

An Invitation to Hike **El Camino Magnifico**

El camino means *the way*. *Magnifico* means *magnificent, superb, splendid, gorgeous*, or simply the *best* or *#1*. Put the two words together and what you get is *the best way or the only way*. For members of the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) that means *The Bruce Trail*.

The Bruce Trail without doubt is the most outstanding hiking trail in southern Ontario. My own pet name for it is *El Camino Magnifico* and that is to put it on the same level as the caminos of Portugal, Spain and France. And why not? The opportunity to experience natural beauty, spiritual growth, warm camaraderie, and physical challenges is common to all of them. The advantage of The Bruce is that it is here at our doorstep.

Be honest with yourself. How many of you have ever thought that someday you would like to hike the Bruce Trail from end to end? Many people have and some of them are members of HOC.

Photographs and travel literature can't quite capture the beauty of the Niagara Escarpment and the Bruce Trail. First-hand experience does. Hiking the Trail just once from end to end left me entangled in a love affair I knew would last a lifetime. How else could I describe a relationship which has led me to hike the Trail from Queenston Heights to Tobermory at the northern tip of the Bruce Peninsula seven times?

Hiking it just once (900 km) is precisely what I am inviting you to do in a series of 50 hikes that I will soon be leading under the title *El Camino Magnifico*. Imagine hiking into Tobermory on the final day. What a triumph for you this culmination might be of one of the most significant experiences in your life! Is your "someday" coming up soon? Do you think you might want to accept my invitation to join me in my next end-to-end?

If so, read the attachment entitled *How an End-to-End Works* next.

Cheers, Richard Reble,

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