

TRAVEL TALES

EXPLORING OTTAWA FOR TOURISTS AND LOCALS

By MIKE COHEN

OTTAWA HAS LOTS TO OFFER: As Canada's capital, Ottawa (<https://ottawatourism.ca>) is the perfect place for locals and their out of town visitors to experience some of the country's best attractions, celebrations and flavors in one welcoming city. With its unique blend of urban and rural beauty, year-round outdoor activities, and vibrant neighbourhoods, the Ottawa region is best ex-

plored over several days or more. Since I often go there for family reasons, an extended trip is usually on the agenda as was the case this past summer. Parliament Hill is the most visited Ottawa attraction. Guided tours are free and include the Senate, House of Commons, East Block and Parliament: The Immersive Experience. Tickets must be reserved in advance.

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Shana Tova to the Jewish Community



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JEWISH OWNERSHIP: Ottawa has a vibrant and active Jewish community. Take the Ottawa Titans Frontier minor league professional baseball team for example. They play out of the state-of-the-art Ottawa Stadium. The schedule begins in May and continues through early September. It is a wonderful outing for the entire family, even someone who might not even be a baseball fan. The team essentially has complete Jewish ownership: former Winnipeg Mayor

Sam Katz, his nephew Regan, prominent lawyer (and Westmount native) Jacques Shore and the Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group, whose executive chair and managing partner is Roger Greenberg. Go to www.ottawatitans.com

FINKELSTEIN CHABAD CENTER: When I was in Ottawa this past summer I learned that Montreal businessman Harley Finkelstein, the president of e-commerce giant Shopify, played a major role in bringing the dream of establishing a permanent home for the Rohr Chabad Student Network of Ottawa. He was a young law student at the University of Ottawa when he met Rabbi Chaim Boyarsky of Chabad and pledged to assist his campaign years later. The \$5 million complex opened last spring and is now known as the Finkelstein Chabad Center. It is 6,000-square-foot, with two floors, located near Parliament Hill and houses a synagogue, dining hall, guest suites, a

commercial kitchen and soon, a mikvah. "It's becoming the center of Jewish life, which is unbelievable," Finkelstein says, "I never imagined in a million years that I would be doing this."

THE BROOK-STREET: For the second summer in a row, we were fortunate to spend the day at the magnificent Brookstreet Hotel in Kanata. While this time we stayed with family, we do want to try out the accommodations here on a future visit. Since opening in 2003, the Brookstreet Hotel has gained notice as a luxury property noted for outstanding dining, incredible entertainment, luxurious accommodations, inspired green initiatives and world class golf and fitness facilities. We arrived for our day of leisure and checked in at Perspectives Restaurant and a table



THE ENTRANCE TO the tunnel in Southern Gaza where the bodies of Hersh Goldberg-Polin, Eden Yerushalmi, Carmel Gat, Almog Sarusi, Alexander Lobanov, and Ori Danino were found. Families have been informed that personal items, including a chessboard and notebooks, would be returned.

Happy New Year to the Jewish Community of Ottawa

May the coming year be one of peace and prosperity



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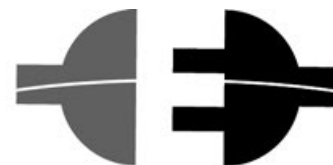
on the beautiful patio looking over the full property. Seated near us was a Jewish couple from Chomedey that I know. The heated outdoor saltwater pool and the area surrounding it truly is a slice of paradise. The hotel is now completing an impressive \$11 million renovation project, transforming its guestrooms into a haven of luxury and comfort. This hotel has 276 rooms and suites spaced across 18 floors. Info: <https://www.brookstreethotel.com>,

DINING OUT: There are so 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 (www.starlingottawa.ca), represents a

must visit and we were thrilled to dine there for the second successive year. The Métropolitain Brasserie (www.metropolitainbrasserie.com), conveniently located next to the Byward Market at 700 Sussex, is open seven days a week, serving lunch, dinner and brunch on weekends. The Metcalfe Hotel in Ottawa marks the Gray Collection's first hotel property outside Montreal. It is home to Cocotte (www.cocottebistro.com), a French-inspired restaurant on the ground level, where we dined. Somewhere Dine Bar (somewhereottawa.com) in Ottawa's Byward Market combines casual elegance with a contemporary European flair. Ottawa has so many dining establishments that serve all-day breakfast, something that is

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not common in Montreal. Zola's Restaurant (<https://zolas.ca>) offers Italian fare and a terrific "Brunch" menu served from 8 am to 3 pm each day. Located in a strip mall in the west-end of the city, Zola's is family-owned and operated. At the iconic Nate's Deli (<https://nates.ca>) on Sparks Street you can also get items

like steak and eggs, omelettes and bagel and lox. The Wellington Diner (www.wellingtondiner.ca) specializes in all things related to breakfast, lunch, dinner.

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DRUZE PARAMEDIC FOUND THE LIFELESS BODY OF HIS 12 YEAR OLD DAUGHTER AND THEN RETURNED TO SAVING LIVES



ADAM SFADI, A SENIOR PARAMEDIC WITH Magen David Adom in Majdal Shams, was on his way to a wedding when he saw smoke billowing from the town's soccer field. He headed immediately to the field. He knew his 12-year-old daughter Vinis was there. What he found were a dozen children, including his daughter, motionless. He identified his daughter from her Arsenal FC jersey. "As soon as I entered the field," Sfadi said, "I saw my daughter and her friend lying on the ground. I looked at her; her body was intact, but she had suffered a head injury that left her no chance. I bent toward her, placed my hand on her chest, and asked her to forgive me." But even amidst his grief he did what he was trained to do...he tried to save as many children as he could. "A day that started with great joy, a wedding...I couldn't believe it ended like this."