


Arts & Life · Featured · Photos · Scarborough

# Scarborough Bluffs a not-so-secret surf spot

Jessica Lee  
Published 01 November 2011



JESSICA LEE/TORONTO OBSERVER  
A surfer catches a wave on Lake Ontario at the Scarborough Bluffs. During this time of year, more surfers will be out on the lake due to bigger waves caused by more wind. 

On windy mornings in the fall at the Scarborough Bluffs, one may happen to see a group of neoprene-clothed surfers bobbing in the lake while waiting to catch a wave.

Occasionally, passersby will see a surfer riding a wave towards the shore.

"The waves aren't as powerful [compared to the ocean], but I was really surprised at how much power they did have and when I did actually catch a couple, it felt just like the ocean," Lou said, who did not want his last name in this article.

"Can I remain anonymous since I called in sick?" he asked.

For Lou, last week was his first time surfing in Lake Ontario, though he has been surfing for 15 years in Santa Cruz, San Francisco.

"What finally got me out here was [Surf Ontario](#)," he said.

"These guys had stand-up paddleboard lessons on [Groupon](#), and I said, 'if I can't surf the way I used to surf, I might as well get out there [because] I love the water.'"

Despite the near sub-zero temperatures during this time of year, fall is the most popular time for surfing on Lake Ontario due to the swelling of the waves. The surfers keep warm by wearing a head-to-toe neoprene wetsuit.


"Today [just] the wetsuit was fine," Lou said. "I could have used gloves to keep warm. I just needed the gloves because I stopped feeling my hands about 20 minutes in."

SEARCH 

PHOTOS AUDIO VIDEO








Young Singers deliver heavenly performance

more photo galleries this way 






TORONTO EAST YORK

- LATEST HEADLINES
-  Scarborough has no footing in Occupy Toronto
  -  Supporters of '60s Scoop survivors rally ahead of class action suit appeal
  -  Health care workers face flu-shot dilemma
  -  Occupy Scarborough?
  -  Charity recipient climbs CN Tower at a record pace





POPULAR COMMENTS FEATURED

-  Scarborough resident questions Harper's 'Islamicism' remark

Lou wears a three-milimetre thick wetsuit. Suits can range from 1.5 milimetres to seven milimetres. Thicker wet suits contain heat better. Some surfers even wear dry suits, which keep the body from getting wet while surfing.

“The good thing about the water is that it can’t freeze, so it’s got to be above zero,” said Gavin Fregona, a 61-year-old retiree who spends his days surfing and taking photos of the surfers to upload to his surfing website.

He said that with the right wet suit, a surfer can stay in the water for up to four hours, sometimes even more.



*Surfing in the winter is quite awesome because you're out either in a snowstorm or it's after a snowstorm*

— Mike Sandusky

Mike Sandusky, surf instructor and owner of Surf Ontario says some surfers will surf all year around in Toronto.

“Surfing in the winter is quite awesome because you’re out either in a snowstorm or it’s after a snowstorm,” he said.

[It can also get] really cold, minus five or minus 10 [weather] plus the wind chill. So you’re going out when most people are trying to stay home or get home, so that’s kind of neat .”

Sometimes in February, there will be ice in the water while they are surfing, he said.

“If it’s really cold after an hour, you start to develop ice chunks on your shoulders and head,” Sandusky said.

He says the best waves are in the fall and wintertime.

“If you’re truly passionate about the surfing, you’ll go out in any conditions.”

Sandusky began surfing in Lake Ontario after he came back from first learning how to surf in Hawaii at the age of 21. Now at 33, he runs Surf Ontario, a retail store and school dedicated to surfing. He has been teaching people how to surf and stand-up paddleboard for almost 10 years.

“The internet has allowed more people to see, from photos and videos that there are actually waves on the lake,” he said.

He added that there’s a growing market in Toronto for people wanting to get involved in surfing.

To catch the best waves, he travels around often to the different lakes according to the weather forecast. The spots with more wind that day will likely have the largest swells in the water.

“There’s a lot of good spots between Lake Erie and Lake Huron that I frequent, but I like Scarborough Bluffs because it’s close by,” he said.

“It’s a dramatic place to surf with the background, it’s where I got married and there are pretty good waves there too.”

- ☆ Toronto FC needs win to keep faint playoffs hopes alive
- ☆ U of T shakes the trails
- ☆ Torontonians start online petition to bring back Transit City
- ☆ Wong criticized for 'wearing two hats' in Scarborough-Agincourt
- ☆ Liberal supporters defy vandalism in St. Paul's riding
- ☆ Liberal Best reclaims Scarborough-Guildwood
- ☆ Highland Creek community is about to get dirty, residents fear
- ☆ Scarborough's personal Nightmare Before Christmas
- ☆ Hope's story gives 'paws' to reflect on animal abuse

CATEGORIES

ARCHIVES

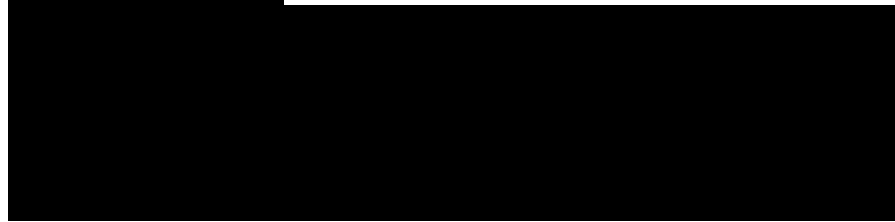
RELATED SITES

INFORMATION

- Centennial Journalism Blog
- Centennial Journalism | YouTube
- Centennial Sports TV
- Ellin Bessner's Blog
- Journalism onDemand
- Observer Radio News
- Observer TV News
- Ted Barris

- Centennial Journalism
- Centennial/UTSC Journalism
- UTSC Journalism
- Sports Journalism
- Twitter
- Facebook
- YouTube
- Digital Paper
- Observer RSS
- Log in

PHOTO GALLERY





JESSICA LEE/TORONTO OBSERVER

A surfer rides the waves at the Scarborough Bluffs. The fall is the best time to try to catch a wave due to more winds.



Categorized | [ARTS & LIFE](#) · [FEATURED](#) · [PHOTOS](#) · [SCARBOROUGH](#)

Tagged | [BLUFFS](#), [HOBBY](#), [LAKE ONTARIO](#), [MIKE SANDUSKY](#), [SCARBOROUGH BLUFFS](#), [SURF](#), [SURF ONTARIO](#), [SURFING](#)

## Leave a Reply

Name (required)

Mail (will not be published) (required)

Website