

Ottawa Tourism is committed to showcasing accessible travel options

by *Mike Cohen*

As Canada’s capital, Ottawa is the perfect place to experience some of the country’s best attractions, celebrations and flavours in one welcoming city.

Ottawa International Airport (YOW) is RHF Accessibility Certified Gold by the Rick Hansen Foundation. The Ottawa International Airport Authority is committed to providing a safe, dignified and welcoming environment for everyone. Check out ottawatourism.ca and click on “Plan Your Visit – Getting Around” to learn about the different ways of moving around the city to experience and explore all that Ottawa has to offer.

All national museums, as well as the National Arts Centre, are barrier-free, and the Canada Science and Technology Museum is RHF Accessibility Certified Gold. Parliament facilities are accessible to wheelchairs and service animals, and tours with American Sign Language (ASL) or Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ) interpretation can be requested.

Parliament Hill is the most visited Ottawa attraction. Guided tours are free and include the Senate, House of Commons (West Block), East Block and the Parliament building (Centre Block). The “The Immersive Experience,” a self-guided exhibition and media show, is available for the last one. Be sure to reserve your tickets in advance.



The pool and golf area at the Brookstreet Hotel in Kanata.

Ottawa cultural attractions, museums and galleries invite visitors to experience the best of Canada all in one place. The capital’s premier performing arts venue, the National Arts Centre, presents a full lineup of music, dance and theatre, plus popular touring acts and shows. Just go to their websites to learn more about their accessibility options.

For the second summer in a row, we were fortunate to spend the day at the magnificent Brookstreet Hotel in Kanata. While we stayed with family, we do want to try out the accommodations here on a future visit. We arrived for our day of leisure and checked in at Perspectives Restaurant and a table on the beautiful patio looking out over the full property. Since this was a Sunday, we were fortunate to be able to order from the brunch menu. The heated outdoor saltwater pool and the area surrounding it is truly a slice of paradise. The hotel is now completing a \$11-million renovation project to transform its guestrooms into upscale accommodations.

The entry way to the hotel is fully wheelchair accessible. You can access the outdoor pool via the restaurant and then via a nice pathway. Elevators will take you to the different floors. There is indoor parking and a large lot near the entrance.

There are many wonderful choices for dining out. From my most recent trip, here is my culinary report. The historic York on William (YOW) building, which encompasses Starling Restaurant & Bar and Apothecary Cocktail Lounge, represents a must visit,



An aerial view of Parliament Hill. Photo courtesy of Ottawa Tourism |

and we were thrilled to dine there again. Starling brings you contemporary dishes from timeless classics to personal recipes with a fondness for locality, designed to be loved by one or shared by many. There is patio seating at street level therefore accommodating people in wheelchairs.

The Métropolitain Brasserie in Ottawa, conveniently located next to the Byward Market at 700 Sussex, is just steps away from Parliament Hill. Home to Ottawa’s largest oyster bar, the patio and main entrance are wheelchair accessible. You can also park in the building next door, and an elevator will take you to the dining room. The Metcalfe Hotel in Ottawa marks the Gray Collection’s first hotel property outside Montreal. Located in the heart of downtown Ottawa, just a few blocks from Parliament Hill, the boutique hotel is home to Cocotte, a French-inspired restaurant on the ground level, where we dined. The restaurant is located right off the main lobby in a very pretty ambiance. Both the hotel and restaurant offer accessibility access. ■



The seafood platter at The Métropolitain Brasserie. |