

Oakville offers many attractions and activities

Travel Spotlight

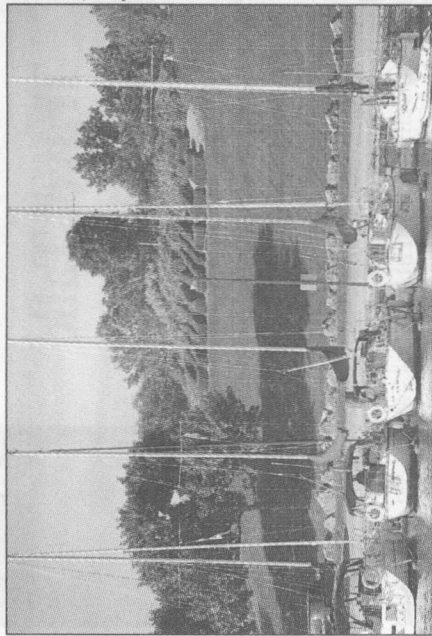
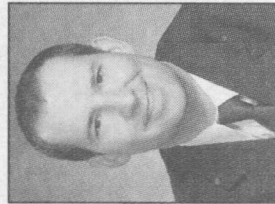
MIKE COHEN

OAKVILLE – A vibrant and impressive community within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA),

Oakville (www.oakvilletourism.ca) is a beautiful lakeside town with a strong heritage, preserved and celebrated by residents and visitors alike. Founded in 1857, this thriving municipality of about 165,000 residents provides all the advantages of a well-served urban centre, while also maintaining its small-town ambiance. Along historical downtown streets, Oakville offers a mix of converted 19th century buildings which accommodate over 400 fine shops, services and restaurants.

A 30-minute drive from downtown Toronto; and an hour's drive from the U.S. border, Oakville boasts an \$88 million tourism industry, with over 1.4 million visitors annually. On our recent trip to the Niagara Falls area, we decided to stop over in Oakville for a day. We checked into the beautiful Staybridge Suites Extended Stay Hotel Oakville Burlington (www.staybridge.com/oakvilleon), located at the QEW and Bronte Road at 2511 Wycroft. This three year old property still looks spanking new.

The Staybridge Suites Oakville Burlington offers one and two bedroom suites, with all the conveniences of home to suit your extended stay or short term needs. The hotel offers apartment like suites featuring fully-equipped kitchens, cable TV, free wired and wireless internet and direct dial phone number with personalized voicemail. There is a 24-hour business center with free internet, print/



Oakville's harbour is a beautiful place to visit in the spring, summer and fall

architecture, especially in heritage neighbourhoods.

Oakville's annual Waterfront Festival and Jazz Festival draw crowds from around the GTA. Golfers can play at one of seven golf courses, including PGA-recognized Glen Abbey Golf Course, which has hosted the Canadian Open for many years.

For boaters, Oakville features two picturesque harbours with docks and slips for sail and powerboats. The Oakville Public Library's Events Calendar is the ultimate resource for everything happening in the Town of Oakville, including the acclaimed Jazz Festival.

Oakville is renowned for its beautiful shopping districts which include the historic, yet sophisticated downtown – one of the foremost shopping and dining destinations in Ontario – with architecturally preserved storefronts, the quaint waterfront

Mike Cohen's email address is info@sandboxworld.com/travel. Follow his travels at www.sandboxworld.com/travel.

fax/copy capabilities, free laundry facilities, a fitness center, an indoor pool, a home theatre room with a 50 inch plasma TV, gas BBQ grills, a putting green, the Bridgemarket "Suite" Shop, a free deluxe breakfast buffet, evening sundowner receptions (Monday through Thursdays). You can help yourself to free soft drinks and juices in the lobby 24/7. This hotel is pet friendly so that of course includes service animals. It is fully wheelchair accessible, has one room with accessibility standards and handicapped parking at the front entrance.

Our one night there went too quickly and we will definitely be back. For reservations call: 1-877-660-8550, or 905-847-2600 or email staybridgeoakville@whg.com.

When in Oakville I would recommend you make it a point to dine at the Marquis Bistro (www.marquisbistro.com), a 60 second walk from the Staybridge Suites lobby. It is open for breakfast, lunch and supper. We chose to have dinner there and were very pleased with the quality of selections. The menus are all online. We shared the lemon calamari and the pan seared scallops to start and give high marks for the spaghetti bolognese, the chicken parmesan and the delicious chocolate bundt cake for dessert. There are also a number soups and salads to choose from, other pasta dishes, steaks, rack of lamb and seafood. For reservations call 905-465-4480. This is a very pretty restaurant, with booths and tables. There is a large flat screen television and an attractive wine cabinet when you walk in.

Residents and visitors enjoy theatre, dance, music and comedy performances at the Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts. They can visit the museum at Erchless Estate, located in the home of the Chisolms, Oakville's founding family. Other points of interest include galleries, historical societies and local