

Ride More Drive Less

Sledding Southwestern Ontario's Grey Bruce Region



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The Grey Bruce Region is favourably sandwiched between Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. Typically, these lake effect snowmakers generate some of southern Ontario's best snow conditions, pushing white streamers to bury the land even when other areas aren't getting any. Our Snow Goer Canada crew – Craig & Dawn Irwin, Dan Carty, Brent Murphy and I – were first hand beneficiaries of this bounty as it snowed four of the five days we visited what is also the northern part of District 9 of the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC).

Grey Bruce and Owen Sound

No winter assets are more valuable in the Grey Bruce Region than District 9's more than 3,500 kilometres of OFSC snowmobile trails. We staged out of the region's largest centre, Owen Sound, population 22,000 for a series of day rides. Located at the base of the famous Bruce Peninsula, Owen Sound provides snowmobilers with small town hospitality and big city amenities. It's also home to one mighty fine, snowmobile-friendly hotel, the Best Western Inn On The Bay, where we stayed for four nights (see "Hotel Spotlight").

"Ride More Drive Less" is District 9's slogan and truer words were never spoken. Owen Sound is only a hop, skip and jump north of the 401 corridor in Southwestern Ontario, little more than two hours from much of the Golden Horseshoe and Greater Toronto Area, and close to both the Michigan and New York border crossings. This proximity

makes the Grey Bruce Region and Owen Sound the no brainer first choice of snowmobilers looking for a quick day ride or an easy long weekend getaway. After all, the name of the game is to do as much sledding and as little trailering as possible, right?

As Good As Quebec

Speaking of sledding, our been-there, done-that Snow Goer Crew is pretty hard to impress. But by the end of our tour, everyone agreed that the trail riding just doesn't get any better than this. As Craig Irwin commented, "If I didn't know where I was, the sledding is so good here that we could've been riding Quebec trails!" That snowmobile trails in Grey Bruce earn such high praise from experienced Snow Goer Canada riders is first and foremost a testament to the extraordinary efforts of District 9 clubs and volun-



teers, whose trail prep and grooming is second to none. It's also proof positive that a recent district-wide move to centralized trail and grooming operations is already paying off for visiting snowmobilers.

Getting Around

The district approach will also be bringing the same consistency and uniformity to District 9's directional and information signage as is already present in its field staking and intersection signboards. This is good because in the past too much of Grey Bruce has been signed for locals who know their way around, not for visitors to navigate as easily as