

Free A Walking Tour: KINGSTON

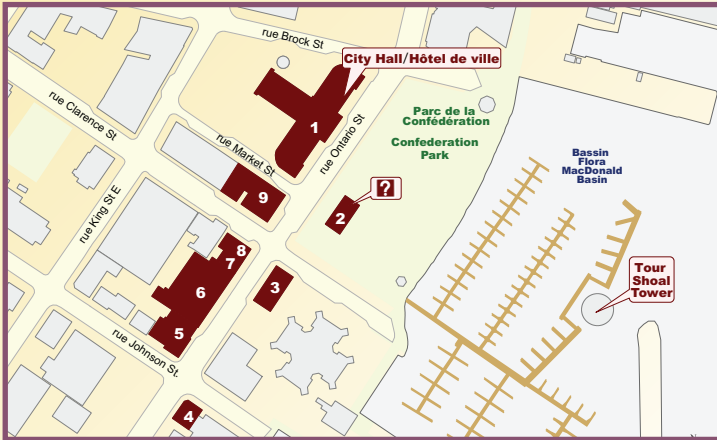
Ontario Street, Kingston

Estimated walking time is 20 minutes including the return to the starting point at the Visitor Information Centre.

Enjoy this historical City of Kingston Walking Tour.
Look for more Walking Tours in this series.

Other tours available in this series include:

- Earl St. – one of the oldest streets in Kingston
- John & Joseph Power – featuring some of the buildings designed by these prominent Kingston architects
- King St. – the ‘ceremonial’ entrance to Kingston’s downtown
- Princess and Brock Sts. – the old Kingston business district
- Wellington St. – through the heart of old Sydenham Ward



Start your tour in front of the Visitor Information Centre. Look across the street.

1 216 Ontario St. (Kingston City Hall). George Browne and William Coverdale designed City Hall. This magnificent building was built in 1842 to 1844 as a public market building or “shambles” and “civic centre” as well as for town offices. Also in the building were the Royal Mail Post Office, the Customs Office, public meeting halls, a library, the police station and cells, a print shop and restaurants. On the lower level there were also offices to be rented to lawyers (including John A. Macdonald) and brokers. It also had a room where citizens could come and read the latest newspapers. The building is Paladian in style, with each side of the façade being a mirror image of the other. It has an imposing Tuscan portico. As built, the dome had no clock faces and no glass “lantern” on top. Its imposing façade faced the waterfront because visitors to the city usually arrived by ship.

Kingston was the capital of the United Province of Canada when the building was started. By the time it was finished, however, the government and the civil servants had moved to Montréal. The



remaining citizens of Kingston could not pay for the new building. For many years, they rented out parts of it to a bank, churches, saloons, a women’s medical college and for other uses. There was originally a driveway through the centre of the building. It has been replaced by the central part of the present front steps and what are now the main doors. The city government and a public meeting hall now occupy the entire building.

Parts of City Hall were restored after fires in 1865 that destroyed the market wing behind the building, and in 1908 that destroyed the dome. The portico was rebuilt in 1966 and the building was fully restored in the 1970s. The dome was re-coppered in 2002. Free guided tours are available in the summer.

Cross the street to the foot of City Hall’s stairs. Turn and look back across the street.



2 209 Ontario St. (Kingston and Pembroke Railway Station). The K&P Railway station is now the Tourist Information Office. In the early 1800s, there was a market here between Ontario St. and the water. From 1846 to 1875, the space was occupied by a large stone gun position called the “Market Battery.” The land became a park after the battery was torn down. In 1885, some stone from the battery was used to build this station, designed by William Newlands. The park became a railway yard. The K&P Railway brought lumber, iron ore, phosphates, mica and other natural products to Kingston where they were transferred to ships. The present park was built in 1967 to celebrate the Centennial of Canadian Confederation. The Canadian Pacific Railway’s steam locomotive number 1095, named “Spirit of Sir John A.,” was built in 1913 at the locomotive works further south on Ontario Street. It remembers Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada’s first prime minister who was the Member of Parliament for Kingston.

Turn right and proceed south across Market and Clarence Streets. Look across Ontario St.

3 193-195 Ontario St. (RCHA Club and Raging Bull). These 1848-49 buildings were designed by William Coverdale. The Royal Canadian Horse Artillery (RCHA) was Kingston’s army garrison from 1871 until it went overseas at the beginning of World War II in 1939. Walk



Please respect private property.

further south and look at the end of the building. The remains of a brick fireplace and chimney flues you can see are from an adjoining building that has been demolished.



Continue south to Johnson St. Look ahead of you and diagonally across Ontario St. to your left.

4 167 Ontario St. (Grand Trunk (or "inner") Railway Station). This 1886 station is now Frankie Pesto's Restaurant. It was designed by William Newlands. Connecting trains ran from here to the mainline or "Outer" Station, that was farther north on Montréal St. The Grand Trunk Station has a prominent mansard roof. The Hanley family operated a railway and steamship ticket agency in this building beginning in the 1890s. It was once covered with railway and steamship advertisements that were painted on the brick.



Cross Ontario St. Turn left (north) towards the Visitor Information Centre. Look back across Ontario St.

5 172 Ontario St. (Anglo-American Hotel) and 176 Ontario St. (White Mountain Ice Cream). The hotel was built before 1844. It was named the Anglo-American in 1851. If you look carefully, you can see cast iron arches with carved heads above the second storey windows. There is a floral design on the



stone string between the second and third storeys. The hotel owners built 176 Ontario (on your right) as a store.



Continue north towards the Visitor Information Centre.

6 178-186 Ontario St. (Frontenac Hotel, now Brandees, Zappas and Mia Gelato). The hotel got that name in 1889. The southern (your left) end was built as a house in

1822. It was heavily damaged during an explosion and fire that destroyed much of the area in 1840. The house was repaired and re-opened as a hotel. It was given a new front in 1853 when architect John Power added the large expansion on the north (your right) end.



Notice the decorative iron pilasters (half columns) on either side of the doorway to 178 Ontario.

7 192-194 Ontario Street (Wooden Heads). This office building was built sometime between 1853 and 1860. The architect was probably John Power. The façade is brick that was fashionable at the time, but the end wall is less expensive stone. Notice the iron pilasters beside the doorways similar to 178-186 Ontario.

8 196 Ontario St. (Mac's General Store). This modest frame building dates from between 1878 and 1880. It was built as the ticket office for the Folger Brothers' excursion steamboat line. An interesting feature is the beaded wooden shingles designed with semi-circular arches.



9 200 Ontario St. (Prince George Hotel). The hotel has been called the Prince George since 1918. The façade is actually three separate buildings. The middle part is a stone house built about 1817. New stores were built on each side of the house in 1847. The buildings became a hotel after a fire in 1848. William Newlands designed the third floor and the mansard roof that were added in 1892. These changes made the three buildings look like one. The hotel's most recent restoration was in 2008. Intricate ironwork on the tower, the copper roof and the decorative woodwork on the verandah are distinguishing features.



Arrive back at the Visitor Information Centre.

