

Romantic Travel Getaways

Ooooooh, Canada – Blissful and Bountiful

This is for you and your loved one. Here is a chance to explore wondrous destination places in this proud land of ours, for those “special moments” you may have planned for 2009. Truly beautiful romantic times can be had in our home country, you know.

First, let’s take a peek at a couple of hidden gems in Ontario and then we’ll skip our way to the Maritimes to discover the possibilities there.

Burleigh Falls: One of Ontario’s most scenic spots, it’s located in the Trent-Severn Waterway in the township of North Kawartha (Peterborough County). Waterfalls allow you to glean a particularly scenic experience and provide an opportunity for romantics wishing to escape the drudge of the city, to be alone with a lover.



Burleigh Falls

Burleigh Falls, in particular, has been quietly known for a hundred years to draw lovers to it, like a powerful force, a chance to be moved by its wonder, all the while in blissful amour...Oh it’s fantasy-natural at its finest. These falls, ever so soulfully, send the waters of the Trent River tumbling down from Lovesick Lake to Stony Lake—yes, Lovesick, but not for long! Geologically, it just so happens that it is where Paleozoic limestone formations have yielded to the underlying Precambrian bedrock of gneiss—and the pink gneiss gives the spot its exquisite colour. How fitting for a gay escape!

The lakes, below and above, as well as the falls themselves, are almost as if deliberately decorated by Nature, with abundant pine-covered rocky islands all around. Some say they are quite similar in appearance to the Thousand Islands region, with which you might be familiar. The Burleigh Island area is rich with the First Nations proud heritage. To this day, some of the inhabited islands in Lovesick Lake honour Traditional Indian Ways.

For vacationers, the fishing is said to be superb, particularly Muskie fishing. Commercial boaters like to use the Trent-Severn Waterway lock which raises boats just slightly over seven meters from Stony Lake to Lovesick Lake. Boat campers can easily find the nearby Wolf Island Provincial Park to sleep the night. It’s secluded and one can safely avoid the crowds found at the more road-accessed parks.

In terms of more conservative, sheltered places to stay, here are a couple of suggestions: There is Stickers Cottage Resort & Trailer Sites in Lakefield, Ontario (www.stickersresort.com). This is fairly up-market and has everything you could possibly want in a resort: not overly expensive, in fact quite reasonable with specials generally listed on the website. For Reservations, contact: Sean Hill at:

info@strickersresort.com

Tel: (705) 654-3547

Fax: (705) 654-1016.

Alternatively, there’s **Burleigh Island Lodge**, set on Hwy. 28. Burleigh Falls, Ontario (www.burleighislandlodge.com)
Tel: (705) 654-3441 **Toll Free:** 1-877-565-0479 **Fax:** (705) 654-5011.
Email: info@burleighislandlodge.com. This is equally enjoyable.

Ontario as “The Great Outdoors”

Another possibility for a travel destination as a romantic getaway, or even a wedding, is Ahmic Lake; in particular, a gem called Woodland Echoes Resort in Magnetawan, Ontario. (www.woodlandechoes.on.ca)
Tel: 705-387-3866; **Fax:** 705-387-0216
Reservations: Toll free in Canada and the USA 1-888-661-3669.

This destination may appear to you as being a touch obscure; so here are the grid points for you keenly-navigational types: 45 39. 400' North 079 38.88" West UTM 17T 0605342 5056790. The resort recently received a good review in the “Kiss Your Way” to a Romantic Getaway (a Toronto travel blog.) Ken is one of the very kind Woodland Echoes hosts, and he has this to say,

“We try to offer the northern alternative to the Caribbean wedding—outdoors, natural, and intimate—just the two of you. We have a number of venues. We have had weddings on an island, in a canoe, on horseback, in the forest or on a dock.

We will work with the couple to accommodate any special interest or dream. This is a resort where you sense a warm invitation from the moment you arrive.”

The resort also offers elopement packages. They provide witnesses, minister, etc. There’s the option of an indoor or outdoor ceremony. They can put on larger weddings, up to 100 guests in an outdoor venue, including attractive tent, amenities, etc.

Their waterfront accommodations feature hot tubs and fireplaces—a nice bonus for after-party wedding guests!

Romance packages are available for couples, from one night to week-long stays. Included are things like champagne, robes, candles and spa treatments. They also provide candle light dinners as room service. Honeymoons are also a specialty and value packages are offered.

Why have people said they’ve liked Woodland Echoes Resort and this part of Central Ontario?

The Freedom...the vast space. Imagine breathing in the fresh scents of a spring forest; canoeing; drifting quietly, absorbing the beauty and warmth of a summer’s sun; or cycling down a country road in a blaze of fall colour. Later in the year, cross-country skiing through a Winter Wonderland, if that’s your fancy.

Moving now to explore Newfoundland

Portugal Cove and St. John’s, Newfoundland

If but for the sake of taking in the sheer beauty of abundant views and landscapes, Portugal Cove and the townships of St. Phillips and St. John’s, this part of the Maritimes especially, is something not to be missed. The community is one of the oldest in Newfoundland and is known to have a very rich cultural history. Every Canadian, at some point in his or her life, should visit Newfoundland. Not only is it breathtakingly scenic but also the heritage of this Maritime enclave is truly interesting.

Portugal Cove was founded by the Portuguese and was one of the first villages to be established in the New World. It was here that Kraken of legend (aka, giant squid) was first recorded.



Portugal Cove

Evident to any traveler to this area will be how folklore and oral tradition permeate the very character of the community—and so poetically. Famously, of course, fishermen from the West Country of England and Ireland settled near the cove. It also has a small settler tradition from Jersey, Channel Islands. And, yes, it is named after Portugal. Fishing had been central to the economy since the 1600s; but, sadly, this has been vastly declining since the 1990s. Travel and tourism are booming—a relatively new but hopeful trend for this beautiful area of the world.

Portugal Cove is a favourite spot for the romantic poets at heart. Its rural seashore, sweeping the eastern Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland, with classic farms encircling. “Portugal Cove—St. Philip’s” is the actual name of the residential community, and is home to approximately 6,000 people covering just over 55 km². On the map, the city of St. John’s is to the east and the town of Paradise to the west. Fairly young people seem to gravitate to the area (the average age is said to be thirty-three years).

Within the community itself, you’ll find extraordinarily rustic and varied shops, home-cooking restaurants and cafes, gardening centres, hair salons, bed and breakfasts, and a convenient taxi service. The town’s ferry terminal provides daily access to and from Bell Island. Although one can stay at a B&B in Portugal Cove, it may be worth considering staying in the capital city at Banberry House. It’s located in historic downtown St. John’s and is absolutely delightful. I can’t say enough good things about this place. It’s the perfect place for romance, as is the whole city of St. John’s—whether it be for holding hands or frolicking along, sight-seeing.

Happy promenading, lovers! ▲

By Diane Walsh