Decorating & Design

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This Niagara-on-the-Lake Hotel Has Made The Old Town Feel New Again

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From historic homes to fine dining and world-class theatre, there's a lot to love about Niagara-on-the-Lake. But for those looking for a place to stay that's more than just a bed, the town has been lacking in modern amenities to write home about... until now. Introducing the newly rearranged Old Town Suites, a dreamlike large property on the town's main street with stylishly appointed condo-style rooms and a huge courtyard with a pool, hot tub, and cabanas. The property is the brainchild of Niagara-based duo Jeff and Cassess. They have been over the entire block that included the old Tl Comm hotel, redesigning the property from the ground up. The result is a cohesive, modern-meets-classic property that pays homage to the hotel's history and when the vibrant businesses that occupy that block of Queen Street, including a popular restaurant and a boutique hotel, reopen in 2022. "We love here, we're part of the community, and we care deeply about our town," says Cassess.

Scroll down for a tour of this unique property!

The hotel's red brick facade is original to the building and blends nicely with the surrounding streetscape, but the interior is a complete reimagining. Cassess and Jeff worked with Toronto-based interior designer Lauren Glassco Hardy and designer Jessica Vasquez, who curated the relaxed-living aesthetic of the hotel rooms here, with a brown and crystal color palette in shades of blue, gray, and gold.

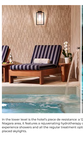
The three-year long renovation added 19 new rooms, including the elegant Signature Collection of 12 rooms. You could literally live in one of the one-bedroom suites, which feature a fully stocked kitchen, living area (some with designer electric fireplaces), cedar-lined closets and Espresso & Cocoa luxury mattresses.

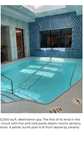
The living area in each suite is thoughtfully decorated in neutral tones with a sectional sofa for luxe lounging, U-shape shapes and an office area for in-room dreaming.

In the spa-like bathrooms, walk-in rainfall showers are complemented by double sinks with Crème Nuvolo glass vanity cabinetry, Calacatta Gold Marble Porcelain Ceramic, with underlaid gray marble walls and floors, gray white counters and a subtle touches of sparkle.

The kitchens are designed for real meal prep, with Caesarstone in Wilderness countertops (Banco slab), Delta faucets and appliances by Panasonic and Blomberg. The cabinets are fully stocked with everything you might need, from cutlery to saucepans.

Every Signature Collection suite is subtly different and Keyness is the more evident than the kitchens. The Caesarstone countertops come in three different colorways (Empire White, Calacatt Gold's and Rugged Concrete) and the configurations make space for bar stools or prep areas. Keyness coffee machines complete the setup.





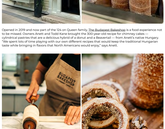
In the lower level is the hotel's piece de resistance: a 12,000 sq.ft. destination spa. The first of its kind in the Niagara area, it features a rejuvenating hydrotherapy circuit with hot and cold pools, steam rooms, sensory experience showers and all the regular treatment options. A petite, sunlit pool is 6 from above by cleverly placed skylights.

A key part of the spa experience is a hot and cold cycle that includes the hot sauna and a soon-to-be-completed cold plunge pool. The cold plunge pool is currently being installed and will be ready for the normal temperature after the heat of the sauna. A second phase of development will see the addition of an outdoor yoga and meditation area, spa cabanas and reflecting pools.

A longstanding fixture on Queen Street, Freedman's closes as an early proponent of farm to table dining and continues to lead the charge today. A family run business that's now part of Silk on Queen, the restaurant's owner Stephen Freedman is a fixture in the local community, and has been a leader in growing conditions in Ontario for not only vanilla but fruits and vegetables. Says Chef Founder Stephen, "Niagara-on-the-Lake is a place where people come to relax and enjoy the beauty of the region." Complete with a charming breezy patio, is located just beside the main hotel building. Don't miss the Lobster Eggs Benedict for breakfast.

Sommelier Founder James Treadwell (Stephen's son) is very proud of his extensive wine list, which includes the biggest selection of Ontario wines in Canada. Sommelier-led wine pairings are encouraged, and you can sit at the kitchen-adjacent "chef's table" for a closeup view of the action.

When the new owners took over the hotel, they also brought back Starbucks to downtown NOTL. The Queen Street location closed in 2020, much to the locals' disappointment, but Silk on Queen brought the humble and expanded it a year later. It's now accessible from the hotel lobby.



Opened in 2011 and now part of the Silk on Queen family, The Restream Bakeshop is a food experience not to be missed. Owner Jessica Vasquez and Chef Jeremy Ryan bake up a delicious selection of cylindrical pastries that are a delicious hybrid of donut and a Bearclaw — their Kürtős cakes Hungary. "We spent lots of time aligning with our own different recipes that would have the traditional Hungarian taste while bringing in Ontario flavor," Jessica explains. "We like both."

Chimney cakes are made by rolling dough onto a cylindrical mold, baking it until crispy in special ovens, then dusting it with sugar, hazelnuts and cocoa! Recipe is one of mine! Newsletters.

Photographer: Justin Alberto

The hotel's current incarnation is just the first phase of an ambitious transformation. Future plans include a busy lobby bar, garden event space, rooftop relaxation area and more of their Signature Collection rooms.

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