

A photograph of the Toronto skyline across a body of water, with the CN Tower prominent on the left. The sky is blue with some birds flying. The text '2018 06' is centered over the skyline, followed by 'TORONTO' and 'TRAILS' in large white letters, each underlined.

2018 06 TORONTO TRAILS

By EDLISA

02 Jun 2018 – 03 Jun 2018

02 Jun 2018

9:00 am

Introduction

City of Toronto

Our first group ride of the 2018 season was with Ontario by Bike on their Toronto Trails and Ravine tour. Come follow our journey through this amazing weekend.

Here are the details from Ontario by Bike.

Toronto Trails & Ravines Weekend
When: Saturday, June 2 to Sunday, June 3 - 2018

Total Distance: 90km

The Ride: Discover another side to the big city on this weekend long looped tour around Toronto. Ride on a mix of park, ravine, hydro corridor and waterfront trails on this 2 day, 90km route. Learn more about and experience the city's heritage waterways and unique ravines system, pedalling the Humber and Don Valley Trails. Stop downtown at Harbourfront, explore the Leslie Street Spit, and enjoy the fine white sands of Woodbine Beach. Setting a relatively leisurely pace, ride with group or peel off to enjoy some of the many natural and cultural sights or city attractions along the way. This ride is part of the Adventure Cycling Association's 3rd annual Bike Travel Weekend. This small group tour includes accommodation, some meals and support van. We make it easy - Just bring your bike and ride.

Experience Level and Ride Guide:
Easy to moderate. Off-road paved multi-use trails, with limited on-road connections. Suitable for all types of bikes. Enjoy a group ride option or

ride at your own pace using detailed maps and information provided.



9:30 am

Day 1- Ontario by Bike Toronto

James Cardinal McGuigan Catholic School

We left our hotel at the Monte Carlo Inn in Vaughan early Saturday morning to find our way to the starting point at James Cardinal McGuigan Catholic School. We were pleased to discover that there were only 4 other riders joining us for the Toronto Trails & Ravines tour along with our guides (and van drivers) Louisa and Michael from Ontario by Bike.

Mike & Cathy from London

Beth from Windsor

Ewin from Huntsville.

After our welcome and ride briefing, we were off and riding with Louisa as our guide for the morning.



10:00 am

First the roads, then the trails

Humber River Recreational Trail

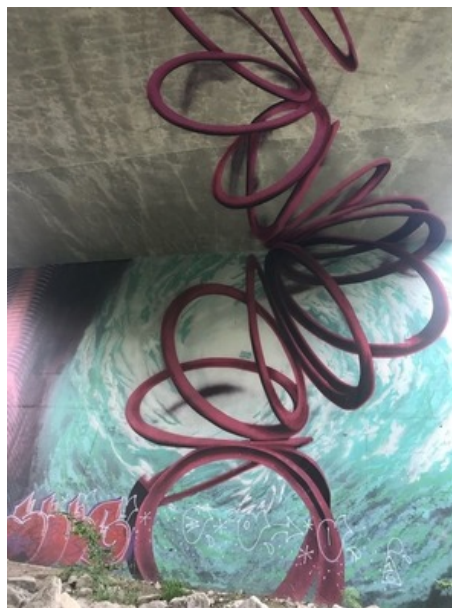
The first 2.5 km (which felt like 14 km) were quite interesting as we needed to follow the sidewalk along Finch Ave - a very busy street. Thank

goodness, it wasn't long before we were able to enter the Humber River Trailhead and followed the beautiful route along the river. The path was very quiet and at times it felt like we were the only ones there.



11:00 am
Amazing talent
Humber River Recreational Trail

Along the way we discovered some amazing art on the bridge structures that you never see when touring Toronto by car.



11:30 am
Lunch Break - 25 km
Étienne Brulé Park

At around 25 km, we stopped at the Etienne Brule Park, Humber River South. Michael was waiting for us with lovely baguettes and salads for a picnic lunch in the park. Right across the river was the Old Mill Hotel. I am not sure we will ever be able to afford to stay there. :-). After lunch, Michael would be our guide for the afternoon ride.



1:30 pm
At the mouth of Humber River and the Waterfront
Humber River Footbridge

We continued to head south along the trail in the afternoon. It wasn't

long before we came to Lake Ontario and the Waterfront Trail East. Spectacular views of the city, lake and bridge were enjoyed from a place we had never been before!



2:30 pm
Harbourfront & Downtown
Harbourfront Boardwalk

The pace was slow as we followed the waterfront trail along the busy path. It was a beautiful day and we were not the only ones who wanted to get outside and enjoy the day.

We took a break from our travels and enjoyed an afternoon coffee beside the Amsterdam Brewery.



3:30 pm
Cherry Street
Cherry Beach

It felt good to turn onto Cherry Street as it was much quieter with very little traffic. We again headed south and soon discovered Cherry Beach. We continued to follow the Waterfront Trail along the shoreline. We ventured out along the Leslie Street Spit/Tommy Thompson Park and were amazed by the view of the city from a completely different perspective. The park is a peninsula the juts out into Lake Ontario - out and back added about 10 km to our trip, but definitely worth the extra distance.



6:00 pm
Evening Social and Overnight
Accommodations
Murphy's Law

With our butts a little sore and our legs weary and after a detour through Woodbine Park, we found our destination for the night at the Days Inn Toronto East Beaches. It wasn't a speedy day, but we covered 61 km of Toronto's Trails & Ravines (and a few roads). After a quick shower, we tucked the bikes away for the night and went

off to meet up with the group at Murphy's Law, a local pub. We had a wonderful evening filled with laughter, new friendships and stories, some true and some, well, maybe not so true. Then again, maybe Al Capone really was there. What a wonderful day and a new discovery of Toronto!



03 Jun 2018

7:00 am

Day 2 - Ontario by Bike
Woodbine Beach Picnic Shelter 2

We were up early and headed out to explore the area around Queen Street east. It wasn't long before we found a Starbucks and we were able

to fuel up for the morning. We enjoyed a beautiful stroll along the boardwalk at Woodbine Beach before heading back to meet up with the group for the official start to the day.



9:30 am

And we are off
Days Inn 1684 Queen St East,
Toronto

After a brief review of the trails and map for the day we left the Days Inn behind and headed west along the Waterfront Trail toward the Don River with Michael at the lead.



10:00 am

Undiscovered world
Don Valley Trail

It felt like we were in a different world, quiet, green, running water and then we would come up on the streets and were reminded, yes, in fact we were still in Toronto. Once again we discovered some amazing artwork as we ventured along the path.





10:30 am

***Detour to Evergreen Brick Works
Evergreen Brick Works***

Following Michael's suggestion, we decided to take a detour of about 1 km at Pottery Road and headed off to Evergreen Brick Works. It was a former brick making factory that now houses many local artisans who display their work, local farm products, Muskoka Brewery, a DIY bike shop and much more. One of the art pieces was a metal and plant sculpture on the wall replicating a map of the City of Toronto.



11:00 am

***Break - Toronto Botanical Gardens
Toronto Botanical Garden***

We met back up with the group at the Toronto Botanical Garden. An amazing place with free admission to a botanist paradise. We wandered around the gardens and to our delight we found a café where we could refuel for the next leg of our journey.



12:00 pm

***Lunch stop
East Don Parklands***

We found Louisa waiting for us at the East Don Park. Our lunch boxes from the Panera Bakery were amazing and we enjoyed a wonderful picnic with the group in the park. Louisa suggested we might need the energy from our cookies for our afternoon adventures allowing us to enjoy the calories guilt free! After refilling our water bottles, we were on our way.



2:00 pm

***Finch Trail
Finch Corridor Recreational Trail***

Louisa was right, we did need the energy! As we entered back onto the Finch Trail we had a very large climb to the top. Note the steepness of the bike warning

picture as Ewin and Beth make their way to the top of the summit.



2:30 pm
The finish

James Cardinal McGuigan Catholic School

With 43 km finished for the day, it was with mixed emotions that we once again entered the parking lot at James Cardinal McGuigan Catholic School. Glad to be off the bike saddle but sorry the ride had come to an end. What an amazing two days and we hope we will meet these riders again at future events. Our two day combined total was 104 km.

Some honourable mention memories that we didn't have pictures to note:

- 1) As we entered the Humber Trail we discovered a snapping turtle on the side of the trail we think was laying her eggs.
- 2) We made an unscheduled loop in the Trillium Park along the Waterfront Trail and ran into Kathleen Wynne along with cameras and security. Her comment was "Hello cyclists, enjoy the day!".
- 3) According to Michael, he planned to have the Bag Pipers set up under the York Mills Road overpass so that they were there when we arrived as a tribute to Ewin's home country.

What an amazing adventure!

