



Weekend Sledding Destination
 STORY BY
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Mattawa
 PHOTOS BY Martin Lortz FOR Ontario Tourism

Looking for a great destination for an easy weekend sledding getaway? Check out what Mattawa has to offer...

With participation up 28% over the past two seasons, more riders are looking for new ideas for places to go snowmobiling for a weekend sledding getaway. Typically, locations within quick and easy trailering distance are most popular, ones that welcome snowmobilers with good amenities and enough groomed trails for two or three day rides where no saddle bagging is necessary.

Staging Location: Mattawa (population 2,000) is tucked away on Highway 17 on the north side of Algonquin Park on the shore of the Ottawa River. You may know it as one of the stopping points along the 'Round Algonquin Park (RAP) Tour. Mattawa is about a four-hour trailer from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and about about three hours from the Ottawa area.

Why Mattawa: Positioned in the Laurentian Mountain Range and the Canadian Shield, Mattawa and area is one of those fortunate



locations that always seems to get good snow that comes earlier and stays later than points south. Slightly off the beaten track but still easy to reach by trailer or sled, Mattawa offers a variety of uncrowded and under used trails, including the 200-kilometre Voyageur Multi Use Trail System (VMUTS). But that's just a part of the available groomed snowmobile trails that are signed and mapped for a great sledding weekend.

Mattawa really embraces winter and caters to snow lovers. It offers a variety of lodgings and restaurants, most easily accessed by TOP A112A that runs beside and through town. Bonus: The newly opened and updated Antoine Mountain (antoinemountain.ca) is fast becoming a downhill skiing magnet that's a great reason to plan a sledding/skiing combo the whole family may enjoy.

Staging Hotel: Valois' Motel & Restaurant
 valoisotel.com or (705) 744-5583.

This owner operated, roadside motel backs onto the Ottawa River. It offers 42 clean, comfortable rooms, some at road level and others tucked away along the shore below. For snowmobilers, these riverside rooms offer plenty of truck and trailer parking, plus more privacy away from prying eyes with sleds parked in front of rooms. The on-site Valois' Restaurant offers a home-style menu with daily specials and hearty meals. Fuel is available at west end of town on TOP A112A.

- Road Access to Hotel – On the east end of town on Highway 17.
- Sled Access to Hotel – Direct trail access off TOP A112A (just follow the Valois signs).

Local Dealers: Mattawa Sports & Marine (service all makes)

Day Rides:

- 1. East** – Ride TOP A toward Pettawa and return on local club trails (OFSC Districts 6 & 11 trail guides).
- 2. West** – Ride TOP A/TOP D toward North Bay, then ride North Bay/Bonfield trails (OFSC District 11 trail guide).
- 3. Northwest** – Ride TOP A102D to TOP A/D, then do a Field-Marten River loop, returning on NB trail 308 (OFSC District 11 trail guide). Be Sure to See: Old Mica Mine and Birds Eye View Lookout (TOP A112A just west of Mattawa); Boulter View Lookout & canyon (BF205); Redbridge Lookout (NB304).

Get More Info: Mattawa Voyageur Tourism (www.visitmattawa.travel); OFSC Interactive Trail Guide (www.ofsc.on.ca); OFSC District 11 (www.nnta.ca).



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