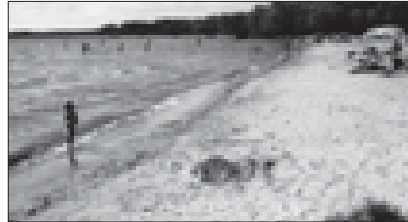


## McRAE POINT & MARA PARKS



### TIPS (fun for all ages)

- You can fish in both parks. Both provincial parks include campgrounds.
- I recently revisited this area with girlfriends (to see a show at the **Casino Rama**). I noticed an ice cream stand **Sweet Dreams** by Hwy 12 on the way to the provincial parks. It sat by the small beach with playground of **JD Tudhope Memorial Park**. We followed the trail along Couchiching Lake (see lower right picture). It is a great place to bike. The 8-km trail reaches **Couchiching Beach** (p. 418).
- We stopped in Orillia to check out the main street and fell in love with the **Mariposa Market** (109 Mississauga St., 705-325-8885, [www.mariposamarket.ca](http://www.mariposamarket.ca)). This store with restaurant doesn't look huge from the outside but it is! It includes a clothing and accessories section, a gift shop, a counter restaurant with delicious and very affordable food, a kitchen store and shelves loaded with goodies.



### Best family picnic

Lake Couchiching and Lake Simcoe are separated by a shallow strip of land called the Narrows. Mara Provincial Park sits right by the Narrows. McRae Point Provincial Park lays further along the shores of Lake Simcoe.

We stopped for a swim at **Mara's** wide beach with shallow water and great sand. Picnic tables were set in the shade of tall trees; unfortunately, they were too far from the water for my liking.


We preferred to spend the rest of the afternoon at **McRae Point** (10-min. drive further). We really fell for **McRae's** narrow beach bordered by grass, pretty trees and tables (as shown on the upper left picture).


As the day was fading away we had a great picnic, accompanied by the music of the lazy waves stroking the shore.




**McRae Point P. Park**  
(705) 325-7290  
**Mara P. Park**  
(705) 326-4451 (seasonal)  
• Orillia  
[www.ontarioparks.com](http://www.ontarioparks.com)

**A-3  
North  
of Toronto  
75-min.**

 **Schedule:** Mara opens mid-May to Labour Day. McRae opens mid-May to Thanksgiving.

 **Admission:** \$11/vehicle.

 **Directions:** Take Hwy 400 North, then follow Hwy 11. Take Hwy 12 eastbound and follow signs. Mara comes first.