

Country inn raises a glass to winter

BY ROCHELLE LASH, SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE FEBRUARY 17, 2011



Auberge du Joli Vent will create dinners to be served with ice wine during the Plein Feux sur les vins de glace, a festival in January and February in the Eastern Townships.

Photograph by: Auberge du Joli Vent

The countryside is brimming with B&Bs, resort hotels and condo developments, but an authentic, traditional country inn is a rare treasure.

My definition narrows this type of accommodation to an establishment that is chef-owned, with a commendable dining room and between five and 20 guest rooms. You can expect comfort, not luxury, and unassuming country furnishings, usually without any trace of interior designers. Factor in a fireplace for a chilly winter afternoon and gardens in summer, and you have a fine inn.

The Auberge du Joli Vent, owned by Patricia Provencher and her husband, Hans Christiner, is the real thing.

With extensive grounds and access to Brome Lake across the street, the 10-room clapboard cottage has held the rank of best three-star hotel in the province by Tourism Québec. What it lacks in luxury, it makes up in country charm.

