

Falling for Glamping

A few extra comforts—from fluffy duvets to bathrobes to breakfast baskets—can easily take your next outdoor adventure up a notch

By Diana Ballon



Photo by Julia Matthews

Homegrown Hideaway

Glamping has an obvious appeal—total immersion in nature, but with a comfy bed, no worries about rain and easy access to bathroom facilities and other amenities you wouldn't get with camping. It's the perfect social bubble.

I recently had my first glamping experiences on two sites in Norfolk County, an area between Port Dover and Long Point on the north shore of Lake Erie. Like any good love affair, I fell for each glamping property for very different reasons. Homegrown Hideaway (homegrownhideaway.com) is like the understated person you fall for because you can really be yourself around them: they're family oriented, totally down to earth and when you're together, you feel relaxed and at ease.

Long Point Eco-Adventures (lpfun.ca) is more like being around the person you love for their energy and enthusiasm and enjoyment of the outdoors. They like some luxury, but they also like to kayak, paddleboard, maybe throw an axe (yup, you can do that too) and go mountain biking. And then after a full day, they want to chill with a beer (there's a brewery on site) or a glass of wine (there's an award-winning winery across the road) and then have dinner on a patio overlooking the marsh.

What kind of person are you most attracted to?

Let me give you more details so you can best choose your mate. Homegrown Hideaway near Port Dover has, as the name implies, an emphasis on



Photo by Diana Ballon



Long Point Eco-Adventures

hidden: each tent is set apart in its own wooded clearing, and are so private that the only people we saw over a weekend there were the owners, Caroline and Jon Jager, and their two charming young children. When the Jagers opened in July 2020, they hadn't expected to be starting a business amidst a pandemic. For now, that means operating just two of their five tents so that each has access to its own toilet and shower facilities. Their Wooded Oasis is set in a clearing in the forest, while their Secluded Sanctuary is even more remote from the main road, close to the Lynn River, with its own outdoor rainwater shower.

Each tent has a bed with puffy white duvets, towels and bathrobes. Although there is no electricity in the tents, there are plugs in separate washroom facilities, along with an outdoor kitchen for cleaning up. Both tents also have their own deck chairs, firepit and barbecue.

For extra pampering, \$20 breakfast baskets can be delivered to your tent in the morning, with choices



Long Point Eco-Adventures

ranging from ingredients for farm fresh omelettes, to baked goods and a British brunch.

At Long Point Eco-Adventures, you can stay in safari tents (their "Wilderness Suites") or wooden huts (their Elite or Deluxe Pods). All the suites and pods have beautiful hardwood floors, their own sink and toilet, hydro, space heaters and super cozy beds. The suites also have heated blankets on the beds, their own outdoor showers, private firepits and Adirondack chairs. While the pods also have access to firepits and showers, not all of them are private.



Photo by Diana Ballon

Overnight stays at Long-Point include a continental breakfast at their Marshview Patio, weather permitting, with lunch and dinner available à la carte. The eco resort also has a hopping microbrewery, Hometown Brew Co, on site, with live music Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons (if warm enough) and picnic tables and lawn space where you can enjoy it. Across the street is their popular sister company, Burning Kiln Winery, on what was formerly a tobacco farm. Here you can do a tasting and drink their wines at the adjacent Canned Heat restaurant next door. The winery overlooks the shore of Lake Erie and Long Point, a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve.

Fall activities include everything from hiking and biking, to pumpkin patch picking at local farms, axe throwing on site and visits to the town of Port Dover. You can also visit the beautiful stretch of beach at Long Point Provincial Park just 30 minutes away.