

A photograph of four people (three women and one man) sitting around a campfire at night. They are wearing winter clothing like hats, scarves, and jackets. One woman is holding a small cup. The background shows a wooden fence with string lights.

# inOntario

TRAVEL DISCOVERIES WINTER 2004/05

**resorts**  
from the inside out

**carnivals**  
heat up winter

Ethnic restaurants

**Favour Flavour**

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 TORONTO Special Events





it's a winter

With autumn's glory now behind us and thoughts of fluffy snow captivating your mind, *inOntario* introduces you to some favourite winter destinations.

After a successful launch this fall, *inOntario* – your Ontario travel magazine – has garnered the attention of many travellers by connecting life-long passions with ideal, personal moments. It has quickly become the guide for discovering unique perspectives and original experiences in Ontario.

In this second issue, you can see Ontario at its best in a dazzling winter coat. From sitting fireside in a gorgeous resort; to taking a journey on a snowmobile; to zooming down an indoor waterslide, count on *inOntario* to take you there.

You can also read about what provincial park you need to visit where

# wonderland

chickadees eat right out of your hand and get a great look at where to eat the best traditional foods in Toronto's wonderful ethnic neighbourhoods.

What do you know about a quinzy, a yurt or an ice volcano? All are in the winter edition of *inOntario*.

If you have comments, please e-mail us at [editor@ontariotravel.net](mailto:editor@ontariotravel.net) and you may see your submissions included in an upcoming edition.

We would like to publish your favourite Ontario moments, along with photos. And please tell us what you think of *inOntario*, and what you'd like to see us feature in the magazine.

Enjoy your winter getaway. We look forward to offering you stories and information that will help you to discover the great things in Ontario.

# Ontario

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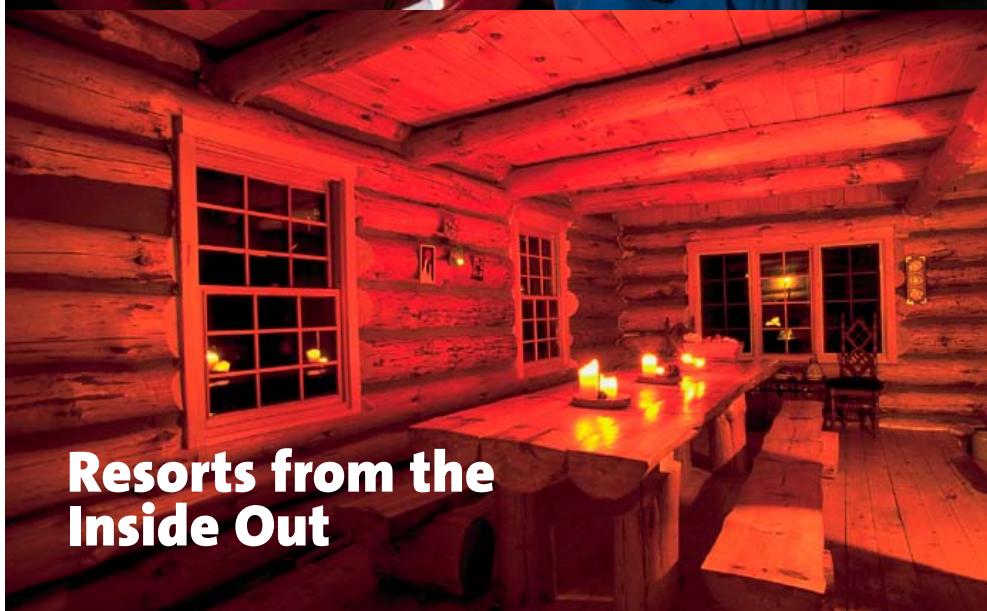
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Great Escapes



Exclusively  
Ours



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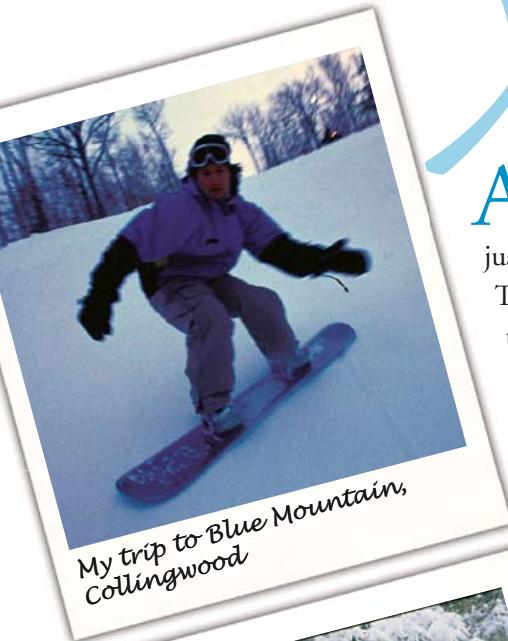
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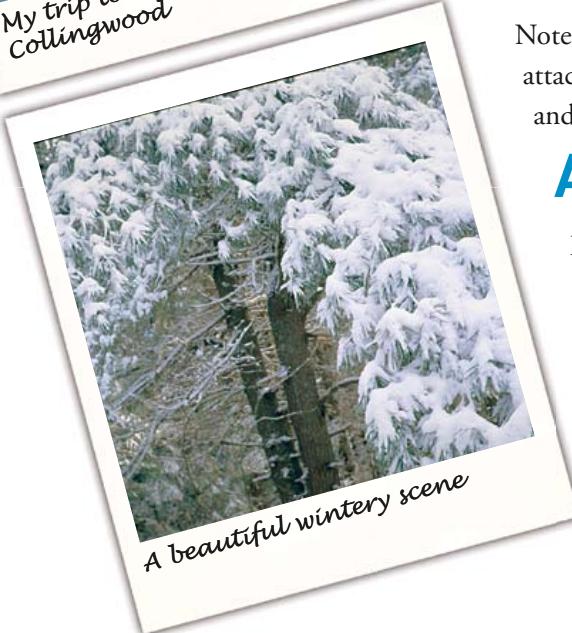
Cover photo: Taboo Resort, Muskoka



# yourOntario



My trip to Blue Mountain,  
Collingwood



A beautiful wintery scene

As introduced in our premiere issue, 'Your Ontario' highlights extraordinary travel stories to entertain, inspire and immerse curious travellers in Ontario. These are the pages where favourite travel moments are shared with people just like yourself.

To send your own life-enriching travel moments, or to simply offer comments on *inOntario* magazine, contact us today.

Mail us: Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation

Attention: *inOntario* Editor

10th Floor, Hearst Block, 900 Bay St., Toronto, ON M7A 2E1

Fax us: (416) 314-7563 E-mail us: [editor@ontariotravel.net](mailto:editor@ontariotravel.net)

Note: Please include name, address and telephone number in your submission. Please send all e-mailed photo attachments in JPEG format. Sorry, mailed photos cannot be returned. Thank you in advance for your story and we hope to share your Ontario Moments with our *inOntario* readers soon.

## A snowy day in the woods

December 12, 2003 was one of those beautifully crisp, sunny and breathtakingly clear winter days when your breath comes out like plumes of smoke.

A friend and I went for a horseback ride in Moffat, Ontario. My horse was 'Baby'.

It was spectacular! We rode for an hour through marshes strewn with ice, wound our way through trees that had shed their leaves for the season, and we saw lots of winter wildlife. In the stillness, all you could hear was the sound of the horses' hooves crunching on the snow. Awesome.

— Sharon Jones, Toronto, sent via e-mail

# inOntario

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or [nicole.leaper@mtr.gov.on.ca](mailto:nicole.leaper@mtr.gov.on.ca)

## ADVERTISING SALES

Please visit [www.tourismpartners.com](http://www.tourismpartners.com) (click on partnership opportunities). Or call Brynda Browning, Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation (OTMPC) – Sales, toll-free 1-888-365-4422 or (416) 314-6314. E-mail [otmp.sales@mtr.gov.on.ca](mailto:otmp.sales@mtr.gov.on.ca)

## ADDITIONAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

For additional travel information on Ontario  
please call the following numbers.

### FROM TORONTO CALLING AREA:

English: (905) 282-1721 French: (905) 612-8776

### FROM CANADA, CONTINENTAL U.S.A. AND HAWAII:

English: 1-800-ONTARIO or 1-800-668-2746  
FROM CANADA: French: 1-800-268-3736

Teletypewriter – TTY/Telecommunications Device  
for the Deaf (TDD): (905) 612-0870

## INTERNATIONAL INQUIRIES

Contact the appropriate Canadian embassy or overseas consulate for information on Ontario. For more information, visit [www.dfaid-maeci.gc.ca/english/missions/menu.htm](http://www.dfaid-maeci.gc.ca/english/missions/menu.htm) on the Internet. International visitors can also obtain information on Ontario through [www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net)

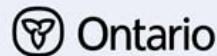
 We provide information to assist travellers with disabilities. Accessibility information is collected to address a variety of special needs. Please call the toll-free line and counsellors will assist you with the details you need to plan and enjoy travel throughout Ontario.

## RENSEIGNEMENTS EN FRANÇAIS

Nous sommes heureux de vous offrir un service d'information touristique en français. Veuillez composer le (905) 612-8776 et il nous fera plaisir de vous aider.

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## 'How to' ONTARIO

### STEP #1:

Finish reading *inOntario* and place in protective sleeves.

### STEP #2:

Log on to  
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or visit an Ontario Travel Information Centre.

### STEP #3:

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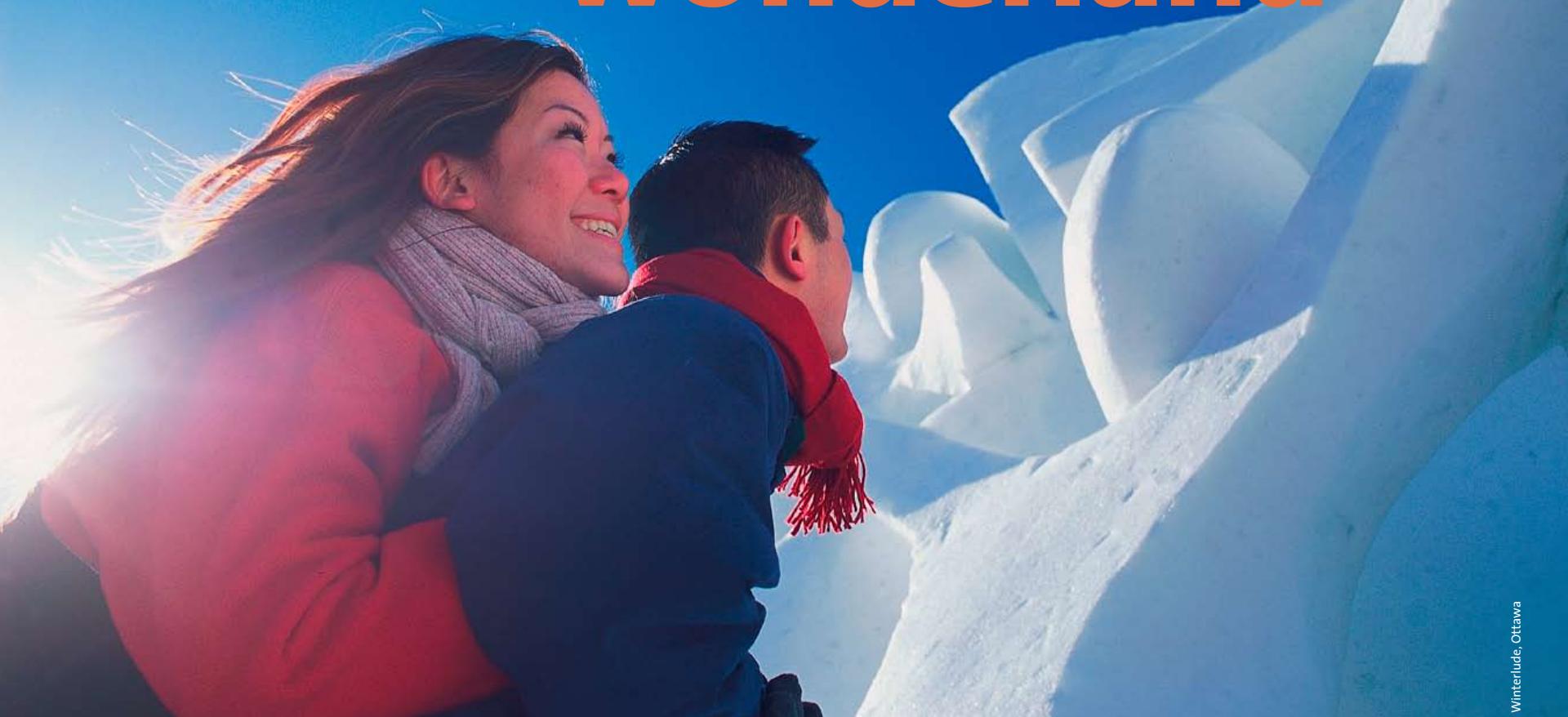
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[www.snowpass.org](http://www.snowpass.org)



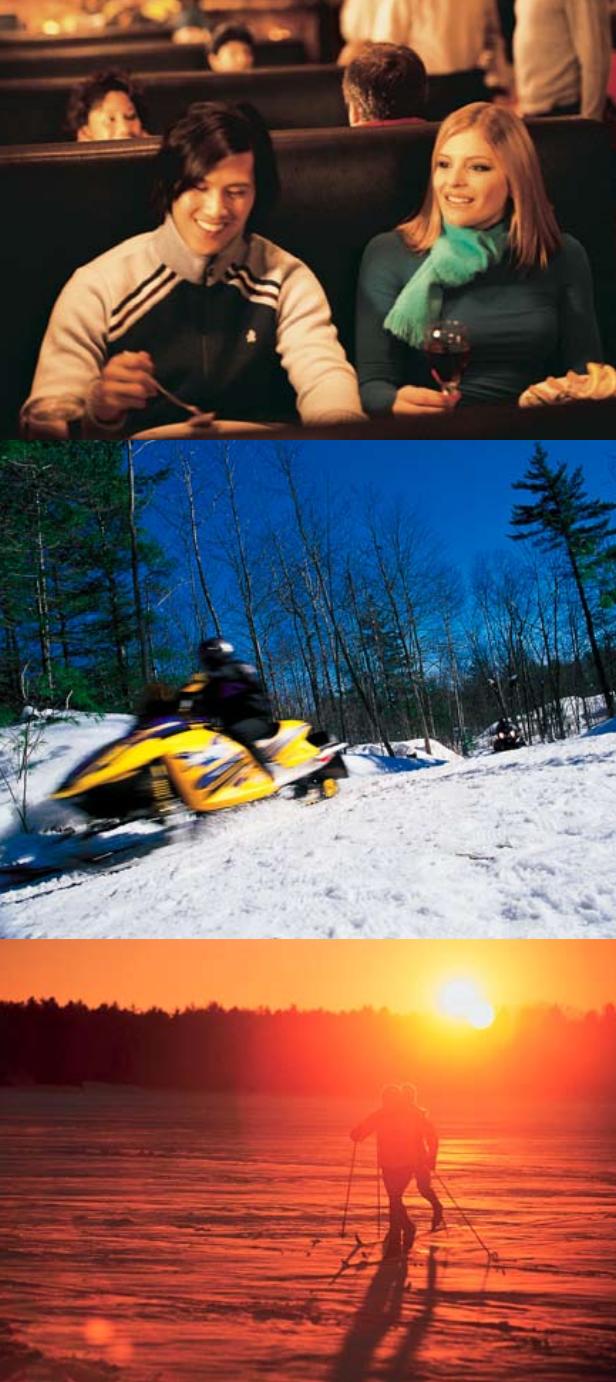
ONTARIO  
SNOW RESORTS ASSOCIATION

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[www.snowpass.org](http://www.snowpass.org)

# Walking in a winter wonderland



Winterlude, Ottawa



When nature drapes itself in whimsical winter fluff, visions of sugarplums – and Ontario – come to mind. The province, your ultimate winter playground, features world-class sporting venues and events for the whole family both outdoors and indoors.

Enjoy a getaway in the romantic settings of a secluded resort, or show your special someone a side of you they have never seen, by going on a couple's snowshoeing expedition among towering pines. Consider a trip with the whole family to see Ontario through the eyes of a child – either way, you're sure to be dazzled.

## FROM HEAD TO SNOW

Whichever path of adventure you choose to follow, Ontario outfitters are here to equip you with everything you need. From snowmobiles and snowshoes to toques and tickets, welcoming communities across the province have what you need for an unbelievable winter escape.

- Find winter festivals throughout the season that feature skating, ice sculptures, brilliant lights, polar bear dips and much more
- Try something different and take the reins of a dogsled for an expedition through Ontario's wilderness
- Curl up with a loved one fireside in a rustic cottage, enjoy a variety of cuisine, then do some cross-country skiing on professionally groomed trails
- A holiday season classic, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* will once again dazzle audiences at the Hummingbird Centre for Performing Arts in Toronto, December 11–19

**Call 1-800-ONTARIO or log on to [www.ontariotravel.net/outdoor](http://www.ontariotravel.net/outdoor) for updated ski conditions, snowmobile trail reports and weather information.**

# here and now

Around every corner, up every hill, in every town and city, there's something new and unique to experience in Ontario.

Celebrate the holidays in style with a celebration of the sixties in Ottawa or the 100th Annual Santa Claus Parade in Toronto. Fly by the Niagara Falls Aviary, learn more about Icewine, find a one-of-a-kind gift and more. Find the best of the newest right here and right now in Ontario.



# For the 100<sup>th</sup> time Santa Claus is coming to town

Stop your pouting. Stop your crying. Jolly old St. Nick is coming to town for the 100th anniversary of the Toronto Santa Claus Parade. And he's bringing more than just his jovial self. As you read this, Santa's busy reassembling some of his favourite floats he's used over the past 100 years. Even his elves have taken time away from their gift-making to shine the classic cars expected to make an appearance.

Starting with only one float in 1905, this spectacular parade is now one of

the largest in North America and is loved by kids and parents alike. But it's not just a parade this year. Special events are in the works to make this the best Santa Claus parade ever!

So, deck your kids in holiday garb, fill your thermos to the rim and scout out the perfect parade-viewing location. Join in the fun November 21 in Toronto. Find the Santa Claus Parade route map online at [www.thesantaclausparade.com](http://www.thesantaclausparade.com) or call (416) 249-7833 for more jolly information.

**HO HO HO**

# It's a jungle in here



Photo courtesy of Niagara Falls Aviary

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The Niagara Falls Aviary isn't your run-of-the-mill birdcage. It's an exotic experience. Take your friend, take your children, and most importantly, take your camera and get shots of over 300 tropical birds (most of which you've probably never seen before) and thousands of plants.

Everything you'll see under the massive glass dome screams 'tropical rainforest adventure.' From the cascading waterfalls to the shimmering ponds to the ancient ruins, the details are meticulous. There's even a crashed biplane, a 1930s Boeing Steerman. There's more than just tropical scenery, the warm, summery air will make you feel like you're actually walking through a jungle.

It's an exotic bird playground in the heart of Ontario and it's for all ages. To find out more on the Niagara Falls Aviary, please call 1-866-994-0090 or log on to [www.niagarafallsaviary.com](http://www.niagarafallsaviary.com)

**here and now**

# Deck the malls, shops and boutiques...



Toronto



Kingston

The holiday shopping season is finally here, along with a million or so reasons to get something special for someone special. From Ontario's large urban centres to our quaint rural towns, it's entirely possible to check everyone off your shopping list with a few strategic stops.

If you desire variety, Ottawa and Toronto have what you need. Or, enjoy the small town atmosphere's, shopping boutiques, eclectic treasures and friendly 'hellos' in places like Port Hope and St. Jacobs.

But if you're not too fond of the holiday shopping crowds – like many of us nowadays – then consider online gift certificates. This overlooked and underrated solution to holiday gift-giving is one of Ontario's latest trends. And the best part is, you can order them 24/7. Give your loved one the gift of a weekend massage,

mud bath and pedicure with Spas Ontario, or a romantic getaway for the two of you with Ontario's Finest Inns. For excellent online shopping destinations, visit [www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter) or take the simpler route and order a gift certificate online at a number of Ontario sites, including Ontario's Finest Inns

1-800-340-4667, [www.ontariosfinestinns.com](http://www.ontariosfinestinns.com),  
Spas Ontario 1-800-990-7702,  
[www.spasontario.com](http://www.spasontario.com), and Resorts Ontario  
1-800-363-7227, [www.resorts-ontario.com](http://www.resorts-ontario.com)

Give the gift of Ontario, a gift that keeps on giving. You can purchase memberships to museums and galleries, and season's passes to local theatre, the ballet and other entertainment packages. You'll get plenty of ideas if you call  
1-800-ONTARIO or visit  
[www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter)

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Would you like a  
**truffle with that icewine?**



Chocolate truffles, Leigh Beisch - Getty Images

Icewine, a sweet and flavourful wine served most often with desserts and produced right here in Ontario, is the perfect complement to your dinner.

Hillebrand Estates Winery, located in the heart of Niagara-on-the-Lake's wine region, has a number of desserts created with Icewine – *Icewine Vanilla Mouseline* (strawberry rhubarb jelly and sweet basil purée), *First-Pick Niagara Strawberries* (pistachio Chantilly and Icewine syrup) – but one of the big favourites is a melt-in-your-mouth *Icewine Truffle*.

Hillebrand Estates has won more than 300 medals all over the world – many for its Icewine – and if there were prizes for Icewine Truffles, Hillebrand would surely be among the winners. Here, they share their truffles recipe with you, so you can prepare it for your special dinner parties. For more information, contact Hillebrand Estates Winery at (905) 468-7123, 1-800-582-8412 or visit [www.hillebrand.com](http://www.hillebrand.com)

## Hillebrand Estates

# Icewine Truffles

Makes 3-4 dozen.

### Ingredients

1 pound/500 g chocolate chopped into small pieces  
1 ½ cup/300 mL 35% cream  
1 vanilla bean  
2 tablespoon/30 mL butter  
2 ounce/60 mL Hillebrand Estates Icewine  
1 cup of cocoa powder or icing sugar (optional)

- Place chopped chocolate into a stainless steel bowl.
- In a small saucepan, set over medium heat, add the cream, vanilla bean and 1 ounce/30 mL of the Icewine. Bring to a boil and remove the vanilla bean.
- Using a small knife, scrape out the seeds from the vanilla bean and add them back into the cream. Discard the bean.
- Pour the hot cream over the chopped chocolate and stir gently until the chocolate has melted completely.



- Add the butter in small pieces. When the butter has melted and incorporated into the chocolate cream mixture, pour out the truffle base into a clean flat casserole, using a rubber spatula to get every bit.
- Refrigerate the chocolate truffle base until it is set (2 hours). Remove the chocolate truffle base and, using a small teaspoon, form small 1 ounce/30 g balls. Working with your index finger, press a hollow in each truffle and fill with a small quantity of Icewine. You may wish to use an eye-dropper or syringe for this task. Pinch the truffle closed to capture the Icewine and use both your hands to round out the truffle.
- Refrigerate the truffle until all the chocolate has been used. Dust the truffles with cocoa powder or icing sugar, then serve.

# here and now



# 'inn' style

Top left to right – photos by George Whiteside. Courtesy of The Drake Hotel. Bottom left and centre – photos courtesy of Arc The.Hotel. Bottom right – photo courtesy of Hotel Le Germain. Photo by Michel Touchette.

The world of luxury urban inns, known as boutique hotels, is not an obvious choice when you're planning a winter weekend getaway. Traditionally, you slap the snow tires on the SUV and head out of the city, not into it. But if your travel mood is more metropolis than rural, Ontario's new batch of boutique hotels tempt travellers to escape big city life without skipping town.

More than a decade ago, small hotels catering to rock stars and supermodels, who wanted to stay off the beaten path, started to sprout in New York City. Today, boutique hotels celebrate luxury and design and

offer guests the same feeling of serenity as a quiet B&B tucked away on a secluded country road.

Mercer Street is as secluded as downtown Toronto can get. The laneway is sandwiched between the city's King Street theatre strip and the CN Tower, and lined with chic windowless restaurants and anonymous night-club doors. Hotel Le Germain's library fireplace glows in its glass lobby and invites guests to

escape the snowbanks and salted sidewalks out-side. Within moments of entering your room, you'll be mellowing out under a pile of Egyptian cotton sheets as quiet jazz notes bounce off the walls.

The lure of the boutique is in those details. Business executives and vacationing families appreciate the star-treatment you find at a smaller hotel. Le

Germain still takes reservations from plenty of fabulous people, but you'll

feel just as welcome if your entourage includes your kids and their collection of stuffed animals. The sleek style and approachable attitude of the staff helped the hotel to be named one of the 50 coolest new hotels in the world by *Condé Nast Traveler* magazine.

## **Hotel Le Germain**

Off of Le Germain's Lobby, star restauranteurs Michael and Guy Rubino's Luce serve up delectable Italian dishes.

30 Mercer Street, Toronto

1-866-345-9501

[www.hotelboutique.com](http://www.hotelboutique.com)

## **Other Unique Ontario Boutique Hotel Options**

### **ARC The.Hotel**

The capital gang has fallen for this Ottawa boutique fashioned by star Canadian design firm Yabu Pushelberg.

140 Slater Street, Ottawa

1-800-699-2516

[www.arcthehotel.com](http://www.arcthehotel.com)

### **The Drake Hotel**

An old flophouse that was about to fall onto Toronto's Queen Street West Art and Design District has been transformed into a mecca for the city's creative types and curious travellers who want in on the scene.

1150 Queen Street West, Toronto

416-531-5042

[www.thedrakehotel.ca](http://www.thedrakehotel.ca)

### **Harbour House Hotel**

In the heart of historic Niagara-on-the-Lake most rooms have king-sized feather-top beds with down duvets, whirlpool tubs and separate glass enclosed showers. Just don't miss breakfast in the conservatory.

85 Melville Street,

Niagara-on-the-Lake

1-866-277-6677

[www.harbourhousehotel.ca](http://www.harbourhousehotel.ca)

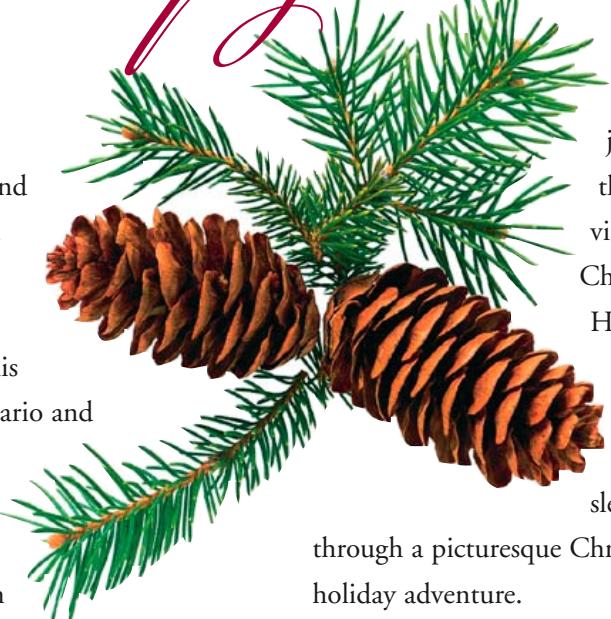
Visit [www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net) or call 1-800-ONTARIO for a complete list of accommodation options including boutique hotels.

*— Andrew Sardone is a freelance writer and fashion designer in Toronto.*

# here and now

## A Holiday Yule Treasure

Way back in the 19th century, before Christmas was associated with temperamental customers and end-of-year sales, families looked forward to coming together, feasting on a delicious meal and celebrating. You too can relive this joyous holiday spirit here in Ontario and you're encouraged to invite the whole family.



For this annual celebration, Ontario's historic sites have given rebirth to old-fashioned Christmases with a fresh new look: thousands of gorgeous lights and costumed participants decked in 19th century wear.

Take your kids on a memorable horse-drawn wagon ride through snow-blanketed trails at Upper Canada Village, shake hands with Father Christmas at

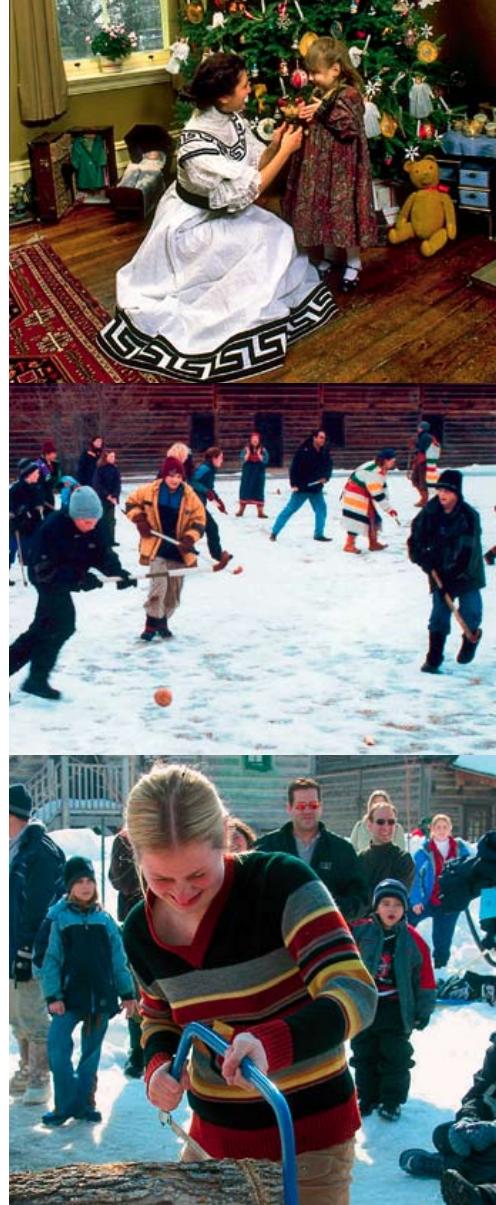
Lang Pioneer Village, then join a lantern-lit walking tour through a restored Victorian village and sing some classic Christmas carols at Doon Heritage Crossroads.

Stop by Mockingbird Hill Farm in Sault Ste. Marie and tour by horse-drawn sleigh past historic buildings and

through a picturesque Christmas tree meadow – a classic holiday adventure.

After working up such an appetite, complete your journey in 19th century Ontario with a holiday dinner, complete with turkey or ham and all the fixings.

A celebration like this only happens once a year, so make this holiday stand out from all your others and take the family on an adventure into the past.



Photos – top right – Spadina Museum: Historic House and Gardens, photo courtesy of Toronto Culture. Centre and bottom – photos courtesy of Fort William Historical Park, Thunder Bay.

fa la la la la la la



**Alight at Night**

Upper Canada Village, Morrisburg

[www.uppercanadavillage.com](http://www.uppercanadavillage.com)

(613) 543-3704

**Heritage Christmas**

Lang Pioneer Village, Keene

[www.langpioneererville.ca](http://www.langpioneererville.ca)

(705) 295-6694

**Light up the Night**

Fort William Historical Park, Thunder Bay

[www.fwhp.ca](http://www.fwhp.ca)

(807) 473-2344

**Christmas Remembered**

Black Creek Pioneer Village, Toronto

[www.trca.on.ca](http://www.trca.on.ca)

(416) 661-6600

**Doon By Lantern Light Tours**

Doon Heritage Crossroads, Kitchener

[www.region.waterloo.on.ca](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca)

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**Mockingbird Hill Farm**

Sault Ste. Marie

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(705) 253-4712

**Journeys of Discovery**

[www.journeysofdiscovery.ca](http://www.journeysofdiscovery.ca)

1-800-ONTARIO

# here and now

Ever notice how society associates the sixties with little more than hippies, peace protests and colourful vans? Some people have yet to realize that it was also a time of art. A time to design and a time to redesign.

Two of Ottawa's distinguished cultural attractions are highlighting the best of the sixties this February, with

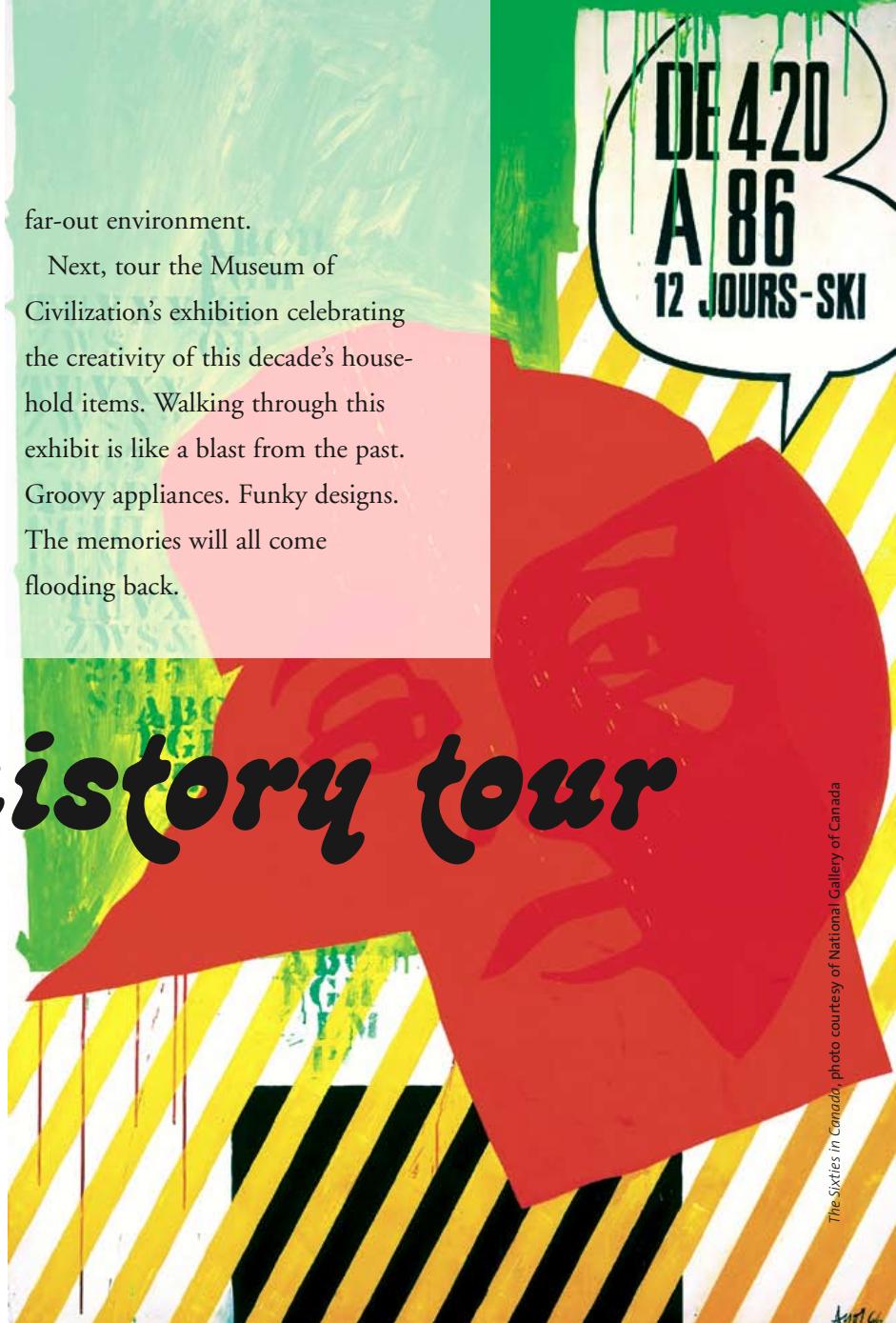
a strong emphasis on the art and culture that it brought into our homes and influences that resonate today. From paint and canvas to film and paper, you'll never get closer to this era's art than at the new exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada. Here, you can walk past some of the sixties' finest creative pieces in a

far-out environment.

Next, tour the Museum of Civilization's exhibition celebrating the creativity of this decade's household items. Walking through this exhibit is like a blast from the past. Groovy appliances. Funky designs. The memories will all come flooding back.

## *The magical history tour*

Check out **The Sixties in Canada** at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, February 4, 2005–April 24, 2005. Log on to [www.national.gallery.ca](http://www.national.gallery.ca) or call 1-800-319-2787 for all the information. Check out **Made in Canada: Craft and Design in the Sixties** at the Museum of Civilization from February 25, 2005 to December 11, 2005. Get the details at [www.civilization.ca](http://www.civilization.ca) or call 1-800-555-5621.





Weekends, February 4 to 20, 2005

Ottawa—Gatineau



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# Something COOL to think about!

Come to Canada's Capital Region for the 27th edition of Winterlude — three fun-filled weekends of excitement and activity for the whole family! Skating on the world's longest skating rink, glittering ice and snow sculptures, playing in the largest snow playground on the continent and meeting the Ice Hog family — all this and much more await you during North America's greatest winter festival.



Canada

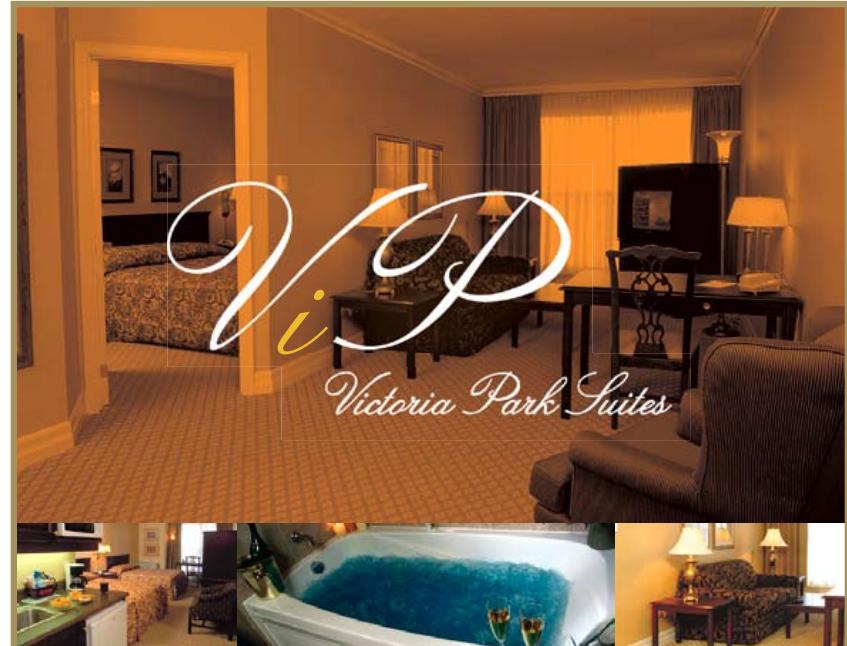
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# Warm up to winter festivals

When the radiant colours of Christmas lights illuminate parks, streets and homes, holiday festivals can't be too far behind.

Witness marvellous displays alight with the holiday spirit. Point out Santa Claus to inquiring minds. Stay for New Year's festivities and be treated to celebrations unlike any you've ever experienced. And as 2005 gets under way, winter carnivals swing into full gear across the province and Wiarton Willie's shadow is big news in early February.

There is plenty for everyone to see and do in the winter wonderland that is Ontario.



Winterlude, Ottawa

**LIGHTS! FESTIVALS! ACTION!**



Photo courtesy of Owen Sound Tourism

## Festival of Northern Lights, November 19–January 16

Striving to create the best Christmas light show and festival in the province, Owen Sound exhibits hundreds of displays, 13 kilometres (8 miles) of lighting and plenty of holiday spirit.

## Christmas Magic Lights Display, November 26–January 1

Gaze at over 100,000 lights in Cobourg – ‘Ontario’s feel good town.’ Walk along the brightly lit waterfront and pick up unique Christmas collectibles.

## Bright Nights Light Festival, December 2 – February 19

Downtown Windsor is once again illuminated with thousands of lights in this annual light extravaganza. Stroll through themed areas packed with radiant displays.

# This winter the calendar is event full



Amedeo Modigliani – *Portrait of Mrs. Hastings*, 1915 oil on paperboard 55.5 x 45.4 cm, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto – Gift of Sam and Ayala Zacks, 1970 © 2004 Art Gallery of Ontario



Christmas Magic Lights Display, Cobourg –  
Photo courtesy of Cindy Taylor

To discover our full lineup of  
events please visit  
[www.festivalsandeventsontario.ca](http://www.festivalsandeventsontario.ca)  
or [www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net)

**Happy 'eventing'!**

## november

### Modigliani: Beyond the Myth

Toronto

Running until Jan. 23, 2005

### Angelfest

Grimsby

Nov. 12, 2004–Jan. 23, 2005

### Celebration of Lights

Sarnia

Nov. 19, 2004–Jan. 9, 2005

### Festival of Northern Lights

Owen Sound

Nov. 19, 2004–Jan. 16, 2005

### Winter Festival of Lights

Niagara Falls

Nov. 20, 2004–Jan. 18, 2005

### Christmas Magic Lights Display

Cobourg

Nov. 26, 2004–Jan. 1, 2005

### Cavalcade of Lights

Toronto

Nov. 27–Dec. 31, 2004

### Simcoe Christmas Panorama

Simcoe

Nov. 27, 2004–January 2, 2005

## december

### Christkindl Market

Kitchener

Dec. 1–5, 2004

### 12 Days of Christmas

Niagara-on-the-Lake

Dec. 1–31, 2004

### Bright Nights Light Festival

Windsor

Dec. 2, 2004–Feb. 19, 2005

### Winter Wonderland

London

Dec. 3, 2004–Jan. 1, 2005

### Wonders of Winter

Waterloo

Dec. 4, 2004–Jan. 3, 2005

### Festival of the Night

Kitchener

Dec. 31, 2004

### New Year's Eve Family Frolic

Thunder Bay

Dec. 31, 2004

## january

### Ottawa International

### Hockey Festival

Ottawa

Jan. 5–9, 2005

### Niagara Icewine Festival

Niagara Falls

Jan. 14–23, 2005

### Sarnia Snowfest

Sarnia

Jan. 28–30, 2005

## WinterCity

Toronto

Jan. 28–Feb. 10, 2005

## Bon Soo Winter Carnival

Sault Ste. Marie

Jan. 28, 2005–Feb. 6, 2005

## february

### Wiarton Willie

Wiarton

Feb. 2–6, 2005

### Winterfolk III

Toronto

Feb. 4–6, 2005

### Grand Bend Winter Carnival

Grand Bend

Feb. 4–13, 2005

### Winterlude

Ottawa

Feb. 4–20, 2005

### Barrie Winterfest

Barrie

Feb. 5–6, 2005

### National Beaver Day

Ottawa

Feb. 25–27, 2005

# hot diggity!

– By Cathy Bennett



# Winter's Gone to the Dogs!

What do you get when you combine a cross-country skier with a couple of harnesses, a rope and man's best friend?

The answer is skijoring – one of North America's fastest growing winter sports. Originating in Scandinavia, skijoring comes from the Norwegian word that means ski-driving, and it's a sport in which you are pulled along on cross-country skis by a dog. Although it's sometimes associated with traditional sled dogs, any mid- to large-size dog that weighs over 14 kg (31 lbs.), enjoys exercise, and can obey commands, is a good candidate for skijoring.

"Most dogs love to pull things and we've had virtually every kind of dog, including a 16 kg (36 lb.) beagle that had a ball," says Kathryn Howell, who along with her husband Eren, owns and operates Dog Paddling Adventures in Markham.

Skijoring is one of the mainstays of the Howells' winter program, and

they will provide you with all the gear you need to try this exhilarating sport – cross-country ski equipment, a harness for you and your dog, a shock-absorbing tow line, and a quick-release system. Although skijoring is not considered a dangerous sport, a quick-release system is necessary in case your dog starts to 'hot diggity' downhill at breakneck speed or decides to detour and investigate a noise in the woods.

The one-day skijoring adventure package at Dog Paddling Adventures

includes a morning of teaching you and your pet the basics of skijoring – fitting the harnesses, basic mushing language and adjusting your rhythm on skis to your dog's pace. The morning is followed by a hearty, hot lunch and hands-on training when you hit the trails. Two-day packages are also available with overnight stays in King City or Orangeville.

In the Ottawa area, Liz Macfie of TTouch All Season Pet Training offers skijoring lessons in Rideau River Provincial Park near

Kemptville. Macfie also offers weekend packages with overnight stays at a 'pet friendly' hotel in the Kemptville area.

For information about **Dog Paddling Adventures**, please visit [www.dogpaddlingadventures.com](http://www.dogpaddlingadventures.com) and for information about **TTouch All Season Pet Training**, visit [www3.sympatico.ca/liz.gary/about.html](http://www3.sympatico.ca/liz.gary/about.html). For other winter ideas call 1-800-ONTARIO or visit [www.ontariotravel.net/outdoor](http://www.ontariotravel.net/outdoor) and [www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter)



Photo courtesy of Dog Paddling Adventures

# So 'mush' fun

There are many great places to dogsled in Ontario, but among the most spectacular is the Haliburton Forest and Wildlife Reserve, which features over 300 km (187 mi.) of groomed trails.

Professional guides at the reserve introduce you to your own team of Siberian huskies, and teach you the basics of dogsledding, including verbal commands such as 'gee' for right turn and 'haw' for left turn. They also help you harness your team, which you can mush yourself. Or if you prefer, you can sit back in the sleigh basket and simply enjoy the ride through this amazing wonderland of snow-draped forests.

There are a variety of guided tours, including an overnight tour with a stay at a bush camp, and activities which may include wolf howling. And with 70 Siberian huskies making their home in the Haliburton Forest and Wildlife Reserve, it's likely you won't have to wait long for the tour that's of interest to you.

To learn more about this wilderness adventure, please visit [www.haliburtonforest.com](http://www.haliburtonforest.com) or call (705) 754-2198.

If you're looking for more information about other places to dogsled in Ontario, please log on to [www.ontariotravel.net/outdoor](http://www.ontariotravel.net/outdoor), [www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter) or simply call 1-800-ONTARIO. 

*— Cathy Bennett is a travel writer whose work regularly appears in major publications. She is often found cruising the beautiful back roads of Ontario with her husband John, helping her find treasures that are not always on the beaten track.*





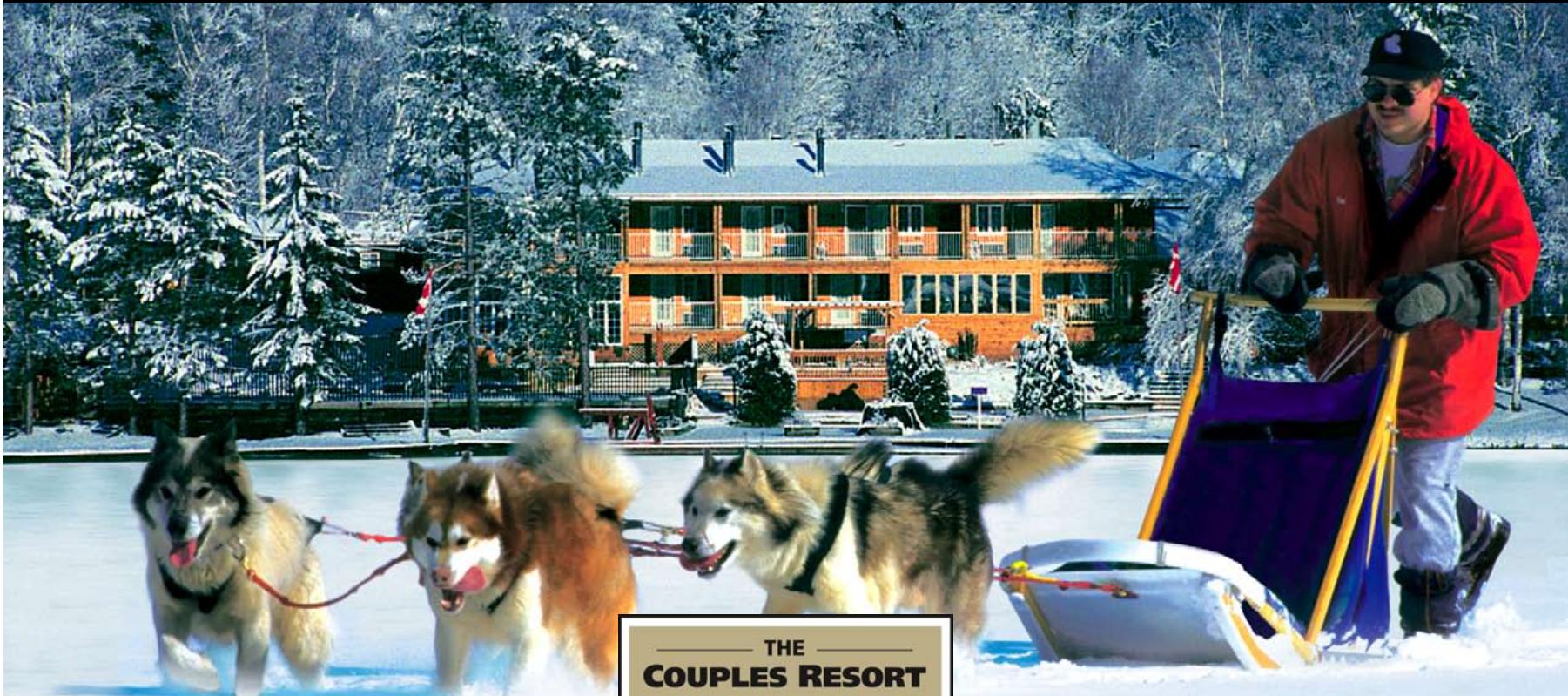
## Picture-perfect passage

When winter approaches, the Snow Train in Sault Ste. Marie comes to mind, with images of rugged mountains, snow-blanketed pines and ice-glazed rivers.

This wonderland adventure is a picture-perfect journey to the very heart of winter in Ontario . . . the winter that our pioneers first experienced, and the winter that inspired so many artists and poets. They even offer homemade French Canadian meat pie for lunch – among many other dishes – right on the train. It's the ultimate Ontario wilderness train experience.

Make this the year for a spectacular train ride through Algoma Central Country. To plan your own Snow Train excursion, log on to [www.agawacanyontourtrain.com](http://www.agawacanyontourtrain.com)

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# Carnivals heat up winter



Ontario has fantastic, fun-filled family winter carnivals and festivals throughout the province. And for the past 27 years, Winterlude – from February 4–20, 2005 in Ottawa – has been one of the grandest, playing host to more than 650,000 visitors last year.

Many of Winterlude's attractions are focused on the frozen Rideau Canal, the longest skating rink in the world. Here, taste buds are tantalized at the Stew Cook-off and fun is awakened at the Bed Race. Make a point of seeing the Waiters and Waitresses Race, where some of Ontario's finest servers show off their skills on the canal in this unique competition. Watch out for flying trays.

Iceculture, one of the largest ice-carving companies in the world, will freeze blocks of ice in its Hensall, Ontario ice factory for Winterlude, where artists sculpt them into many intricate, detailed and life-like works of art, including buildings, logos, animals and even human figures.

Julian Bayley, Iceculture's owner, said he is excited

that their unique Ice Café will return to the winter festivities. For the third year in a row, Iceculture will transport more than 200 blocks of ice to Ottawa and create a cool café right on Dow's Lake, a short skate from the Rideau Canal. This ice-cold stop will let thirsty skaters enjoy a hot beverage. This year's Winterlude looks to be one of the best ever.

Sault Ste. Marie's Bon Soo Carnival, the second largest winter carnival in Ontario,



celebrates its 42nd anniversary this winter. Famous for its unique – and often hilarious – events, Bon Soo attracts carnival-goers of all ages from all over the province.

Participate in popular activities such as sleigh rides, winter sports and concerts. Show your children how to have fun at some lesser-known attractions, such as a playground sculpted entirely of snow, polar bear swims and snow-canoe races. It's a week you're unlikely to forget. It runs from January 28–February 6 and has more than 125 indoor and outdoor activities.

The Orillia Winter Carnival, held from February 11–13, has a chili cook-off, and children can get involved in a story-writing contest. There's even jumbo checkers and 4 on 4 hockey tournaments.

Do you have a special talent for guessing the weight of a beaver? How about bubble blowing? Or snowshoe racing? You can have fun as a spectator or as a participant at the Dorset Snowball Winter Carnival, February 18–19. As you'd expect, there are plenty of snowball throwing contests. 

Photos – top right – SDorset Snowball Winter Carnival, Winterlude Ottawa, Bon Soo Sault Ste. Marie, Orillia Winter Carnival

# Join in the carnival fun!

- For more information on Winterlude in Ottawa, visit [www.canadascapital.gc.ca/winterlude](http://www.canadascapital.gc.ca/winterlude) or call 1-800-465-1867.
- Iciculture, visit [www.iceculture.com](http://www.iceculture.com) or call 1-888-251-9967.
- Sault Ste. Marie's Bon Soo Carnival, visit [www.bonsoo.on.ca](http://www.bonsoo.on.ca) or call 1-866-899-1670.
- Orillia Winter Carnival, [www.orilliawintercarnival.ca](http://www.orilliawintercarnival.ca) or call (705) 326-4663.
- Dorset Snowball Winter Carnival, log on to [www.dorsetsnowball.com](http://www.dorsetsnowball.com) or call (705) 766-9968.
- For more winter carnivals or travel information, visit [www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter) or call 1-800-ONTARIO.

# RESORTS

*from the inside out*

— Anne Dimon



*grab a good novel and a mug of  
hot chocolate or Irish coffee, and  
head for the nearest fireplace*

Blue Mountain, Collingwood



*Now Falling on Cedars*, the best-selling novel by David Guterson, has nothing to do with winter per se, but doesn't the title conjure up the perfect image of a magical, wintry day? A bright, yet slightly overcast day with full, lush snowflakes floating down from the heavens. Silently and slowly, they dress the cedars that stand like sentries on yard duty.

While some people embrace and celebrate winter by decking themselves in winter gear and dashing to the slopes, others wrap themselves in a woolly blanket, grab a good novel and a mug of hot chocolate or Irish coffee, and head for the nearest fireplace. That would be me. Snow bunny I am not. It's the après-ski stuff I find most appealing.

Fortunately, along with offering all the fun trappings of winter – skating, snowboarding, cross-country and downhill skiing – the resorts of Ontario have a deluge of indoor diversions to keep the anti-snow bunnies occupied and amused.

Take the Delta Grandview Resort. Located on the shores of Fairy Lake in Muskoka, the resort offers the mandatory cross-country skiing, snow-shoeing and snowmobiling. Indoors, guests can take advantage of a swimming pool, tennis court, exercise facilities and an intimate spa. One of the resort's most popular year-round attractions is the nearby Echo Valley Observatory where astronomy experts like Robin Tapley introduce guests to celestial wonders. When we visited, the sky was overcast and we couldn't enjoy this state-of-the-art observatory, but last spring we

were on a birdwatching outing with Tapley and his breadth of knowledge is impressive, his enthusiasm for nature infectious. His tour/edu-tourism techniques are far removed from textbook spiel and he designs his very popular edu-tours to be interactive and personalized. His 10-year-old company, Nature Trails, has a permanent office and on-site staff located right in the

Grandview lobby. In addition to nature tours, the Tapley team also conducts year-round workshops – paddle arts, soap stone sculpture, quill work, and other First Nation arts – for Delta guests and others on a first-come basis.

One night we dined in the resort's Rosewood Dining Room looking out over a frozen Fairy Lake. Every now and then you can see the lights of snowmobiles whizzing by. "During the winter months we like to offer hearty, comforting foods such as lamb shanks and veal tenderloin," says executive sous chef Ken Schultz. A special wild game menu is planned for November, a Christmas theme for December.

The dessert menu is extensive, and when I couldn't decide between the crêpes, the strawberry

rhubarb tart, the Grand Marnier crème brûlée or the banana chocolate bread pudding, the chef prepared an impromptu sampler plate. See, you can have it all!

Minutes away from the Grandview, Deerhurst Resort on Peninsula Lake, recognized as one of the top 100 family resorts in North America, is



Photo courtesy of Delta Grandview Resort, Huntsville



Photo courtesy of Deerhurst Resort, Huntsville

probably best known as the place where Shania Twain was discovered when she performed in a stage musical back in the late 1980s. One weekend my husband and I checked-in for a little mid-winter R & R (romance and reading) and took advantage of the indoor amenities. During the day I relaxed with a delicious, hot-stone massage in the resort's Aveda Spa. The spa has recently enhanced its services and treatment menu with the introduction of a Swiss shower system that can make you feel as if you're in the middle of a Costa Rican rainforest.

In the evening we took in a live stage show in the resort's intimate theatre. While it changes its theme from time to time, the show has been running on the Deerhurst stage for 23 years and is billed as the longest running show in

Canada. Playing now is Vibe – a flashy, musical romp through the decades from Sinatra to Beyoncé and Celine.

Also under the Deerhurst roof, guests will find two indoor pools, a fitness centre, two tennis courts, squash and racquetball courts, plus in-house pros available for private tennis, squash and racquetball lessons. Also good to know, there are fireplaces in more than 50 per cent of the resort's 400 rooms and suites. Those who wish to venture into the snowy wilderness can take advantage of groomed cross-country ski trails, snow-shoeing, snow tubing, snowmobiling, horse-drawn sleigh and cutter rides for romantic tours around

the property. At special times, such as the Christmas holidays and March break, the resort also offers a number of fun workshops and interactive activities for kids and families – things such as cooking classes, craft sessions, even teen dances. “Guests here run out of time before they run out of things to do,” says Director of Sales, Brent Lavery.

When, occasionally, I acquiesce to my husband or daughter’s pleas to go outside and play in the snow, it’s usually to skate or cross-country ski. But one weekend I got really brave and hit the bunny hills at Sir Sam’s Inn in Haliburton. The fact that I probably made a fool of myself really didn’t matter because the mother/daughter bonding experience was worth every embarrassing moment.

Innkeepers James and Liz Orr have owned and operated the historic inn for the last 25 years. The only downhill ski resort in Haliburton, Sir Sam’s offers 12 runs, four chair lifts, a pony lift and a T-bar. Additionally, there’s an outdoor whirlpool and skating rink and nearby Winter Dance Dogsled Tours allows outdoor enthusiasts the opportunity to

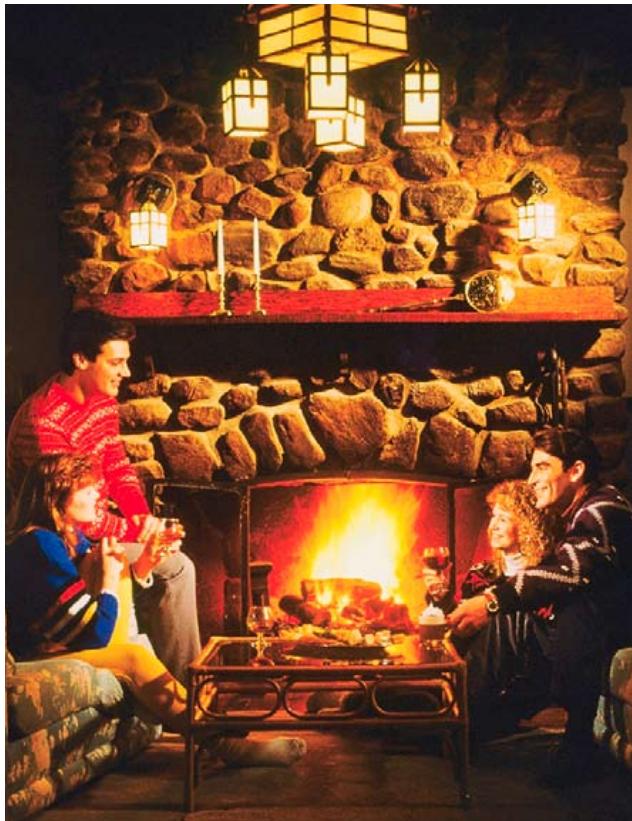


Photo courtesy of Sir Sam's Inn, Haliburton

take a team of sled dogs on a spin through a winter wonderland. Of course, one must immediately follow up the chilly adventure with a soothing massage in the Loon Song Spa. It’s a small spa that offers all the basics.

Decorated in contemporary country, most of the 25 guestrooms have romantic wood-burning fireplaces and whirlpool baths. Every Saturday evening, the Orrs welcome in-house guests to the lounge for an après-ski with complimentary wine and hors d’œuvres. Guests who enjoy an evening meal in the Twin Fires dining room, which derives its name from the room’s two fireplaces, are invited to descend the circular staircase down to the wine cellar to make their selection.

Located just over an hour’s drive from Toronto on the shores of Lake Simcoe, The Briars Resort, Conference Centre and Spa is a gracious and sprawling country estate that has

been in the Sibbald family since the late 1800s. “My great, great-uncle Frank purchased the manor house in 1878,” says vice-president Hugh Sibbald.



"We began renting cottages in the 1920s and opened the golf course in 1921."

Along with a buffet of outdoor activities, there is also a full menu of things to do for those who prefer to admire the white stuff from a distance – things such as floating in a solarium pool watching the snow flakes fly, or practising your golf swing at an indoor practice facility for when the blanket of white turns to a carpet of green. There's also yoga and wellness-oriented seminars tied in with the resort's very pleasant, full-service spa. Two of their signature specialties are the Chakra Balancing treatments and Hawaiian Temple Body Work. Waiting for your session, you can sip herbal tea while, outside in the distance, you can see guests enjoying a horse-drawn sleigh ride.

So, let it snow, let it snow. You'll find me warm and toasty lounging by the fireplace, wrapped in seaweed at a spa, or simply savouring a glass of fine Ontario wine at one of the province's many great resorts. ❄

*– Anne Dimon is a freelance travel writer whose work appears regularly in the Toronto Star*



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To contact Delta Grandview call 1-877-472-6388 or  
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To contact Sir Sam's Inn call 1-800-361-2188 or visit  
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To contact Deerhurst Resort call (705) 789-6411 or  
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# Ethnic restaurants **favour flavour**

– Betty Zvavatkauskas and Sonia Zvavatkauskas

*Outside, the Spadina street-car rumbles through the snow-muffled night, past the glow of Chinatown's neon signs. Inside, we warm ourselves with a steaming bowl of noodle soup. The days are short and cold, but we make the most of winter evenings by dining out in Toronto's ethnic neighbourhoods. From the \$3 falafel joint to the \$10 all-you-can-eat Indian buffet, these restaurants favour flavour over lavish décor. More than just places to eat, they are the pulse of this multicultural city.*

Little India



# Historic St. Lawrence Market

When *Food & Wine* magazine listed the 200-year-old St. Lawrence in its top 25 markets of the world, it confirmed what Torontonians already knew. This is the place to shop for a daunting array of distinctive, fresh food in one of the city's most historic buildings. Roughly 200 vendors sell everything from organic watercress and artisanal cheeses to wild boar meat and warm Montreal-style bagels. Caviar Direct is famous for its selection of smoked salmon from the popular Scottish

style to Canadian classics like maple-and-alder-smoked Gaspé or sweet B.C. fish candy. Chefs turn to Placewares for everything from icing tips to diminutive 71 gram (2.5-ounce) ramekins. We love browsing through the wall of cookie cutters for unusual shapes like seahorses and giant martini glasses.

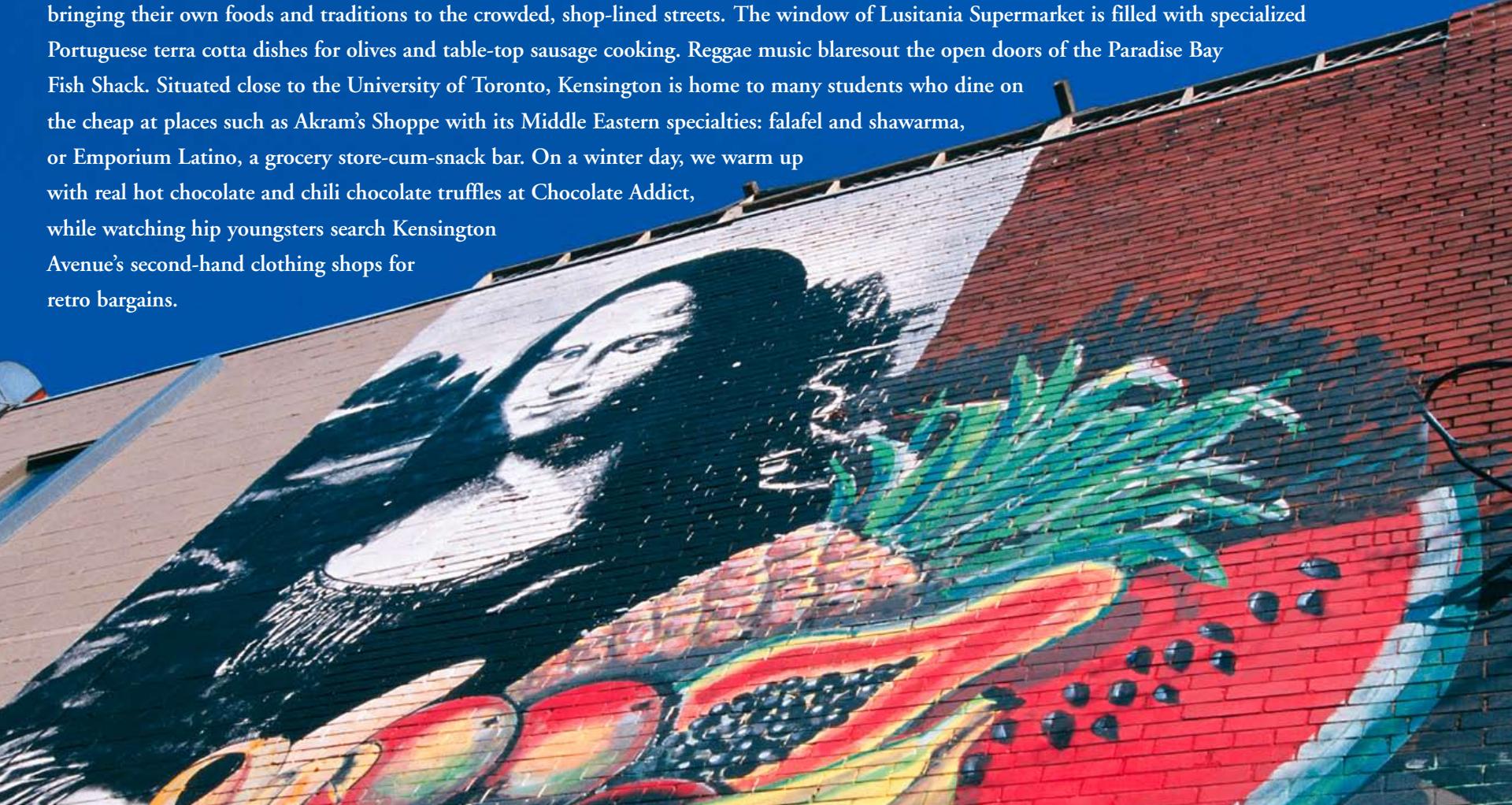
On Saturdays, local farmers set up shop in the smaller building across the road, known as the 'north market.' In winter you'll find them selling

the freshest eggs, specialty mushrooms and baked goodies. Alli's Catering boasts irresistible breads: leek and saffron, Guinness-flavoured and savoury pumpkin.

The south building was once the site of Toronto's city hall and jail. Learn more about the neighbourhood's rich history and taste food samples on one of the walking tours offered Wednesday through Saturday mornings.

# Colourful Kensington

For more than a century, successive waves of immigrants moved in and out of this neighbourhood, just west of Spadina and north of Dundas, each bringing their own foods and traditions to the crowded, shop-lined streets. The window of Lusitania Supermarket is filled with specialized Portuguese terra cotta dishes for olives and table-top sausage cooking. Reggae music blares out the open doors of the Paradise Bay Fish Shack. Situated close to the University of Toronto, Kensington is home to many students who dine on the cheap at places such as Akram's Shoppe with its Middle Eastern specialties: falafel and shawarma, or Emporium Latino, a grocery store-cum-snack bar. On a winter day, we warm up with real hot chocolate and chili chocolate truffles at Chocolate Addict, while watching hip youngsters search Kensington Avenue's second-hand clothing shops for retro bargains.





## HONG KONG-STYLE PACIFIC MALL

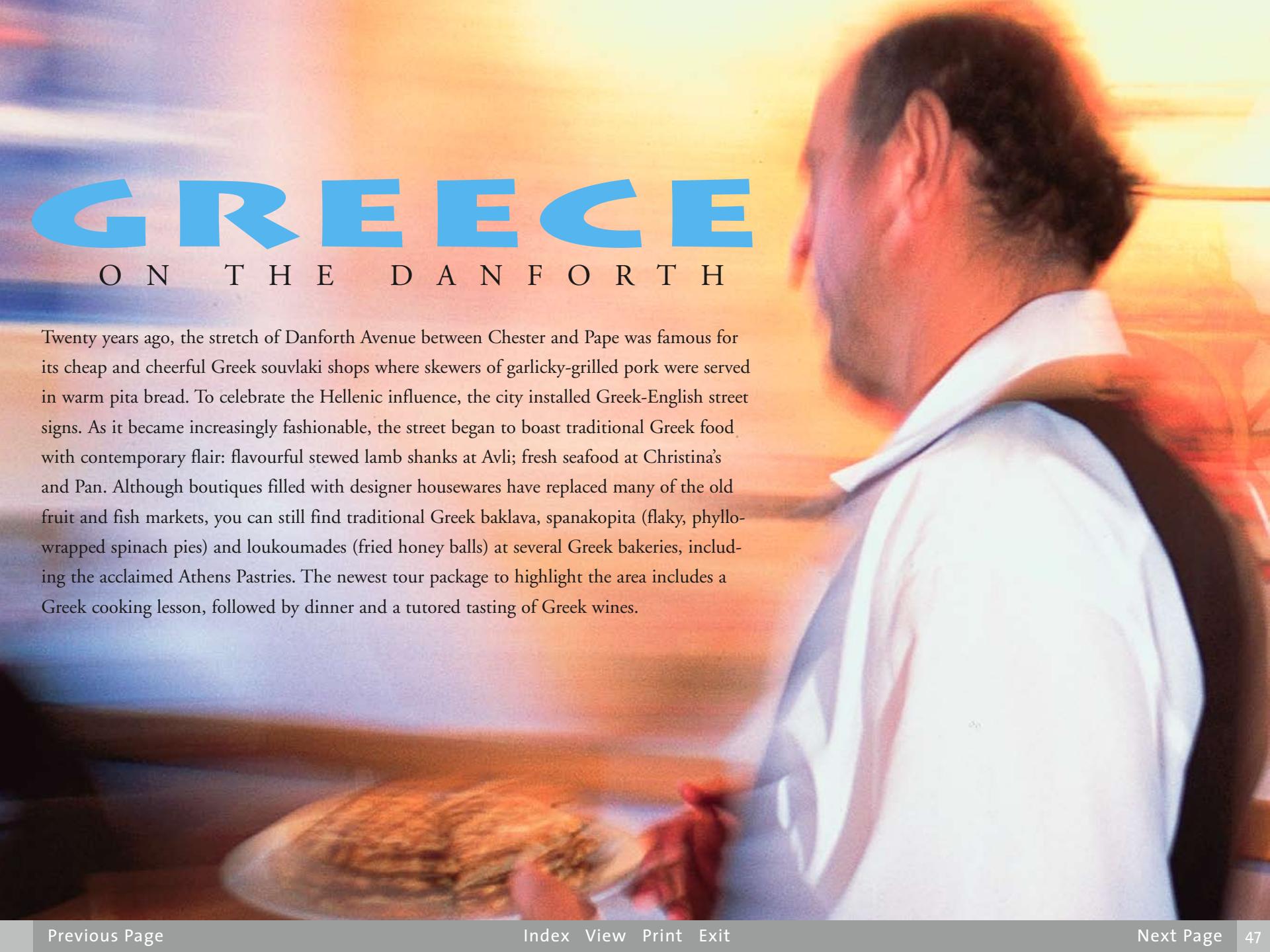
Toronto's newest Chinatown sprawls across the northeast fringes of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in Markham. When streets are slushy, we head here to experience one of North America's largest indoor Chinese malls. At Pacific Mall, roughly 400 boutiques offer all things Asian, from the modern (tiny cellphones and Hello Kitty paraphernalia) to the traditional (Japanese raku tableware) in a Hong Kong-style atmosphere. Foodies shop for dozens of varieties of

ginseng, preserved lemons, dried shark fins and sea cucumbers. We love the second floor food court redolent with the smells of baking and stir-frying. The food here is authentic: bird's nest soup with sweet red date and fried lemon grass chicken wings. We watch noodles being pulled by hand at Dong Bei Wang, then order a bowl of noodle soup with spicy shredded pork. Afterwards we pick up a box of traditional Korean walnut cakes, named for their shape, not their ingredients

— a waffle-like exterior filled with sweet red bean paste. Munching still-warm cakes we check out the nearby stage to see if any performances are scheduled, or if anyone has ordered an emperor's photograph package, complete with elaborate costume rental. To experience truly Asian entertainment, youngsters head for MHQ to enjoy sweet bubble tea in a karaoke booth, where music is available in three languages: Mandarin, Cantonese and English.

# GREECE

ON THE DANFORTH

A photograph showing the back of a man's head and shoulders. He is wearing a white button-down shirt. In front of him, a hand holds a shallow, round dish containing a traditional Greek dessert, possibly baklava or a similar sweet pastry. The background is a warm, blurred sunset or sunrise over water.

Twenty years ago, the stretch of Danforth Avenue between Chester and Pape was famous for its cheap and cheerful Greek souvlaki shops where skewers of garlicky-grilled pork were served in warm pita bread. To celebrate the Hellenic influence, the city installed Greek-English street signs. As it became increasingly fashionable, the street began to boast traditional Greek food with contemporary flair: flavourful stewed lamb shanks at Avli; fresh seafood at Christina's and Pan. Although boutiques filled with designer housewares have replaced many of the old fruit and fish markets, you can still find traditional Greek baklava, spanakopita (flaky, phyllo-wrapped spinach pies) and loukoumades (fried honey balls) at several Greek bakeries, including the acclaimed Athens Pastries. The newest tour package to highlight the area includes a Greek cooking lesson, followed by dinner and a tutored tasting of Greek wines.



# 1 little India on Gerrard

Shops full of rainbow-hued saris, glistening bangles and crisp cricket uniforms make a trip to Little India on Gerrard Street East the perfect antidote to a grey winter day. Equally tempting is the inexpensive dining: dhosas (crepes) filled with potatoes and onions, cobs of corn grilled right on the street, nutty sweetmeats decorated with edible silver leaf and that ubiquitous bargain – the Indian buffet. It's hard to beat the \$9.95 dinner spread at Famous Indian Cuisine, including luscious butter chicken, aloo gobi

(cauliflower and potatoes), saag (spinach purée) and many others.

The Lahore Tikka House hums with crowds of happy families enjoying barbecued meat dishes that emerge in rapid succession from the tandoor, a quick-cooking clay oven – chicken tikka (coated red spice mixture) and lamb kebabs accompanied by giant rounds of soft naan (flat bread). When it first opened, the décor of this former KFC (Kentucky Fried Chicken) restaurant was improvised, but it has become so popular in

recent years that the owners are investing in a \$1-million facelift. They promise dedicated customers the food will stay the same.

Back on the street, sated diners finish their evening with kulfi, an ice-cream style treat. While in the neighbourhood, we shop at Kohinoor Foods for almonds, green raisins and fragrant spices – all top quality at reasonable prices. Local kitchen supply stores are piled high with bargain pots, stainless steel mixing bowls, statues of the elephant-headed Ganesh and other Hindu deities.

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# Cosmopolitan St. Clair West

The busy stretch of St. Clair Avenue West from Bathurst to Oakwood is not a typical tourist destination, but its ethnic restaurants are as varied as the local population. A neighbourhood landmark, Albert's Real Jamaican Foods, satisfies cravings for oxtail and homemade ginger beer. Farther west Spanish culture meets Arabian influence and gives birth to a great selection of tapas at Mezzetta Café Restaurant. We like to munch on cheese boureka (pastry) and deep-fried beans while enjoying live jazz on Wednesday nights. Truly decadent break-

Nowhere else are you likely to hear Cuban rap while enjoying a heavenly custard flan with orange sauce

fasts are a specialty of the French bakery-cum-café Pain Perdu. Their namesake dish, a melt-in-your-mouth French toast, is served smothered in crème anglaise, maple syrup and fresh berries.

For dinner, Bohemia Havana serves up large helpings of rustic Cuban fare: fried pork and onions served with either ripe plantain or yucca. While the travel posters on the walls help to conjure up an island atmosphere, the music truly transports. Nowhere else are you likely to hear Cuban rap while enjoying a heavenly custard flan with orange sauce. Brides-to-be shop for lavish gowns along the stretch of St. Clair dubbed Corso Italia. This is the place to find a great little neighbourhood trattoria.

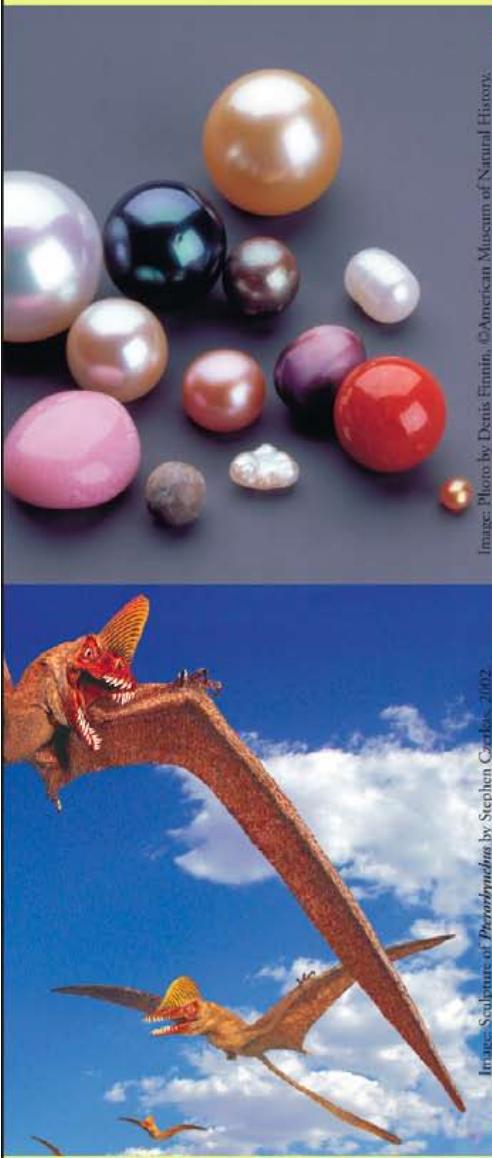


Image: Photo by Denis Finnin, ©American Museum of Natural History

Image: Sculpture of *Pteranodon* by Stephen Corlett, 2002

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Lawren S. Harris, (Canadian, 1885-1970), Lake and Mountains (detail), 1928, oil on canvas. Gift from the Fund of the T. Eaton Co. Ltd. for Canadian Works of Art, 1948 © 2004 Art Gallery of Ontario

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Yousuf Karsh, Pablo Picasso in Vallauris ©1954 Yousuf Karsh ©Estate of Picasso/SODRAC(2004)

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# PAN-ASIAN SPADINA



Chinatown, Toronto

The chaotic stretch of Spadina between Queen and College streets is home to Vietnamese, Cantonese and Mandarin communities. In winter we love to linger over a large steaming bowl of Vietnamese pho (soup) at Pho Hung or fill up on fried pork-filled dumplings, a Mandarin specialty, served at the Dumpling House. Although a modest eatery, it draws an eclectic crowd, including Prime Minister Paul Martin, whose photo hangs on the ceramic tile wall. At Tung Hing Bakery we buy pretty pink lotus pastries and sweet buns filled with mung bean and coconut. Small children race through the crowded aisles of Hua-Sheng Supermarket, while their parents shop for fresh conch and pickled banana blossoms. Stacks of bright plastic strainers frame the doorway of Tap Phong Trading Co. Inside we pick up bamboo placemats and leave the 132-litre (140-quart) pots for the restaurant folk.

## CELEBRATE TORONTO! WINTERLICIOUS

There's no better way to sample Toronto's food scene than the annual Winterlicious event, when more than 100 of the city's restaurants offer affordable fixed-price menus (\$10 to \$30 for a three-course meal). This is the window of opportunity for thrifty foodies to experience such acclaimed restaurants as Canoe and Auberge du Pommier. Early reservations are a must at this enormously popular event. Visit [www.toronto.ca/special\\_events/wintercity/winterlicious.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/special_events/wintercity/winterlicious.htm) 

— Betty Ziyatkauskas and Sonia Ziyatkauskas are the co-authors of *Eating Shakespeare: Recipes and More from the Bard's Kitchen*.

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Emporium Latino, 243 Augusta Ave.,

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Chocolate Addict, 185 Baldwin St.,

(416) 979-5809

## SPADINA

Pho Hung, 350 Spadina Ave., (416) 593-4274

Dumpling House, 328 Spadina Ave.,

(416) 596-8898

Tung Hing Bakery, 428 Dundas St. West,

(416) 593-9375

Hua-Sheng Supermarket, 293 Spadina Ave.,

(416) 263-9883

Tap Phong Trading Co., 360 Spadina Ave.,

(416) 977-6364

## PACIFIC MALL

Pacific Mall, 4300 Steeles Ave. East,

(905) 470-8785 [www.pacificmalltoronto.com](http://www.pacificmalltoronto.com)

## THE DANFORTH

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Christina's, 492 Danforth Ave., (416) 463-4418

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The Famous Indian Cuisine,

1437 Gerrard St. East, (416) 406-4511

Kohinoor Foods, 1438 Gerrard St. East

(416) 461-4432

## ST. CLAIR AVENUE WEST

Albert's Real Jamaican Foods, 542 St. Clair Ave

West, (416) 658-9445

Mezzetta, 681 St. Clair Ave. West,

(416) 658-5687

Pain Perdu, 736 St. Clair Ave. West,

(416) 656-7246

Bohemia Havana, 994 St. Clair Ave. West,

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# P A R K S ' S T I L L ' A P L A C E T O B E I N W I N T E R

—By Sue Lebrecht

Stillness is an underrated sensation.

We hardly think to seek it anymore.

Yet, when all is calm and quiet, we exhale with a sigh, perhaps closing our eyes for a moment, then, looking about, see beauty. It's sort of like a massage, stillness, in the way it bestows relaxation to spots you didn't even know were tense.

# “WOW” SCENE AT SANDBANKS

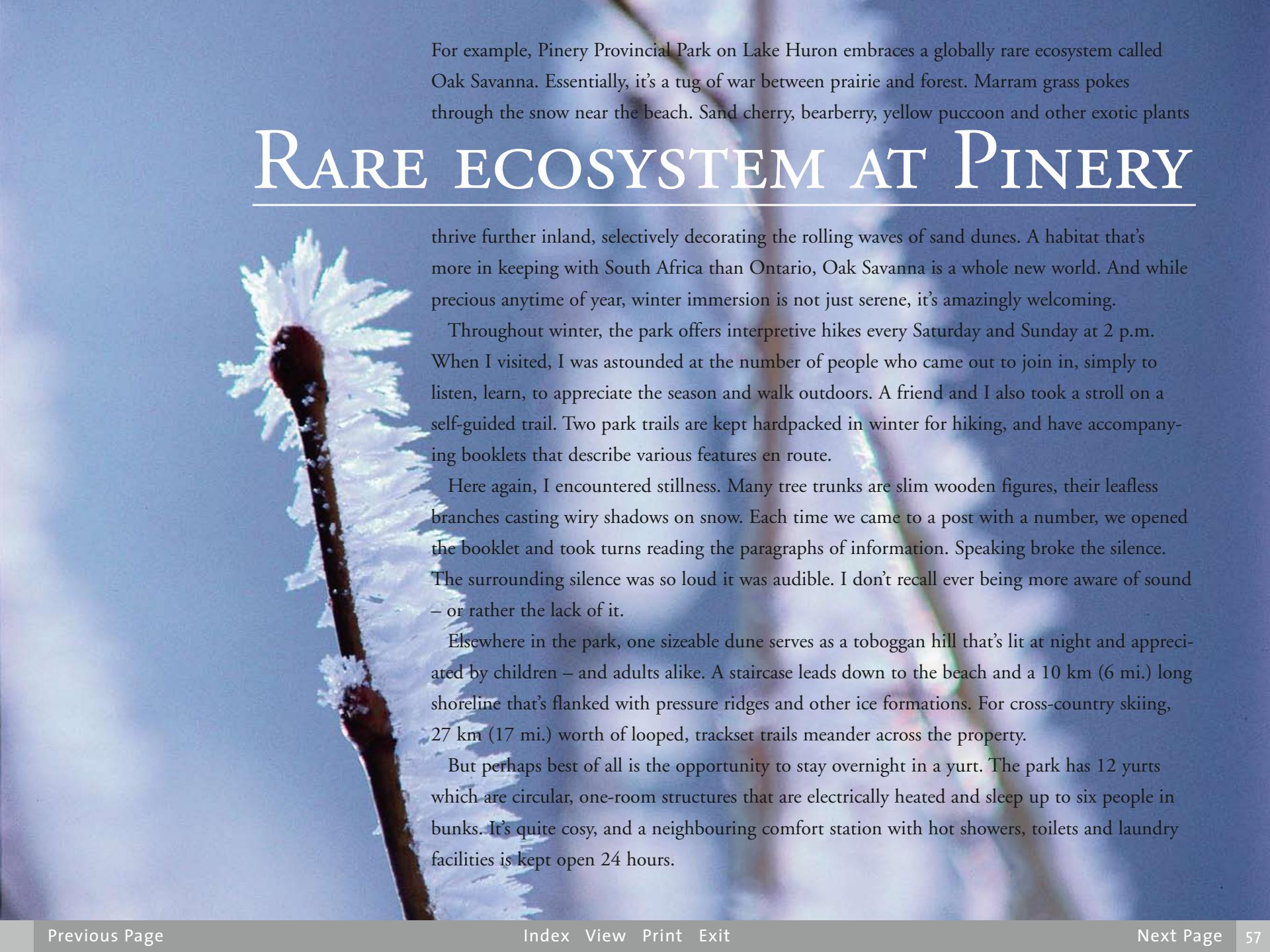
Winter is probably the best season for experiencing stillness. I clearly remember one moment at Sandbanks Provincial Park while cross-country skiing with a couple of friends. The park's ski trails criss-cross a long sandbar on the shore of Lake Ontario to a point called the Pannes where sand dunes encircle a flat expanse of oval-shaped pools. The frozen depressions glistened under the bright sun, the tops of dunes protruded from the



snow – blond on white – and an unmarked ski track peeled away to roller coaster among the mounds. Someone said “wow” and we stopped beside a gnarled hunk of driftwood and soaked in the scene. It looked surreal and provocative, as if the unmarked ski track beckoned into another dimension. I took pictures, knowing that none would capture this moment or tingling feeling. By contrast, in summer, Sandbanks is festive,

and like most provincial parks, it's packed on weekends. Big towels are spread on the beach, there's music, coolers, lawn chairs, inflatable toys, people swimming, chatting, building sandcastles and savouring ice cream.

Winter takes the hurry out of a park. There are no crowds, no rush. Its very nature slows things down; its blanket of snow subdues momentum, seduces urgency. There's space, calm and solitude; also there's a portal to appreciation. Without the distraction of festivity, you can more clearly detect the nature of the land that's being protected.



For example, Pinery Provincial Park on Lake Huron embraces a globally rare ecosystem called Oak Savanna. Essentially, it's a tug of war between prairie and forest. Marram grass pokes through the snow near the beach. Sand cherry, bearberry, yellow puccoon and other exotic plants

# RARE ECOSYSTEM AT PINERY

---

thrive further inland, selectively decorating the rolling waves of sand dunes. A habitat that's more in keeping with South Africa than Ontario, Oak Savanna is a whole new world. And while precious anytime of year, winter immersion is not just serene, it's amazingly welcoming.

Throughout winter, the park offers interpretive hikes every Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m. When I visited, I was astounded at the number of people who came out to join in, simply to listen, learn, to appreciate the season and walk outdoors. A friend and I also took a stroll on a self-guided trail. Two park trails are kept hardpacked in winter for hiking, and have accompanying booklets that describe various features en route.

Here again, I encountered stillness. Many tree trunks are slim wooden figures, their leafless branches casting wiry shadows on snow. Each time we came to a post with a number, we opened the booklet and took turns reading the paragraphs of information. Speaking broke the silence. The surrounding silence was so loud it was audible. I don't recall ever being more aware of sound – or rather the lack of it.

Elsewhere in the park, one sizeable dune serves as a toboggan hill that's lit at night and appreciated by children – and adults alike. A staircase leads down to the beach and a 10 km (6 mi.) long shoreline that's flanked with pressure ridges and other ice formations. For cross-country skiing, 27 km (17 mi.) worth of looped, trackset trails meander across the property.

But perhaps best of all is the opportunity to stay overnight in a yurt. The park has 12 yurts which are circular, one-room structures that are electrically heated and sleep up to six people in bunks. It's quite cosy, and a neighbouring comfort station with hot showers, toilets and laundry facilities is kept open 24 hours.

# ICE VOLCANOES AT PRESQU'ILE

Shorelines always spell romance, and that reminds me of another moment, back on the banks of Lake Ontario at Presqu'ile Provincial Park. In a fierce wind, I stood transfixed with my boyfriend watching the eruption of ice volcanoes. The shore was punctuated with dozens of them, these 6 m (20 feet) high hummocks, water spurting and frothing from their tops like lava from a volcano. They say the windier the day, the higher the waves, the more spectacular the eruptions. The potency of the wind was intense. Another couple, also bearing witness, captured the phenomenon on video.

## CHICKADEES AT MACGREGOR



MacGregor Point Provincial Park, on Lake Huron, is another park with rental yurts along with hiking and cross-country ski trails. However, the sensation of stillness here comes from a chickadee. In winter, the resident birds, along with red-breasted nuthatches, land on outstretched hands for sunflower seeds. I must have stood there for an hour, perhaps more, mesmerized as the birds came to me one by one. They'd wrap their tiny talons around my thumb or forefinger, and before picking a seed, they'd cock their head with a twittering look, perhaps to assess their safety, perhaps to say thank you.

Then at day's end, you can't miss the sunset on Lake Huron – a ritual at anytime of year. In winter, the daily occurrence sets huge blocks of upheaved ice aglow in hues of red and gold.

Ice, Lake Ontario, Whitby – Masterfile

# Algonquin

T H E C R O W N J E W E L

Talk of stillness, winter and Ontario parks needs to include the provincial crown jewel, Algonquin. Winter starts early here, usually mid-November, and generally stays to the end of April. Snow is abundant, yet accessibility is one of the park's virtues. There could be a metre (three feet) of snow and you can still go practically everywhere. It's like the carpet has been rolled out for your arrival.

The 56 km (35 mi.) long corridor of Highway 60, from the park's West Gate to the East Gate, is kept plowed and sanded all winter. Cross-country ski trails are trackset and have en route shelter cabins for lunch and rest stops. Snowshoes are available from Algonquin Outfitters just outside the West Gate, and there's a choice of a dozen, marked hiking trails for exploration. Moreover, there are dog sled excursions, rental yurts, plowed campsites

and outstanding exhibits in the Visitor Centre, which is open on weekends. Collectively, it's all about easing into wilderness.

I took my aunt and uncle there just after Christmas; they were visiting from Germany. First stop was the 2 km (1.2 mi.) long Lookout Trail. It's so popular, it's almost always hardpacked, and leads to a cliff overlooking a vast expanse of silent, white imagery. Algonquin is larger than Prince Edward Island; my relatives were taken aback by the immense sense of space and naturalness. Next we went cross-country skiing and there were countless animal tracks. A moose had gone before us, following the ski trail. There were imprints of wolves, martens and other creatures. The snow played show and tell, and we were armed with the booklet 'Mammals of Algonquin,' which shows tracks of various wildlife. In the stillness, the tracks told a story, and provided an unforgettable sensation.

## PLAN YOUR TRIP NOW

- Sandbanks Provincial Park at [www.pec.on.ca/friends](http://www.pec.on.ca/friends) (613) 393-3319.
- Pinery Provincial Park at [www.pinerypark.on.ca](http://www.pinerypark.on.ca) (519) 243-2220.
- MacGregor Point Provincial Park at [www.friendsofmacgregor.org](http://www.friendsofmacgregor.org) (519) 389-9056.
- Presqu'ile Provincial Park at [www.friendsofpresquile.on.ca](http://www.friendsofpresquile.on.ca) (613) 475-4324.
- Algonquin Provincial Park at [www.algonquinpark.on.ca](http://www.algonquinpark.on.ca) (705) 633-5572.

For more information visit [www.ontarioparks.com](http://www.ontarioparks.com),  
[www.ontariotravel.net/outdoor](http://www.ontariotravel.net/outdoor),  
[www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter), or call  
1-800-ONTARIO.



Lake Superior Provincial Park

# YURTS

## FOR THE TAKING

The advent of yurts in Ontario provincial parks has made winter camping cosy. The Mongolian-style huts, round with a peaked roof, available for rent at five provincial parks, are insulated and electrically heated.

Fancier than a tent, but more rustic than a cabin, they sleep up to six people in two sets of bunks, the bottoms of which pull out into double beds. Plywood forms the floor and canvas covers the shell. Four windows let in light by day; candles or light bulbs, your choice, brighten the interior by night.

Mounted on a wooden deck, about half-a-metre (20 inches) off the ground, the structures are 4.8 metres (15.6 feet) in diameter – like a large backyard gazebo. Outside, on



the deck there's a propane barbecue. Inside, in the middle, is a small table with chairs.

It's quite snug and surprisingly warm. Four close friends more than fill the place, and if you're not that close you will be.

Missing is running water and toilets, but the majority of yurts have been positioned in close proximity to a heated comfort station, open 24 hours a day, with hot showers, toilets, drinking water and laundry facilities.

Yurts can be found at Algonquin, Pinery, MacGregor Point, Silent Lake and Quetico. Bookings can be made up to five months in advance, and it's best to book early, as yurts are popular. Please call 1-888-668-7275 or visit [www.ontarioparks.com](http://www.ontarioparks.com)

## Going on an owl prowl

Great Grey Owl in Snowstorm, Jim Zipp – First Light



Snow and freezing temperatures hardly hinder festivity at some provincial parks. Indeed, the majority of parks that are open in winter capitalize upon the season with intriguing events and programs.

For example, an 'owl prowl', is an evening outing with a possibility of spotting one of the beautiful creatures. Offered on specific days at Pinery and Rondeau, the event takes you into the forest in search of pellets – regurgitated bones and fur – and for the whitewash of owl droppings at the base of trees. Then, with everyone quiet, the leader imitates an owl's call, or uses a recording of its call in an attempt to elicit a response.

We weren't lucky on the tour I attended, but the leader's stories and insights of owls were fascinating. It was also intriguing just to be out in the forest in winter at night scouting quietly high and low with a group.

In the end, the search for an owl seemed more like an excuse – or incentive – for what was an unusual and memorable experience.

There are numerous other special events at both parks and also at Presqu'ile, Bronte, MacGregor Point and Frontenac. Pinery, moreover, offers interpretive tours throughout winter every Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m. These are guided hikes on hardpacked trails, with the opportunity to learn about the park's rare and fragile ecosystem, and also about how much life there really is during the 'dead of winter.'



*– Adventure travel writer Sue Lebrecht is the 'Active Pursuits' travel columnist for the Toronto Star, and is the author of eight books, including *I Hate Winter: A Guide to Winter Outings in Ontario*.*



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**Take an inside ride on a**

# **Waterlide**



Children just love places where they can swirl, swoosh, turn and twist down slippery wet waterslides – especially indoors during winter. And Ontario's got a slew of these family-fun places, from the charming city of Chatham to



Wheels Inn



Nottawasaga Resort

the nation's capital of Ottawa. Whether you're on a family vacation getaway or attending a hockey tournament, Ontario's indoor water parks are a great attraction.

If you come for a day or make it a weekend, children – and the young-at-heart – will never run out of exciting things to do at Chatham's Wheels Inn. Here, you can race your children down two-30 m (100 ft.) waterslides, goof around in the water and curl up poolside with your favourite book. This is also the place with bragging rights to Ontario's largest indoor amusement park: Wild Zone Adventures. Adjoining the Inn and hosting lots of activities, Wild Zone invites guests to bowl, putt 18 holes, shoot some aliens at the arcade and laser tag your day away. It's also a perfect place to celebrate occasions or just to get away from 'reality' for a while. Plus, with a cosy bed mere seconds away, you can spend practically every moment of the day having wet and wild fun.

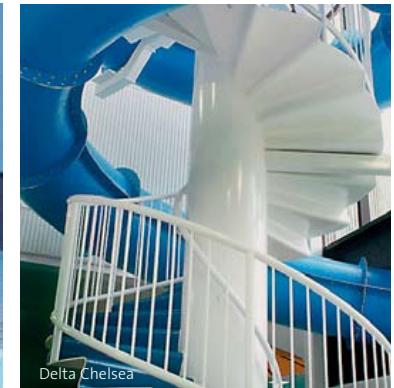
In Toronto, look no further than the Delta Chelsea. Convenient loca-

tion aside, travellers have been known to frequent this hotel for downtown Toronto's only indoor waterslide. It's a colossus, four-storey, 40 m (130 ft.) 'corkscrew' waterslide towering over the Family Fun Zone. It's so enormous, part of the slide even swoops out of the building. Give your kids a good push-start and watch as they loop and laugh through this thrilling water attraction. There's also an arcade room and creative centre for children.

But if waves are what you're looking for, head to Richmond Hill's Lois Hancey Aquatic Centre, home to the only indoor wave pool in the Greater Toronto Area. Splash in monstrous waves of up to 1.2 m (4 ft.) high, twist



Wheels Inn



Delta Chelsea

your way down the enormous 48 m (160 ft.) waterslide or watch the excitement from a distance under a palm tree. Take a moment and relax among the sprinklers and water jets of the whirlpool. Visit Chatham's **Wheels Inn** online at [www.wheelsinn.com](http://www.wheelsinn.com) for all your accommodations, dining and family fun information.

Find more information on the **Delta Chelsea**, home of the only indoor waterslide in downtown Toronto, at [www.deltahotels.com](http://www.deltahotels.com)

The **Wave Pool** in Richmond Hill is just another reason to make a winter getaway to the Greater Toronto Area, visit [www.richmondhill.ca](http://www.richmondhill.ca) for more.



# get wet get wild

International Plaza Hotel

## GET IT IN ONTARIO

- Seeing someone rocket down the 30 m (100 ft.) indoor waterslide at Kingston's Ambassador Hotel is pretty cool. Sliding down it yourself is simply thrilling. Log on to [www.ambassadorhotel.com](http://www.ambassadorhotel.com) to read more on their large Fun and Fitness Centre or call 1-800-267-7880 to book today. For Kingston travel packages, visit [www.sharekingston.com](http://www.sharekingston.com) or call 1-888-855-4555 ext. 24.
- A 34 m (115 ft.) two-storey waterslide highlights the Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites' newly renovated fitness centre. Here, you can watch the children from the comfort of the hot tub and work out with top-notch fitness

- equipment. Immerse yourself at [www.deltahotels.com](http://www.deltahotels.com) or call 1-877-814-7706.
- Niagara's new – and only – indoor water park, Waves at the Americana Hotel, is 2,320 sq. m (25,000 sq. ft.) of family fun, cure to the winter blues, wet 'n wild entertainment. Sure, children drool over its wave pool, tube slides and interactive play structure, but parents will also love its whirlpool and food and bar services. Visit [www.americananiagara.com](http://www.americananiagara.com) or call 1-800-263-3508.
- The International Plaza Hotel, located near Toronto's Pearson Airport, has an entire indoor

water park waiting for you. Two 37 m (124 ft.) long waterslides, a splash pad, sauna and much more will keep your minds off snow for hours – or even days. For more information visit [www.internationalplaza.com](http://www.internationalplaza.com) or to book your reservation call 1-800-222-8733.

- Accented with palms and coconut trees, the Agincourt Leisure Pool boasts a huge waterslide among other fun water-related activities. Call 416-396-8343.
- A mind-boggling 5.5-storey indoor waterslide, Northern Ontario's largest, highlights the water park at Best Western – Great Northern in Sault Ste. Marie. Take a dip in their whirlpools or indoor pool, then have a 'ball' at the 24-lane Bowling Centre. Visit [www.bestwesternsault.com](http://www.bestwesternsault.com) or call 1-800-563-7262.
- Nottawasaga Inn's Sports and LeisureDome has an enormous water play area for kids and kids at heart. A large 'water umbrella', whirlpools, wading areas and a 25 m (82 ft.) swimming pool beg water rats to get soaked. If you really want to turn up the notch on fun, slide down the 30 m (100 ft.) spiralling waterslide. This place is so exciting, you'll wet your bathing suit. Visit [www.nottawasagaresort.com](http://www.nottawasagaresort.com) or call (705) 435-5501 or 1-800-669-5501.
- For all the travel information you need, including accommodations, when visiting communities with waterslides, call 1-800-ONTARIO or visit the website at [www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter)

# PLAY 'N STAY



Beat the winter blahs with a getaway at Toronto's Entertainment Hotel! We're just steps from all Toronto has to offer, and one call gives you access to great

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To book your winter getaway, call 1-800-CHELSEA (243-5732) or visit [www.deltachelsea.com](http://www.deltachelsea.com)

\*Subject to availability, from January 1 - March 31, 2005. Conditions, restrictions apply. Taxes, gratuities extra.

hotel deals, as well as tickets to the city's hottest shows and events through our on-site Ticketing Hotline. And, if you're bringing the kids, don't forget to ask about Camp Chelsea, with an exciting line-up of fully-supervised activities.

**Kids love March Break at the Delta Chelsea - home of 4-storey "Corkscrew" indoor waterslide!**



- 210 guestrooms including **bunk bed suites** & 2-room family suites
- 25,000 sq. ft. **indoor waterpark** with wave pool, 8 slides, tipping bucket, activity pool and kiddie splash area. Enjoy **summer weather** all winter long!
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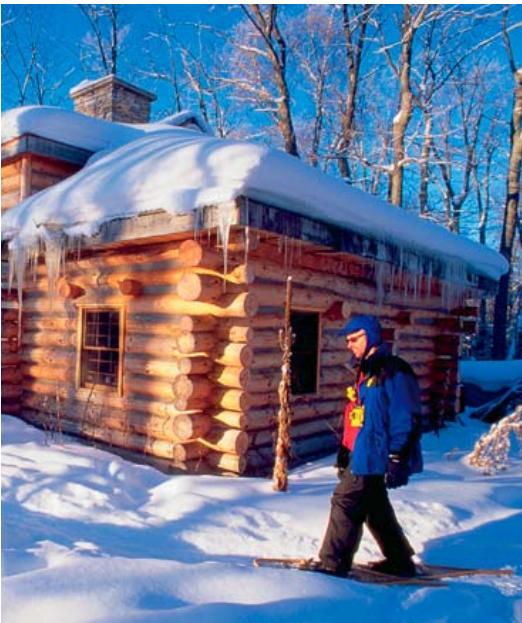
A wide-angle photograph of a snowy forest. On the right side, a musher in a brown coat and tan pants is driving a team of four dogs (two black, two white) pulling a sled. The forest is filled with tall evergreen trees heavily laden with snow. The ground is a thick layer of white snow.

# Seize THE SNOW

– Leslie Jennings

My guide at Algonquin Log Cabin on Surprise Lake, just outside Algonquin Provincial Park, had challenged me and my family to experience winter first-hand. Starting with the dog sledding, I'd listened to my kids squeal with delight as my sled dogs took me off on a merry jaunt through the forest – without the sled. I'd watched a snow bridge crumble into a melting stream and enjoyed a moment of reckoning: take off the snowshoes and jump for the shore. Now my guide wants me to build a quinzy – an emergency snow shelter – for fun. Much to my own surprise, I can't wait.

*“We want to show people as many aspects of traditional Canadian culture as we can – from a log cabin to the quinzy.”*



Provided there is enough snow, quinzy-building can be one of the favourite March break activities at Algonquin Log Cabin.

The word itself, quinzy, is a loose borrowing from the Ojibwa. The construction of the snow shelter is ideally suited to the kind of weather that spells trouble: snow falling so fast and furious that visibility is limited. Especially soft, light snow.

First we stomped down a platform for our snow mound. Then we began piling up the snow. It was hard work, even with everyone pitching in. When we finally had our mound sufficiently large, we inserted sticks, each about 25 centimetres (10 inches) in length, across the surface of the flattened dome. The sticks help you maintain the appropriate thickness of the walls when you start digging out the interior.

Before we could start hollowing out, however, we needed to let the mound set. An adult-sized quinzy should probably set for at least three hours. We whiled away the time at our bush campfire with a cup of cedar tea until it was time to start hollowing out. This is the wettest job of all (and a little claustrophobic), as once you get inside the shelter of snow you start to get quite sweaty. Luckily, we knew we'd be able to head back to the warmth of the cabin for a hot shower and sauna – so we all had a go at it.

Owner of Voyageur Quest and



the Algonquin Log Cabin, John Langford, says, “We want to show people as many aspects of traditional Canadian culture as we can – from a log cabin to the quinzy.” Langford believes it’s important for folks to get out of the cities and embrace the winter in the north. That’s where you get the truest sense of what the season is all about.

As for the quinzy – it’s part of a continuum of winter structures such as the heated wall tent (still used in the north), the buckwan (another type of survival snow shelter), cabins and even yurts (a Mongolian-style round tent structure).

When our quinzy was complete, it was just big enough for two kids. After trying it on for size, we all agreed we were glad we had comfortable beds waiting at the end of our snowshoe trek back to the cabin. Still, I felt a sense of quiet satisfaction, a connection to the past, the land and my family.

Langford has found that his family-oriented programming for March break has become ever more popular in the past two years. People are hungry for these types of true winter exploits where a family can bond over new challenges. Such adventure-oriented action may not be for every family, however. And that’s no worry because there’s a wonderful diversity of opportunities out there to help you enjoy the perfect March break.

# Resorts cater to kids



If you hanker to be out of the city, but are looking for more pampering and less challenge, consider booking into one of Ontario's excellent resorts. A quick search on the [resorts-ontario.com](http://resorts-ontario.com) website will list the Ontario resorts offering programming for children. For example, my kids loved the eco-oriented programming at the

Delta Grandview, in particular watching the night sky at the only resort-owned observatory in Canada.

More traditional activities for kids are offered at many resorts. For example, Wigamog Inn Resort has made a name for itself with its kids' programming.

The beauty of staying at a resort with kids' programming is that you can tailor your visit to encompass family time and adult time.

Say the kids enjoy a morning activity, while you visit the spa for a massage, you all meet up for lunch together and a family-oriented activity, then the kids have an early supervised meal while you and your spouse enjoy a romantic dinner à deux. As the kids say, it's all good.

March break holiday opportunities in Ontario are almost as wide as your imagination and with a little homework, you and your family can experience a memorable vacation that's just right for you.



# ALL DRESSED UP FOR Afternoon Tea

Consider an utterly urban break in Toronto or Ottawa. Get everyone dressed up and go out for afternoon tea at the Royal York's EPIC in Toronto or the Château Laurier in Ottawa. All of my kids enjoyed the pomp and ceremony associated with this ritual. Stay overnight at a downtown hotel and order room service. Of course, make sure it's a hotel with a pool.

In Toronto, go to the theatre, traipse through the St. Lawrence Market, loading up on snacks, or head out to the shops around Kensington Market for a more eclectic cultural smorgasbord. Fun shops like Courage My Love have been delighting young hipsters for decades. In Ottawa, check out the area around the ByWard Market.

Round out your urban adventure with a little museum hopping. In

Toronto check out the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Royal Ontario Museum, the Ontario Science Centre or the Toronto Aerospace Museum. Meanwhile, Ottawa is plump full to bursting with museums, with offerings including the Canadian Children's Museum at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Science and Technology Museum, the Museum of Nature, the National Aviation Museum and for just plain weirdness, don't miss the Diefenbunker in nearby Carp. 

*– Leslie Jennings is a freelance writer who specializes in family travel. She is the travel editor of City Parent Newsmagazine and editor of News4Kids.*



# PLAN NOW FOR **winter fun**

Voyageur Quest and Algonquin Log Cabin call (416) 486-3605/  
1-800-794-9660,  
[www.voyageurquest.com](http://www.voyageurquest.com)

To arrange a stay in a yurt, or other rustic accommodations, visit [www.ontarioparks.com](http://www.ontarioparks.com); or call 1-888-668-7275 to reserve.

Yurts can be rented at MacGregor Point, Pinery, Quetico, Silent Lake, Pancake Bay, Bon Echo and Algonquin provincial parks.

Ottawa Tourism and Convention Centre: (613) 237-5150,  
[www.ottawatourism.ca](http://www.ottawatourism.ca)

Tourism Toronto: 1-800-363-1990,  
[www.torontotourism.com](http://www.torontotourism.com)

Resorts Ontario 1-800-363-7227,  
[www.resorts-ontario.com](http://www.resorts-ontario.com)

For more March break ideas and travel information visit [www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter) or 1-800-ONTARIO.

# exclusively ours



– Darren Hakker

## A getaway with all that Jazz

Toronto has a world-class jazz scene. And it's getting bigger and better. Assisted by mainstream artists such as Diana Krall and Mike Murley, jazz is finding a home in the hearts of more than just those who have listened to it their whole lives. Its sweet rhythms are attaching themselves to another generation: my generation. I decided to head to Toronto and explore its celebrated jazz scene, considered by many as one of the best in North America.

One of the jazz aficionados' favourite jazz clubs is the Montreal Restaurant/Bistro & Jazz Club. Walking in there was like going back in time. Aged wooden pillars and dimmed lights accented its early 20th century ambience, quintessential of the jazz age. You can almost feel a wonderful sense of heritage and respect hanging in the air.

This jazz club hosts some of Toronto's – and the world's – finest jazz artists: George Shearing, Marian McPartland, Joshua Redman and Nat Adderley just to name a few. You can't miss the photo of Oscar Peterson gracing the brick wall.

Visit [www.torontojazzlive.com](http://www.torontojazzlive.com) or call Toronto Tourism at 1-800-205-7638 to book a jazz package at the Montreal or at The Top O' The Senator. Hang out in the Rex Hotel & Jazz and Blues Bar, another celebrated jazz club in Toronto.

Experience Toronto's jazz scene for yourself. Whether you've adored jazz since birth or you'd like to see it live for the first time, you'll be amazed at just how much jazz there is to enjoy.

For all of your travel information, call 1-800-ONTARIO or [www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter)

Here is what your jazz package for two includes:

- Dinner for two at the Montreal Restaurant/Bistro & Jazz Club
- Preferred seating for the show
- Complimentary CD
- Two tickets to the Art Gallery of Ontario
- For more information visit [www.torontojazzlive.com](http://www.torontojazzlive.com) or to book call Toronto Tourism at 1-800-205-7638.

Montreal  
Restaurant/Bistro  
& Jazz Club  
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\$144

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The background image shows a vibrant city skyline at night, with the distinctive red brick tower of the Gooderham Building (the "Old Toronto" sign) prominently featured in the foreground. Other buildings are illuminated with various colors, creating a dynamic urban atmosphere.

# Old Toronto puts on a winter face

**F**ew cities can boast the holiday season ambiance and 19th century Victorian architecture of Toronto's Nutcracker Neighbourhood. Dressing up Old Town Toronto (centred around Front St. and Jarvis St.) in holiday cheer, the Nutcracker Neighbourhood quenches your thirst for a magical winter adventure and satisfies your hunger for flavourful food (and plenty of it)!

I took a fascinating walking tour with Bill Genova, local historian/tour guide/resident know-it-all, and he enlightened me on 19th century Toronto.

Our first stop was Toronto's historic St. Lawrence Market, rated by *Food & Wine* magazine as one of the 25 best markets in the world. Here we browsed a smorgasbord of fresh produce, meats, vegetables and fruit offered by friendly merchants and picked up a few treats for my big holiday dinner. There were delicious jams made from all sorts of fruit – kiwi, peach, strawberry – and more honey, mustard and meat than I could have imagined. We stopped by Carousel Bakery for a famous steaming-hot peameal bacon sandwich. We even paid a visit to the Sausage King.

Bill's inquisitive personality led me to St. Lawrence Hall, the same building where our Fathers of Confederation met to discuss the future of the nation. I could practically feel their ghosts walking beside me as I explored its vast Great Hall.

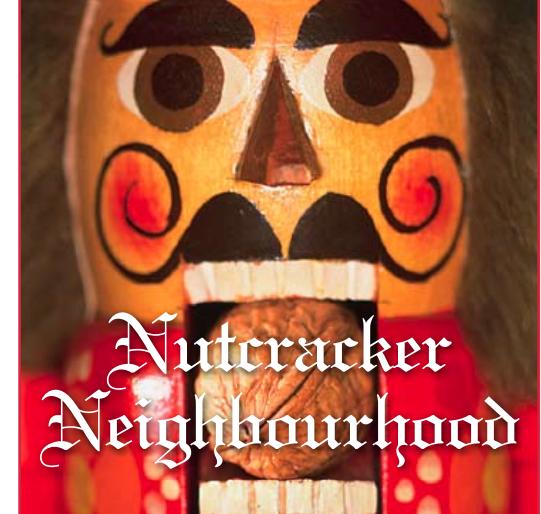
As we visited the bevy of home décor boutiques along King St., I couldn't help but notice the brightly coloured, wooden nutcracker toys sitting in the decorated window displays – a nod to Christmases of years past.

Next, Bill and I visited a few of Toronto's landmark buildings. I began with a tour of Toronto's first post office, then stood in awe of St. James' Cathedral's expansive sanctuary (be sure to admire over 160 nativity scenes at their museum this December). We even had time for a quick tour of the historic King Edward Hotel.

I completed my Nutcracker Neighbourhood tour with a visit to Flatiron's Christmas Market. "If you want to buy a nutty, nutty present for someone," Bill said, "do your holiday shopping here." You can pick out an authentic German nutcracker, peruse their exclusive tin toy selection and find the perfect Christmas tree decoration.

I recommend bringing along friends and family on this guided holiday adventure. Old Town Toronto is only dressed up as the Nutcracker Neighbourhood from November 5 – December 31, so book your magical getaway today. There's more holiday fun this season. Simply visit [www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter) or call 1-800-ONTARIO today.

– Darren Hakker is a writer with Fuel Advertising whose work appears regularly in this magazine.



## Nutcracker Neighbourhood

### TRAVEL PACKAGE

- Escorted St. Lawrence Market history or food tour & lunch voucher.
- Escorted tour of historic St. James Cathedral & Crèche Exhibit, with refreshments.
- Nutcracker hop-on/hop-off shuttle bus.
- One night's hotel accommodation.
- Add favourite performances of the National Ballet of Canada's 'The Nutcracker,' the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's 'The Messiah,' and many more.
- Be sure to include High Tea at the King Edward Hotel to complete the experience.

For more information on this holiday package, visit [www.nutcrackerneighbourhood.com](http://www.nutcrackerneighbourhood.com) or to book, call Toronto Tourism at 1-800-205-7638.

great escapes

# make tracks in Ontario

It's that time of year again. Time to get out and make tracks in Ontario, an unparalleled winter playground abounding in unique and extraordinary experiences everywhere you go.

On the next few pages, *inOntario* highlights some of the best Great Escapes our province has to offer this winter. Read them. Connect with them. Get out and discover these wondrous treasures – hidden and others not-so-hidden – and do some escaping of your own.

In this issue, we'll take you to the rousing winter festivals of Niagara, down the ski slopes in the Barrie area, over the snow-blanketed hills of the Georgian Triangle and for a foray into Thunder Bay's Finnish society.



Niagara's Winter Festival of Lights and the 10th Annual Niagara Icewine Festival are dazzling wine and light-themed getaways. Feel the cool rush of schussing down the Georgian Triangle's Blue Mountain and check in at the Chateau Ridge, tucked in at the bottom of a ski run. Take advantage of the Barrie area's snowfall with ski, snowboard, tubing and Hummer adventures. Then we'll take you north and tip you off to Thunder Bay's favourite stops for Finnish pancakes, Nordic skiing and relaxing saunas.

Inspiration to travel comes from many places. Let *inOntario's* Great Escapes be one of those places.

great escapes

# MOUNTAINS OF ADVENTURES



Blue Mountain, Collingwood



With a smorgasbord of indoor and outdoor recreational activities throughout the region, the Georgian Triangle attracts adventurers, romantics and families.

Begin your winter-themed adventure at Blue Mountain, near Collingwood. Not only is this the largest mountain resort in Ontario, but it's an entire winter experience where even non-skiers can have a blast. Nowhere else in Ontario can you go for hours of snow-tubing, master the fine art of dog-sledding, practice your swing at the indoor golf centre (complete with putting surface and sand trap) and spend your evenings relaxing in a pub, all in one day. For the skiers and boarders in the family, Blue Mountain has 34 trails and three half-pipes groomed and ready for you to enjoy.

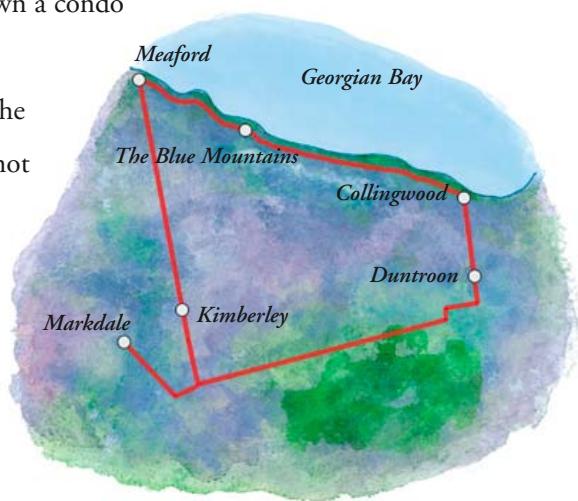
But before you head up the lift, check into your hotel or condo, where an exhilarating experience awaits. If you're looking for convenience, luxury and value (aren't we all), then reserve a spot at the

Chateau Ridge sitting right at the bottom of the Happy Valley trail. This place will make you a firm believer in perfect accommodations, especially if you're the type who enjoys late nights in a Jacuzzi and warming your weary body fireside. Plus, you can't possibly turn down a condo that comfortably sleeps six, starting at \$300.

Take a short drive down the road to Kimberley, and you'll discover another winter adventure destination – the Talisman Mountain Resort. A fun-filled holiday spot catering to families, couples and friends alike, Talisman not only has 18 ski trails, but also a tubing area, cross-country skiing trails and skating facilities. Or if you're looking for something different, try snowshoeing and then take a dip in the heated outdoor pool.

Send the kids to snowboarding school, where they're not only taught the boarding basics, but also this culture's unique lingo including such terms as 'tricky,' 'grommet' and the ever-popular 'ollie.'

Ontario's Georgian Triangle's resorts make learning new activities and enjoying the classics easy, fun and affordable – the hardest part will be leaving.



Blue Mountain is an outdoor adventurer's playground. Visit [www.bluemountain.ca](http://www.bluemountain.ca) or [www.blueactivities.com](http://www.blueactivities.com) or call 1-800-955-6561.

The Chateau Ridge Blue Mountain Resort is about as close as you can get to the action. Call (705) 445-0231.

Visit Intrawest's Village at Blue Mountain. Ponder choices in the chocolate factory. Browse fine cigars. Pick up your favourite gourmet delights. It's a shopaholics dream.



Located in a world biosphere reserve, Talisman Mountain Resort is as beautiful as it is fun. [www.talisman.ca](http://www.talisman.ca) or 1-800-265-3759.

Photo courtesy of Talisman Mountain Resort



Canadian Hummer Adventures at Horseshoe Resort



Blue Mountain, Collingwood



Blue Mountain, Collingwood

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Get a group of friends or family together and come enjoy one of our large Swiss or Executive style chalets at the base of Ontario's premier ski resort, Blue Mountain. Each chalet features a kitchen, fireplace, sauna or jacuzzi tub, cable TV and a beautiful view of the mountain.

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# Great Georgian Getaways

- Whether you're heading to the Beaver Valley area for the beautiful pine forests and panoramic vistas, or if you're beginning a ski and snowboarding adventure at the Beaver Valley Ski Club, it's best that you contact the Georgian Triangle Tourist Association for maps and other important getaway information.

[www.georgiantriangle.com](http://www.georgiantriangle.com) or call 1-888-227-8667.

- Take to the well-groomed trails of the Georgian Triangle for world-class snowmobiling. It's easy to rent snowmobiles for a day and even easier to learn how to ride one, just remember to reserve your trail permit beforehand. Simply contact the Georgian Triangle Tourist Association at [www.georgiantriangle.com](http://www.georgiantriangle.com) or call 1-888-227-8667.

- Downhill skiing isn't your thing? Pick up a pair of cross-country skis at Highlands Nordic in Duntroon and spend all day on 20 km (12.5 mi.) of classic and skate trails. [www.highlandsnordic.on.ca](http://www.highlandsnordic.on.ca) or call **1-800-263-5017**.
- Visit the Scenic Caves in Collingwood for a nature adventure. Walk through towering trees, snowshoe across the longest suspension footbridge in Ontario, then take a guided night skiing tour through snow-draped forests. For information, please visit [www.sceniccaves.com](http://www.sceniccaves.com) or call **(705) 446-0256**.
- Take your spouse, take your kids and bring your love for dogs to Rob Roy Farms, where you'll learn dogsledding and do some mushing of your own. For mushing information at Rob Roy Farms call **(519) 922-2706**.
- Although it's modelled after pioneer railway hotels of Canada's infancy, the Grand Georgian at Blue Mountain has all the conveniences of modern life, including full kitchens, Sony Playstations and Internet access.

- Tours are available at the Hummer Driving Academy. New in 2004 are two Hummers that can take up to 11 people through the rugged countryside of the Georgian Triangle. These giant vehicles are the kings of 4x4s, capable of going anywhere in all weather, all seasons, and over all terrain. Visit [www.blueactivities.com](http://www.blueactivities.com) or call **1-800-955-6561**.
- Go up, up and away for a scenic tour of the Georgian Triangle in an airplane. If you thought Blue Mountain was high, you haven't seen anything yet. See about an airplane flight by visiting [www.blueactivities.com](http://www.blueactivities.com) or by calling **1-800-955-6561**.
- Don't miss the Village at Blue Mountain. It's your second-to-none shopping, eatery and night-life destination, comparable to other Intrawest resorts, such as Whistler and Mont Tremblant.

Discover much more information on the Grand Georgian at [www.bluemountain.ca](http://www.bluemountain.ca) or **(705) 445-0231**.

And for much more information on your winter getaway, visit [www.georgiantriangle.com](http://www.georgiantriangle.com) **1-888-227-8667** or visit [www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter) or call **1-800-ONTARIO**.



- Do you have a child in Grade 5 or born in 1994? If you do, they're eligible for Ski & Snowboard Canada's FREE Grade 5 SnowPass. This exciting coupon book has hundreds of pages packed with discounts on lessons, equipment rentals and even FREE lift tickets. Simply visit [www.skicanada.org](http://www.skicanada.org) to fill out the online application.

# Get Up!

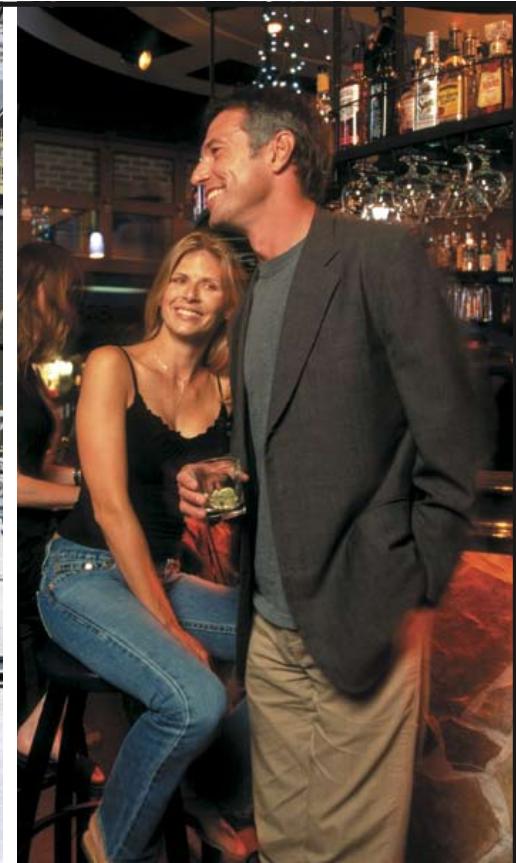
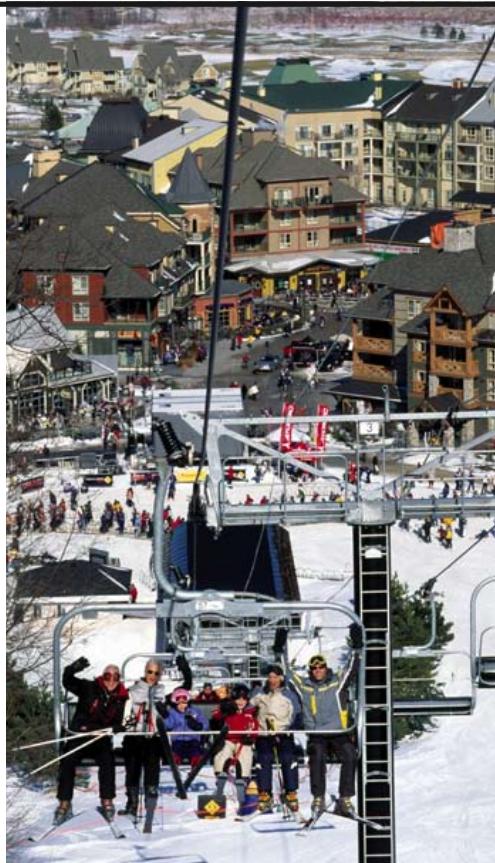
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**EYES**, and take the...

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To receive your Travel Challenge Vacation Package call: 1-888-675-5555 and ask for Rebecca or visit [www.explorethebruce.com](http://www.explorethebruce.com) or [www.visitgrey.ca](http://www.visitgrey.ca)

*Visit Grey & Bruce Counties*

TAKE THE GREY BRUCE TRAVEL CHALLENGE

great escapes

# a Barrie great escape



Be sure to set aside four days – one for each ski resort – when you book a family adventure in Barrie. Known for its rolling hills and winter sports, Barrie boasts a variety of skiing, snowboarding and tubing at its holiday spots: Hardwood Hills, Snow Valley, Mount St. Louis Moonstone and Horseshoe Resort.

# great escapes



Horseshoe Valley Resort, Barrie



For those who dream of waking at sunrise, slipping on ski boots, then exploring rolling hills and dipping valleys until sunset, consider Hardwood Hills. Renowned for its world-class Nordic trails and annual skiing events, Hardwood Hills has 36 km (22 mi.) of groomed trails for skiing, and 20 km (12.5 mi.) ungroomed for snowshoeing – ideal for those who don't live by skiing alone.

Hailed as the 'Best Ontario Hill for Kids' by Ski Canada Magazine in 2001, Snow Valley has a steadfast

focus on fun and the family. They actually *guarantee* that your family will have fun. Every age. Every skill level. Pick up a family lift pack, then tube, ski and snowboard all day long.

Snowboarders will find themselves drooling over Mount St. Louis Moonstone even more this winter. Outback Terrain Park, Moonstone's snowboarding superpark, has completed two new superpipes, six new trails and even more jumps. Plus, with a newly renovated chalet and improved ski hills, Moonstone truly

has become a snow-lover's paradise.

Wrap up your winter getaway with an off-road Hummer tour and moonlit ski excursion at Horseshoe Resort. Take a one- to three-hour tour with up to five people comfortably strapped into the seats of a gigantic Hummer and see what this beast of a machine can do in the rugged winter wilderness. Later, when the light of a full moon hits the cross-country ski trails, lanterns are lit and guests are treated to an evening of skiing, hot apple cider and to finish it off, a blazing bonfire.



## Horseshoe Resort PREMIER PACKAGE

Take advantage of unlimited alpine/cross-country skiing from 4:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. the following day, then spend your evenings at a resort room with two double beds or one king-sized bed. Breakfast and dinner are also included. From \$189.88 pp/night. Just one of many winter packages Horseshoe Resort has to offer.



# Further fun to flip for

- Consider fishing this winter. When you rent a hut from the Cannings Fish Hut Co., you can reel in a trophy fish even in the dead of winter. Bring along up to five friends or family members and catch dinner in the comfort of a propane-heated hut. Transportation and bait is included. Call **(705) 721-8500** to book your fishing adventure today.
- Celebrate winter the Ontario way with dog sledding, balloon rides, ice carvings and much more at the Barrie Winterfest & The Festival of Ice from February 5–6. Browse [www.barrietourism.on.ca](http://www.barrietourism.on.ca) or call **1-800-668-9100**.

- Relax fireside in the comfort of the Richmond Manor Bed & Breakfast. This Georgian-style residence, former home to a mayor and judge, is an idyllic setting for a romantic winter getaway. Find out more by visiting [www.bbontario.com](http://www.bbontario.com) or by calling **(705) 726-7103**.
- New in 2004, the Robert Simpson Brewing Company Ltd. offers tours, tastings, events and parties at its Barrie brewery. Visit them online at [www.robertsimpsonbrewery.com](http://www.robertsimpsonbrewery.com) or call **(705) 721-8989**.
- To plan your winter getaway visit [www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter)



Snow Valley Ski Resort

**Book your Barrie great escape today by contacting the following resorts:**

- **Hardwood Hills**  
[www.hardwoodhills.ca](http://www.hardwoodhills.ca)  
1-800-387-3775 or (705) 487-3775
- **Snow Valley**  
[www.skisnowvalley.com](http://www.skisnowvalley.com)  
(705) 721-7669
- **Mount St. Louis Moonstone**  
[www.mslm.on.ca](http://www.mslm.on.ca)  
(705) 835-2112
- **Horseshoe Resort**  
[www.horseshoeresort.com](http://www.horseshoeresort.com)  
1-800-461-5627 or (705) 835-2790

great escapes

# THUNDER BAY the Finnish Way





**H**ome to the largest Finnish population outside of Scandinavia, Thunder Bay has wintertime sport recreation and ethnic diversity that reflects much on this cultural heritage.

Drive to the beautiful shores of Lake Superior, where Finnish culture blends itself

experience – and let your worries fade away.

Finnish culture isn't just about the food and saunas. Finns also have a deep love for winter sports. This admiration is reflected in Thunder Bay's winter wonderland – usually lasting from mid-November to mid-April – with Nordic (cross-country) skiing being



into much of the city's daily life. A stroll down Bay Street reveals fine boutiques and restaurants serving traditional cuisine – such as Finnish pancakes (delicious is an understatement) and kala mojakka (fish soup) at Hoito, rated one of the best restaurants in Canada. Relax at the Kangas Sauna café-restaurant – a mind, body and soul rejuvenating

the most popular sport. The Lappe Nordic Ski Centre, created by Finn immigrants, is a cross-country skiing oasis complete with 15 kilometres (9.5 miles) of meandering trails and a full body-healing sauna. Simply grab a pair of skis to begin your adventure at this historic playground, considered one of the finest Nordic centres in North America.

Photos – top left – Eagle Canyon, Dorion. Photo courtesy of Lois Nuttall. Bottom –Nor'West Outdoor Centre, Thunder Bay. Photo courtesy of Lois Nuttall

# great escapes



As you continue your winter wonderland getaway, explore the snow-blanketed wilderness from a snowmobile. Thunder Bay Adventure Trails has cleared over 600 kilometres (375 miles) for those yearning for the space and serenity of Northern Ontario. Find warm hospitality at a number of hotels and motels located near the trail system, with world-class ski hills a short drive away.

Make your next stop at Eagle Canyon Adventures – Ontario's first artificial ice park. Over 37,000 litres (8,139 gallons) of water are frozen on a cliff face, turning a rocky precipice into an incredible ice-climbing experience. The cliffs vary in size and are open to climbers of all levels.

It's hard to beat a winter excursion to Thunder Bay – Finnish culture abounding, winter playground astounding, breathtaking scenery surrounding.

*Look up snow conditions and find more information for the Lappe Nordic Ski Centre at <http://flash.lakeheadu.ca/~lnordic> And cling onto [www.eaglecanyonadventures.ca](http://www.eaglecanyonadventures.ca) or call (807) 857-1475 for ice-climbing fun.*

Photos courtesy of Eagle Canyon Adventures

# Eventful vacations in Ontario's Lake Superior Country!

Opportunities for winter excitement abound in the North of Superior Tourism Region - snowmobiling, ice climbing, ice fishing, dog sledding and skiing. And that's just the beginning.



Thunder Bay has been designated a Cultural Capital of Canada and rightly so. We're the regional centre for the performing and visual arts, entertainment and a host of many events and attractions.



For a free copy of the Thunder Bay Visitor Guide, contact:  
1-800-667-8386 Ask for Operator #311 [www.ThunderBay.ca](http://www.ThunderBay.ca)



For a free copy of the North of Superior 2005 Events & Festivals Guide  
or Regional Visitor Information, contact:  
1-800-265-3951 [www.nosta.on.ca](http://www.nosta.on.ca)



## Happenings at Fort William Historical Park

December 3-6 - Light Up The Night  
A seasonal treat featuring sleigh rides, thousands of twinkling lights, songs, entertainment and unique handcrafted gifts at the Artisans Fair.

December 10-12, 17-20 - A Christmas Carol  
Rogue Productions presents a heartwarming adaptation of the Charles Dickens timeless holiday classic about Ebenezer Scrooge and Tiny Tim.

December 31 - New Year's Eve Family Frolic  
Northern Ontario's Biggest New Year's Eve Party - Ring in the New Year! The entire family will delight in sleigh rides, contests, entertainment, food and a huge fireworks show.

February 18-20 - Voyageur Winter Carnival  
Embrace the joys of the season with the region's biggest winter carnival. Sleigh rides, snow sculptures, contests, music, games and even a Sugar Shack.

Voted "Best Outdoor Attraction In Canada"  
- Attractions Canada 2002



Thunder Bay - Ontario • Canada  
(807) 473-2344  
[www.fwhp.ca](http://www.fwhp.ca)

# great escapes

## FINNISH YOUR TRIP HERE

- Kamview Nordic Centre, the largest of the Nordic centres in Thunder Bay, has trails for every skill level – complete with family nights, lighted routes and a gorgeous chalet.  
[www.nordictrails-tb.on.ca/kamview.htm](http://www.nordictrails-tb.on.ca/kamview.htm)
- Make your resolution to do more mushing this winter. Hop aboard with Northwest Sled Dog Adventures and take an exhilarating journey through 121 hectares (300 acres) of wilderness with a team of well-trained dogs. Visit [www.sleddog.on.ca](http://www.sleddog.on.ca) or call (807) 964-2070 for a complete list of packages.
- Hosted by the North of Superior Climbing Company every March, Orient Bay Ice-Fest brings together international ice-climbing professionals to show off their talent. It's the only one of its kind in North America and includes various demonstrations.  
[www.northofsuperiorclimbing.com](http://www.northofsuperiorclimbing.com) or call (705) 946-6054.
- The Nor'West Outdoor Centre is a getaway in itself – winter camping, tobogganing, kick-sledding, snowboarding and quinzy-building. And new for 2004, get geared up for the climb to the top of a 23-metre (75-foot)

branchless fir tree. [www.cqo2000.com/noc/](http://www.cqo2000.com/noc/) or call (807) 475-8346.

- Also worth a visit is the White Fox Inn, just seven minutes from the airport, nestled in rolling hills, where diners have been excited to see deer come near the window. Call 1-800-603-3699 or visit [www.whitefox.com](http://www.whitefox.com)
- Discover Thunder Bay's Finnish culture without missing a thing. Book a Little Finland getaway package at [www.superiorvisits.com](http://www.superiorvisits.com) or call 1-866-688-9990.
- Celebrate the season with live entertainment, festive snacks and more holiday surprises at Fort William Historical Park in Thunder Bay. Don't be disappointed, call ahead for details on special events at (807) 473-2344 or visit [www.fwhp.ca](http://www.fwhp.ca)
- For more information contact North of Superior Travel Association at [www.nosta.on.ca](http://www.nosta.on.ca) or call (807) 887-3333, Thunder Bay Tourism at [www.thunderbay.ca](http://www.thunderbay.ca) or call 1-800-667-8386 or [www.ontariotravel.net/winter](http://www.ontariotravel.net/winter) or call 1-800-ONTARIO.



Photo – top right – courtesy of North of Superior Climbing Company. Bottom – Nor'West Outdoor Centre. Photo courtesy of Lois Nuttall

## Bright lights, fine wine

Picture this. Your arm is snug around your special someone, overlooking Niagara Falls on a bright winter evening.



*You and your children will always remember seeing the streets come alive with tens of thousands of bulbs*



Niagara Falls Winter Festival of Lights



You're both admiring the bright colours illuminating the falls while magnificent fireworks burst in the sky.

It's like something out of a fairytale – except in this fairytale, you don't have to don shining armour, climb beanstalks or worry about the clock striking midnight. Over here, it's all about living happily ever after.

When you visit between November 20 and January 18, the Niagara Falls Winter Festival of Lights will most definitely dazzle the romantic in us all. You and your children will always remember seeing the streets come alive with tens of thousands of bulbs as the night parade – hosted by Mickey Mouse himself – weaves its way through town. Walk right up to brilliantly lit park displays and take a picture or two – a perfect preamble to a serene moonlit stroll.

Romance is alive in a multitude of Niagara Falls' festivals. For those who love the sweet and satisfying, the 10th Annual Niagara Icewine Festival is beckoning your taste



Photo courtesy of Niagara Icewine Festival



Photo courtesy of Niagara Falls Tourism

buds. Hosted from January 14–23, this Icewine extravaganza boasts elegant galas, along with a long list of Icewine-related events and demonstrations held throughout the region. With more than 35 winery hosts and plenty of food, the Xerox Images of Winter Gala on January 14 is the most well-known of these events. It's also Canada's largest. Don't be surprised to see gentlemen dressed in tuxes and wearing boots at the gala because when it ends, late in the evening, they venture out into their fields and harvest their ice-cold grapes for next year's celebration.

And what would an Icewine festival be without Canada Icewine Bars? Crafted by the creative geniuses at

Iceculture – a renowned Canadian ice carving company – Jordan and Niagara-on-the-Lake will each take a weekend to serve the region's best Icewines from behind a 20-foot outdoor ice bar, delicately carved and placed right on the streets of these quaint Ontario towns. Iceculture will also be performing ice-carving demonstrations throughout the 10-day festival, so keep an eye out for unique and unusual ice masterpieces.

Make time to drive past gorgeous vineyards freshly blanketed in snow around the honeymoon capital of the world. It's the perfect ending to a romantic bright light and fine wine getaway.

# Feast your eyes on this...



## Come for the view. Fall for the food. Discover the excitement.

A breathtaking 775 feet (236 m) above Niagara Falls. With two levels of fine dining-to choose from, both overlooking the Falls!

**Revolving Dining Room.** At the height of dining excellence featuring-award-winning continental cuisine. Early dinner specials.

**Summit Suite Dining Room.** The ultimate in buffet-style dining. Famous Sunday brunch. Family affordable.

**Observation Deck.** Spectacular indoor/outdoor viewing with visibility up to 80 miles (129 km).

**Tower Base.** Distinctive specialty shops & boutiques. Then discover *SkyQuest*... an interactive high-tech playground for challenging family fun. Take in the **4D Motion Theatre** where special effects combine with 3D film for awesome realism and excitement. A not-to-be-missed experience for all.



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(905) 354-7887 or visit [www.niagarafallshilton.com](http://www.niagarafallshilton.com)

6361 Fallsview Blvd., Niagara Falls, ON

**Take me to the Hilton.\***

\* Children 18 and under stay free in parents' or grandparents' room. Hilton Hospitality, Inc.  
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# There's lots to do for families or couples



Photo courtesy of Savour Ontario

- The New Year's Eve Party in the Park, highlighted by fireworks and live entertainment, is yet another reason to experience the Niagara Falls Winter Festival of Lights with plenty of fun for families and couples alike. Festivities begin at 7:30 p.m. [www.discoverniagara.com](http://www.discoverniagara.com) 1-800-56-FALLS.

- For Icewine and elegance, Savour Ontario offers the Fire and Ice getaway at Château des Charmes. Pamper yourself at their spa, enjoy a private tour of the winery and savour a gourmet dinner in a four-diamond restaurant. You'll even receive a bottle of Icewine and truffles. [www.savourontario.ca](http://www.savourontario.ca)

- Hosted by Ontario's award-winning winemakers, the Chubb Insurance Tastes of Ontario Icewine Dinner is one of the highlight events of the season. Vintage Inns' chefs prepare fine cuisine paired with award-winning wines. Tickets are a wine-connoisseur's dream, so get your ticket today. [www.grapeandwine.com](http://www.grapeandwine.com) (905) 688-0212.

- The art of dining, thought to be long extinct in today's fast-food culture, is reintroduced with Exploration of the Senses at the Peller Estates Winery. The experience includes a seminar on food and wine and accommodation at the Pillar and Post Inn, Spa and Conference Centre. [www.peller.com](http://www.peller.com) or call 1-888-669-5566.

- Celebrate Niagara's renowned wines, cuisine and roses by taking part in *Days of Wine and Roses*, a series of local events throughout February. Attend a 'How to Taste Wine' seminar, savour a four-course meal at Strewn Estate Winery, take in beauty of the 'Bouquets' Annual Gala Event at the Queens Landing and more. [www.niagaraonthelake.com](http://www.niagaraonthelake.com) or call (905) 468-4263.



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6755 Fallsview Blvd.,  
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## Experience the New Niagara Falls

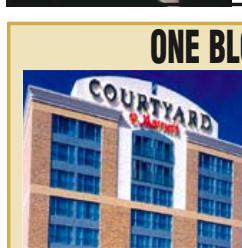
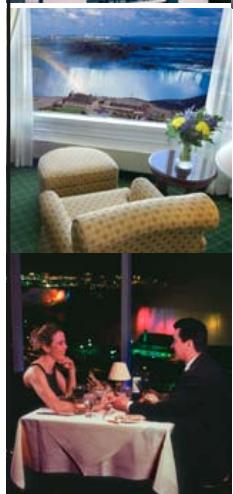
- Located 100 yards from the Brink of the Falls
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[www.niagarafallsmarriott.com](http://www.niagarafallsmarriott.com)



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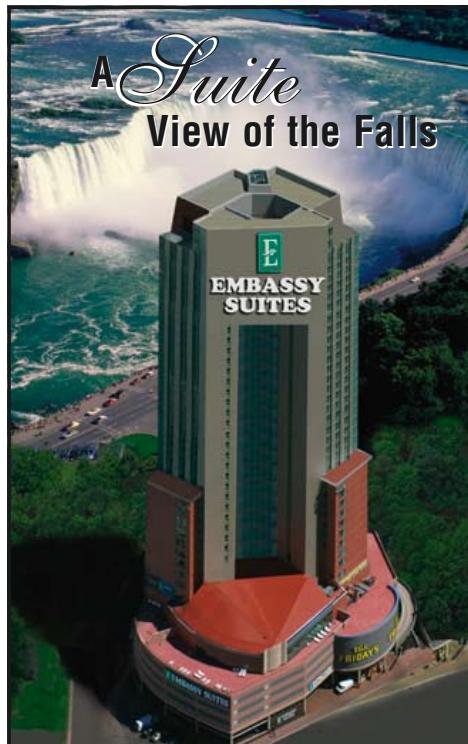
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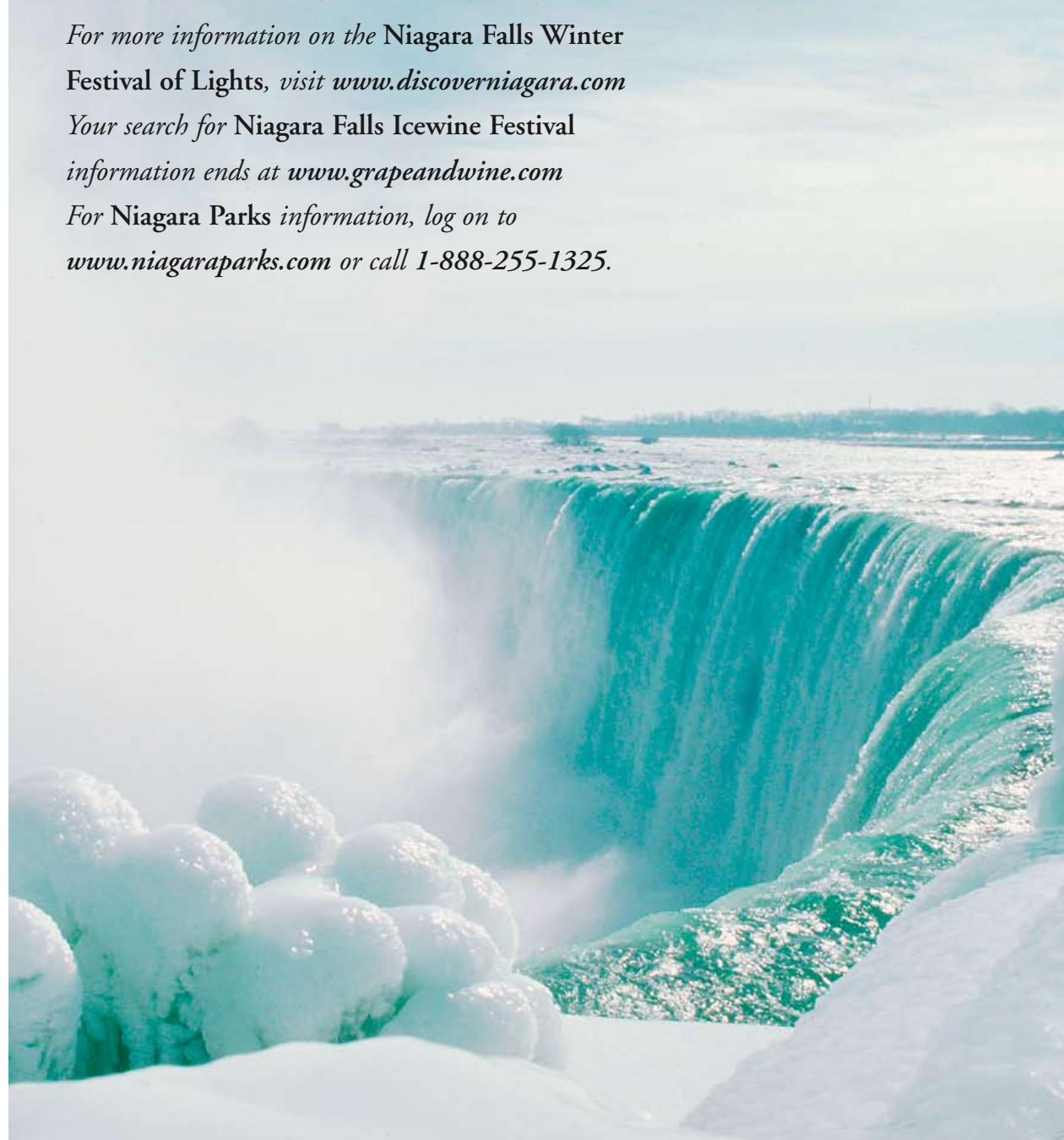
# great escapes



Photo courtesy of Artistic Glass

**B**ut no trip to Niagara is complete until you've experienced the new Niagara Fallsview Casino Resort, a Las Vegas/European-inspired entertainment complex of gaming, dining and shopping. Try your luck at 150 gaming tables and 3,000 slot machines in the elegant atmosphere of hand-painted ceilings, marble floors and chandeliers. After cashing in your chips, ease your mind at The Spa, take in a movie at the 1,500-seat theatre and call it a day in your luxurious suite at the 30-storey hotel. Find out more at [www.discoverniagara.com/fallsviewcasino](http://www.discoverniagara.com/fallsviewcasino) or book by calling 1-888-888-1089.

*For more information on the Niagara Falls Winter Festival of Lights, visit [www.discoverniagara.com](http://www.discoverniagara.com)  
Your search for Niagara Falls Icewine Festival information ends at [www.grapeandwine.com](http://www.grapeandwine.com)  
For Niagara Parks information, log on to [www.niagaraparks.com](http://www.niagaraparks.com) or call 1-888-255-1325.*



looking ahead

# spring & summer



Wasaga Beach

As winter tires are retired for another year, thoughts of blooming flowers, sandy beaches, and road trips come to mind. Experience the joys of spring and summer right here in Ontario. There's something alluring every day of the week: outdoor concerts and art festivals, fireworks displays, water parks, town and country tours, boutique shopping and of course, our natural beauty – all right in your own backyard.

Plan and book your spring and summer getaways now and have the vacation you've only dreamed about. Visit [www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net) or call **1-800-ONTARIO** today.

Don't miss the spring and summer issues of *inOntario*. Explore spring's rejuvenating powers and immerse yourself in stories of ultimate indulgence. Our summer issue will highlight the 'dog days of summer' with Ontario's ultimate family-fun activities and outdoor discovery adventures. Simply log on to [www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net) for your free subscription today.



looking ahead

# Plant yourself here

Ontario is a blooming colourful province. Admire everything from clematis to cacti to chrysanthemums at the beautiful Royal Botanical Gardens, a national historic site of Canada, in the 'growing' city of Burlington. Stroll through 30 kilometres (19 miles) of trails and bask in the serenity of some of Ontario's favourite gardens, including the world's largest collection of lilacs.

Royal Botanical Gardens, Burlington/Hamilton

[www.rbg.ca](http://www.rbg.ca) (905) 527-1158

Green thumbs attend Canada Blooms: The Toronto Flower and Garden Show – the largest flower and garden show in the country. Get marvellous ideas from Canada's leading horticulturists and landscapers, and be sure to see celebrities show off their stuff at the flower-arranging event.

Canada Blooms: The Toronto Flower and Garden Show, Toronto,

March 9–13, 2005.

[www.canadablooms.com](http://www.canadablooms.com) (416) 447-8655.

Canada's largest tulip festival, hosted by the nation's capital, Ottawa, displays millions of colourful tulips in celebration of peace and friendship. First held in 1953 with tulip bulbs graciously given by Princess Juliana of The Netherlands, this year's festival will mark the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II and celebrate the opening of the new Canadian War Museum, in Ottawa.

Canadian Tulip Festival, Ottawa

May 5–23, 2005. [www.tulipfestival.ca](http://www.tulipfestival.ca) 1-800-668-8547

Visit [www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net) to use our convenient searchable database or call 1-800-ONTARIO for more floral festivities

# Enjoy yourself here

Whether you dream of relaxing at a spa, going fishing or sailing, it's never too early to plan your summer vacation. Ontario's resorts are the perfect getaway from a long week of work and can be enjoyed in every corner of the province. Choose from over 200 inns, lodges and resorts. Consider an escape to the Killarney Mountain Lodge for a canoeing, kayaking, sailing or hiking adventure, or indulge in a spa package at the Inn at Manitou. Plan your spring and summer trips now. By booking early you'll avoid disappointment and you'll also have plenty of time to look forward to the trip of your dreams.

Resorts Ontario [www.resorts-ontario.com](http://www.resorts-ontario.com) or call 1-800-363-7227

# Park yourself here

Explore Ontario's landscape in the serenity of environmentally protected provincial parks. Towering pines, great waterways, massive sand dunes and rolling meadows paint a picturesque backdrop to wilderness adventures. Plan your trip now and book early to enjoy the campsite you had in mind. Bookings are accepted up to five months in advance of your arrival.

**Ontario Parks**

[www.ontarioparks.com](http://www.ontarioparks.com)

**1 888-ONT-PARK/1-888-668-7275**

Frontenac Provincial Park



**the source**

# a world of information

*inOntario* can help you to get the most out of your vacation. Whether you have your mind set on where you'd like to visit or are looking for ideas, we recommend some specific sources to help you plan your Ontario winter getaway. If you need any information on travelling in Ontario – weather, highway construction and travel tips – we're just a mouse click or phone call away, 24 hours a day and seven days a week. When you are ready to plan, we have friendly travel counsellors ready to help at **1-800-ONTARIO (668-2746)**, and don't miss the searchable events database at [www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net)

## Fishing Ontario



Don't let ice stop you from reeling in a monster catch. Visit [www.ontariotravel.net/gofish](http://www.ontariotravel.net/gofish) to view many packages that are available to help you plan your ice fishing adventure today.

## Resource Guide

Find your important destination information all in one place. Whether you are looking for specific information on hotels, or other accommodations, attractions or adventures, this guide features easy-to-understand listings complete with addresses, contact numbers, and websites, and you can see more at [www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net)



## Snowmobiling Ontario

Planning on hitting the trails on a snowmobile this winter? Visit [www.ontariotravel.net/snowmobile](http://www.ontariotravel.net/snowmobile)



for everything you need including accommodations, trail information, conditions and travel tips.

## Ontario Outdoors

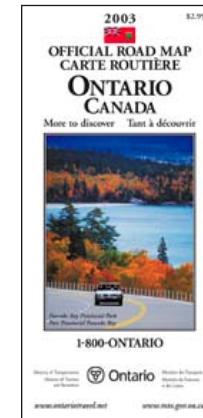
Discover skiing, snowboarding, tubing, dog sledding and more online at [www.ontariotravel.net/outdoors](http://www.ontariotravel.net/outdoors)



Many packages are available as you choose from a great selection of some of Ontario's favourite destinations to plan your winter getaway.

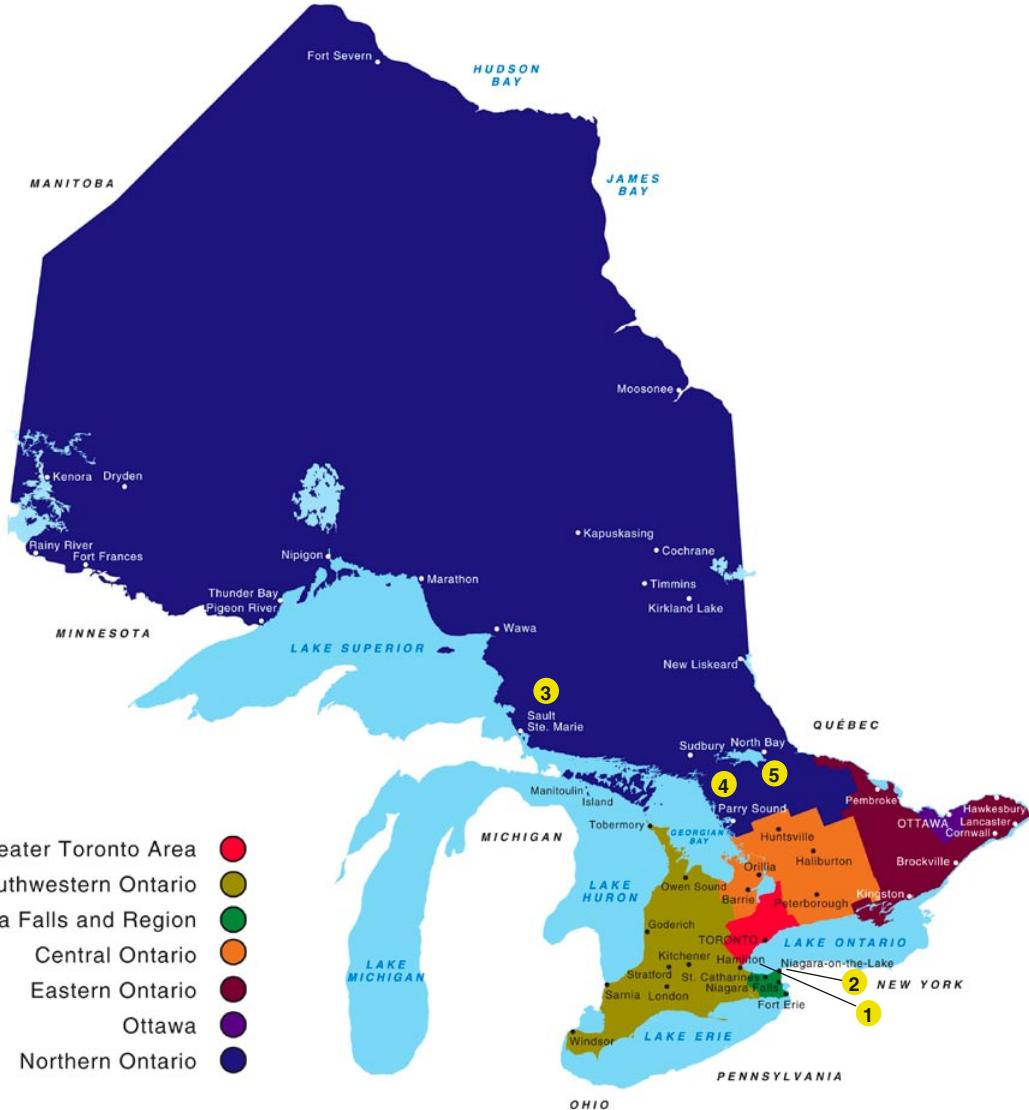
## Official Road Map of Ontario

Always make sure that you have the latest Official Road Map of Ontario, created by the Ministry of Transportation and the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation. The latest edition of the map is available by calling **1-800-ONTARIO**, or visiting [www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net)



# the source

## Travel Organizations



For more on what to see and do in Ontario, simply order free copies of the following guides by visiting online or by calling them today.



### Tourism Hamilton

Experience Hamilton  
Visitor's Guide 2004

1-800-263-8590

[www.hamiltonundiscovered.com](http://www.hamiltonundiscovered.com)



### Niagara-on-the-Lake

2004 Visitors' Guide  
1-888-619-5985

[www.niagaraonthelake.com](http://www.niagaraonthelake.com)



### Algoma Country

2004/2005 Winter Adventure Guide  
1-800-263-ALGOMA (2546)  
[www.algomacountry.com](http://www.algomacountry.com)



### Rainbow Country

1.800.465.6655  
[www.rainbowcountry.com](http://www.rainbowcountry.com)



### Ontario's Near North Almaguin Nipissing Travel Association

1-800-387-0516 705-474-6634  
[www.ontariosnearnorth.on.ca](http://www.ontariosnearnorth.on.ca)



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# Travel information to go

**YEAR-ROUND CENTRES**

**Barrie**, (Hwy. 400 & Molson Park Dr. East)  
21 Molson Park Dr. East L4N 9A9  
**Tel:** (705) 725-7280 **Fax:** (705) 725-7285  
May 15 - June 11 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m.  
June 12 - Sept. 5 8 a.m.-8 p.m.  
Sept. 6 - Nov. 30 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Dec. 1 - Mar. 31 7 a.m.-5 p.m.  
April 1 - May 14 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Cornwall\***, 903 Brookdale Ave. K6J 4P3  
**Tel:** (613) 933-2420 **Fax:** (613) 933-3387  
May 15 - 26 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m.  
May 27 - June 9  
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Sept. 6 - May 14 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

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Sept. 6 - May 14 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

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Sept. 6 - Oct. 9  
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Fri. - Sat. 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m.  
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Sept. 6 - Oct. 9  
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Sept. 6 - Oct. 9  
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Fri. - Sat. 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m.  
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P6A 1A3  
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Sept. 6 - Oct. 9  
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## ontario trivia

# do you really know Ontario?

Here's your chance to learn interesting facts about Ontario. Look at the questions and try your luck at the answers. Then check the answers to see how you did. Good luck and happy travels.

Which city boasts having Canada's largest artificial skating rink?

- a) Ottawa
- b) Windsor
- c) Toronto
- d) Kitchener

**1**



This waterfowl was adopted as Ontario's official bird on June 23, 1994.

Thomas A. Edison installed the first Canadian incandescent lighting system for a factory in this Ontario city.

- a) Cornwall
- b) Cambridge
- c) Brantford
- d) Niagara Falls

**3**

This city's annual Santa Claus Parade is one of the largest in North America, entertaining 400,000 spectators along its route.

- a) Ottawa
- b) Toronto
- c) Mississauga
- d) Hamilton



**5**

Ontario has the world's longest network of snowmobile trails (not to mention, some of the finest).

How long is this network?

- a) 5,900 km (3,600 mi.)
- b) 13,500 km (8,400 mi.)
- c) 43,000 km (26,660 mi.)
- d) 53,000 km (33,000 mi.)

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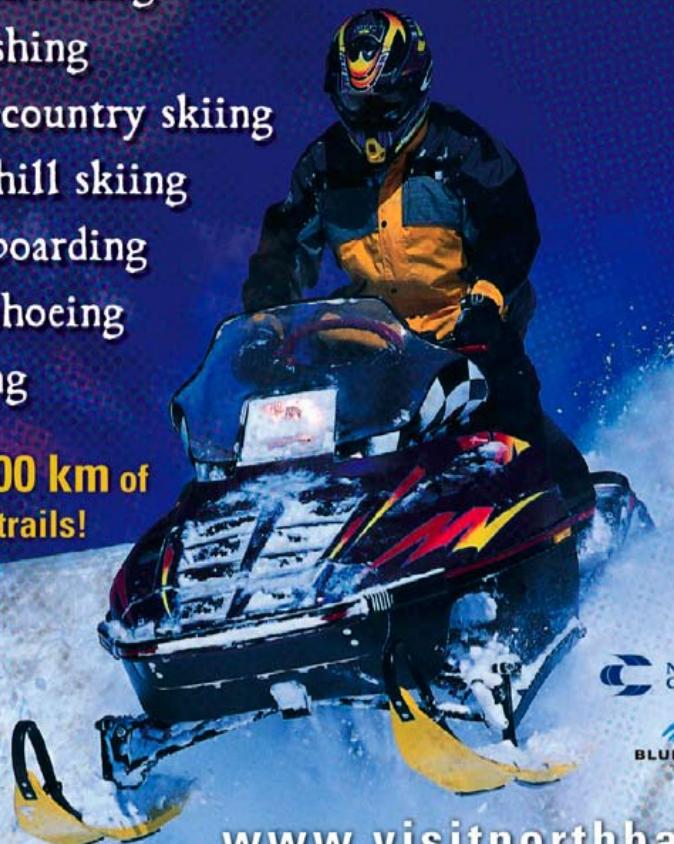
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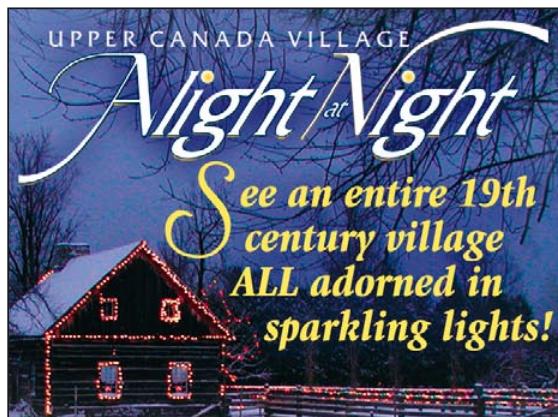
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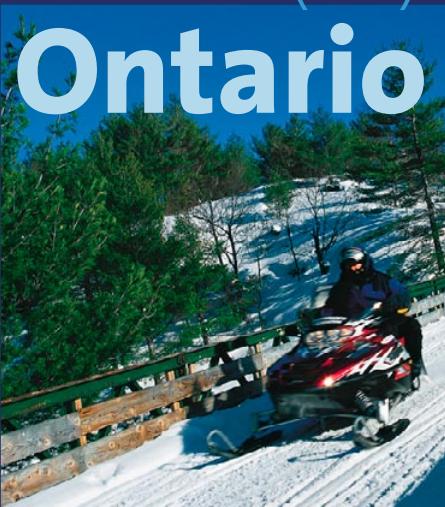
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## Ontario



Whether you consider snowmobiling your wintertime addiction, or simply something you've always thought of trying, Ontario's 'snow highways' are exciting routes to travel – where thrilling rides, friendly faces and delicious food converge.

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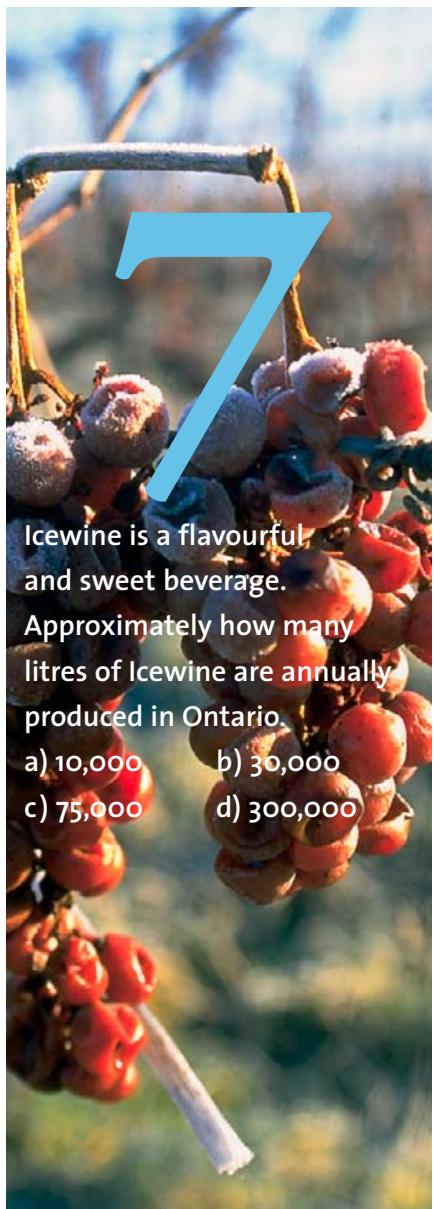
snowmobiling trails in the province. It's easy to find many more places to stop along Ontario's 43,000 km (26,660 mi.) of well-groomed and clearly marked trails. If you have your own snowmobile you might like

to try some of the lodge-to-lodge opportunities. If you don't have a machine, many resorts have them available to rent by the hour or by the day. Log on to the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs website at [www.ofsc.on.ca](http://www.ofsc.on.ca) and [www.ontariotravel.net/snowmobile](http://www.ontariotravel.net/snowmobile) for places to stay, dine, rent and up-to-date trail conditions.

# ontario trivia

6

Which city hosts Canada's largest light festival with 100 brilliant displays covering 5 km (3 mi.)?

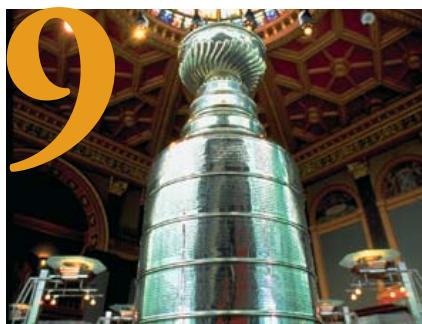


8

Which waterway transforms into the world's longest skating rink over 8 km (5 mi.) long?

- a) Trent-Severn Waterway
- b) Rideau Canal
- c) Welland Canal
- d) St. Lawrence River

10



Where in Toronto can the world's largest collection of hockey memorabilia be found?

- a) Royal Ontario Museum
- b) The Air Canada Centre
- c) The Hockey Hall of Fame
- d) Wayne Gretzky's Restaurant



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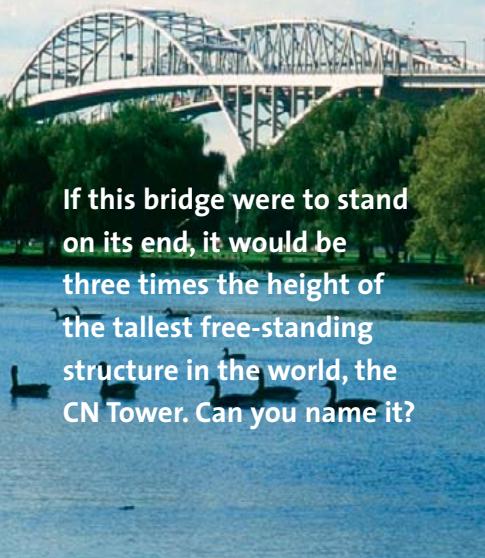
This Ontario animal can weigh 375 kg (827 lbs.) and can grow a new 27 kg (60 lb.) rack of antlers every year.

- a) Bison
- b) Elk
- c) Moose
- d) Whitetail deer

11

12

If this bridge were to stand on its end, it would be three times the height of the tallest free-standing structure in the world, the CN Tower. Can you name it?



During winter, as many as 4,000 ice fishing huts are erected on this lake renowned for its excellent angling.

- a) Simcoe
- b) Ontario
- c) Nipissing
- d) Huron

14

What is the official gem of Ontario?

13



15

This settlement was the largest and most successful black settlement in early Ontario.

- a) Chatham
- b) North Buxton
- c) Ridgetown
- d) Deep River

16

Which animal gathers every winter, south of Lake Nipissing, in a spectacular herd of 8,000 to 14,000?

Although this city is well known for its gardens, it also has the distinction of having one of Canada's naturally occurring magnetic hills.

- a) Niagara-on-the-Lake
- b) Ottawa
- c) Burlington

17

## Answers

1. c) Toronto (Harbourfront)
2. The Common Loon
3. a) Cornwall
4. b) Toronto
5. c) 43,000 km (26,660 mi.)
6. Niagara Falls (The Niagara Falls Festival of Lights)
7. d) 300,000
8. d) Toronto
9. c) The Hockey Hall of Fame
10. b) The Rideau Canal
11. c) Moose
12. Sarnia's Bluewater Bridge. It's 1,883 m (6,178 ft.) long while the CN Tower is 553.33 m (1,815 ft. 5 in) high.
13. a) Simcoe
14. Amethyst, a rich purple semi-precious stone
15. b) North Buxton
16. White-tailed deer
17. c) Burlington. This magnetically charged hill is strong enough to move a car uphill. It is four kilometres (2.5 miles) north of downtown Burlington on a rural section of King Road.

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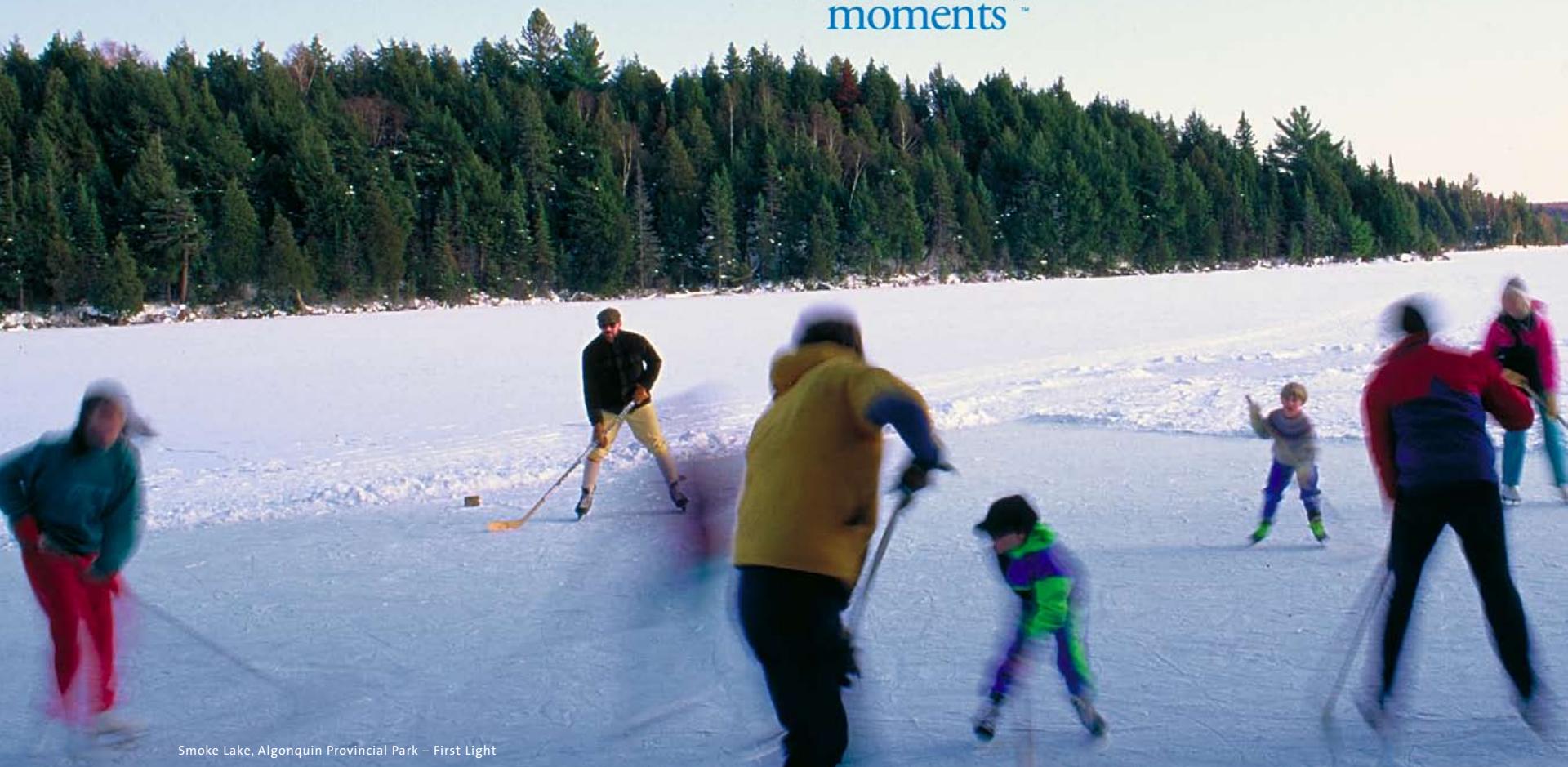
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# On the frozen pond time stands still

for me and my son. We fly down the wing  
carving our names in ice. My Orr to his  
Sundin. His wild swipe at the puck is filled  
with elation knowing that win or lose he  
soon will hoist a cup of hot cocoa.



Smoke Lake, Algonquin Provincial Park – First Light