guides, kayak guides and specialists in ornithology, geology, higher predator biology and history.

Step onboard our ships and embark on a voyage that seamlessly blends the wonders of history with captivating experiences. We have revolutionised the way we delve into history with the magnificent Aula auditorium. The Aula showcases a sprawling 4K laser-projected panoramic screen that stretches across the room, transporting guests to pivotal historical moments in time. It serves as a platform for captivating lectures, enlightening daily briefings, insightful history and science presentations, and enthralling historical films, igniting a profound connection to the past.



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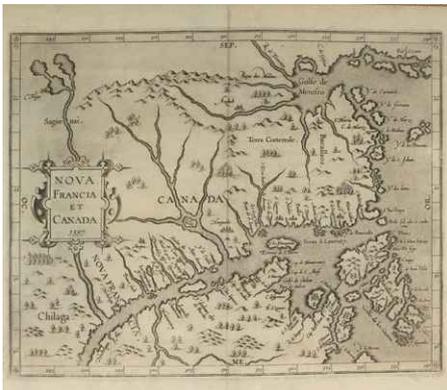
## The Great Lakes

Estimates place North America's Great Lakes at anywhere from 7,000 to an incomprehensible 32,000 years old. This chain of deep freshwater lakes in east-central North America is not only one of the great natural features of the continent, but of the entire planet. It has the largest surface area of fresh water in the world – spanning a surface area that exceeds that of the United Kingdom – and the lakes provide a natural border between Canada and the United States.

The Great Lakes have been inhabited by over 100 native American tribes throughout history, including the people we now call the Chippewa, Fox, Huron, Iroquois, Ottawa, Potawatomi and Sioux tribes. Around 1615, an advance man for the French explorer Samuel de Champlain became the first European to arrive at the Great Lakes.

De Champlain was a consolidator of the French colonies in the New World and had founded the city of Quebec in 1608, along with what are now northern New York, the Ottawa River, and the eastern Great Lakes. He was the first European to describe the Great Lakes, and published maps of his journeys and accounts of his time as a Frenchman living among the Native Americans. During this time he formed long time relationships with local Montagnais and Innu, and, later, with others further west – tribes of the Ottawa River, Lake Nipissing, and Georgian Bay, and with Algonquin and Wendat.

Following De Champlain's discoveries, the Great Lakes played a central role in the European colonisation and development of North America. Lakes Erie, Ontario and the southern portion of Lake Michigan, in particular, grew rapidly with large populations and industry.



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**Left from top:** Map of the St. Lawrence River leading to the Great Lakes; Illustration of early colonial days around Upper Canada

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## Follow in the footsteps of explorers

To witness the Great Lakes is to witness one of the planet's great marvels. As you sail the five lakes of this colossal freshwater system – Lake Erie, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Lake Ontario and Lake Superior – you will feast your eyes on rich and fertile ecosystems thriving with animal and plant life. An abundance of fish, including lake trout, whitefish, salmon and lake herring thrive in the shallow, warmer waters. During autumn and spring, enjoy a front row seat to an incredible display of shorebirds and songbirds as they migrate through the region. Spot bald eagles, moose, beavers and even bears as you hike through ancient, verdant forests. Hop in a kayak with a partner and explore picturesque Georgian Bay—a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, or scale the tranquil, scenic Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.



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## Learn from the experts

Accompanying you on your expedition of the Great Lakes will be esteemed academics and eminent experts on North America's Great Lakes. Find out everything you've ever wanted to know about this magnificent region from those who know it best, and take part in field work as our Viking Scientists take samples along the journey. On an expedition of the Great Lakes, you won't just witness incredible sights, but fully engage with the environment as you expand your understanding of this natural wonder.

**Left to right:** Kayaking excursion in Georgian Bay, Ontario, Canada; Thunder Bay Falls Lookout in Ontario, Canada; Healing ceremony, Little Current, Copper Habor, USA





*Viking Octantis* in Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway, Canada



# Our Voyages

We have envisioned expedition voyages for true explorers to facilitate exploration and scientific discovery. Our ships are purpose-built for expeditions to optimise exploring the remotest parts of the world in comfort. Featuring our signature serene Scandinavian design, they are small enough to navigate remote areas but large enough to provide speed, superior handling, and stability in rough seas. Our vessels merge comfort and exploration in an unprecedented way.

As 'The Thinking Person's Cruise Line', we design our itineraries so you can explore and engage with the nature, culture, science, and history of a destination. Not only do we support research efforts and new scientific discoveries, but we also encourage you to learn from and participate with scientists undertaking primary research, a unique Viking experience.

When you're not out discovering the landscapes and culture of your destination, there is plenty to keep you entertained onboard. Experience the ultimate healthy Nordic traditions and a covered outside badestamp in the state-of-the-art Nordic Spa, participate in citizen science activities alongside Vikings' scientists in The Science Laboratory or visit Expedition Central to learn more about your destination. Or curl up in the Living Room with a book from our onboard library, expertly curated by the prestigious London Bookshop Heywood Hill.

Join us for an unforgettable journey of a lifetime.

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# The Viking Expeditions Difference

Viking Expeditions bring you a new style of exploration on board *Viking Octantis* and *Viking Polaris*. Here are just some of the unique benefits of a Viking expedition voyage:

## More inclusions

We don't underestimate the importance of good value, so we include more features and amenities in your cruise fare than most other cruise lines. All meals, wine and beer with lunch and dinner, one complimentary landing or shore excursion in every port of call, Wi-Fi, self-service laundries, gratuities and access to our state-of-the-art Nordic Spa are included in your Viking fare.

## More comfort

Viking expedition ships have been designed specifically to reach the Great Lakes region and transit the Welland Canal and the Soo Locks. The *Viking Octantis* and *Viking Polaris* are the largest passenger vessels ever to transit the Welland Canal—a key section of the St. Lawrence Seaway connecting Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. An integrated bow creates a longer waterline for the ships and state-of-the-art fin stabilisers allow the ship to glide over the waves for the calmest possible journey. Ice-strengthened Polar Class hulls provide the safest way to explore and U-tank stabilisers significantly decrease rolling by up to 50 percent. An industry first, our internal marina, The Hangar, let's you board expedition Special Operations Boats from directly inside the ship, sheltered from wind and waves.

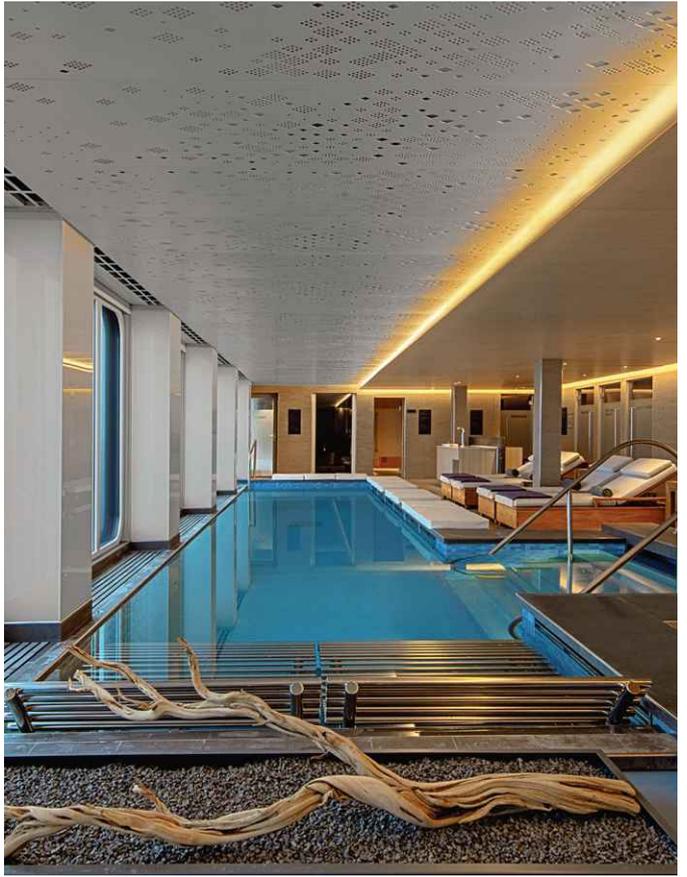
## Innovative ships

At Viking, we build innovative ships that are the right size for the experience—with a signature Scandinavian design that never upstages the destination. Hosting just 378 guests, our purpose-built, expedition vessels were created specifically to explore the world's most remote destinations, while elegantly designed for discovery and comfort. Viking Expedition vessels are also the newest and most modern vessels ever to explore this region of North America.

## Expedition experts

Up to 36 experts will accompany each journey as part of the Viking Expedition Team, including an Expedition Leader and staff, photographer, field research scientists, general naturalists, mountain guides, kayak guides and specialists in ornithology, geology, higher predator biology and history.

**Clockwise from top left:**  
Aquavit Bar; The Nordic Spa; Expedition Central; Breakfast on Open Deck





THE FIRST ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION TO REACH THE SOUTH POLE TODAY IT CONTINUES TO ATTRACT ADVENTURERS AND ATHLETES FROM AROUND THE WORLD. FINSE IS DEAR

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## Science at sea

Our ships have been designed as working research vessels. Not only do we have the most advanced venue for learning at sea and a fully equipped Science Laboratory, our excursions are accompanied by leading expedition experts and distinguished scientists, who encourage guests to participate in collaborative science activities and fieldwork, an experience exclusive to Viking. These scientific opportunities provide a level of onboard education and enrichment never before seen on a cruise ship.

## Environmentally responsible

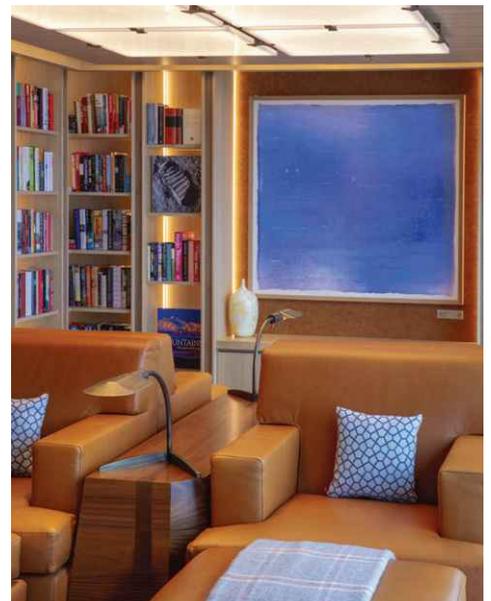
Our ships exceed the International Maritime Organization Energy Efficiency Design Index requirements by almost 36% and our dynamic positioning mode, enabling a “hover in place” preserves sensitive wildlife habitats on the sea floor. While our revolutionary incinerator process means we have zero emissions waste treatment.

## Nordic Balconies

There are balconies, and then there is the Viking Nordic Balcony: harnessing the Norwegian reverence for light and creating the optimal wildlife observatory at sea. Floor-to-ceiling, distortion-free glass at the very edge of the ship lets you take the views in while keeping the elements out. To feel even closer to nature, the top of your panoramic glass lowers to transform your stateroom into a sheltered al fresco lookout, with an observation shelf at elbow level.

## Attention to detail

Our aim has always been to create a comfortable environment on board our ships, so we have focused on making things as straightforward and as easy to operate as possible. Our TV remote controls have just a few, intuitive buttons. Our bathrooms have spacious showers, simple-to-use controls and our toiletries are clearly labelled and feature flip-top caps. Power outlets in staterooms are plentiful and conveniently located. In public spaces, you will find square-backed chairs that are easier for hanging jackets. We’ve thought of every detail, so you can focus on exploring and learning about the destination.





## Science & Enrichment

Our ships have been designed as working research vessels and we have created the world's leading scientific enrichment environment in an expedition setting. Exclusive partnerships with the Scott Polar Research Institute at Cambridge University, The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)—as well as other prestigious scientific institutions—will match leading researchers and educators with each expedition.

During each expedition, visiting researchers from partner institutions are part of the 36-person Viking Expedition Team. This diverse group of experts lead guests through meaningful scientific work, guiding and interpreting during shore excursions or within The Science Laboratory.

### Science on board and on shore

On board, guests will enjoy daily briefings and world-class lectures about their destination – and engage with working scientists from renowned academic institutions in The Science Laboratory or participate directly in citizen science programs.

On shore, guests can assist in fieldwork or interact through experiential activities during landings – such as monitoring birds to help identify migratory patterns, or accompanying scientists to collect samples.



## Citizen science

Citizen science is a collaboration between scientists and the general public to collect data, conduct scientific research and analyse the findings with the goal of allowing everyday people to contribute to the scientific community and learn more about unique environments and the challenges they face.

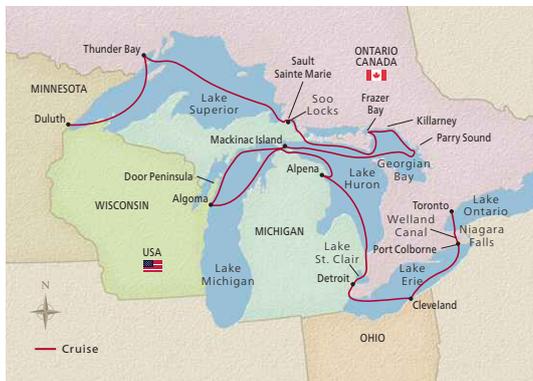
When we created The Thinking Person's Expedition our intention was that every expedition would provide opportunities for discovery. During each voyage, guests can participate in real, significant science that contributes to research and ultimately to the publication of scientific papers.

Our scientific approach centres on having the platform to explore with the personnel to interpret what is found. By taking part in Viking's Citizen Science Program you can gain a deeper understanding of the natural world and the importance of protecting fragile environments.

*Viking Octantis* and *Viking Polaris* have been designated National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather stations, from which we launch weather balloons.

**Left to right:** Weather balloon viewing at Frazer Bay, USA, The Science Laboratory; The Aula

# Great Lakes & Canada Itineraries



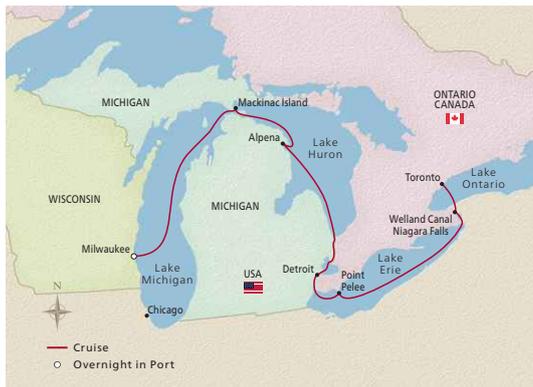
## Great Lakes Collection

**DULUTH – TORONTO** or vice versa

15 DAYS ✦ 2 COUNTRIES

### Legendary waters & scenic landscapes

Join Viking for a unique expedition across the historic waterways of all five of the majestic Great Lakes from Niagara Falls to the shores of Lake Superior and Lake Michigan.



## Niagara & The Great Lakes

**TORONTO – MILWAUKEE** or vice versa

8 DAYS ✦ 2 COUNTRIES

### Journey from nature to culture

From uninhabited islands to urban skylines, discover the wilderness on North America's doorstep alongside renowned cultural attractions while cruising the striking waterways of the Great Lakes.



## Canadian Discovery

**NEW YORK CITY – TORONTO** or vice versa

13 DAYS ✦ 2 COUNTRIES

### In search of natural treasures

Unleash your inner explorer in the remote wilds of eastern Canada. Discover this region's rich colonial past amid stunning natural settings.



## Canada and the Atlantic Coastline

**TORONTO – FT. LAUDERDALE** or vice versa

16 DAYS ✦ 2 COUNTRIES

### Untamed wilderness & historic ports

Sail along the legendary St. Lawrence Seaway and the Atlantic coast of the US on a memorable voyage that combines scenic landscapes and storied cities.



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# Explore More – Pre & Post Extensions

Extend your journey before or after your Viking cruise with our extension packages — designed to help you explore more of your embarkation or disembarkation point, or discover a new destination altogether. To determine which packages are available with your cruise, check the relevant itinerary or visit [viking.com/expeditions](http://viking.com/expeditions)



## 2 NIGHTS MILWAUKEE

Enjoy two nights to further immerse yourself in the eclectic offerings of Milwaukee.

- 2 nights accommodation
- 2 breakfasts
- 2 guided tours
- Services of a Viking Host
- All transfers



## 2 NIGHTS NEW YORK

Spend two additional nights in New York and take in the legendary metropolis.

- 2 nights accommodation
- 2 breakfasts
- 2 guided tours
- Services of a Viking Host
- All transfers



## 2 NIGHTS TORONTO

Explore cosmopolitan Toronto, one of Canada's most diverse and exciting cities.

- 2 nights accommodation
- 2 breakfasts
- 2 guided tours
- Services of a Viking Host
- All transfers



## 3 NIGHTS GEORGIAN BAY

Stay at a remote wilderness lodge in the heart of Ontario.

- 3 nights accommodation
- 3 breakfasts, 3 lunches & 2 dinners
- 4 guided tours
- Services of a Viking Host
- All transfers



## 2 NIGHTS CHICAGO

Explore the Art Institute of Chicago and America's greatest architects.

- 2 nights accommodation
- 2 breakfasts, 2 lunches & 1 dinner
- 4 guided tours
- Fully escorted by your Viking Tour Director
- All transfers



## 2 NIGHTS DULUTH

Discover Duluth, a Great Lakes port set along the shores of mighty Lake Superior.

- 2 nights accommodation
- 2 breakfasts
- 2 guided tours
- Services of a Viking Host
-