

Heated Rivalry fans urged to come to the cottage by Canadian tourism boards

Natalie Stechyson | CBC News | Posted: January 13, 2026 10:41 PM | Last Updated: January 14

Ottawa, Hamilton, Muskoka among locations banking on show's popularity

Image | heated rivalry

Caption: In *Heated Rivalry*, Hudson Williams, left, stars as Shane Hollander and Connor Storrie, right, stars as Ilya Rozanov, two hockey players who are pitted against each other on the ice, but have a secret relationship outside the rink. (Bell Media)



Get in — we're going to the cottage.

As Crave's hockey romance *Heated Rivalry* continues to take over television screens, airwaves, the internet, pop culture and perhaps our collective consciousness, some Canadian tourism organizations are banking on the show's popularity to encourage fans to visit its filming locations.

Ottawa Tourism recently changed its social media bio to say "birthplace of Shane Hollander," a nod to the capital being the fictional character's hometown and, on Monday, posted a "Heated Rivalry 2026 Mood Board" which includes a photo of Muskoka chairs and a loon — also known, to the character Ilya at least, as a "stupid Canadian wolf bird."

Tourism Hamilton likewise on Friday [posted photos of several](#) of the show's iconic filming locations on Instagram, writing, "these 5 Hamilton spots have seen some things." They include what's known as the pink tunnel, where Ilya (played by Connor Storrie) calls his rival/love interest Shane (Hudson Williams) and pours his heart out in Russian.

Image | Screenshot 2026-01-13 155309

Caption: (@tourismhamilton/Instagram)

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And if, like so many fans, mentally you're still at the cottage, Discover Muskoka [is inviting you](#) to visit. You know, physically.

While Shane's gorgeous lakefront cottage is set in Quebec, it's filmed at [Barlochan Cottage](#) in the Muskoka Lakes region of Ontario, about 140 kilometres north of Toronto. The cottage was designed by Toronto-based architect Trevor McIvor.

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On its website, Discover Muskoka says, "you might not be able to book *that* cottage (yet), but Muskoka has nearly a thousand incredible places to stay from charming cabins to luxury lakeside escapes."

Muskoka Tourism has also put up *Heated Rivalry*-coded billboards in Toronto, including on the Gardiner Expressway, en route to Pearson Airport, on Bloor Street and in the underground PATH system, a spokesperson told CBC News.

Image | discover muskoka

Caption: A Heated Rivalry-coded billboard in Toronto's underground PATH system is seen in this image provided by Muskoka Tourism. (Muskoka Tourism)

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Meanwhile, Destination Ontario is encouraging fans to relive their favourite moments by visiting filming locations across the province. The tourism body [posted a list of six spots](#) that serve as the backdrop to the show.

Most of the locations listed are in Hamilton, including FirstOntario Concert Hall, the set for the fictional Major League Hockey Awards; Dundurn Castle, which stands in for Moscow; and the restaurants Ciao Bella and Le Tambour Tavern.

Destination Ontario also lists Joni Restaurant in Toronto, which is used as a Las Vegas location in the series, and points to the entire Muskoka region.

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Canadianness part of its charm

It would be an understatement to merely call *Heated Rivalry* popular. The show about two hockey players pitted against each other on the ice, but who develop a secret relationship outside the rink, is more of an obsession.

It's Crave's most-watched original series ever and has already been renewed for a second season. Videos about the show on TikTok and Instagram regularly get millions of views. [Celebrities](#) are [fawning over it](#), and [singer Miley Cyrus](#) has said she wants in on the soundtrack for Season 2.

- [Why Heated Rivalry isn't eligible for the Emmys](#)
- [Why is Heated Rivalry so popular? It's not just the sex, but the Canadianness](#)

On Monday, Rachel Reid, the Canadian author behind the *Game Changer* book series that inspired the show, announced a new instalment to be released on Sept. 29, 2026, again centering on Shane and Ilya.

But what makes the show so popular? As [CBC's Commotion](#) pointed out recently, it's not just the sex, but its Canadianness. Culture critic Cassandra Morann says the show likely wouldn't even have been greenlit in the U.S., and might be an attractive escape for U.S. viewers.

And some of the show's details that have gone viral — like [Shane's Team Canada fleece](#), designed by Hanna Puley — could only have come from the show being a Canadian production, said culture critic Lainey Lui.

"You can't make that if Hanna Puley isn't Canadian, if she wasn't raised here, if she doesn't know the culture, if she wasn't looking for something cozy for a Canadian player who's from Ottawa," Lui said.

See, Ilya? Canada is fun.

WATCH | Heated Rivalry's spotlight on Canadian content:

Media Video | The National :

Caption: With the Canadian hockey romance series Heated Rivalry firing up fans here at home and around the world, some say it's proof of not only the quality of Canadian content but how much it resonates.

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