

escapade

FINDING SERENITY IN SAINT ANDREWS

Seaside town a mindful retreat for first-time visitor

CATHY DONALDSON TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

Sometimes you don't get what you expect out of a trip. If you're lucky, you get much more.

I was happy to experience the latter last weekend while in Saint Andrews to write a feature about my inaugural stay in the picturesque town. Hubby came along and while it was meant to be a work trip for me, I later discovered it had been a mindful retreat for both of us, a getaway that left us feeling far more relaxed and refreshed than we'd expected.

We're raring to return sooner than later.

Our excursion began with a pleasant, two-and-a-half-hour drive from Moncton along Highway 1 west towards St. Stephen, a path we'd taken repeatedly over the years en route to a family cottage in Maine. This time, we veered from our normal course, taking Exit 39 to Highway 127 south and Saint Andrews (a.k.a. St. Andrews-by-the-Sea).

After arriving in town, we checked into the beautiful

Algonquin Resort, a 233-room, Tudor-style hotel that overlooks Passamaquoddy Bay. From our room, we could see across the St. Croix River to our neighbouring country.

Originally opened in 1889 and once owned by the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Algonquin relaunched in 2014 after a \$50-million renovation. Now part of the Marriott's luxury-brand "Autograph Collection," the hotel continues to welcome dignitaries and everyday travelers alike, and is consistently ranked as one of the world's best resorts.

As hubby situated our car in the hotel's free, on-site parking area, I strolled through the Algonquin's impressive entrance, eyeing dark woods and glittering chandeliers, swept up by the elegance, charm and historical feel of the place. When we found our well-appointed room, decorated in neutral tones, quality linens and fresh carpeting, I made a bathroom check to see how it compared to the rest of the stylish interiors. The reveal included a granite countertop, spacious glass-and-tile shower and – best of all – some of my favourite Aveda products. A sniff of the Rosemary Mint Shampoo brought a smile to my lips and alleviated any tension from the drive.

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St. Andrews features many outdoor murals, including this one of the town as it appeared in 1907. The image is located on the side of the Home Hardware store on Water Street. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



Chef Alex Haun, who oversees dining at Kingsbrae Garden, prepared an exquisite breakfast for the author and her hubby, including this spectacular egg and smoked trout dish. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



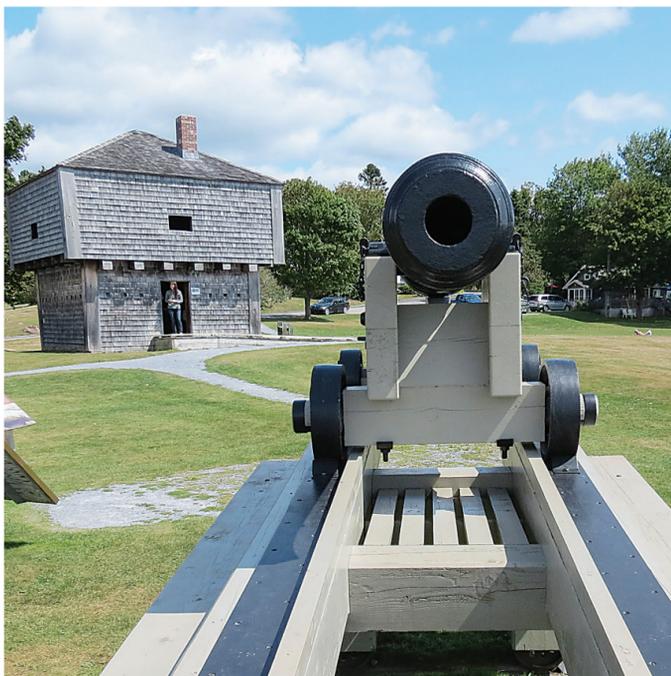
Among other focal points on Ministers Island is Van Horne's stunning two-story circular bathhouse. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



A porch provides a quiet retreat at the Algonquin Resort. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



Two begonia 'trees' - including this one - welcome visitors to Kingsbrae Garden in Saint Andrews. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



This Blockhouse, a small fort with a distinctive overhanging upper level, is one of three constructed in Saint Andrews to defend guns that protected the once-busy seaport. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



Fredericton visitors Heather Henry, left, and Michele MacGregor, right, sample the wares at Toose's Bijoux on Water Street. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



Constructed in 1833, the Saint Andrews Lighthouse - also known as Pendlebury Lighthouse - is the oldest remaining mainland lighthouse in New Brunswick. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



Deer abound in Saint Andrews are a nuisance for residents but a welcome sight for some tourists, especially when the four-legged animals appear to stick their tongue out at the camera. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



A stroll along the dock below the town wharf provides a clear picture of the area's high tides. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



The author, right, and her husband, Keith, feast on tender fish and tasty scallops at The Gables Restaurant. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



Large windows open to beautiful views at the Garden Café in Kingsbrae Garden. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



Tourists and locals congregate outside Honeybeans Coffee, Tea and Treats on Water Street. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL