



Horseshoe Falls
and Table Rock
Welcome Centre

PHOTOS BY CHRISTINE HEISS

FALL FOR NIAGARA

Take a different look at a familiar tourist destination

By Lisa Lagace

A VISIT TO NIAGARA Falls can instantly require one thing: a large budget. But that doesn't have to be the case. If you know where to look and what to do, it's possible to visit this tourist spot without breaking the bank. With the U.S. dollar maintaining its strong value over the loonie (\$1 U.S. was worth about \$1.34 Canadian in late April), now is the time to visit the Canadian side of the falls. Note to Americans: Don't forget your passport!

DINING

Fuel up at local favorite Basell's Restaurant and Tavern (dine.to/basells). Brunch is a rare deal — huge portions of delicious Canadian-cuisine-style eats for less than \$10.

For dinner, stop at Napoli Ristorante & Pizzeria (napoli.ristorante.ca) for the best Italian food you'll find anywhere near the main tourist areas. This white-linen dining experience is worth much more than you'll pay for it. Bonus: free parking.

ENTERTAINMENT

If you're looking for entertainment outside the glitz of the high-end Fallsview Casino lineup (including comedian Chris Rock, Canadian rockers Barenaked Ladies and Kool & the Gang; fallsview.casinosort.com), head to Niagara-on-the-Lake for the Shaw Festival's 2017 season, which began April 5 and lasts through Oct. 15. Playwright George Bernard Shaw's love of theater lives on in this critically adored festival (shawfest.com).

Those seeking the full Niagara Falls experience might be drawn to the trappings of Clifton Hill (see below), but before you head for the Movieland Wax Museum or jump on the Skywheel, ask about a Fun Pass (cliftonhill.com/tickets); buying online will save you even more.



Whirlpool
Aero Car

SIGHTS

A trip to the Niagara Glen gorge within the 154-acre Niagara Parks site (niagaraparks.com) is a wonderful way to fill an afternoon without spending a penny. Overlooking the Niagara River Whirlpool, it's the perfect setting for a fairly rugged hike with spectacular views. Bring plenty of water and a light lunch to enjoy a picnic once you reach the bottom.

Also within the park, 10 minutes north of the falls, the Butterfly Conservatory features more than 2,000 butterflies from 45 different species, making it a sight to behold. While it does require tickets (about \$11 U.S. for adults), children under 5 get in free, offsetting the cost of a family trip.

For the main attraction, the Falls themselves are free to view — just walk down the tourist promenade of Clifton Hill (cliftonhill.com) until you see the mist rising. Beloved tourist attractions such as the Journey Behind the Falls (a stroll behind the mighty wall of water) and the Hornblower Boat Cruise (the classic ferry ride; niagaracruises.com) will cost extra, but you can save a considerable amount of money on these experiences by purchasing an Adventure Pass or, in fall, winter and early spring, a Wonder Pass, both good only on the Canadian side.