



Picking Your Canoe Trip Destination

BWCA VS. QUETICO PARK

THE CHOICE IS UP TO YOU!

The Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA) and Quetico Provincial Park offer over two million acres of pristine wilderness for your canoe trip. Both the BWCA and Quetico Park offer breathtaking beauty. How then, to decide which area you should visit during your canoe trip? Waterfalls, sheer rock cliffs and deep crystal clear lakes abound. Moose, deer, beaver and otter are just a few of the mammals you may encounter during your canoe trip. Osprey, loons, ducks and songbirds also fill the woods and waterways with their enchanting songs and calls. Smallmouth bass, northern pike, walleye and lake trout are abundant throughout the wilderness areas. With "canoe only" access, fishing in both the BWCA and Quetico Park is superior to areas more exposed to public use.

Differences do exist between the areas based on permit quotas and campsite facilities.

BOUNDARY WATERS CANOE AREA WILDERNESS

Located in the northern third of the Superior National Forest in northern Minnesota, the Boundary Waters (BWCA) has over a million acres of clear lakes and deep green pine forests, and is unlike any other wilderness area in the world. The BWCA is also one of the largest bald eagle nesting areas in the lower 48 states. Travel permits for the BWCA offer a variety of entry points to choose from. Start your canoe trip right from our dock, or choose to be driven by van or flown by floatplane to another periphery entry point. It also provides designated campsites which you must stay at when camping overnight. The designated campsites include a wilderness box latrine and a pre-positioned fire grate.

Over the past several years, the BWCA has seen a reduction in total permits and group size. With the above changes, we have seen an increase in solitude for visitors, but a decrease in permit availability. Permit applications for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness may be submitted starting in December for the following season.

QUETICO PROVINCIAL PARK

Quetico Park is a protected, pristine wilderness retreat of international acclaim west of Lake Superior on the Canada-U.S. border. The park's tangled network of lakes once formed water routes traveled by Ojibway and fur traders. Now it is primarily the destination of experienced canoeists seeking solitude and rare glimpses of wildlife by cascading waterfalls, glassy lakes and endless forests. The park is accessible at four points by canoe and two by car. Quetico Park offers many of the same amenities as the Boundary Waters. The limited number of travel permits available make these Quetico permits more difficult to obtain. You may camp anywhere in the Quetico Park as long as you do not cut down any trees. Previously used campsites do exist and consist of a clearing in the woods. Visitors must bring along their own fire grate and latrine shovel.

Planning for Quetico Park canoe trips should start at least a year in advance. Permit applications may be submitted in January for the coming season. Be prepared to work with about six starting dates and numerous entry points to increase your chance of obtaining a permit.

Both wilderness areas offer abundant wildlife, beautiful scenery, fishing, solitude and travel opportunities. Traveling about 4 to 5 portages into either wilderness area will allow you to travel beyond many of the popular base camp areas. Also, consider taking a longer portage and leave people and all your cares behind.

Need help deciding? Give us a call at 800.247.7530

