

TRAVEL TALES

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE JEWISH TRAVELLER

By MIKE COHEN

SADDLEBROOK RESORT: Some 25 years ago I was part of a press tour to Tampa. Our group was hosted at the spectacular Saddlebrook Resort (www.saddlebrook.com) in the suburb of Wesley Chapel – a half hour drive from downtown Tampa. I could not believe my good fortune when I was given the keys to my own private town house condominium.

I never forgot my experience at Saddlebrook, so when we recently set our sights on another trip to Tampa I targeted this 480 acre property for a return visit. We were fortunate to spend five nights there. The three of us booked a 950-square-foot two-bedroom suite. It included a spacious living room, sepa-

rate dining area and a fully-equipped kitchen with a serving bar. The master bedroom boasts a King bed as well as a separate dressing area and elegant marble bathroom. The second bedroom is thoughtfully-appointed with a Queen bed, as well as an additional dressing area and marble bathroom. Both bedrooms offer complete privacy. These spacious two-bedroom suites also feature a private patio or balcony that is accessible from the living room. There were two in-room safes.

Saddlebrook formally opened in 1981, with a unique car-free Walking Village design that allows guests to easily walk throughout the resort with-

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TRAVEL TALES

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out the need of a transportation system while providing sanctuary to nature. It is completely self-contained, with restaurants, spa, golf, tennis, fitness facilities, three pools and an outdoor team building course all on-site.

In addition to the world-class golf courses and tennis courts, the fitness facilities at Saddlebrook cater to every interest and skill level. The Sports Village features grass and

sand volleyball courts, a regulation-size basketball court and a Field Turf sports field. The refreshing waters of the 500,000-gallon free-form Superpool are a highlight of any stay. There are two additional pools at the resort, including the adults-only Serenity Pool.

Bicycle rentals and fishing poles are available at The Swim Shop, and the resort also offers a variety of scheduled activities from

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HILLEL ONTARIO HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE Silber Family Foundation has generously donated \$1,000,000 to the organization in matching funds to invest in talent and attract the best Jewish role models to serve and engage Jewish students at universities across Ontario. Hillel Ontario was challenged by the Silbers to "identify the single most important investment in Hillel that would have the greatest impact on student engagement." This transformative investment in talent is inspired by the potential to impact not just Hillel, but also the broader Canadian Jewish community. In tandem with the Silber's generous gift Hillel Ontario is launching YouHadMeAtHillel.ca, which will serve as the future home for talent recruitment and professional development.

morning power walks and group fitness classes to poolside games. Families visiting the resort can take advantage of S'Kids Club, a fun-filled program for guests.

To reserve your stay today at Saddlebrook Resort or to contact a Reservations Agent call toll-free at 800.729.8383 or locally at 813.907.4401. You might enjoy the place so much you will consider buying a unit. The sales office is located right next to the registration center.

JEWISH COMMUNITY: On September 11, 2011, following years of meeting in hotel conference rooms, and composing services in the living rooms of each other's homes, the Jewish community in Wesley Chapel (and northern New Tampa) opened a synagogue of its own. The Chabad Jewish Centre at Wiregrass opened its doors under the spiritual leadership of Rabbi

Mendi Yarmush. It is located at 2124 Ashley Oaks Circle. Each year the Centre filled with dynamic events and exceptional programming making Judaism an accessible reality for all Jews regardless of background or affiliation. "No matter how you see yourself, at Chabad we see you as Jewish," their website states. "No labels. No differences. At Chabad you are family. You will find the atmosphere casual, the service traditional, and mood uplifting. Our community is a budding family and our motto is Jewish. Done Joyfully!"

Rabbi Yarmush was born and raised in Toronto. He studied in rabbinical schools in Toronto, New York and Los Angeles.

Mike Cohen can be reached at info@mikecohen.ca. Follow his travels at www.sandboxworld.com/travel and on Twitter @mikecohencsl

THE GHOST KEEPER

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in diverse genres. However, some readers favor hard-hitting nonfiction, while others prefer fiction. Morrill reaches both audiences with her exemplary contribution to historical literary fiction. She creates believable characters and reveals real attitudes and conventions of the times. Morrill

guides readers with an accurate timeline and relevant facts. The author attained her MFA at UBC. Her poetry and fiction have appeared in Canadian journals and the Journey Prize Stories Anthology.

For more information on The Ghost Keeper, visit www.harpercollins.ca

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