



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



Derek Purdy

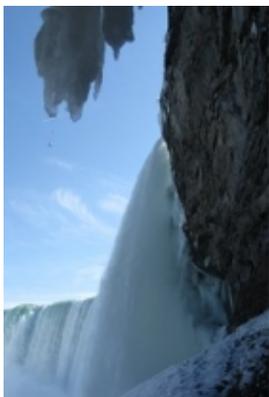
Winter in Niagara

Niagara Falls (ON), 3 Days

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: Winter is a beautiful time to visit Niagara. The crowds are gone, and Niagara Falls looks spectacular when it is covered in ice. The Falls is lit up on a nightly basis, and although all the attractions aren't open year round, you can get into many of them for a discounted price in the winter. The Great Wolf Lodge is a great place to stay in the winter, as it has one of the largest indoor waterparks in the Region. With a wave pool, a water roller coaster, and several waterslides, you could almost spend your whole vacation at the hotel. A new attraction-The Rink on the Brink, opened up in 2009 and is open until February 28th. You can skate the night away with a perfect view of Niagara Falls! If you plan your winter vacation to Niagara accordingly, it can coincide with some of the winter festivals that happen on a yearly basis. The Winter Festival of Lights goes from early November to early January, and the Ice Wine Festival takes place the last two weeks of January. Day One of this guide concentrates on Niagara Falls, while Day Two takes you to several wineries in Niagara on the Lake. It can be very cold here in the winter, but the sheer beauty of the landscape is worth it.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Niagara Falls (ON)



Journey Behind The Falls

Thundering Great Fun



Niagara Falls

Spectacular Natural Wonder



Watermark Restaurant (The)

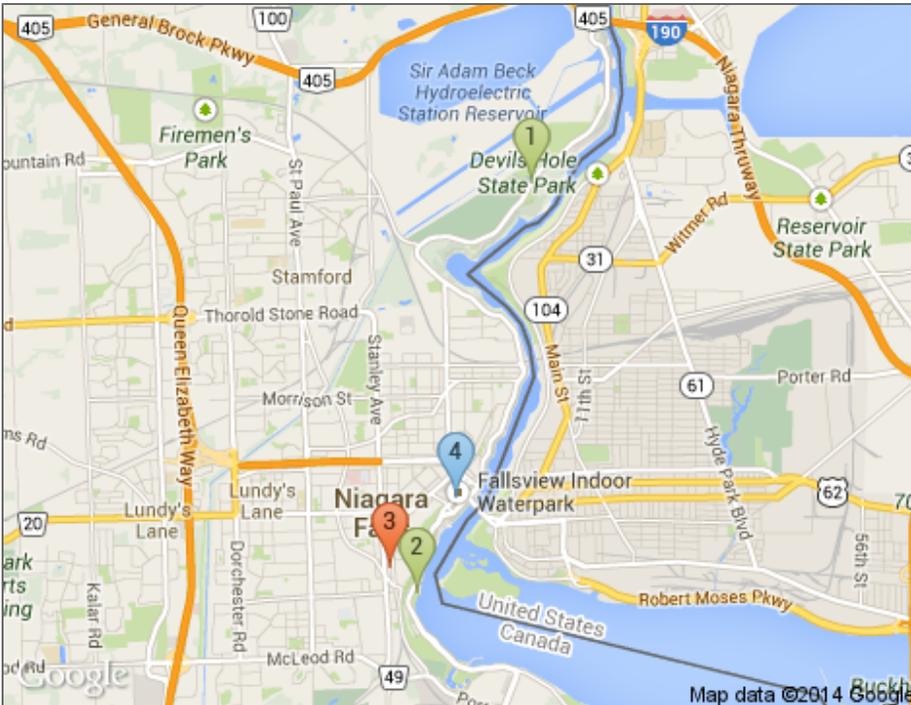
Dine with a View



Casino Niagara

Game for Some Fun

Day 1 - Niagara Falls (ON)



QUICK NOTE

contact:

tel: +1 905 351 0254
<http://www.niagaraparks.com/nfgg/behindthefalls.php>

location:

6650 Niagara Parkway
Niagara Falls ON L2E 6T2

1 Journey Behind The Falls

DESCRIPTION: This thundering adventure literally brings visitors beneath and behind the Canadian Horseshoe Falls, for a wild and wet time up close and personal with one of the world's natural wonders. Protected by rain gear included in the price of admission, visitors are taken through various man-made tunnels. They come out at an observation area where the noise is deafening, the mist all-surrounding, and the view awe-inspiring. Open hours vary seasonally. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Journey Behind The Falls

contact:

tel: +1 905 356 6061(Tourist Information) /+1 800 563 2557(Tourist Information)
fax: +1 905 356 5567(Tourist Information)
<http://www.niagarafallstourism.com/>

location:

Niagara Parkway
Niagara Falls ON L2E 6T2

2 Niagara Falls

DESCRIPTION: It all began 12,000 years ago when a huge trench was carved to create Niagara Falls, spectacular natural wonder. At the time, the Falls were about 11 kilometers (seven miles) down river in the Lewiston-Queenston area. In their present position, the Horseshoe Falls on the Canadian side and the American Bridal Veil Falls are eroding at a fast rate. Together, they pour about 60,000 cubic meters (200,000 cubic feet) of water every second over the brink. Come the winter holiday season, the Falls are beguilingly decked out for the annual Winter Festival of Lights. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: +1 905 353 7138 / +1 866 388 8396 (Toll Free)

<http://www.watermarkrestaurant.com/>,<http://www.niagarafallshilton.com/dining/>

location:

6361 Fallsview Boulevard
Niagara Falls ON L2G 3V9

3 Watermark Restaurant (The)

DESCRIPTION: Have a wonderful dining experience at The Watermark Restaurant. Housed in Hilton Niagara Falls Fallsview. This restaurant serves meals that suit the varied taste buds of international guests it attracts. Prepared with choicest of ingredients and well presented, every meal is a treat. Enjoy all this along with a fantastic view this place flaunts. Must visit for its panoramic views. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Watermark Restaurant (The)

contact:

tel: +1 888 946 3255

fax: +1 905 374 3598

<http://www.casinoniagara.com/>

location:

5705 Falls Avenue
Niagara Falls ON L2E 6T3

4 Casino Niagara

DESCRIPTION: With over 95,000 square feet (8825.7 square meters) of gaming space, 1500 slot and poker machines, and 40 gaming tables, you know this casino is serious about offering some gambling fun. Located across from the Rainbow Bridge, the casino is within easy reach of most of the area's major attractions, including the Falls, Maid of the Mist, and Skylon Tower. There are numerous restaurants and lounges within the complex too. To know more about casino policies and other details, do see the website. © wcities.com



wcities

Niagara Falls (ON) Snapshot

Local Info

It's huge, it's noisy and it makes your heart race.

Standing on the edge of Niagara Falls are unique travel experiences awaiting you, where you will be thrilled over and over again when you venture on back to this beautiful city. This hands down explains why a visit to Niagara topples the To See list of world travelers. Deemed Often as one the Seven Wonders of the World, Niagara Falls has been attracting attention since Father Louis Hennepin first published his description of the Falls in 1678. By the time the first Maid of the Mist was launched in 1846, Niagara was welcoming over 50,000 summer visitors. It is estimated that 13 million tourists visit Niagara Falls yearly.

Niagara Falls is something special as you don't just get the one main attraction that is Niagara Falls but you get three Falls in one- the Horseshoe Falls on the Canadian side, and the American and Bridal Veil Falls on the U.S. side. Together they conduct water from the four Upper Great Lakes into Lake Ontario and then on out into the ocean. Over 20% of the world's fresh water flows over these Falls and is compressed through the Niagara Gorge. The resulting power and speed of 600,000 gallons of water per second tearing through this conduit is astounding.

Locals refer to them simply as The Falls, and most people acknowledge that the view from the Canadian side, as well as the compelling array of attractions that are clustered around the Canadian Horseshoe Falls, provide the quintessential Falls experience. In Niagara Falls its not just about The Falls itself, it is all about the whole package deal of bright lights and long nights while in the city.

The rich and famous frequently flee to Niagara Falls and always gain a warm Canadian welcome. The likes of Royalty, politicians, presidents, writers and movie stars have all wander over the border to see what all the hype is all about. Many members of the Royal Family have come to visit, such as King George VI, Princess Margaret, Queen Elizabeth, and Princess Diana, Prince William and Harry. Various movies have also been filmed here, Marilyn Monroe with her Niagara, and Christopher Reeve in Superman. Celebrities to visit

Niagara Falls include John Lennon and Yoko Ono spent their honeymoon here, Regis and Kelly and Brad Pitt.

A tourism playground is what many call Niagara Falls and its surrounding areas. With everything from wine tours to Clifton Hill there really isn't anything short of fun-filled activities to partake in for the whole family. With lush vegetation and walking trails throughout the Niagara Region, Niagara Falls is a perfect spot to gain some rest and relaxation you have been waiting for all those days being cramped up in an office. In 1885, the Niagara Parks Commission was created to act as steward for the green spaces in Niagara Falls and the Niagara River corridor from Niagara Falls to Niagara-on-the-Lake. This area has been kept as parkland and it is maintained primarily by students of the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture. The park-lands of Niagara remain lush and green and provide many with a sense of solitude around all the hustle and bustle of Clifton Hill and the tourists spots in Niagara Falls.

Over the years Niagara Falls continues to prosper and expand. With Marineland, The Fallsview Casino, The SkyWheel, restaurants galore and much, much more you really will succumb to the perfection and growth that the city has mastered over the years. The newest addition to Niagara Falls is the \$100 million Convention Centre. With an abundance of shows and what not to partake in at the convention centre this just as to the wondrous list of adventures to go on while in Niagara Falls.

Niagara Falls brings wonder and excitement to anyone and everyone who visit this perfect tourist destination. It has something for everyone- from the natural wonder of the world to history lessons, arts and theatre, attractions and walking trails Niagara Falls is really the perfect spot to gain insight into the Niagara Regions world of tourism.

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History

The history of the Niagara Region is pretty textbook. Some 12,000 years ago the first settlers came to the Niagara Region to witness the birth of The Falls. Way back when the land was nothing but spruce and tundra forest, a whole lot different of a look

then nowadays with its flashy lights and filled up streets. The Clovis People were amongst the first to inhabit this picturesque place who were nomadic hunters that most likely camped along the old Lake Erie Shoreline. Through the years hunter-gatherers made their way here during the Archaic Period approximately 9,000-3,000 years ago. Fish camps were set along the rivers and lakes that cascaded the likes of the Niagara Region.

During The Woodland Period which lasted from 3,000-300 years ago The Iroquois came to the area. When the Iroquois came here they started to create small villages and a political system was put in place in these villages, which was rare at the time. At the beginning of the 17th century the European explorers and missionaries arrived causing havoc of power.

Many great explorers made their way to the New World, but never made it over to see Niagara Falls. In 1615 Etienne Brule is said to possibly be the first to behold Niagara Falls. The Recollect missionary was said to explore Ontario during this time. Just a decade later the Jesuits arrived and Gabriel Lalemant was the first to record the Iroquois name for the river: "Onguiaahra", in laments terms, "The Strait". "Niagara" is the simplified original name.

In 1651 the Iroquois wiped out the Neutrals. The fur-trade rivalry is what caused the wipe out and until the American Revolution the Iroquois somehow managed to almost keep white settlers out of the Niagara Region.

Louis Hennepin published "Nouvelle Decouverte" which speaks of The Falls. After visiting The Falls in 1678 he fell in love with the Wonder of the World. He left an impression on the area as he believed The Falls to be a large masterpiece, estimating it at 183 metres high, more than 3 times what is actually is.

The war of 1812 broke out in the area and after the war the area was able to in time rebuild itself. A part of the country was fiercely fought over by British and American soldiers in the War of 1812, where history has left its mark. Museums, preserved forts, and the home of Canada's heroine, Laura Secord, are found here. This is also the home of Canada's wine growing region. Today there are around 80 wineries in the area that continually persevere the greenery of Niagara.

Niagara Falls (ON) Snapshot continued

The first ferry service across the lower river began in the 1820's showcasing to the world that Niagara was continually building itself back up. By 1827 paved roads were created and had been built up from the ferry landing to the top of the bank. The Clifton hotel was built in this area and this area is now Clifton Hill, a place with many high-rises and activities for all to partake in.

Over the last 150 years, daring souls have gone over the Falls by the dozens in every contraption possible. Some have died in the attempt; others like 63-year-old widowed schoolteacher Annie Taylor, the first person to survive a plunge over the Falls in a barrel, made history and gained fame.

In 1829 a major investment was created in the region, The Welland Canal, which still has cargo boats and yachts come through its walls daily. In 1841 the first Upper Canada railroad open its rails and later on in 1854 served the township of Niagara Falls with steam engines. The 1820's was a great time for the Niagara Region as tourism began to boom and still to this day Niagara Falls is known as a perfect tourist destination for all. After World War 1 attractions, accommodations and restaurants galore began to develop and now over 13 million tourists visit Niagara Falls yearly. Niagara Falls and surrounding areas boast an immense amount of history. That history is showcased through the various adventures one can venture off in while in this perfect region.

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Hotel Insights

Did you know... That there are more than 12,000 hotel and motel rooms in the Niagara Region? And that this number is surpassed in Canada only by Toronto and Vancouver?

Not bad for an area that has some 200,000 people at the most, with the city of Niagara Falls, Ontario, weighing in at about 80,000. But, of course, that doesn't take into account the 14-18 million visitors who flock to the region each year from every conceivable part of the world.

Suffice it to say that you won't go begging for a room when you head down to the Falls—be it for a honeymoon, a long-awaited family vacation, or a crucial business trip. Better still, the choice and type of room is just as varied as the number,

with luxury hotels lined up alongside neon-glitter motels, and Niagara-on-the-Lake European-style B&B's tucked away in the same countryside as full service campgrounds.

Scrambling for a view Of course, for the true Falls aficionado, nothing but the best will do—and that means getting as close to their object of desire as possible. That, in turn, means a room at one of the high rise deluxe hotels between Clifton Hill and the Horseshoe Falls. Starting at the top of the hill, you'll find the Brock Plaza and the Skyline Foxhead, often referred to as the Grand Old Lady and her Much Younger Sister. The Brock is redolent with original 1920's Art Deco furniture, chandeliers and marble; the Skyline is sleek and built with a wall of glass to enhance the view.

Along the ridge above Queen Victoria Park are a number of other well-known hotels including Quality Inn Fallsview, Sheraton Fallsview Hotel& Conference Centre, Renaissance Fallsview, and Days Inn Fallsview District. Any of these will make a guest feel right at home amid the mist and the roar.

Those who want to sleep near the Falls without paying for a fancy hotel can opt for Travelodge Clifton Hill, formerly known as the Honeymoon City Motel and on the site of the first motel ever built in the city. What better shrine for the Honeymoon Capital of the World? Claiming the title of closest inn to the Falls is Michael's Inn, one block north of Casino Niagara and featuring various theme rooms for the more imaginative guests!

Lundy's Lane: A motel battleground

Starting out close to the Niagara River and stretching westward into the Niagara Region countryside, this road is famous for two things: as the site of the Battle of Lundy's Lane during the War of 1812(commemorated in the Lundy's Lane Historical Museum); and as a present day corridor for many of the motels in the area. Here you'll find both the chains in the form of Days Inn, Econo Lodge and Travelodge Bonaventure, and such stand-alones as the Gardens Motel with its country setting, and Voyageur Inn, featuring home cooked meals and a fireplace in the lobby area.

If your idea of accommodations calls for a little more privacy and a little less noise from cars backing up to doors, then you've got to get on the reservation hotline for

one of the Niagara Region's incredibly varied bed& breakfasts. There are B&B's scattered throughout the countryside and vineyards from Fort Erie to the south to St. Catharines to the north. These include a few in the Falls area itself, such as Niagara Inn Bed and Breakfast, Cooper's Bed and Breakfast, and The New Hadden Hall along the Niagara River.

But the absolute mecca for B&B's has to be the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, north of the Falls and home to the world-renowned Shaw Festival. Here, amid turn-of-the-20th century homes and boutiques that seem untouched by the passage of time, you'll find everything from the Farmhouse Bed& Breakfast with its adjacent Ice Creamery& Market to the Victorian Kiely Inn and Blairpen House Country Inn, with an historical library and balconies off the rooms.

Getting the massage If it's creature comforts you're wanting, check out Niagara-on-the-Lake's Pillar and Post Inn or Prince of Wales Hotel.

Okay, so you're more the hardy outdoors type who likes to wake up to the stars overhead and the crunch of leaves underfoot. Well, you're in luck. The Niagara region has some 30 full-service campgrounds in all—from the very basic pitch-your-tent variety to sites offering two-bedroom cabins, hot-and-cold running water and electricity for that TV set.

There's Campark Resorts for camping right in the middle of the city; King Waldorf's, located on the banks of the Welland River just south of Marineland; Scott's Tent& Trailer Park with game room and swimming pool; and Niagara RV Rentals with its own boat launch.

From plush hotel to historic inn, gaudy motel to Victorian B&B, basic tenting to comfortable RV-ing—it's all here near the roar of the Falls!

Please Note: Room rates and other costs fluctuate greatly depending on the time of year. So please check all rates to make sure you're not in for a surprise when you arrive.

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Restaurants Insights

Award winners and more From award winner to your basic family eatery, chain to

Niagara Falls (ON) Snapshot continued

mom-and-pop operation, big theme or just big portions, with a view or hole in the wall, Niagara Falls, Ontario, has a restaurant to suit your taste and wallet.

If money is no object, treat yourself to a meal prepared by an award winning restaurant team. Michael Heeb, executive chef of Mulberry's Dining Room in the Renaissance Fallsview Hotel, took home the silver medal at the World Culinary Olympics in Germany, competing grill to grill with chefs from around the globe. Now he's sharing those dishes with both hotel guests and anyone else who cares to have a taste.

On top of Clifton Hill sits the Beef Baron Restaurant, an impressive joint that has won Family Restaurant of the Year honors three times. Go west to the nearby town of Jordan where you will find On the Twenty Restaurant, part of the Inn on the Twenty complex. The decor includes work by local artists and the menu features local produce and from-scratch entrees. It's no wonder it is a Distinguished Restaurant of North America award winner.

For the good of the family If you are traveling with the family or simply trying to pinch a few pennies, there's always the search for places where you can take yourself or the crew for good grub at an affordable price. Niagara Falls has plenty, including Victoria Park Restaurant (where Princess Di and the kids ate during their visit), La Fiesta Fish & Chips (English-style), and the Village Restaurant, located in the village of Chippawa, just minutes from Marineland. The Flying Saucer Restaurant is perfect for the family on a budget with its 99-cent breakfast, while Betty's Restaurant is the place to go for the home-cooked meal away from home.

There are other family eateries that will force you to dig a little deeper into your pockets. But what's a tourist destination without one or two theme restaurants, right? Get up close and personal with your favourite celebrity at the Hard Rock Cafe or Planet Hollywood, both located right in the heart of the action next to Casino Niagara. Both spots feature rock music and movie photographs, clothing and other cultural artifacts. But be ready to wait in long lines for the privilege of these close encounters of the starry kind. Oh yes, the food's okay, too.

Seal of authenticity For a break from all-you-can-eat buffets, chain and theme

restaurants, try an authentic meal from a varied selection of ethnic cuisines. The chef at Tandoor Hut serves up traditional home cooked Indian food with recipes dating back generations. Yukiguni Japanese Restaurant & Sushi Bar has been rated as having some of the best sushi in Southern Ontario—and that's really saying a lot with all the sushi bars in Toronto. And when that honeymoon hits your eye...you've got to go Italian. Try Deluca's for that avant garde yet personal feel. Or Mama Leone, winner of the coveted Niagara's Best Fine Dining Award.

One of the first things many tourists do after arriving at their vacation destination is to ask the hotel concierge or B&B host where they can find the best restaurants. Truth is, those restaurants are often under your very nose—or at least in the place where you rest your weary head. For example, those staying at the Renaissance Fallsview Hotel can take advantage of its 18th floor Rooftop Fallsview Dining Room, serving *à la carte* dinner nightly with delights such as Blackened Swordfish and Pan-Roasted Steelhead Trout.

B&Bs break out the silver Out in the countryside, many bed and breakfast inns are serving more than the traditional sunrise feast. Inside Niagara-on-the-Lake's Pillar and Post Inn can be found the Cannery and Carriages Dining Rooms, a series of three lovely areas to enjoy breakfast, lunch and dinner. Also situated in the prettiest town in Canada is the elegant Escabeche restaurant, featuring classic French cuisine and ambience inside the Victorian-style Prince of Wales Hotel.

A number of restaurants come not only with good food but also with a spectacular view as part of the price of admission. And yes, you do pay a little extra for the privilege. One of the most amazing is the Revolving Dining Room situated at the top of the Skylon Tower, 775 feet above the Niagara River gorge. As the name implies, this restaurant brings a view of the Falls to your seat, revolving once every hour.

Not quite so heady, La Doria Restaurant, located within Days Inn North of The Falls, offers a view of the Niagara Gorge in a garden-like setting. Queenston Heights Restaurant, inside the lovely Queenston Heights Park, which is home to Brock's Monument and the Floral Clock, overlooks the Niagara River.

Dinner and...on with the show

Entertainment with your dinner helps the food go down and cleanses the palate for the next round. Niagara Falls has its share of such offerings, including the Niagara Grand Dinner Theatre, where a witty romantic comedy is performed after your grand meal. At Yuk Yuk's Comedy Club, the rule of the house is to chew with your mouth open. Actually, you won't have a choice when you are laughing aloud as the best in upcoming stand-up comics do their thing. The dinner menu features everything from sirloin to finger foods.

And then there's the unforgettably hilarious Oh Canada Eh?! dinner show. Recently celebrating its 1,500th performance, this musical celebration and gentle send-up of all things Canadian has won numerous awards. And there's a delicious five-course meal to boot, served by wait staff dressed as characters from the show.

If the meal is over and the night's still young, enjoy a cocktail or two at one of the local clubs. There are a number of bars both in the downtown area and along Lundy's Lane Road, including Kelsey's Neighborhood Bar & Grill and 007 Bar Restaurant, claiming the best martinis in town—shaken not stirred.

Whether you are a high roller or just like to watch others gamble, Casino Niagara's Marilyn's Lounge, named in honor of none other than La Monroe, and Twenty One Club are sure bets to help end your evening on a high note.

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Nightlife Insights

Been there, done that "Okay, we've seen the Falls—now what do we do?" is an all-too-familiar refrain for visitors to the area, especially among younger members of the family. And non-honeymooners!

Well, truth is the Falls, awesome and inspiring as they are and definitely the single most-important attraction, aren't a one-trick pony by a long shot. From historical museums to fun-house mausoleums, wine tastings to winery tours, golf courses to freshwater fishing, botanical gardens to world-class theater, the Niagara Region is rich with attractions that draw people back time and again.

Niagara Falls (ON) Snapshot continued

Heck, even saying you've "seen the Falls" doesn't really do justice to the number of ways you can look at them. Sure, you can stand on the edge and stare down or take the Falls Incline Railway and gaze across at them from Table Rock. But what about a Journey Behind The Falls for a wet thrill of a lifetime? Or a trip on the Maid of the Mist to the rocky base of the mighty cataracts? Better yet, why not a helicopter ride over the Falls? And what about the Falls at night when they're all lit up? Or in the winter during the spectacular Festival of Lights?

Of parks and aero cars Surrounding the Falls for miles in each direction along the Niagara River lie parks and recreational trails administered by the Niagara Parks Commission. You'll find such delights as the Niagara Parks Greenhouse, the Butterfly Conservatory with more than 3,000 flying around at any one time, Queenston Heights Park with its Brock monument and Floral Clock, the Great Gorge Adventure, and the Niagara Spanish Aero Car, a marvel of engineering as it travels over the Whirlpool Rapids.

Golf fanatics can whack the little white ball around at the 18-hole Whirlpool Course or the 9-hole Oak Hall Course—with the Falls roaring their approval (or misgivings)! Sports of a different kind gather at the Casino Niagara to wager on that lucky spin of the wheel, flip of the card, or toss of the dice.

It's only appropriate that Clifton Hill right next to the Casino is lined with "dare you to walk through" horror chambers such as Screamers Haunted House and NIGHTMARES Fear Factory. Once you have joined the long line of those who have chickened out before the last mummy rushes out of the wall, you can relax a bit at Ripley's Believe It Or Not! Museum, Louis Tussaud's Waxworks, and the Guinness World Of Records Museum.

And no vacation in Niagara Falls would be complete without a trip to the Daredevil Hall of Fame and The Daredevil Adventure at the IMAX Theatre. For kids and the young at heart, there's the thrill of Adventure Dome, Ride Niagara: The Ultimate Thrill, and Niagara Go-Karts & Mini-Putt.

Making wine while snow swirls After a night on Clifton Hill and environs, you might be more than ready to escape into the countryside where peace reigns supreme and all you can hear is the wind sighing

through the vineyards. The Niagara region is wine-making country with about 40 wineries vying for international gold medals and tourist visits. Some 15 of these wineries lie between Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake, and each offers tours and tastings. And not just in the summer or fall either. This is also ice-wine making country with wineries such as Hillebrand Estates, Inniskillin, and Strewn producing the highly-valued dessert wine while the snow swirls in the vineyards.

After a tour and some tastings of the winemaker's art, you're ready for a bit of history and culture, Niagara-style. First stop is the Laura Secord Homestead in Queenston, commemorating one of the heroines of the War of 1812. Then, it's on to the Mackenzie Heritage Printery Museum, featuring the oldest printing press in Canada, and McFarland House, built in 1800 and with rare furnishings from that period. Finally, you're in Niagara-on-the-Lake itself, an enclave of Victorian buildings where time seems to have stood still. Here, you can check out the Doug Forsythe Gallery, Niagara Pump house Visual Art Center, and Historic Fort George complete with Ghost Tours.

Skilled actors, trained whales And, of course, the Shaw Festival. From April to November, this troupe of world-class actors brings to life the world of George Bernard Shaw and his contemporaries, thrilling audiences from around the globe. True theatre-lovers will want to buy something at the Shaw Festival Shops, take part in the Shaw Festival Village Fair and Fete and Shaw Guild Arts & Crafts Show, and enroll in one of the Shaw Seminars.

Have we forgotten anything? Well, there's Marineland, where you can pet a killer whale or watch the graceful movements of dolphins from an underwater observation area. And Historic Fort Erie, where volunteers in period costumes recreate the War of 1812. And the Steve Bauer Bike Tours, where you can check out more wineries and historical sites during a leisurely bike ride. And, for the horse-racing fan, the Fort Erie Slots & Racetrack, live and simulcast racing in a brand-new \$25 million facility.

There you have it, then. Some of the things you can do in the Niagara Region without even looking at the Falls! But a nod in that direction won't hurt—to keep

those particular gods roaring for as long as possible!

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Things to Do Insights

The reason you made the trip Of course, an up-close and personal view of the Falls is the main reason for making this trip. And there are plenty of ways to tour those Thundering Waters, including a Journey Behind The Falls that brings you to the base of the Horseshoe Falls, the Maid of the Mist boat ride, and a Niagara Helicopters tour from above. Beyond the Falls, the Niagara Spanish Aero Car suspends you high above the Whirlpool Rapids in a cable car while the Great Gorge Adventure takes you on a walking tour along the narrowest point of the Niagara River.

Speaking of walking tours, before and after the Falls, the Niagara River is lined with a series of parks and walking trails ranging from Fort Erie to the south all the way to Niagara-on-the-Lake to the north. Taking the Niagara River Recreation Trail, on foot or on bike, you can make your way up what has been called the prettiest Sunday drive in the world—except no cars allowed!

Start with a visit to Dufferin Islands Park, with interlaced walking paths and bridges, and the Niagara Parks Greenhouse, featuring a gift shop and floral displays. Then move on the Table Rock area and Queen Victoria Park with its celebrated rock and rose gardens.

Definitely for the birds From there, it's around the Whirlpool Rapids and the edge of the Whirlpool Golf Course to the Niagara Glen Nature Areas. Here, you'll find the Feather in the Glen Country Store, a bird lover's toy shop, and guided nature walks in season.

A little further up and you're into what some consider the most spectacular areas of the Niagara Parks zone: the Butterfly Conservatory with its ever-changing display of fluttering beauty, and the 100-acre Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens, featuring herb, floral, and rock gardens and even a School of Horticulture whose students tend the gardens.

On the other side of Ontario Hydro's generating stations, you'll find Queenston Heights Park, home of Brock's Monument,

Niagara Falls (ON) Snapshot continued

a tribute to the British general who lost his life trying to re-capture Queenston during the War of 1812, and the Floral Clock, featuring a design with upwards of 16,000 carpet bedding plants. Queenston also marks the starting point for the Steve Bauer Bike Tours, with trips down scenic back roads past wineries, orchards, and Victorian homes.

Get that fortified feeling Several historic forts are located in the Niagara Falls region, including Historic Fort Erie at the south end and Historic Fort George at the north. Fort Erie, an important military post during the War of 1812, features a guided tour including battle re-enactments. Fort George offers a tour with guides dressed in period clothing and also includes re-creations of key battles during the war. A special treat are Ghost Tours of Fort George, a candlelit journey to the other side during which guides tell of real life experiences with the spirits of people dating back to 1812. It's all in fun, of course, but don't be surprised if you find yourself sleeping with the light on that night!

Historically-minded tourists who've had their appetites whetted by the forts can complete their education with a tour of the numerous historical museums in the area, including the Niagara Historical Society and Museum, Willoughby Historical Museum, The Welland Historical Museum, and Fort Erie Historical Museum.

The Niagara Falls Heritage Week, held in February, celebrates 200 years and more of local history with exhibits and other festivities. Participants include Lundy's Lane Historical Museum, Laura Secord Homestead, and Mackenzie Heritage Printery Museum.

Museums with an edge If you find museum exhibits a touch boring, maybe you should try a whirlwind tour of Clifton Hill's special brand of bizarre museum madness. The Guinness World Of Records Museum stands as a 21st century version of a freak show with exhibits featuring the world's tallest man, shortest woman, longest fingernails, etc. Ripley's Believe It Or Not! Museum features wacky exhibits and interactive displays of work inspired by Robert Ripley.

Would you like to rub elbows with the stars? Movieland Museum of Stars includes the wax form of Cher, Jim Carrey and several other celebrity icons. Louis Tussaud's

Waxworks lets you touch your favourite celebrity or hero—or at least their waxed identical twins. Railroad history fans can get a closer look at a historic locomotive at the Fort Erie Railroad Museum while sports buff get to see the entire history of lacrosse at the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame and Museum.

No sour grapes here Ontario produces 80% of wine in Canada with about 15 of those wineries and vineyards located in the countryside between Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake. Niagara Wine Tours International takes visitors via bicycle or van, on guided or solo tours of various areas in the wine region. Many wineries offer tours of their vineyards and wine tastings, including Inniskillin Wines, Chateau des Charmes and Reif Estate Winery.

Hillebrand Estates Winery teaches the art of wine tasting with lessons on technique, in addition to a tour of the property. The pièce de résistance is the Niagara Grape and Wine Festival, held each fall. Celebrate the harvest of the grape with a 10-day gala, including live concerts and fine cuisine. For the truly brave, come back in the dead of winter to take part in the numerous ice-wine tours and tastings!

If your feet are getting sore and the temperature is rising, inside and out, take advantage of one of Niagara Falls' many tour companies for an air-conditioned ride in a comfortable bus. Companies such as Niagara Falls Scenic Tours and Double Deck Tours Ltd will whisk you away to the major attractions both in the city and surrounding areas, accompanied by your own narrator or interpreter.

Whichever tour you choose, you can be sure there'll be plenty to see and admire, and plenty of memories to bring back home. ©

Travel Tips

Getting There:

By Air: Toronto Pearson International Airport(+1 416 776 3000/<http://www.toronto-yyz.com/>) has three terminals with a total of 82 air carriers flying an average of 25 million passengers annually. Some of the airlines provided are as follows:

Air Tran Airways(+1 800 247 8726/ <http://www.airtran.com/>)

American Eagle(+1 800 433 7300/ <http://www.americanair.com>)

Continental(+1 800 525 0280/ <http://www.continental.com>)

Conair/Delta Connection(+1 800 221 1212/ <http://www.comair.com/home>)

Independence Air(+1 800 FLY FLYI/ <http://www.flyi.com/>)

Jet Blue(+1 800 538 2583/ <http://www.jetblue.com/>)

Northwest(+1 800 225 2525/ <http://www.nwa.com>)

Prior Aviation(+1 800 621 2923/ <http://www.prioraviation.com>)

Southwest(+1 800 435 9792/ <http://www.southwest.com/>)

United(+1 800 241 6522/ <http://www.ual.com>)

United Express(+1 800 241 6522/ <http://www.ual.com>)

US Airways(+1 800 428 4322/ <http://www.usairways.com>)

US Airways Express(+1 800 428 4322/ <http://www.usairways.com>)

Shuttles, taxis, limousines, and other transportation services are readily available at Toronto Pearson Airport.

Buffalo Niagara International Airport(BNIA) (+1 716 630 6000/ 4200 Genesee Street, Cheektowaga NY 14225/<http://www.nfta.com>) contains 26 terminals that house 13 airlines.

Air Tran Airways(+1 800 247 8726/ <http://www.airtran.com/>)

American Eagle(+1 800 433 7300/ <http://www.americanair.com>)

Continental(+1 800 525 0280/ <http://www.continental.com>)

Conair/Delta Connection(+1 800 221 1212/ <http://www.comair.com/home>)

Independence Air(+1 800 FLY FLYI/ <http://www.flyi.com/>)

Jet Blue(+1 800 538 2583/ <http://www.jetblue.com/>)

Northwest(+1 800 225 2525/ <http://www.nwa.com>)

Prior Aviation(+1 800 621 2923/ <http://www.prioraviation.com>)

Niagara Falls (ON) Snapshot continued

Southwest(+1 800 435 9792/ <http://www.southwest.com/>)

United(+1 800 241 6522/ <http://www.ual.com>)

United Express(+1 800 241 6522/ <http://www.ual.com>)

US Airways(+1 800 428 4322/ <http://www.usairways.com>)

US Airways Express(+1 800 428 4322/ <http://www.usairways.com>)

There are numerous shuttles parked outside BNIA, most of which provided by nearby hotels, touring companies, and independently owned transportation enterprises.

Taxi Services- all metered per mile and available near the entrance of BNIA.

Airport Taxi(+1 716 633 8294/ <http://www.buffaloairporttaxi.com/>)

Amherst Taxi(+1 716 875 1900/ <http://www.amherst-taxi.com/>)

Buffalo Taxi Cab(+1 888 822 3030/ <http://www.buffalotaxicab.com/>)

5-0 Taxi(+1 905 358 3232/ <http://www.5-0taxi.com/>)

Rental Car companies include:

Alamo(+1 716 631 2044/ <http://www.alamo.com>)

Avis(+1 716 631 2044/ <http://www.avis.com>)

Budget(+1 716 632 6400/ <http://www.budget.com>)

Enterprise(+1 716 565 0002/ <http://www.enterprise.com>)

Hertz(+1 716 632 4783/ <http://www.hertz.com>)

National(+1 501 376 7221/ <http://www.nationalcar.com>)

Limousines:

Magic Mist Limo(+1 716 284 7040/<http://www.magicmistlimo.com>)

For further service to Niagara Falls, consider Niagara Falls International

Airport(+1 716 297 4494/ <http://www.nfta.com/>).

By Train:

GO Transit(1 888 GET ON GO/ <http://www.gotransit.com>) provides train and bus services. In the Toronto area, there are various stations including 1456 Bloor St. W., 0 Manitoba Road, and Yonge Street and Finch Avenue. Operating Hours are 4:15a to 7p Monday through Friday, and subject to change. Closed weekends& holidays.

By Bus:

GO Transit(1 888 GET ON GO/ <http://www.gotransit.com>) provides train and bus services. In the Toronto area, there are various stations including 1456 Bloor St W., 0 Manitoba Road, and Yonge Street and Finch Avenue. Operating Hours are 4:15a to 7p Monday through Friday, and subject to change. Closed weekends& holidays.

By Car:

From the west, take 405 east to 18F north. From the South, take the QEW north.

Getting Around:

GO Transit(1 888 GET ON GO/ <http://www.gotransit.com>)

Mississauga Transit(905 896 5000/<http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/publictransit>)

Pacific Western Airport Express(1 800 387 6787/ <http://www.torontoairportexpress.com/>) provides regular public transit service to and from Toronto Pearson Airport and around the city of Toronto.

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Fun Facts

1. Interesting fact: Almost 1/3 of the Canadian Falls lies within US Territory.
2. Weird fact: The first person to go over the Falls in a barrel and survive was a 63 year old

female schoolteacher.

3. Sad Fact: Jesse Sharpe, a 28 year old from Tennessee, went over Niagara Falls in a kayak. Robert Overacker, a 39 year old from California, used a jet ski to go over Niagara Falls. Neither of them survived.

4. High wire tightrope acts used to be performed across the river. The best known high wire walker was "Blondin" who once actually carried his manager across on his back, stopping midway to rest!

5. Amazing fact: Twenty percent of the world's fresh water lies in the Great Lakes, and most flows over Niagara Falls.

6. Niagara Falls is home to the world's largest glass-enclosed butterfly conservatory. More than 2,000 species of butterflies call this tropical setting home.

7. The Niagara River is not a river; it is a strait.

8. Marilyn Monroe stayed at the Brock Plaza Niagara Falls, now called the Crowne Plaza, while filming the movie "Niagara" in 1953. (If you wander through the Crowne Plaza Hotel lobby you will find more pictures with other fun facts about Niagara Falls.)

9. "Niagara" is the only Marilyn Monroe film in which her character dies.

10. Fish swim over the falls all the time, and 90% of them survive. In fact, a tourist was hit by a salmon while walking on the Cave of the Winds boardwalk. He was not hurt but was able to take the fish home with him as a memento.

11. The amount of water going over the falls could fill up 50 Olympic sized swimming pools in one minute

12. The world's first railroad suspension bridge was erected over the Niagara River in 1848.

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