

# TRAVEL TALES

## HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE JEWISH TRAVELLER

By MIKE COHEN

**HISTORIC VERMONT TOWN OF STOWE:** The beautiful village of Stowe, Vermont is the type of place tourists and part-time residents with summer/winter homes flock to year-round. While autumn is picturesque, soon it will be downhill skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, cross country skiing and skating time.

It is never too early to plan ahead for the summer of 2012. If your trip is targeted for late July try and sample The Taste of Stowe Arts Festival (<http://craftproducers.com>). This is an unusual event, combining a market for handmade crafts, original art, music, and an array of gourmet edible treats.

**ALPINE SLIDE:** From June to Labour Day

(and weekends after that through mid-October), you just have to try the Alpine slide. What you will experience is an exhilarating 2,300 foot ride down Spruce Peak. This is fun and exciting for people of all ages. Hours of operation are 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. It is free for kids aged five and under; \$21 for one adult ride and \$42 for three; \$19 for one junior/senior ride and \$38 for three.

You can also take the easy way up the mountain in the famous Stowe gondola. Spectacular views await you near the peak of Vermont's highest mountain. From the gondola, access hiking trails or stop for a bite in the lift summit snack bar. This runs daily from mid June until mid-

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**October.** The Summer Inflatable Obstacle Course, located on the same site as the alpine slide, is also a blast. This runs from mid-June to Labour Day and then continues on weekends until mid-October from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY:** The Jewish Community of Greater Stowe (JCOGS) holds weekly Kabbalat Shabbat Services throughout the summer at 1189 Cape Cod Road. JCOGS is a growing unaffiliated congregation, embracing all denominations of Jewry. Conceived in 1988, its mission is "to create and sustain an environment which perpetuates and celebrates Jewish traditions, observances and sense of community."

Friday night services are usually held on the first and third Friday of each month, led by Rabbi Brian Besser. The congregation supports an active children's education program, Bar and Bat Mitzvah preparation, various adult programs, social events, an energetic youth group and a caring Chesed Committee for grieving members and other in need. They now also operate a Jewish cemetery, which is available to members and non-mem-

ers.

Kosher food is not available locally. According to Rabbi Besser, people bring kosher meat from Montreal and/or Boston.

"Our communal kitchen is strictly kosher, and we are available for rental for internal functions, such as Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations, and outside functions, such as weddings," he says.

**WHERE TO STAY:**

The historic Green Mountain Inn ([www.greenmountaininn.com](http://www.greenmountaininn.com)) has been offering travellers a warm and friendly environment for over 175 years. Located at 18 Main Street, it features 107 accommodations, ranging from traditional guest rooms to luxury suites and townhouses. The Inn is owned by the Gameroff Family Trust. Marvin Gameroff was a Jewish Canadian businessman who took a liking to Stowe in the 1970s and purchased the Inn 12 years later. He passed away in 2004.

The Inn is also home to the wonderful Whip Bar and Grill ([www.greenmountaininn.com/whipbarandgrill.html](http://www.greenmountaininn.com/whipbarandgrill.html)). This spot provides travellers respite, refreshment, and fine dining in a casual atmosphere. It features an extensive menu full of flavorful food prepared with Vermont products and the freshest ingredients from local farmers. There are fresh home made breads and incredible desserts. It is open for  
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lunch, dinner and Sunday brunch. The bar offers a great selection of Vermont and New England microbrews on tap and a newly revised wine list sure to tempt occasional wine enthusiasts and connoisseurs alike.

I would strongly recommend the grilled swordfish, which cuts like butter. It comes with vegetables, but you can switch this for the mashed potatoes. There is a kids menu, but the younger ones might want to try the delicious flatbread pizza from the main selections. This is the place for fish – salmon, tilapia, wild striped bass and oven roasted Boston cod. There are also steaks, chicken, burgers and sandwiches.

**DINNER AT GRACIES:** Many veteran Stowe vacationers also strongly recommended Gracie's ([www.gracies.com](http://www.gracies.com)) at 18 Edson Hill Road. Owners Paul and Susan Archdeacon are wonderful hosts. Paul, known simply as "Archie," came here in 1972 from Boston to ski and never left. This is where he met Sue. In 1991 the couple opened the restaurant, naming it after their new shelter rescue dog Gracie, a Yellow Lab Air dale mix from the South Burlington Humane Society. The name stuck and the restaurant has been a landmark ever since. Right from the start Gracie's was committed to producing as much of their menu as possible themselves. All the breads, rolls and desserts are made on the premises. This led to the introduction of Gracie's "Doggie Bag." A penny candy bag painted on the inside with white chocolate, frozen and filled with chocolate mint mousse. When ordered the paper bag is peeled off and the chocolate sack is served over double boil hot fudge. The

"Doggie Bag" is garnished with fresh baked sugar cookies cut to look like mill bones. I have not tasted such an exceptional dessert in a long time. The doggie theme carries throughout the menu with all the burgers, made with Boyden Farms all natural ground

beef, named after particular breeds. You can check out their menu online or call 802-253-8741.

*Mike Cohen's email address is [info@mikecohen.ca](mailto:info@mikecohen.ca). Follow his travels at [www.sandboxworld.com/1](http://www.sandboxworld.com/1) and follow him as we on Twitter @mikecohencl.*

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