

City to Superior

I sit here, looking out the window at all the traffic, the nearby apartment buildings, a few trees, some spots where the sky is visible. Listening to the sirens, the people on the sidewalk, a horn honking, a squeal of car brakes.

My mind though, is on a 24-foot Zodiac, touring the islands in Rosspport, Ontario, on the northern tip of Lake Superior, east of Thunder Bay.



Every June, Ernest and I visit friends living near Rosspport. Last year someone mentioned a boat tour from Rosspport to the nearby islands. Sounded good. So this year, that's where we went.

Note the beautiful sky, all those white, fluffy clouds. Made me wonder how the night sky looks above the water, all the stars twinkling! How about lightning or the Northern Lights?



Here is what Rev. George Grant wrote about Lake Superior many years ago. “Superior is a sea. She breeds storms and rain and fog like the sea... She is wild, masterful and dreaded.” Is this the same lake as pictured above? Are we going to experience tranquil, gentle waves or wild, masterful waves? Part of me wants the later, part of me, the former.



We bundled into the Zodiac. I thought northern Lake Superior would be cold in June. Ernest and I wore our long johns. But the weather that day was perfect, high teen temperatures (Celsius), gentle

breeze, just enough sunshine to make it pleasant. We didn't really need the long johns except for a brief time when we

were quite far out from land. Interestingly, the air temperature could change quickly. First warm, then as we kept moving, it would turn quite cold. I wished I had worn mittens when that happened. I suppose this was a 'mini' example of how fast the weather can change on the world's largest, deepest and coldest freshwater lake.

As we pulled away from the shore, we noticed no apartment buildings in sight. In fact, nothing but nature, trees and more trees. Beautiful cliffs and bays. No people, no other boats, no fishermen, no nothing. What a contrast to our home in Toronto!

You can google 'Rosspport, Ontario' and 'Discovery Tours' to see the many highlights of our trip. I'll just mention a few, the sights that impressed me the most.

Harry's Hilton. An emergency shelter, just in case you get stranded on the lake during a storm. It sort of reminded me of the cottage I had at one time on Ragged Lake, even to the 'Thunder Box' that Paul Turpin, our captain/tour guide, said was behind it.



Beaver house. We actually saw two. This one was covered with mud. The beavers did that as protection against the wolves. It probably made their residence warmer in the cold winter also.



Eagle's nest. Ernest got a good picture of the mother eagle up high in a tree feeding her young. He took other excellent photos in this photographers' dreamland. I can see why the famous Canadian Group of Seven painters loved this part of Canada, and Gordon Lightfoot sang about it.



Two shipwrecks. It's really surprising that we didn't see more. The water depth can change quickly. Because the water is so clear, northern Lake Superior is a divers' paradise. But divers require extra caution because the water is so cold, and also because the wrecks are quite far down.



Two loons. One of my favourite birds, and the only birds we saw besides the eagles and a falcon soaring high in the sky.

Lighthouse. It is automated now. The locals are raising money to restore it. Wouldn't that be a fun job? Paul said that during one especially severe storm, the waves smashed a lighthouse window that was 125 feet above the high water mark. When the lighthouse keeper was asked if he called for someone to rescue him, he answered, 'What? Who'd 'ave come and got me in that kind of storm!'



At one point, Paul turned off the motor and just floated. He said, 'Can you hear that?' We all strained our ears to hear a bird, maybe the loon. Maybe tree leaves whispering in the

breeze. No. He had us listening to the silence. We listened again, sure enough, silence.

A brief word about Paul: His commentary throughout the trip added so much. His love for the wildness of northern Lake Superior was contagious. He showed us a way-too-unsung Ontario secret.

If we now know about Rosspoint and the islands in its bay, why am I sitting here, near the tallest residential building in Canada? Aura Tower has 78 stories. In Toronto, we are living on top of one another. In Rosspoint, houses are small, but the Lake is large.



And the silence is great.

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