

Winter Cottaging

Georgian Bay Land Trust Presentation

February 3, 2011

Assuming you are water based, have no running water in winter, and have some form of heating.

BEFORE: Things to think about in advance of your trip

- Information: Reliable persons for ice conditions and routes. The Bay ice is very dangerous because of currents among islands. Discuss your plans with a backup person in case of emergency.
<http://www.wikihow.com/Know-When-Ice-is-Safe>
- Conveyance: Pack, tow a sleigh, rent a sled, or contract a local? Layered clothing if walking.
- Car Parking at your usual site is not always available
- Timing – try to avoid late arrival – gets dark and cold early
- Slush strategy – possibly your biggest challenge. Footwear?
- Communication – cell phone, landline operating? Battery powered radio
- Waste management. Outhouse? Warm seat? Grey water disposal? Slop bucket.
- Plan your first meal without electricity – just in case, hydro outage number is **800-434-1235**
- Access to lake water. Auger & pump, nearby open water, pails. Chopping with an axe is no fun
- Drinking Water – carry, boil, filter, treat, but don't even think of melting snow!!
- Access to the building - shovels available, screw drivers etc needed to open up doors or windows. Building shifts cause doors and windows to stick.
- Heating? Wood supply nearby, propane full? Perhuna available?
- Snowshoes are important on most sites to access outbuildings, wood piles, and any travel on land
- Flashlights, extra batteries, candles, lamp oil, propane tanks full?
- Ski poles – safety across ice if walking. Sharpened tips act as ice picks in an emergency
- Camera – the winter potential is breathtaking

DURING:

- Warm-up time – allow 24 hours – shut off extra rooms with door, blanket
- Some newer appliances (stoves, microwaves) require 24 hrs of warmth before using
- Get water, pack trails (they harden overnight), shovel steps and decks, locate BBQ near door
- Bedding – electric blankets are awesome to take away the chill
- Ensure you have warm indoor footwear
- Minimize humidity
- Ice dams – poorly insulated roofs can cause leakage (and dangerous slides if they are metal)
- Dry boot liners nightly
- Hopefully have access to a sauna
- “No footstep” principle
- Have Fun! Make Ice Candles, Snow Angels, listen to the Ice Symphony, light winter bonfires (great time to burn brush), go to different places, ice fish, brew mulled wine, and plan for summer!**

ON LEAVING:

- Open doors for 10 – 15 minutes to reduce humidity. Leave 2 windows partly open
- Remove all freezable liquids
- Separate mattresses etc
- If you used drains, refill with antifreeze
- Pack out any refuse that might attract bears in the spring.