

# A unique "Outback" love story from Burlington, Vermont

## Travel Spotlight

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BURLINGTON, Vt Montrealers will recall that a few years ago the wonderful Outback Steakhouse (www.outback.com) chain came to Montreal's West Island. It was a wonderful treat for my family and I to dine there, and when it closed up shop we were quite disappointed.

Well readers will be pleased to learn that there is a terrific Outback Steakhouse only two hours from here in Burlington, Vermont and what a remarkable story fell on my lap the moment it came time to order. Our server was a gentleman named Errol Rule and his Australian accent turned out to be the real thing. Errol is from Down Under. He actually met a girl named Fiona from Burlington there and she just happened to work at the Outback in Burlington.

The couple met through a mutual friend on April 24, 2009 at the Gearin Hotel, a local pub, in Katoomba New South Wales (NSW), Australia. In January 2010, Errol decided to come to Mon-

treau to work at Hurlay's Irish Pub downtown while waiting for his US paper work to come through. That process took 11 months. "We finally got married on December 31, 2010, the day before my birthday," says Errol, who started at the Outback last May. "The odds of me working at the Outback Steakhouse in Burlington were very slim to none, but its working out well and its turning out to be an excellent job."

The Outback, located at 150 Dorset Street, also offers a wide variety of crisp salads and freshly made soups and sides. New creations and grilled classics are made from scratch daily using only the highest quality ingredients. Franchise owner Derek Gorman and manager John Legere appreciate the steady flow of Montreal diners. We had a superb meal. I would recommend the clam chowder, the lobster tails and of course the steaks – either the rib eye or Victoria's filet. The 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 opened seven days a week. Call 802-862-0003 for reservations.

We stayed at the 161 room Doubletree Hotel Burlington (www.burlington.doubletree.com), located just off I-89 on Williston Road and a short walk from The Outback. This is a large and attractive property. All standard guestrooms include the Sweet Dreams bed, coffeemaker, hairdryer, iron and ironing board, refrigerator, 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 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 parents 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.

Shopping is the real draw here. The Church Street Marketplace pedestrian mall is an amazing place to shop. With over 100 retail shops, restaurants and



**Errol and Fiona Rule met in Burlington and work at The Outback**

street vendors, this 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 major selection of major department stores like JC Penney, Sears and the Bon-Ton. Within walking distance you'll find Home Goods, Hanford Food & Drug and the Sears Automotive Center.

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