

Country Roads: Auberge Godefroy expands its appeal to couples, families

Rochelle Lash

Special to The Gazette

Thursday, February 25, 2010

Editor's note: Some of the details might have changed since the original publication date. Please check with the establishment before heading out!

Original publication date: Feb. 25, 2010

BéCANCOUR – Auberge Godefroy is a country hotel that is not really in the countryside. But it is getting there.



Godefroy, named for a seigneur and a fur trader in the 1600s, is a modern-looking château built 20 years ago for a business clientele. That explains its less-than-pastoral location south of the St. Lawrence River near Highway 55, which links Highways 40 and 20.

CREDIT:
0227-road.jpg

However, over the years, Godefroy has grown into a leisure getaway for couples and families, and it is working to become more green and gorgeous, adding trees and gardens to create a prettier setting.

"We have done a lot of landscaping, and there is more to come," said Guy Boisclair, who owns the hotel with his wife, Solange Rouleau. "Originally, we wanted easy access to the highways because Bécancour's industrial park is the largest in Quebec in area. And, of its 10 biggest companies, like Alcoa and Olin from the U.S. or Cepsa from Spain, not one is Canadian, so we get a lot of people from the U.S. and Europe.

"Now we also receive guests on holiday, so we are working to improve the surroundings, but our original plan always has been consistent – to have a medium-sized hotel with personal service and a relaxing atmosphere," said Boisclair, who trained at the Institut de tourisme et d'hôtellerie du Québec and started his career during the 1970s as a front-desk clerk at the swanky 1,100-room Sheraton Mount Royal Hotel on Peel St.

Godefroy has 71 great-looking, high-tech rooms and suites, with sleek beige and brown decor, work spaces and flat-screen televisions. The place has the ambience of a country lodge, but the accommodations are all-out hotel-style.

"The spa is very fundamental to Godefroy's clients, and gastronomy is our other priority," Boisclair said. "We have so many people coming for two to four nights and, because we are the only dining room in the area, we know that our food has to be good."

It's true. The cuisine of executive chef Stéphane Hubert is a star attraction at Godefroy. He prepares starters like foie gras with berries and salmon that he smokes in-house and flavours with spices and balsamic. His delectable, slightly sweet main courses include venison with whisky sauce, breast of duck in port and maple sauce, pheasant marinated in Calvados, and pork with creamy red-wine sauce.

Godefroy is located along the Maple Route, a gourmet trail in the tourist region called Centre du Québec. Many of Hubert's desserts feature a soupçon of the local elixir, including crème brûlée, croustade of maple with cinnamon, and rice pudding with cinnamon, maple, nuts and ginger.

The spa and Godefroy's pools make it weatherproof, even during the winter. Swimming, particularly outside in the heated pool, is the most popular activity. Guests wrapped in bathrobes dash outside, paddle around, then head to the sauna or spa.

Godefroy is one of 10 hotels in Quebec with an Ameri-Spa, a chain offering a lots of beauty and body treatments. Try the Ice Cider Body Wrap and Exfoliation, designed to revitalize the skin with the concentrated nutrients of fruit.

The Parc Écologique Godefroy, a small conservation area adjacent to the hotel, has snowshoe trails, a skating rink lit for use at night and lookouts. It's almost time for an outing to the park's cabane à sucre, a tiny, intimate sugar shack that serves treats of ice taffy or tire. The sugar shack is more like those of olden times – not the big modern maple-product emporiums that have sprung up with high-tech equipment and serve supper to hundreds of people at a time.

rochelleink@aol.com

If you go

Bécancour is a 90-minute drive from Montreal. Take Highway 40 east to Trois Rivières and Exit 196 to Route 55 south, cross the St. Lawrence River to Exit 176 for Ste. Angèle.

Auberge Godefroy, 17575 Bécancour Blvd. in Bécancour, 800-361-1620, 819-233-2200, www.aubergegodefroy.com. Price: one night with breakfast and use of hotel facilities, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, whirlpool and fitness room, from \$89 per person, double occupancy, with breakfast; Romance package, with breakfast, seven-course dinner, Champagne and chocolates, from \$165 per person, double occupancy; Girls' Night Out package with breakfast, dinner and one massage each, from \$196 per person, quadruple occupancy. Other packages are available with snowmobiling, gastronomy and spa treatments.

Regional tourism information for the Centre du Québec: 888-816-4007, www.tourismecentreduquebec.com

CLOSE WINDOW

Copyright © 2012 CanWest Interactive, a division of ~~CanWest MediaWorks Publications, Inc.~~ All rights reserved.
CanWest Interactive, a division of ~~CanWest MediaWorks Publications, Inc.~~ All rights reserved.