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TRAVEL TALES

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE JEWISH TRAVELLER

By MIKE COHEN

ALBANY, NEW YORK: The last time I was in the United States for a getaway was just a few months before the pandemic

shut down the world. We had gone for a change of scenery to the New York capital of Albany, where you can count on good shopping and fun restaurants.

Four years later, while I was on holiday from my day job for March Break, I figured that a few days in Albany (<https://www.albany.org/>) would be a good idea and I was right. Between the two large malls, meals at some of my favorite restaurants and a terrific hotel I did indeed come back feeling refreshed.

WHERE TO STAY: On my previous trip here I noticed that a dual-brand Homewood Suites & Tru by (Please turn to page 18)

KICKER STANDS WITH ISRAEL



SOUTH AFRICAN-BORN-Minnesota Viking kicker Greg Joseph is proud to be Jewish and says that Judaism has “absolutely” guided him during his life. He was also affected by the October 7th attack. He first responded by starting a “Kicks for Israel” Pledgeit campaign which raised \$10,000 for Leket Israel. Then he wore specially designed cleats for a game with the Stars of David and the phrases “I Stand with Israel” and “Am Yisrael Chai” in Hebrew and the English transliteration.

Happy Passover to
Our Jewish
Friends and Patrons



Johnny Castellano
Sean Finlay

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Hilton had just opened. This 192 room extended stay facility features two separate areas designed for each brand, unique public spaces designed to promote social connectivity, a 24-hour fitness center, indoor pool, outdoor grills, sport courts and airport shuttle. The hotel offers a meeting room and a business centre. The different lobby and dining spaces are extremely large and offer all of the comforts of home and more. There is 24 hour complimentary coffee and tea in the Tru by Hilton lobby. Our room had a kitchen, stovetop, fridge, dishwasher, microwave, coffee maker and all of the necessary dishes and cutlery. There were two televisions, two queen sized beds in the master and a safe (always a must for us) and a pullout couch in the large living room area. For more information or to make a reservation, visit Homewood

TRAVEL TALES

(Continued from page 8)

Suites By Hilton Albany Crossgates Mall or Tru by Hilton Albany Crossgates Mall or call +1 (518) 704-4040 or +1 (518) 704-4010. Log on to www.albanycrossgatesmall.homewoodsuites-byhilton.com or www.albanycrossgatesmall.tru-byhilton.com

JEWISH COMMUNITY: There are an estimated 13,000 Jews in Albany. The hubs of Jewish life are the Sidney Albert Albany Jewish Community Center and the United Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York. Regionally there are five reform congregations, five Conservative and three Orthodox. There is a Hillel Foundation for Jewish life at the local university campus. Price Chopper supermarket offers a year-round well-stocked full-service kosher store at 1892 Central Avenue in Colonie. The University at

Albany (SUNY) operates a full-service Kosher Meal-Plan (Meat) in the Dutch Quad Cafeteria during the academic year, which is open to guests. The resettlement of 1,300 Jews from the former Soviet Union in the Capital District in 1988 represented the most significant Jewish immigration into the Albany area since the early 1920s.

GREAT SHOPPING: Crossgates (<https://www.shopcrossgates.com/>) is the largest shopping, dining and entertainment destination in New York's Capital Region. The center is anchored by Macy's, JCPenney, Dick's Sporting Goods, Primark and Best Buy, while offering more than 180 retail shops, including Apple. Crossgates offers 10 entertainment venues and over 20 on-site eateries, such as Dave & Buster's, Get Air, Billy Beez, Apex

Entertainment, The Standard Restaurant & Lounge, Maggie McFly's and Regal Cinemas with IMAX. You can also relax at their award-winning day spa, Spa Mirbeau. Dave & Buster's, with its fun food and endless array of games, is always a draw for people of all ages. Colonie Center (<https://shopatcoloniecentre.com/>), a 1.3 million square-foot enclosed two-level, regional shopping center with over 100 specialty stores, is at the heart of New York's Capital Region. The center is anchored by a three-level Macy's.

DINING OUT: As people who read my articles regularly are aware, I have been a big fan of the Red Lobster restaurant chain for many years. Unfortunately, it disappeared from the Quebec dining landscape in the late 1990s. There are two locations in Ottawa, but when we visited Albany, New York we made a bee-

Happy Passover!

Wishing you and your loved ones joy and many blessings this Passover and throughout the year!

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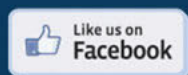
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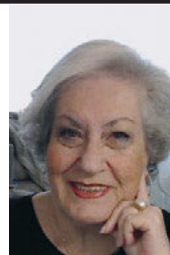


line for the Red Lobster at 170 Wolf Road. Red Lobster is the world's largest and most-loved seafood restaurant company, focused on serving the highest quality, freshly prepared seafood that is traceable, sustainable, and responsibly sourced. This Red Lobster opens at 11 am each day. You can call 518-459-1040. To learn more about Red Lobster go to www.redlobster.com.

The Cheesecake Factory also ranks as one of my must stops in cities like Albany. Of course, Quebec does not have one of these franchises either. The Albany location opened on August 29, 2006 at the Colonie Centre. This 10,800 square foot locale seats 300 diners and you can always expect a lineup at the door. You will be handed a beeper

and an estimated wait time. The Cheesecake Factory (www.thecheesecakefactory.com) is known for its extensive menu, generous portions and legendary desserts. In fact, there are more than 250 menu selections and this includes more than 50 lower calorie "SkinnyLicious®" selections—all handmade in-house with fresh ingredients – and more than 50 signature cheesecakes and desserts. Favorite choices include appetizers, pizza, seafood, steaks, chicken, burgers, pasta, specialty items, salads, sandwiches, omelets and the desserts. You can call them directly at 518-453-2500.

Mike Cohen's e-mail address is info@mikecohen.ca. Readers are welcome to send their comments.

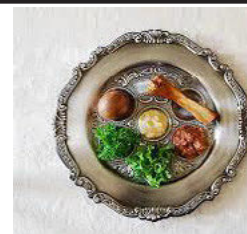


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