Rideau Canal offers year-round vacation pleasure, recreation

The Rideau Canal, stretchng 198 km (123.5 miles) from Otlawa to Kingston, Onlario is a waterway for all seasons. Year-round, it is a pleasure route for relaxation and recreation

In summertime, the living s easy. Sports enthusiasts, ustory buffs and vacationers can all find something to xcite and interest them.

Boating, of course, is a popular activity. All types of pleasure craft from palatial crusers, yachts and househoats to canoes, paddleboats and rowboats ply the Canal waters The waterway generally opens for navigaion the middle of May and loses the day after Thanks-

gring in mid-October. For those who enjoy sitting tack and letting someone dse man the belm, Paul's Root Lines Ltd. in Ottawa offers a 11 bour sightseeing along the Canal. Aboard the Miss SBJ or the ittawa Queen, passengers ravel (6.8 km) (5.5 miles) the National Arts 'entre to Dow's Lake, The uided tour, conducted in oth French and English,

introduces the visitor to the geographical and historical importance of the Canal.

But activity on the waterway isn't limited to boating. An Ollawa bicycle path allows eyelists to enjoy the scenic heauty of the Canal while improving their physical fitness. The waterway is also popular with joggers, those out for a relaxing drive, and people

who enjoy a leisurely stroll. Visiting the Canal's museums is an interesting way to discover the history of the waterway.

The Bytown Museum, located below Confederation Square in Olfawa, is dedicated to the relics of Col, John By, the British engineer who constructed the Canal in the 1820s, and other artifacts relating to Ollawa's history. The museum, the oldest stone edifice in Ottawa, was Col. By's base of operations during the Canal's construction. Today, the second floor houses pictures and sketches of the Canal, while the basement holds the complete set of tools used to build it and the great vault where the payroll was stored.

The Merrickville Blockhouse Museum, in Merzickville, Ontario (76 km or 47 miles from Offawa) features displays relating to the Canal's construction and the early surveying of the area.

At the Kingston Mills lockstation, (6 km or four miles from Kingston) the blockhouse has been recently restored with furnishings from the late 1830s.

Strolling about any of the four Rideau Canal blockhouses is an excellent way to view 18th century military architecture. The blockhouses (located at Narrows Locks, Newboro Locks. Merrickville Locks and Kingston Mills Locks) still retain the hand-operatedmachinery, massive wooden gates and the cut stone walls that Col. By designed almost

a century and a half ago. There are interpretative programs going on at many of the lockstations informing visitors about the Canal's rich history. At the Bytown Museum in Ottawa, and the Lockmaster Angling Visitor Centre, at Kingston Mills Locks, the program includes

slide shows, tilms and exhibits. Many of the lockstations are remote, but all are accessible by road.

Vacationers could spend a summer's afternoon in Oltawa visiting the lockstation located below Confederation Square. There, an intricate series of eight locks lifts boats 24 m (79 feet) from the Ottawa River to the man-made portion of the

Autumn is a lovely time of year along the Rideau Canal. The changing leaves enhance the beauty of the waterway. making it a perfect place for a romantic walk.

In winter, the Canal vibrates with activity. From the middle of December to the end of February, a 7.8 km (4.8 mile) stretch of the canal, in Ollawa, transforms into the world's longest manmade skating rink. Much of the rest of the Rideau Canal system is a popular route with cross-country ski and sunwshoe enthusiasts.

Springtime brings flowers and festivals to the Canal. Soon after Canada's capital sheds its wintery blanket of

tulips takes its place. And one of the best places to view the flowers is along the Ruleau Canal, Thousands of then bloom every spring along Col. By Drive and the Queen Elizabeth Parkway. two scenic routes that run parallel to the waterway, one on each side.

In May, Offawans celebrate the arrival of spring and the blooming of the tulips with the Festival of Spring. The Festival is highlighted by a Festival of Spring Parade on the Rideau Canal led by a giant smiling tulip, outdoor concerts, a craft

For more information on the Rideau Canal contact the Rideau Canal Office, Parks Canada, 12 Maple Ave. N., Smiths Falls, Ontario.

market and a beer garden.



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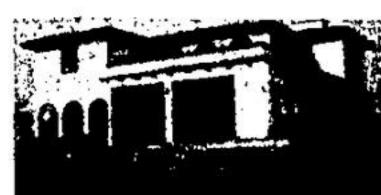


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