

Proposed article for Spring into Rideau

For submission to the Leeds Grenville Economic Development eNews

Spring into Rideau: A shared approach to strengthening the spring tourism season in Rideau Lakes

A new initiative in Rideau Lakes is seeking to build on one of the region's most promising seasons for tourism growth: spring. "Spring into Rideau", developed through the Rideau Lakes Economic Development Committee, is a community-driven effort to promote early spring from April to May. Rather than introducing a new festival or large-scale event, the initiative brings together existing activities, businesses, and experiences under a shared seasonal identity.

The goal is simple. Make spring easier to see, easier to promote, and more appealing as a time to visit.

"Spring into Rideau is about building on what we already have and helping tourism grow in our shoulder seasons," says Ken Davies, Chair of the Spring into Rideau Working Group. "We know that spring is a beautiful and active time in our communities. This initiative gives us a way to invite visitors to support our local businesses."

The concept is inspired in part by the continued success and renewed energy around Daffodil Days; a defining symbol of spring in Rideau Lakes. Long known as the Daffodil Capital of Ontario, the region is seeing ongoing interest in celebrating these early blooms as an anchor for spring visitation.

From roadside blooms to forest paths, daffodils offer a natural and recognizable signal that the season has arrived. Spring into Rideau builds on that idea, using both the flower and the colour yellow as a unifying thread across communities.

April and May mark the beginning of travel planning and short trips for many Ontarians. The landscape is changing, communities are revived, and the pace remains unhurried. By clearly promoting this period, Spring into Rideau encourages visitors to arrive earlier, explore more broadly, and extend their stay.

Tourism continues to play an important role in the regional economy. Across Canada, the sector contributes more than \$100 billion annually to GDP and supports approximately one in ten jobs. Increasingly, there is a shift toward shoulder-season travel, where visitors seek out quieter, more relaxed experiences outside of peak summer months.

For Kim Lulashnyk, who leads the charge for Spring into Rideau, the initiative reflects both creative and economic opportunity. “We have enormous potential,” says Lulashnyk. “The flowers, the energy, and the opportunities for individuals and small businesses to participate all come together in a natural way. It gives people a reason to visit Rideau Lakes in the shoulder season and to experience what makes this place special.”

Lulashnyk has seen firsthand the growing interest in spring programming. Experiences such as Daffodil Days, creative workshops, and seasonal gatherings are drawing visitors looking for something slower, more personal, and more connected to place. But also looking for something to do, to experience.

“Spring is already telling a beautiful story here,” she adds. “This simply helps us share it more clearly and more collectively, with more activities, specials, and experiences.”

Unlike traditional tourism campaigns, Spring into Rideau is intentionally flexible.

Participation is locally driven, with each village and hamlet choosing how to be involved. Communities may highlight existing events, promote seasonal offerings, or collaborate with neighbouring areas. Businesses can participate through simple actions such as spring displays, themed promotions, or inclusion in shared marketing.

By establishing a clear identity for spring, the region is taking a step toward a more balanced, year-round tourism economy. Find out more at [**rideaulakes.ca/spring**](https://rideaulakes.ca/spring)