

CULTURE ENTHUSIASTS WILL LOVE DISCOVERING TILLSONBURG

CALLING ALL LOVERS OF...

history, of art, of small town getaways and more. If culture is what you love to discover when you visit a town, look no further than beautiful Tillsonburg. Nestled in Ontario's agricultural heartland, the sandy plains of this town were at one time the ideal location to grow tobacco and the storied ground has many stories to discover.

From emerging artists to heritage aircraft, Tillsonburg is practically bursting at the seams with new places telling old stories and waiting to be discovered. Whether you love military history, want to check another National Historic Site off your bucket list or want to taste the flavours of Dutch immigration to the area, Tillsonburg is a wonderful spot to begin your journey in Oxford. Read on for an ideal itinerary for culture vultures. This trip is best taken on a Tuesday or Saturday during the summer months but can be adjusted accordingly.

Stop #1: Breakfast with a View

Where: The Skyway Cafe, 244411 Airport Rd.
Tillsonburg, ON.

Hours: Open 8am-2pm daily

You shouldn't start your day without having breakfast so why not enjoy your eggs with a fantastic view? The Skyway Cafe is located inside the Tillsonburg Regional Airport and is decked out with viewing windows so that you can watch heritage, commercial and private planes hit the sky while you eat. In the summer months, hit the patio for an even better view and enjoy the sun.

Drive Time to Next Stop: 0 minutes, just walk over!



Find more trip ideas at:
www.TourismOxford.ca

Stop #2: Brush Up on Aviation & Military History

Where: The Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association, 244411 Airport Rd. Tillsonburg, ON.

Hours: Open Tuesday & Saturday 9am-4pm

Military history buffs and airplane enthusiasts alike will love discovering the stories behind the treasured vintage aircraft in the hangar at The Canadian Aircraft Association where a loyal bunch of volunteers fastidiously restore World War I & II training aircraft to their former glory. Home to several of the beloved Harvards, there's a story to each and every one and the volunteers will gladly help you discover it. You'll get to wander the hangar, enjoy the stories and if volunteers are available, hop in a cockpit! Really want to kick things up a notch? Consider booking a flight experience in a Harvard.



Drive Time to Next Stop: 3 mins

Stop #3: Grab a Dutch Treat

Where: Sundown Farms Country Market (home to Urban Wheel); 412569 Cranberry Line, Tillsonburg, ON.

Hours: Monday 9am-4pm; Tuesday-Friday 9am-5pm; Saturday 9am-4:30pm



Over the years, Tillsonburg has been settled by many immigrants. Dutch tradition is rooted firmly in town (like much of the county) and with it, a delicious cuisine full of tasty treats. If you're interested in trying some goodies (and we highly recommend you do), there's no better place to shop for them than at

Sundown Farms. You'll find everything from delicious Dutch licorice to Dutch baking supplies, stroopwaffels, bitterballen, croquettes and more. Seriously, you should definitely go.

Drive Time to Next Stop: 9 mins

Stop #4: Discover Where Artists Gather

Where: The Tillsonburg Station Arts Centre: 41 Bridge St. Tillsonburg, ON.

Hours: Monday-Saturday, 9am-4pm

The Tillsonburg Station Art Centre isn't just an adventure to discover because it's located in two historic train stations. Apart from the beautiful bones of the building, it's stuffed to the brim with lovely art to discover. With two exhibit galleries of rotating pieces from both in house artists and neighbouring ones, there are plenty of pieces to take in. Also on site are a number of fun classes from photography to stained glass and even succulent frame workshops. Don't forget to check out the gift shop on your way out for some great artisan vendors and art supplies too! Just a hop skip and a jump from the downtown, consider wandering into Tillsonburg's quaint and charming shops along Broadway Street and grabbing a spot at one of the outdoor patio tables in the downtown to enjoy the day.



Drive Time to Next Stop: 1 min drive or 4 min walk

Stop #5: Grab a Bite in a Historic Church Manse

Where: The Cup and Cake, 38 Ridout St. W. Tillsonburg, ON.

Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 11am-5pm

Cozy up in this charming historic church manse for a lovely lunch and tea served in real china cups. You'll love their array of made-from-scratch soup, sandwich and salad options but the real star of it all? Their dessert fridge. Choose from delicious and inventive cupcake flavours, cakes, puddings, pies and more that are regularly rotated so you can come back and try something new each time!

Drive Time to Next Stop: 3 mins



Stop #6: Explore the Town's Origins

Where: Annandale National Historic Site: 30 Tillson Ave. Tillsonburg, ON.

Hours: Monday-Friday 9am-4pm, Saturdays (July and August only) 12pm-4pm, Sundays 1-4pm

Discovering an 1800s home is a lot more posh than you think it might be when it's the first mayor of Tillsonburg's home! Built between 1880 and 1883, this three-story "retirement" home would have stood in stark contrast to the one bedroom log cabins most people were living in at the time it was built.

Complete with indoor plumbing and heating, the true marvel of it all is the decor. Decked from ceiling to floor in the Aesthetic Arts Movement style, this gorgeous architectural wonder is complete with ornately painted ceilings, inlaid floors featuring four different kinds of wood, busy wall paper and detailed stained glass everywhere you look. Learn how home owner E.D. Tillson made his money through entrepreneurial endeavors and learn about the town's history with a tour through the museum.



Drive Time to Next Stop: 2 min drive or 11 min walk

Stop #7: Find the Town's First Families in the Pioneer Cemetery

Where: The Tillsonburg Pioneer Cemetery, 13 Cedar St. Tillsonburg, ON

By this point in your day, you'll have recognized that Tillsonburgers definitely care about their town history and the Pioneer Cemetery is no exception. This small plot of land is the final resting place of the town's first families: The Tillsons and The VanNorman's as well as a few other 1800s grave markers. Carefully walk the rows to learn some of their stories and see how a small group of volunteers has worked to restore the stones. Want to really get down to the history? Check out the self-guided walking tour that can be found on tillsonburg.ca!



Drive Time to Next Stop: 3 mins

Stop #8: Grab Dinner in Style at One of Two Historic Restaurants

Option 1

Where: Nectar Coffee + Bar, 117 Broadway Street Tillsonburg, ON.

Hours: Monday-Wednesday 8am-10pm, Thursday-Saturday 8am-11pm, Sunday 9am-5pm

Nectar Coffee & Bar is the newest hot spot in Tillsonburg but its home is no stranger to Tillsonburg residents. Located in what was once the historic Heath's Department Store, a family-run business that ran from 1945-2006, Nectar still has a few of those old-school elements in the architecture. Where once you could do all your Christmas shopping in one go, now Nectar keeps the tradition of supporting local alive. Pop in for a delicious light lunch, Shaw's ice cream (made in Tillsonburg), a delectable coffee or grab a beer of their taps featuring exclusively local brews. Dine inside or grab a spot on their covered patio and watch the world go by.



Drive Time to Next Stop: 6 mins

Option 2

Where: TheMill Tales Inn, 20 John Pound Rd. Tillsonburg, ON.

Hours: Monday-Thursday 11am-8pm, Friday & Saturday 11am-9pm, Sunday 9:30am-2pm, 4pm-8pm

Grab a spot right next to the window and enjoy your meal with a beautiful view of the Otter Creek. The Mill Tales Inn is located inside a historic 1878 pea and barley mill that was originally owned by E.D. Tillson (of Anndale House). Locals know this hidden gem for its delicious fresh water fish n' chips and distinctly historic charm. Once one of six Tillson mills in town, The Mill Tales Inn is the last remaining of its kind.



Drive Time to Next Stop: 9 mins

Stop #9: Enjoy Community Theatre

Where: The Otter Valley Playhouse (home of Theatre Tillsonburg), 144789 Potters Rd, Tillsonburg, ON

Finally, wind down your culture-filled day with a community theatre production set in rural Tillsonburg. Drive along beautiful Potters Road past farm fields and lovely homes to the playhouse where you'll be greeted with the latest spirited production from Theatre Tillsonburg. Performing about five shows per season, there's always something new to catch each year and you'll be delighted by the talent in this small town troupe.



Stay the Night



Want to make this cultural day into an overnight trip? You can separate it into two days by checking out Annandale House and The Pioneer Cemetery out the next day. If you're wanting to stay the night, consider booking a luxurious room at Seven Gables Tillsonburg, a former Tillson home or at The Howard Johnson.

