

The Glenridge Quarry: a Hidden Escape within Niagara

By Ron Bauman
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Niagara Region is a tourist mecca, with over [14 million visitors each year](#). When out-of-towners come to visit the area and want to see the main attractions like Niagara Falls or Old Town Niagara-on-the-Lake, I gladly oblige (I am always happy to revisit my first loves of the region). However, that's too many people to contend with. So, on a beautiful day and trying to avoid the crowds, I head to my favourite hiking spot: the [Glenridge Quarry Naturalization Site](#).

Sitting atop the Niagara Escarpment and directly connected to the [Bruce Trail](#), the Quarry cannot be found on any Ontario blue road signs, but is [only 500 feet off Highway 406 at the Sir Isaac Brock Way exit](#). This repurposed waste management site is now a tranquil park, with less than 5-kilometres in a loop trail, open to all skill levels.

On those beautiful days, the Quarry makes for the best picnics in the area with quiet spots scattered around the site. Stop at [The Bagel Oven](#) in Thorold or [Helen's Deli](#) in downtown St. Catharines, both quick detours before heading to the Quarry. Though a short hike, water is always recommended to have for you, your family and your pets.

From the parking lot, take a quick walk down into a small valley of wide pebble-riddle pathways that surround the summit. You will be hit with a fork in the paths right away, but both will lead you to some of the highlights like the children's science and nature area for new discoveries, the meadow and nature area for connection to the history of the Quarry, or the pond boardwalk for quiet reflection and bird watching.

I am a sucker for a good vista and a good view, so the Summit Overlook does not disappoint on the view. The Quarry opened in 2004, and I arrived in 2005 for university, and this site has been my own sanctuary. Walk up to the overlook for views out onto Lake Ontario and to Toronto, east to Niagara Falls (catch the mist rising), and west towards [the Niagara Benchlands](#). With my dog by my side and my bagel sandwich in hand, we watch life move around us with only the whistling winds, birds chirping and buzzing insects harmonizing in my ears.

Free for all who attend and accessible by bus, visit the Quarry for a soothing stroll in the heart of Niagara.