

MINNESOTA LAKES

Gunflint

Cook County, MN

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Gunflint is located in [Cook County, Minnesota](#). This lake is 4,009 acres in size. It is approximately 200 feet deep at its deepest point. When fishing, anglers can expect to catch a variety of fish including Lake Trout, Northern Pike, Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Walleye, Yellow Perch, Pumpkinseed,.

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SIZE
4,009 acres

MAX DEPTH
200 ft

ACCESS
Boat Ramp

LAKE TROUT NORTHERN PIKE ROCK BASS SMALLMOUTH BASS TROUT-PERCH WALLEYE YELLOW PERCH BURBOT CISCO (TULLIBEE)
LONGNOSE SUCKER PUMPKINSEED RAINBOW SMELT SHORTRNOSE CISCO SLIMY SCULPIN WHITE SUCKER

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History of Gunflint Lodge

Gunflint Lodge: circa
1930

Fishing License: 50¢

Lake Trout Limit: 10

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nor electric service. Telephone service was also a dream for the future.

Justine wrote about the immediate improvements her mother made. "Mother made arrangements locally to enlarge the lodge by having an extension built on one side complete with a large fireplace for a lounge and an extension built on the other side with a fireplace and dining room. This also called for changes in the kitchen. Beside the changes in the lodge structure, George Bayle was hired to build tables and chairs from local trees – primarily birch that furnished the new additions. All of the table tops were mounted on large roots." An indication of Mrs. Spinner's priorities at that time is shown by the fact that both of these additions faced the incoming road, not the lake. Two more cabins and a boat house were also added at this time.



The summer of 1929 was the two women's first season at Gunflint. Mrs. Spinner acted as the resort hostess, wrote the correspondence, planned the meals and supervised the staff. Justine ordered the supplies, paid the bills, and kept the equipment in good repair. Keeping equipment in repair was a new experience for Justine. When asked how she learned to fix motors, Justine replied, "I took them apart and looked at them."



From the very first Justine developed a close relationship with her Indian neighbors. They came over to shop in her small store and she employed them at the resort. They guided fishermen, cleaned cabins, waited tables, and took care of her children. Eventually Justine would win the trust of the local Indian families. It was a two-way street. They shared their knowledge of the woods with her and she helped them deal with the outside world. She even delivered one of their babies. The most important part of this long-lasting relationship was a mutual trust and respect.

In 1930 Mrs. Spinner bought an island on Saganaga Lake for an outpost camp. A lodge and one cabin were built on the island that year. There were also tents on platforms for the guests to sleep in. The island resort was called Saganaga Lodge. Guests at Saganaga Lodge canoed down the Granite River from Gunflint with a guide and spent a night or so on the island to fish on Saganaga. At the end of their trip they would be met by a lodge vehicle on Seagull Lake and driven back to Gunflint. This island outpost would eventually be a casualty of the depression.

By 1933 the depression had severely hit the Spinner family and they were forced to give up their home in Illinois and move permanently to Gunflint. This had never been in the plans. Justine put off continuing her education at Northwestern and her dreams of a medical career for a year and then one more year and then forever. Luckily by this time she had fallen in love with the Northwoods.



Generally the resort business prospered during these years of the late forties and early fifties. After the tight depression and war years, people had money and time to spend again. The growing Kerfoot children (Bruce, Pat, and Sharon) were able to take some of the load off Bill and Justine. Improvements to the main lodge and cabins progressed at a steady pace.



In June of 1953 disaster struck! The main lodge caught fire and burned to the ground. Justine reacted to this event just as she had to the depression. She was not about to give up all she had worked so hard for. The morning after the fire, the Kerfoot cabin was transformed into a substitute lodge. In one corner was a small store with pop and candy. A cigar box run on the honor system became the cash register. Tables and benches went into the living room to transform it into a dining room.

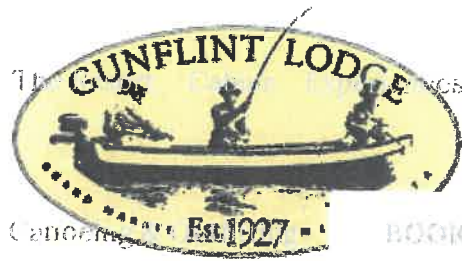
Work started on the new lodge as soon as the fire debris were cleaned up. Everyone worked like they never had before. Workdays lengthened. Coffee breaks were unheard of. Incoming guests were greeted from the top of a ladder. Some guests came in after a day of fishing and picked up a hammer to help for a bit. The building quickly took shape. The new lodge went into operation in August. It wasn't complete but it was functional. The floor was sub-floor planks. The walls had no paneling. There were no fireplaces.

Oak floors, paneling, new dining room furniture, fireplaces, and even curtains would be added in time for the next season. In August these extras were trivial. The kitchen, however, was completely finished. This building, designed on the spur of the moment, has served the resort well for many years.

Bruce married Sue in 1968. During the first years of their marriage, Justine ran a branch of the canoe outfitters, Grand Marais Northwoods Outfitters, in Grand Marais and lived there from May to October. When she moved back to Gunflint, it was to run the canoe outfitters. That lasted only a couple of years before Bruce bought her out. Although Justine always retained a very active interest in the business, the next generation was now truly in place. Once again an ambitious young couple were running Gunflint Lodge.



Bruce and Sue worked to expand the summer business. About 1975 a friend named Ernie Schmidt suggested that they add a naturalist to the staff and he had already picked out the person for the job. Rather than offering golf, tennis and swimming pools, Ernie felt that Gunflint should specialize in introducing guests to the Northwoods. The naturalist's job was to show guest the Northwoods surrounding the resort. Hikes, breakfast paddles, berry-picking trips and sunset canoe trips were some of the activities that were offered.

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What to Bring

It is often hard to know what to bring on trip, especially for your first visit. This will give you a few hints about what we think is important for each season. Before you start packing, check to see if your cabin has a washer and dryer. Most of our cabins do and that can cut down on how much you need to bring, especially for families. Also remember that dress is always casual at Gunflint. In the Northwoods there is no need for fancy clothing.


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that pass through from there to enter the room. We recommend that you bring clothes that can be layered. Long pants, long sleeve shirts, sweaters, sweat shirts, vests, and jackets that can be piled one on top of another and peeled off the same way as the day warms up. If it is late fall or you plan on being on the water a lot, bring a pair of long underwear bottoms. Even on warm days, it can be cold in a boat. A good wind-breaker or rain jacket is necessary. Later in the fall you might want a lined jacket. Shoes or light hiking boots work for foot gear. Daytime temperatures run from the 50s into the 70s.

Winter visits

First, regarding your winter driving– If you stop to think about it, we are north of the freezing and thawing zone so we have snow, but not much ice to deal with. We only have one road to keep in good shape and the county is great with their plowing and sanding. We get very little drifting snow, because of the heavy forest. Our own plow truck keeps our driveway and parking areas clear, and of course we help you with any needs you may have. To us, the roads in the Twin Cities are much more challenging than the Gunflint Trail for much of the winter.

Secondly, regarding your winter clothing– This is the time of year when you need to pay the most attention to dressing properly when outside. Layering is the key. You need long underwear for skiing most days. A knit hat keeps heat from escaping through your head. Some people wear just earmuffs. Mittens are warmer than gloves. Heavy socks keep your feet warm but don't wear ski boots that are too tight. If you are out all day skiing, have a heavier jacket to put on when you stop for lunch. You have to keep adjusting your clothing so you don't get too hot or too cold. If you get too hot and sweat, your damp body will cool down.



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Guided Wilderness Adventure Programs

Gunflint Lake holds a special spot in the hearts of outdoors fans in Minnesota's Northeastern Region. Almost 30 miles northwest of Grand Marais 'as the crow flies', Gunflint Lake calls out 'Northwoods Adventure' loud and clear. This large lake forms part of the boundary between the United States and Canada and is connected to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area's Magnetic Lake entry point by a narrow channel (Note: those entering Canada this way must obtain a Remote Area Border Crossing permit in advance).

Much of the southern lakeshore is within the Superior National Forest, while the northern Canadian shoreline is public lands. This isn't the usual northern resort lake, and there are few private residences along the lakeshore. The lake is hardly deserted, however; a strong, long-term community of tourism-related services share the area along the southwestern edge. They are a part of an entire 57-mile group of small businesses serving adventurers who drive, hike and bike along one of Minnesota's Scenic Byways, the Gunflint Trail.

Gunflint Lake stretches across over 4,000 acres and has a depth of up to 200 feet. A few swimming beaches are available along the shoreline in spots where a shoreline ledge has provided shallows. Most of these are only accessible to hikers, unless they are guests of one of the resort properties at the south and west sides. More visitors hike around the lake and fish the deep waters. The big lake holds sizable numbers of walleye, lake trout, smallmouth bass, yellow perch and northern pike. A public access boat launch is operated by the U.S. Forest Service. Outfitters along the shore are ready to arrange fishing trip packages to direct anglers to the best spots among the underwater ledges. Many of the lakes in the area are no-motors lakes, but Gunflint Lake allows motorized craft. Fishing boats and pontoons can be rented from the largest lodge at the lake. Because the border passes through the middle of the lake, fishing licenses for both Minnesota and Canada are required. Ice fishing for lake trout is a special treat, and the camps are open year-round to accommodate winter fishermen and snow sportsmen. A sea-plane base at the lake serves to bring in guests by air much of the year. Other visitors drive the scenic Gunflint Trail from Grand Marais.

The area around Gunflint Lake is rich in wildlife, and one of the resort camps specializes in nature hikes, berry-picking excursions and moose viewing. There are many moose in the area, and visitors are more likely to see moose in the wild here than most other places in Minnesota. Outfitters take guests on canoe and kayak trips, overnight camping treks, and to the hidden spots where they can take the best photographs. Gunflint Lake connects to several other lakes, and the passages are usually accessible by canoe with short portages. One of the camps rents camping spaces and cabins where reservations are usually necessary due to their popularity. Another operates a small general store, the only nearby convenience store. Lake businesses provide services and amenities, so few visitors will find it necessary to drive the 45 miles to Grand Marais once they arrive.

Lodgings at Gunflint Lake range from rustic to 'northwoods elegant'. There are rental cottages available that sleep six with hot tubs on the decks. These facilities have become a favorite for corporate retreats and weddings. The lodge has developed wedding planning into a fine art, and several cottages are reserved for honeymooners. Amenities offered at these resorts range from on-site riding stables to zip lining among the tall pines. Outfitters lead hikes to nearby waterfalls or act as guides for multi-day canoeing treks among the many lakes. Mountain biking and nature observing on the many old logging trails in the area are favorite pastimes, particularly in spring and early summer when wildflowers bloom.

The lake is home a wide variety of waterfowl, including loons, herons and various ducks. Bald Eagles often soar above the lake, fishing. In winter, cross-country skiing, dog sledding, snowshoeing, sledding, snowmobiling and sleigh rides are popular. Equipment for all of them can be rented at the lake. Lodges make it a point of pride to offer children's educational activities, discussions on local history and informative talks about the ecology of the region.

The Gunflint Trail is more than just great scenery. The entire trail covers over 50 miles and is accessible by car. Every few miles feature the trailhead of yet another hiking trail to view lakes, waterfalls and overlooks. Also along the trail are hotels, motels guest cottages, and plenty of places to stop for a meal. Multiple places to access the Boundary Waters Canoe Area are along the Trail, which ends in a loop around a historic campground and waterfall just beyond Sea Gull Lake. Much of the trail parallels the old voyageur water route of long-ago fur trappers. Although now a good paved road, the original trail was completed over many years around 1900. Some parts were private 'toll roads' built by property owners across their own land. The Civilian Conservation Corps worked on the trail during the Depression.

The Gunflint Trail even has its own historical society dedicated to preserving the rich history of mining, logging and settlement in the area. Operating out of a 1930's resort lodge, the building that the Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center occupies is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Unusual rocks found in the area of Gunflint Lake and even used in building one lodge fireplace were determined to be remnants of the explosion of the super-meteor that formed the Sudbury Basin over two billion years ago. The Basin is over 150 miles to the east, giving some indication of the power of the explosion.

Visiting Gunflint Lake is an adventure waiting to happen. The resorts and camps are mostly family-friendly and have thought of everything to make your visit rewarding and complete. A few private homes in the area may rent their properties from time to time, and real estate can be found on the limited amount of non-public land in the area. This is one wilderness area where you can count on finding a comfy bed in a modernized motel, camp or hotel or a primitive campsite far from human habitation. Plan your visit and make reservations before summer fills up most of the resorts.

Gunflint Lodge. Gunflint Lodge is one of the oldest and the best known lodges on the **Gunflint Trail** in Minnesota, United States. It is located on **Gunflint Lake**, on the border of Ontario, Canada, and is open year-round. ... The lodge was threatened by the **Ham Lake Fire** in spring of 2007, but avoided any damage.

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Gunflint Pines

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Rent a boat on Gunflint Lake.

We have fishing boats, pontoons, canoes or Kayaks. Rent one for the day and explore Gunflint and Magnetic lakes. Take a paddle around Gallagher's island, or cruise and hike to Bridal Falls. Whether your staying in one of our cabins, or campsites or visiting elsewhere on the Gunflint trail we've got rentals available.

Gunflint Lake is approximately 1-1.5 miles across (north/south) and 6.5 to 7 miles long (east/west). It lies on the Minnesota and Canada Border. There are no motor restrictions on Gunflint Lake or it's connecting waters of Magnetic Lake, Little Gunflint, Little North or North lakes. You can gain access to some of the connecting waters with a 16ft or smaller fishing boat. Larger boats can access Gunflint and Magnetic Lakes but may be limited from accessing other lakes by the water level depending on the time of year.

Explore Our World!

Where cell phones don't ring to call you to work. Where evenings are spent gathering with friends, watching the Northern lights, playing games or chatting the evening away around a fire. Where "Neighbor" still means someone you can count on in a pinch and "Community" means more than just the place you live.

- Fishing Boats w/4 stroke outboard motors
- Canoes & Kayaks
- Pontoon Rentals
- Boundary Waters Access