

TRAVEL TALES

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE JEWISH TRAVELLER

By MIKE COHEN

BACK TO BURLINGTON: During my many trips to Burlington, Vermont over the years, I always made the easy two hour drive from Montreal. But since my summer travels took me to Toronto first, we headed down Highway 401, crossed over a bridge to New York State after Brockville and took an interesting seven plus hour route to our destination. When we arrived at the wonderful Doubletree Tree Burlington Hotel we noticed a lot of Ontario plates in the lot. We had booked a trip to nearby Smugglers' Notch Resort and felt that a few days in Burlington would quench our thirst for some good shopping.

My most recent visit to Burlington was an interesting one. We had actually started off our trip in Toronto. The way the schedule worked out, our next stop was to be a five

night booking at the Smugglers' Notch Resort. Given the fact this was nearly an eight hour drive from Toronto, it did not make a lot of sense to arrive there in the late evening. Burlington was on our radar screen, particularly for its excellent shopping, so we elected to head directly there. It is only 45 minutes from Smugglers' Notch and Stowe, known as four season destinations.

WHERE TO STAY:

This was actually our second trip in as many years to Burlington, as we stopped there on the way back from Cape Cod a year ago. One of the incentives to return, in fact, was the Doubletree Hotel Burlington (www.burlington.doubletree.com). Located just off I-89 on Williston Road and near the airport, this is a large and attractive property. All standard guestrooms

(Please turn to page 18)

TRAVEL TALES

(Continued from page 9)

include the Sweet Dreams bed, coffeemaker, hairdryer, iron and ironing board, refrigerator (great for those keeping kosher), easy chair, in-room remote printing, Lodgenet with web access and Game Cube, speakerphone and complimentary wireless high speed internet access. In the suites there is a main bedroom with a

king size bed and flat screen TV, separated by a door to a spacious living room area featuring a pullout couch, a working desk with two chairs and another flat screen television. The bathroom is accessed from the living room area, which is especially convenient for families with small children who needn't wake up par-

ents as they charge to use the facilities early in the morning.

The hotel has a nice pool, connected to an outdoor patio and an amazing workout gym open 24 hours a day. Its treadmills have small television monitors

attached, with headphones, making one's workout so much more pleasant. There is an onsite restaurant called Trader Duke's.

We were greeted with hot chocolate chip cookies upon checking in. General Manager Rick Milliken has been in the local hotel industry for 33 years and converted the hotel from a Clarion to a Doubletree in 2005, at which time 33 suites were constructed. There are 161 in all. The hotel also has a beautiful banquet and conference centre.

DINING OUT: The Sadie Katz Delicatessen (www.sadiekatzdeli.com) is located at 189 Bank Street, just off Church. It is the closest thing the city has to a kosher restaurant. My family and I thoroughly enjoyed our lunch there. Owner Glenn Walter opened the establishment two and a half years ago and the Jewish-style diner has a loyal following. You can enjoy Meredith Mann's Matzoh Ball Soup, a chopped chicken liver plate, latkes and knishes. Fresh deli sandwiches are their specialty. There is also a nice breakfast menu.

We were thrilled to find an Outback Steakhouse (www.outback.com) only minutes from our hotel at 150 Dorset Street. This has always been one of my favorite chains. Montreal's West Island had a franchise for about a two year period which we happily frequented. Why it shut down I still do not understand. Well, if you want to experience this spot, best known for grilled steaks, chicken and seafood, then Burlington represents the closest opportunity for Montrealers. Torontonians can experience the Outback in Niagara Falls.

The Outback also offers a wide variety of crisp salads and freshly made
(Please turn to following page)

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TRAVEL TALES

(Continued from preceding page)

soups and sides. New creations and grilled classics are made from scratch daily using only the highest quality ingredients. We had a superb meal. I would recommend the steaks and a number of fish selections. Their new menu actually has a calorie count in brackets for every single item, which is great for folks who are watching what they eat. This Outback is open seven days a week. Call 802-862-0003 for reservations.

SHOPPING: The Church Street Marketplace pedestrian mall is an amazing place to shop. With over 100 retail shops, restaurants and street vendors, this a popular destination for shopping, dining and people watching. Burlington Town Center is considered Burlington's premier indoor shopping center, featuring an exciting retail mix including J.Crew, Pottery Barn, Williams-Sonoma, Ann Taylor Loft, Abercrombie & Fitch, Abercrombie, Aéropostale, Gap/Gap Kids/Baby Gap, Crabtree & Evelyn and Macy's Department Store.

Then there is University Mall, Vermont's

largest enclosed shopping center, with over 70 shops and services. Here you can choose from a wide selection of major department stores like JC Penney, Sears and the Bon-Ton. Within walking distance you'll find HomeGoods, Hannaford Food & Drug and the Sears Automotive Center. Plus, there is plenty of free parking!

JEWISH COMMUNITY: The state of Vermont has about 5,000 people of Jewish faith - 3,000 in Burlington and 500 each in Montpelier-Barre and Rutland. There are a number of synagogues, including Temple Sinai (Reform), Ohavi Zedek (Conservative) and Chabad. Beth Jacob Congregation is located in Montpelier. The latter is not affiliated with any movement and carries out programming for reform, reconstructionist, Jewish Renewal, and conservative followers. Kosher food can be found at the Price Chopper Supermarket at 595 Shelburne Road.

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