

Georgian Bay Regatta

July 31 to August 4, 2024

Where Cruisers and Racers Unite in Ontario's Sailing Paradise

Thrills and Tranquility: For racing enthusiasts, the Georgian Bay Regatta is the ultimate test of skill and strategy. From seasoned veterans to eager newcomers, sailors of all stripes flock to the bay, eager to pit their prowess against wind and wave. The regatta's challenging courses and unpredictable conditions promise adrenaline-pumping excitement at every turn. But it's not just about the competition. Cruisers have their own category, offering a unique blend of relaxation and competitiveness. Georgian Bay provides a serene backdrop for those seeking a more laid-back experience while still embracing the spirit of competition.

History/Background: In 1985, the Georgian Bay Regatta (GBR) began as an ambitious sailing regatta featuring two main events that lasted a week each. Initially, the regatta kicked off in Thornbury. One of the events was a challenging, non-stop race around Georgian Bay, including a leg into Parry Sound. The second event consisted of daily competitions stretching from the northern reaches of Wingfield Basin down to Collingwood and east towards Christian Island, with participants moving from one marina or anchorage to the next. Alongside the competitive day races, the regatta was known for its lively shore-side BBQs and social gatherings at various stops. Both the long-distance event and the daily event concluded with a celebratory dinner and an awards ceremony.

Two years after its inception, the Georgian Bay Sailing Association (GBSA), a not-for-profit corporation in Ontario, was created to oversee the regatta. Subsequently, GBSA became affiliated with Ontario Sailing, which further cemented the regatta's status in the sailing community.

As years passed, the format of the regatta evolved. The demanding long-distance race was eventually phased out, shifting focus to the shorter, day races that explored new areas, including Midland and further north to Parry Sound. Recognizing the changing needs of participants, the regatta was condensed to four days in 2019 to make it easier for skippers to find crew members willing to commit to the event.

From its inception, the regatta has welcomed cruising boats to sail casually alongside the racers. This was formalized in 2017 with the introduction of a cruising division, complete with handicapped scoring, broadening the appeal and participation of the event.

Trophies are awarded each year in several categories, including overall regatta winner, division winners, and family and club participation. Flags are awarded for each division for individual race as well. A list of regatta winners and race results is maintained at the GBR website.

Many dedicated volunteers make the GBR possible. They begin their work planning for the next year not long after the summer ends. Moreover, the GBR has been honoured over the years with contributions from many generous sponsors who have helped make the regatta sustainable. To ensure sailing's long-term viability on Georgian Bay, the GBSA contributes annually to junior sailing programs in the region.

Celebrating its 38th year: The Georgian Bay Regatta stands as the pinnacle of summer sailing on Georgian Bay – an event not to be missed! This annual spectacle, nestled amidst the breathtaking beauty of Georgian Bay, captures the hearts of sailors from far and wide, beckoning adventurers and competitors alike to Ontario's sparkling waters.

The GBR will take place from July 31 to August 4, 2024 on the east side of the Bay, visiting the picturesque islands and ports such as Christian Island, Sans Souci, Regatta Bay, Kilcoursie Bay, Parry Sound as well as spectacular anchorages. Seven races are planned over four days, including two long-distance and five course races. Please visit our website at [Georgian Bay Regatta - Ontario Sailing](#) for further detail.

Community and Connection: At the heart of the Georgian Bay Regatta lies a vibrant community united by a shared passion for sailing. From dockside gatherings, onshore social events, to post-regatta celebrations, participants come together to forge friendships and share tales of adventure. Whether racing or cruising, sailors find camaraderie in the embrace of Georgian Bay's sparkling shores.

A Tapestry of Memories: Each year, the Georgian Bay Regatta weaves a tapestry of memories that linger long after the sails have been furled. It's a celebration of the indomitable spirit of sailors and the timeless allure of the open sea. From the thrill of the race to the tranquility of a sunset cruise, Georgian Bay offers something for every adventurer.

The Fleet: The Fleet is divided into high and low PHRF-LO handicap divisions for white and flying sails. A more relaxed cruising division is also offered for those who like to race but don't feel comfortable with the more intense competition and challenging starts of traditional racing.

This year, upwards of 40 boats from all around Georgian Bay are expected to compete, making it a true testament to the enduring appeal of the regatta. Family involvement is encouraged and is recognized by an award for outstanding family participation. Also, awards are given for the best club and best new regatta entrant.

An informal feeder race will take place before the regatta for boats coming from the Midland Bay area on July 31st.

Plan your adventure: Set your course for Ontario's Georgian Bay, where every journey is an adventure and every moment a memory to cherish forever. Please visit our website at [Georgian Bay Regatta - Ontario Sailing](#) for our regatta schedule and details regarding the event.