

CHECKING IN

Main Street fixture turned into social hub



ROCHELLE LASH

Scott Pasfield and Nick Barletta have created an engaging, hospitable getaway in tiny, tranquil Montgomery, Vt., about 12 kilometres from Jay Peak and less than a two-hour drive southeast of Montreal.

The INN operates in a fine manor house that has been a fixture of Main Street since a lumber baron built it during the 1890s. By the time the couple got their hands on it, the manse had seen better days, so they got to work.

"Every surface has been renovated — painted, varnished or stencilled," said Pasfield, the creative half of the team. "And the infrastructure — plumbing, electricity, emergency systems — has been overhauled," added Barletta, who handles operations.

After two years of refinishing, redecorating and rebuilding, The INN is a sociable hub, humming with a lively lounge, monthly arts events, 11 guest rooms and appealing spaces for weddings and meetings.

With a view of Main Street's majestic trees, the new summertime outdoor deck is ideal for breakfast, lunch or late-day drinks. The couple also built a covered bridge entrance that reflects the six covered bridges in the historic Montgomery area.

"The look is part ski chalet, part hunting lodge and part gentlemen's club," said Pasfield.

Together, they have amassed an eclectic and entertaining collection of serious antiques, cool curiosities and vintage decorative items, and this is what gives The INN so much character. The furniture ranges from period wing chairs to a red vinyl couch. Everywhere one looks, there is a fabulous eyeful of art, fine glass and deer mounts. A 250-pound black bear is The INN's new mascot, perfect for a photo op.

The bedrooms, all renovated, are bedecked with such discerning details as original wainscoting, built-ins and wood veneers — remember the original owner was a lumberman. The new bedding includes down pillows and pillow-top or gel-foam mattresses. There are no TVs in the



Room No. 6 at The INN in Montgomery, Vt., has a private balcony and view of the Trout River. PHOTOS: SCOTT PASFIELD/THE INN



The richly furnished lounge at The INN, 12 kilometres from Jay Peak, is filled with antiques and vintage curiosities.

guest rooms, but the lounge has a large-screen HDTV as well as low-tech fun like chess, backgammon and yes, books.

Barletta is an accountant and a former executive with American Express and Pasfield is a globe-trotting photographer who recently produced the compelling book, *Gay in America*, portraits from his travels across the United States. They turned their favourite vacation destination into a way of life and they have built The INN into a gem that recently won a first-place, \$25,000 prize on the Travel Channel's reality show,

Hotel Showdown.

Apart from the dramatic, detailed decor, The INN's major draw is its personal approach and creativity. If you arrive in late afternoon, you might wind down with Nick's Martini, which is gin and olives stuffed with blue cheese. The lounge also serves other craft cocktails, Vermont cider, micro-brews at \$5 and retro drinks like root beer floats.

Scott's Breakfast Special — with a secret ingredient — is panko-encrusted brioche French toast, often with sautéed apples, bacon and eggs.

he dishes out hearty favourites like mac 'n' cheese, steaks, chops, burgers and fried chicken with biscuits and gravy.

SPRING-TIME ACTION

The INN is the host venue for the monthly Celebration of Expressive Arts (CEA) at which a trio of artists — musicians, visual artists and writers — present their work. Pasfield and his superb photography will co-star on the first CEA of the season, April 26. The CEA Dinner Concert Series starts June 13 with Myra Flynn, an indie singer-songwriter whose sensual style combines jazz and soul.

The snow season will wind up in a few weeks — although it sometimes runs into May — and sportsmen will turn to golf, hiking, mountain-biking and fishing or canoeing on the nearby Trout and Missisquoi rivers.

At Jay Peak, the Pump House indoor water park splashes all year-round, and the resort soon will open an entertainment pavilion with a 120-seat movie theatre, a climbing gym and a virtual-reality arcade. Jay's State-side Amphitheater opened in 2014, will showcase Southern U.S. rockers Widespread Panic June 19; and the second annual Jeezum Crow Festival, July 24-25.

Rochelle@rochellelash.com
twitter.com/rochellelash

IF YOU GO

Montgomery Center, Vt., is a one-hour, 45-minute drive from Montreal via Highway 10 east and Route 139 south through Sutton, Abercorn and the U.S. border to Routes 105 and 118.

The INN: 802-326-4391, theinn.us; 241 Main St., Montgomery Center, Vt.

Jay Peak Ski & Summer Resort: 800-451-4449, www.jaypeakresort.com; Route 242, Jay, Vt. Some activities accept Canadian dollars at par (with cash only).

Chef Jason Chartrand — he is American, but his family is originally from Montreal — mans the kitchen on Thursdays to Sunday nights. His starters include duck wraps, a pear and beet salad and baked feta. Blackened salmon is his signature main course, and

WHERE TO STAY

TO ADVERTISE PLEASE CALL
514-987-2279



NEW YORK



RIVERSIDE TOWER HOTEL

www.riversidetowerhotel.com

New York City, New York

Toll free 800-724-3136

Singles USD \$134. Doubles USD \$139. Suites USD \$149. - \$169. Lincoln Center area. Hudson River views, 18 floors, kitchenette, 5 minutes to midtown. Safe, quiet luxury area. Riverside Drive & 80th Street. For more info, call 800-724-3136 or visit www.riversidetowerhotel.com



AMERICA'S BEST VALUE INN

www.plattsburghbestvalueinn.com

19 Booth Drive, Plattsburgh, New York

& 518-563-0222 Toll free 1-800-358-2137

In wonderful Plattsburgh. Only \$140 for 2 nights. Canadian cash. Up to 2 people, additional pers. add \$10 more per night. Free continental breakfast. Located conveniently off exit 37 on I-87. Some holidays, wknds & spec. events do not apply. Up to 70% occ. daily. Based on availability.



VERMONT



DAYS INN

3229 Shelburne Road, Shelburne
802-985-3334

Spend two nights at the Days Inn Shelburne, 2 person occupancy for \$149.00 through 2015. Close to attractions, shopping and restaurants. Free continental breakfast and wifi. Call us directly if you would like a newly remodeled room or any special requests. Take 189 to exit 13 and make a left. We are 3 miles down on the left.



QUALITY INN

2572 Shelburne Rd, Shelburne
855-547-2524

Special Rate for 2 night hotel stay for \$149.99 USD or 1 night for \$79.99 plus Tax. Park & Fly rate which includes 1 night stay with round trip transportation to BTV airport and up to 21 days parking for \$139.00 plus Tax. Rates based on double occupancy. Additional charge \$10/person/night. Pet charge \$20/pet/night. These rates also include Full Hot Breakfast, Indoor Heated Pool, Hot Tub, Sauna, Fitness center, Free wireless Internet and a Business center. Directions: I-89, Exit-13. Rates based on availability. Not valid on busy weekends. This promotion is available till 4/30/2015. Call 802-985-8037 or Toll Free: 855-547-2524 for reservation.



TRAVELODGE

1016 Shelburne Road, South Burlington
1-802-862-6421

Close to downtown Burlington shopping malls and outlets. Enjoy a Free Full Hot Breakfast, High speed wireless internet and pets welcome. Special rates for 2 nights \$129.00 USD or 1 night for \$69.99 USD Plus Tax. Additional \$10 USD per person/night. Pet Charge \$10/pet/night. Rates based on availability and not valid on busy weekends. Call 802-862-6421 for reservations



SMART SUITES

www.smartsuitesburlington.com
1700 Shelburne Rd., So. Burlington, Vt.
Toll free 877-862-6800

Come and enjoy our hospitality in either a studio efficiency at US \$82.00 or a more spacious one bedroom suite at US \$92.00/night, including a deluxe continental breakfast and free WIFI. Mention the Gazette special. Not valid with other discounts and subject to availability. Effective December 1, 2014 to April 1, 2015. Take Exit 13 off I-89, left on rt. 7 for 1.5 miles, same entrance as Holiday Inn Express.



GREEN MOUNTAIN SUITES HOTEL

www.greenmountainsuites.com
401 Dorset Street, South Burlington, Vermont
Toll-free reservations 866-337-1616

Experience all the Charm of a Boutique Vermont Country Inn Escape to beautiful Burlington starting at \$119/night weekdays Luxurious One-Bedroom Suite Includes Vermont-style Hot Breakfast served each morning Includes Fireside Reception with Beer, Wine and Food (M-Th.) Heated Indoor Pool/Jacuzzi & Exercise facility Walking distance to University Mall and close to Lake Champlain and the Church Street Marketplace Promotional rate may not be available during select periods. Toll-free reservations 866.337.1616