

INNS EMBODY KINGSTON'S CHARM, CULTURE



ROCHELLE LASH
Checking In

Kingston's fine inns embody all the history and spirit of this southern Ontario city, with lots of charm and the warmth of what once were private homes.

Four exceptional B&Bs operate as a group under the banner Kingston's Historic Inns: Green Woods Inn, Rosemount Inn & Spa, Secret Garden Inn and Frontenac Club Inn.

They all are at the heart of, or near, Kingston's charming downtown quarter, which hops with pubs and shops, as well as farmers' markets on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays and an antique fair on Sundays.

Kingston Trolley Tours short-hops around to many landmarks, including Fort Henry, Queen's University, the Canadian Penitentiary Museum and Confederation Basin, a park in front of city hall that is a great vantage point for people-watching and live music.

Greater Kingston is home to about 160,000 people and the city's centre is a waterfront delight, with a picturesque location at the convergence of the Rideau Canal Heritage Route, the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario.

(The water sports are so outstanding in Kingston that it was the venue for the sailing events of Montreal's 1976 Summer Olympics. The region offers some of the best freshwater sailing anywhere, and it is the venue for Canadian Olympic Training Regattas.)

Kingston is not only about vintage Canadiana. The city is sizzling with an impressive cultural calendar and a hip, contemporary cuisine scene.

Le Chien Noir is a hot bistro that is packed for lunch, dinner, Sunday brunch and a cocktail hour that features \$5 craft beer and terrific wines, plus half-price apps. Chef Derek MacGregor cooks up house specials including organic salads, beef tartare, short ribs, mushroom tart, grilled octopus, duck confit, B.C. salmon, Alberta beef and Quebec's artisan cheeses.

EXCEPTIONAL B&Bs

Nigel and Tessa Dearsley's Green Woods Inn is tranquil, refined and



Kingston has a lively waterfront scene at the convergence of the Rideau Canal Heritage Route, the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario. *SUZY LAMONT PHOTOGRAPHY/KINGSTON TOURISM*



A wedding party arrives by horse-drawn carriage at the historic Green Woods Inn. *GREEN WOODS INN*

personal. The B&B is surrounded by carefully tended gardens. The white verandas are perfect perches for reading and relaxing. The handsome lounge is ideal for afternoon tea or a game of chess, amid the antiques that the Dearsleys brought from England when they moved to Canada more than 30 years ago.

The original wing is a farmhouse built in 1850, which was extended in 1910 with a red brick Victorian facade.

Now, Green Woods has four guest rooms, all with private bathrooms, and comfy beds topped with quilts for the summer and thick duvets for the winter.

The Oak Room, recently decorated in tranquil blue, is special for the sepia-toned family portraits and the original claw-foot

bathtub. The Ash room, at the back of the house, is a whimsical, country-style hideaway.

Breakfast is served at a large oak table in a rather formal setting of china cabinets and sideboards. Guests start with freshly baked croissants and fruit plates garnished with edible flowers, and then tuck into signature dishes like peach crepes, eggs Benedict with tomato bruschetta and sautéed mushrooms, blueberry pancakes with lemon curd and raspberry sauce, and traditional English spreads of poached eggs, hash browns and bacon.

Green Woods Inn offers packages that feature the best of the Kingston region. The 1000 Islands cruises run midday with lunch service or at sunset with dinner until Oct. 25.

IF YOU GO

Kingston is off Highway 401, halfway between Montreal and Toronto (approximately three hours each way), and about two hours southwest of Ottawa.

Kingston info: 888-855-4555, kingstoncanada.com, or 613-531-5290, visitkingston.ca.

The Arts: The Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts: 855-533-2424, theisabel.ca; Hidden From View, Bellevue House: Oct. 9-12; 613-545-8666, salontheatre.ca; The Grand Theatre, 613-530-2050, Kingstongrand.ca.

Green Woods Inn: 866-878-1884, greenwoods-inn.ca; 1368 Highway 15, Kingston, Ont.; approx. \$169-\$179 for two, per night, including gourmet breakfast, Wi-Fi, car charging stations, parking.

Le Chien Noir: 613-549-5635, lechiennoir.com; 69 Brock St., Kingston; children's menu, vegetarian options.

and Emanuel Ax, Nov. 1; the Marco Polo Project, a world of music and dance, Oct. 29; and the Dover Quartet, Nov. 14. The jazz series will feature Cuban Rhapsody with Jane Bunnett, Sept. 29; the Lemon Bucket Orchestra, Nov. 6; Frankly, Sinatra with Albert Schultz and leading Canadian jazz artists, Dec. 12.

The Grand Theatre, a cultural landmark of Kingston that has been beautifully restored, has been host to iconic entertainers since 1879, including Harry Houdini and Oscar Wilde, as well as the Kingston Symphony Orchestra.

This autumn's lineup showcases comedian Howie Mandel, Oct. 1; singer-musicians Danny Michel and Jeremy Fisher, Oct. 16; José Feliciano and Pavlo, Oct. 24; Cirque Alfonse, Oct. 27; ProArteDanza, Nov. 17; the 50th Anniversary Tour of The Irish Rovers, Nov. 18; Darlene Love (He's a Rebel, 1960s), Nov. 27; guitar virtuoso Jesse Cook, Dec. 5; and Shine On: The Universe of John Lennon, Dec. 10.

On the history front, Canada's first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, has the starring role in a theatre piece called Hidden From View, to be staged at his former residence, Bellevue House.

Actors portray Macdonald's life and times, while theatre-goers explore the fanciful Victorian mansion and household of the mid-1800s.

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CULTURE CORNUCOPIA

The new Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts opened at Queen's University in 2014 and was an instant hit with a compelling lineup of theatre, music, film and multimedia entertainment. Set on the banks of Lake Ontario, the Isabel is a stunning contemporary performance space of wood, glass, steel and concrete on a historic site that has been home to stables, a brewery and a mill.

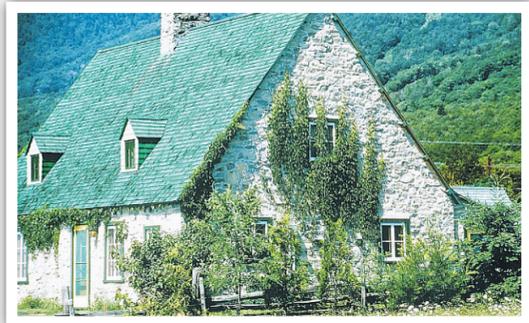
This fall's lineup showcases pianists Angela Hewitt, Oct. 11,

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