

HOTEL INTEL

Revamped Sheraton Gateway at Toronto airport is now airborne



ROCHELLE LASH

I love the excitement of airports and hotels most of the time, and the newly redone Sheraton Gateway in Toronto International Airport reflects that double dose of travel magnetism.

It also is an upbeat solution to time-consuming and tiring layovers and chaotic delays, with Pearson International, Canada's busiest airport, making headlines for lots of both. This hotel update is part of a trend of airport hotels polishing their game to attract guests for mini-vacations — no passport required.

The Sheraton Gateway is the only establishment structurally connected to the airport, so when YYZ calls for a sleepover, it's no longer a chore. You can while away the hours in great comfort atop Terminal 3, the Toronto hub for airlines including Air Transat, Sunwing, Delta, American and British Airways.

Airports are in constant motion, driven by the urgency of blinking lightboards, streaming crowds and gigantic aircraft taxiing to takeoff.

The Sheraton Gateway perpetuates that sense of adventure, but in a safe haven of hospitality. Guests can plan dinner and drinks in an unusual locale, socialize at the bar or rejuvenate with a dip in the pool, a session in the sauna or a workout in a Peloton Studio. When your flight departure is announced, you'll be steps away.

Hotel: After a \$30-million upgrade, the Sheraton Gateway is comforting, not cold, and inviting, not intimidating. The lobby is an airy indoor public square with lofty ceilings and distanced sofas.



Many rooms and suites at Sheraton Gateway have fascinating views of the tarmac. GILLIAN JACKSON

The signature elements include a community table for working and soundproof booths for private conversations — like the telephone booths of the last century, but you have to bring your own phone.

Wood panelling, tweedy sofas and étagères of books and contemporary objects add a homey quality even though it's a large hotel with more than 450 sister Sheratons in 70 countries. The living room look is part of the friendly, unbuttoned decor being adopted by the brand worldwide, including two other majors in Canada, the Sheraton Centre Toronto and Centre Sheraton Montréal.

“Sheraton's vision is to be ‘the world's gathering place,’” said Douglas Brennan, Sheraton Gateway's general manager. “So we have created spaces that multitask, that bring people together or permit them to work

solo.”

The hotel has 484 rooms and suites, yielding a choice of views of either Toronto's skyline or Pearson's tarmac. No contest. I've seen the CN Tower and I like the latter because I've been fascinated since I was a kid with the sight of planes taking off and landing. I was worried about noise, but the windows are double-paned, so you can see the aircraft, but not hear them.

The rooms are streamlined and functional with a soothing colour scheme of vanilla, wheat and pale wood, 55-inch TVs, efficient reading lights and lots of charging outlets for mobile devices. Each room has an ergonomic table that can be raised or lowered, so it multitasks as a standing work station, a breakfast corner, a desk or a cocktail bar when you have guests.

If you are one of the chosen,

life in the VIP lounge can't be beat. The 24-hour Sheraton Club Lounge is a privileged space for Marriott Bonvoy Elite members and Sheraton Club level guests (both associations are free to join). It's an inner sanctum, with hushed tones, comfy chairs and lots of refreshments included: Breakfast; all-day soft drinks and snacks; barista coffee from a Starbucks machine; and evening hors d'oeuvres, as well as (for a fee) cocktails, wine, and beer.

Dining: The dining domain is called &MORE and it's everything in one space: a cocktail lounge, a coffee bar, a grab-and-go corner and a bistro. An overnight stay in an airport hotel calls for a drink, perhaps the Build-Your-Own Gateway Gin and Tonic, with flavours like rose or habanero and fizzy mixes of citrus or ginger.

Executive chef Pravin Kumar Bagali goes for crowd-pleasers

IF YOU GO

Sheraton Gateway, in Terminal 3 of Toronto Pearson International Airport (YYZ), is a 30-minute ride from downtown Toronto on the UP Express train from Union Station (Via Rail).

Sheraton Gateway Hotel in Toronto International Airport: 800-325-3535, 905-672-7000, marriott.com/yyzgs; Sheraton Hotels & Resorts (sheraton.com), follow Marriott International's Commitment to Clean. Marriott Bonvoy and Marriott app valid for contactless check-in/room key.

Price: Starting at \$229, including indoor heated swimming pool, whirlpool, 24/7 fitness area (Peloton Studio with video yoga, cardio and strength training). Meeting spaces, business services, in-room dining available. Pet-friendly.

Info: Ontario, destinationontario.com; Toronto, destinationtoronto.com; Pearson Airport: torontopearson.com.

with a global flair like chicken satays, bam-bam shrimp and poké bowls, as well as classic mains including braised short ribs, steaks, burgers and the Quebec staple that has become a symbol of Canada: poutine.

The pizza menu has a fancy edge, too, with one choice featuring whipped truffle mascarpone and wild mushrooms.

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ENTERTAINMENT

SPONSORED BY POINTE-À-CALLIÈRE, MONTREAL ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY COMPLEX

Walks through Old Montreal given new meaning with “a parliament under your feet” exhibit

Pointe-à-Callière's interactive outdoor exhibit brings Montreal's rich history to life.

ADAM BURTON
Postmedia Content Works

With how visibly historic the Old Montreal is, it's hard to imagine that there's much more to discover about the city's rich history. Pointe-à-Callière, Montreal Archaeology and History Complex's new outdoor exhibit is showing locals and tourists that there is always more to learn, unveiling its “A parliament under your feet” outdoor exhibit to the city of Montreal. The exhibit is located directly above the ruins of St. Anne's Market (1832-1844), Montreal's first covered market, and the Parliament of the Province of Canada (1844-1849) before it was burned down by rioters in 1849.

The new exhibit will be free to the public and located in the heart of Old Montreal on Place D'Youville West, between McGill and St-Pierre Street. Through a series of archaeological digs between 2010-2017, the museum unearthed a staggering 350,000 artifacts from St. Anne's Market and the Parliament. Visitors will be able to explore seven interactive stations, highlighting events that took place on the site and that played a major role in Montréal and Canadian life during this period.

Pointe-à-Callière has been showcasing Montreal's unique and fascinating history for three decades, and it is celebrating its 30th anniversary this



“A parliament under your feet” is Pointe-à-Callière's latest exhibit. PHOTO BY SEBASTIEN ROY.

year. The museum's raison d'être has always been to promote the city's rich archaeological history.

Visitors will first be able to learn more about St. Anne's Market, which holds a tremendous amount of historical significance for the city of Montreal. Between 1834 and 1844, the market served as a community centre for the residents of the city and hosted concerts, balls, lectures, and political meetings. It was also the founding site of the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste and where the Black community

of Montreal celebrated the abolition of slavery in 1834.

In 1844, the building that once housed St. Anne's Market turned into the Parliament Building, and began serving as the nation's capital.

The five years that Montreal served as the seat of the Canadian government were ripe with landmark decisions and pivotal moments. When the building was converted into the Parliament, it became a place of power where critical decisions were made for the advancement

of democracy in Canada. Ministerial accountability was established with the adoption of a system of responsible government that marked the beginning of democratic governance in Canada.

All of this and more will be brought to life at the “a parliament under your feet” exhibit. In the seven stations within the 100-metre footprint of the original building, you'll get to meet some of the Montrealers who frequented the market or worked at Parliament. They include a young girl



The Pointe-à-Callière app has even more content for visitors to discover about the exhibit. PHOTO BY SEBASTIEN ROY.

who lived in the parliament with her family, a tavern owner, and important historical figures such as Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine, Robert Baldwin, Sir Georges-Étienne Cartier.

In addition to the information already available at the exhibit, the Pointe-à-Callière app, available on the App Store and Google Play, offers even more enriched content for those looking to make the most of their visit. The app includes architectural plans, 3D reconstructions of the Parliament Building, and photos of additional artifacts. These extra features will better your understanding of the building's transformation from a bustling marketplace to a bureaucratic centre of governance in just a few short years.

Every station will include a family activity, where all ages are encouraged to engage with the exhibit as a group. This is a great way to keep children involved in an outdoor environment conducive to both fun, and learning.

Guided tours are also available throughout the summer, and they are a great way to get the whole family involved. Tour guides provide additional information at each station and ensure everyone can have fun while learning about the nation's history.

For more information, visit pacmusee.qc.ca.

The project was made possible thanks to financial support from Tourisme Montréal's Fonds de maintien des actifs stratégiques, with the financial participation of the Government of Québec