

ABOUT WHATÌ

Whatì (Marten Lake) is a friendly Tłı̨chǫ community on the south shore of Lac la Martre, one of the largest lakes in the Northwest Territories. Whatì is located in the traditional hunting area of the Tłı̨chǫ people, and some families still hunt and trap for a living. The area is rich in wildlife - there are black bear, moose, wolf, fox, beaver, mink and marten nearby. The Northwest Company traded for furs here in the late 1700s. Today's community grew around a school established in 1955. Fifty years later, in 2005, Whatì became a self governing community under the Tłı̨chǫ claim settlement.

Whatì includes a blend of traditional and contemporary architecture. Log homes remain from the era when Whatì was called Lac La Martre and became a permanent settlement. In contrast, the youth centre, cultural centre, the arena and Mezi Community School (K- 12) show today's influences. The population is now about 500, and most residents speak both Tłı̨chǫ and English.



WHAT TO DO IN WHATÌ

Lac La Martre, the big lake, is famed for catch and release of large Lake Trout and Pike, summer and winter. The La Martre and Grandin rivers feature rapids and a pretty waterfall with excellent fishing for Arctic Grayling and Whitefish. In spring and fall Whatì is a haven for birders, a stop off point for thousands of geese, ducks and other migratory birds that follow three North American flyways to the Arctic.

The community government provides visitor information. Local residents offer guided tours to the waterfalls, or the rapids, for a picnic or fishing. A trip to Nailii, the twin falls on the La Martre River, is highly recommended. Here people pay respect to the falls, and it is believed that when a bright colorful rainbow appears, it is a sign of good luck. If darker colours appear with blackish and yellowish hues, it signifies a bad sign. The rainbow is considered sacred and because of the beliefs associated with it, only those strong enough to live with the fortune venture out to the falls.

Visitors can also enjoy a swim from the white sand beach right in front of the community. Hiking trails leading to scenic Blueberry Hill are well used, winter and summer. In the fall, visitors can also watch residents setting nets for fish in the Grandin River.

EVENTS

From late August through April, Whatì is one of the best locations in the Northwest Territories to observe the Aurora Borealis, the Northern Lights, due to its location under the auroral oval. There's almost no light pollution, and the vast expanse of lake fronting the community offers an unobstructed view. Whatì also celebrates Indigenous Day June 21, and there's a spring carnival in April. Events are held throughout the year at the community hall, or in the harbour in the centre of the village.



ACCOMMODATION AND MEALS

The motel has 8 rooms with 14 beds, and offers cable, wifi and laundry facilities. The store and the Whatì Development Corporation each offer bed and breakfast accommodation trailer-style for more visitors. Meals are available as a package of three meals per day at the hotel. Alcohol is prohibited, by community plebiscite. There's a general store, with groceries and dry goods, open six days a week. The store also has an ATM machine. There's a snack shop, called ChooChoo's, which is a home based business, open limited hours.



ARTS AND CRAFTS

Whatì has some notable artists - several women produce high quality traditional beadwork - beaded jackets, mitts, gloves and moccasins. These items are usually available through the community office, the store, or direct from local craftspeople. The economic development officer in the community office can provide introductions and directions.



WHATÌ MAP

GETTING HERE

Air Tindi provides scheduled Twin Otter service to the Whatì airport from Yellowknife, daily except Saturdays, with two scheduled flights most days. Charter service is available on wheels, floats or in winter, skis.

A 125 km winter road from NWT Highway 3 near Behchokò is usually open from late January to mid April, however there are no services and drivers must be well equipped and self sufficient. Construction of a year-round highway from NWT Highway 3 began in 2019. The 97 km route will serve Whatì, with a 50 kilometre extension to a new mine, north of the community.

LEGEND

1. Whatì Community Government
2. Tłı̨chǫ Government and Government of NWT
3. Senior's Home
4. RCMP
5. St. Bruno's Church
6. Health Centre
7. Mezi School
8. Youth Centre
9. Arena
10. Arbour
11. Cultural Centre
12. Whatì Store
13. Baseball Diamond / Soccer Field
14. Whatì Hotel
15. Community Garden



TESSA MACINTOSH



FISHING



LAKE VIEWPOINT



TESSA MACINTOSH



WHARF



SAND BEACH



FLY FISHING



SPECTACULAR NORTHWEST TERRITORIES DESTINATION: NORTH SLAVE

DID YOU KNOW?

The population of Whatì is **470 people** and is the second largest of the four Tłı̨chǫ communities.

