

# Marathon Information Centre



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## What are Those Sculptures on the Rocks?

The stone statues, which are frequently seen on the larger rocks throughout Northern Ontario, are referred to as Inukshuit. The Inukshuit have a traditional history as well as modern day purpose. Originally constructed by the Inuit people of the far north, the Inukshuit served as guideposts on landscapes that were otherwise unmarked, thus making pathways easier for individuals to follow. The Inukshuit also sporadically stored caches of food. The Inukshuk is a symbol of human spirit, and the word itself means "*likeness of a person*". Individuals ability to create, communicate and commit to common goals are also historically represented through the Inukshuk.

Today, tourists and other individuals erect non-traditional Inukshuit along the roadside. The purpose of these modern Inukshuit are mostly recreational and visual. They are often constructed as a way for individuals to say, "*I was here*", without adding any unnatural materials to the wilderness landscape. Although the Inukshuk is no longer used for traditional purposes, it still provides a unique visual to the Northern Ontario panorama.

