

# Niagara

Tourism Investment Update

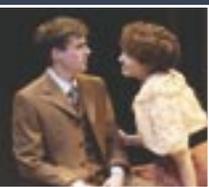
## Niagara to lead tourism sector recovery in Canada



**Niagara set to lead national tourism recovery:** Conference Board predicts page 2



**Ripley's announces \$200 million Aquarium and Great Wolf Lodge project** page 6



**Theatre, Festivals and Gaming attract visitors and tourist dollars to Niagara** pages 3-7



**New \$1 billion Fallsview gaming complex in Niagara largest in Canada** page 7

### Investors and business leaders target Niagara, Canada for tourism-related opportunities!

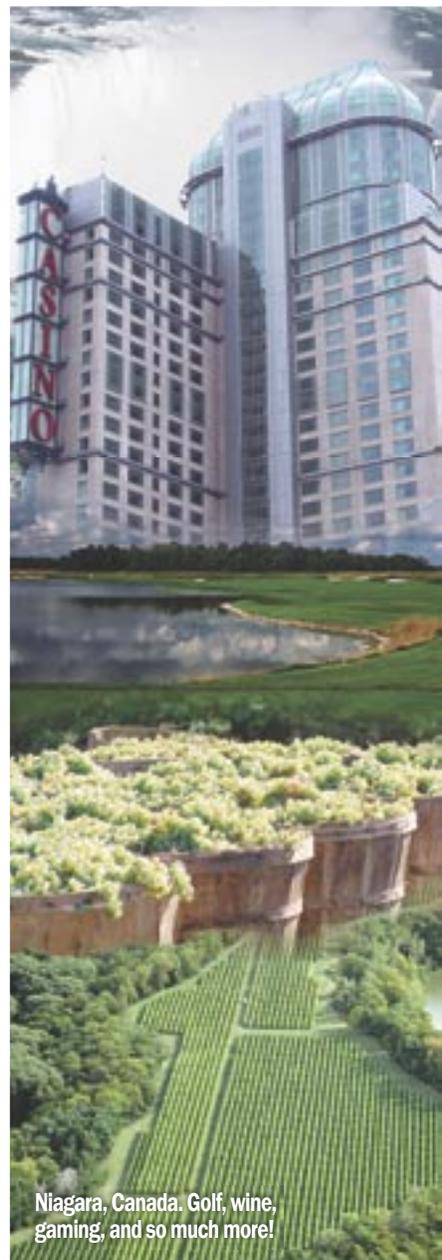
With billions of dollars in new tourism-related development completed or currently under development, Niagara can arguably claim to be Canada's Premier Tourism Investment Region.

Our rich natural amenities, close proximity to more than seventy percent of the North American population, and an entrepreneurial culture widely prevalent in Niagara's residents are key contributors to our region's growing success as a year-round, world-class tourism destination.

Visionary entrepreneurs and risk takers have recognized the opportunities Niagara affords the international traveller. Global trends in the tourist destination marketplace are being realized in Niagara. Local investors are meeting the needs and wants of tomorrow's traveller — today, by offering luxury hotels, resorts and inns, live entertainment and theatres, and ecological and agricultural themed experiences.

Niagara's network of tourism experiences includes award-winning wineries, world-class casino gaming, a host of challenging golf courses, and the majesty of the world-famous Niagara Falls. Our tourism sector partners have been working in partnership to market the Niagara experience across the globe.

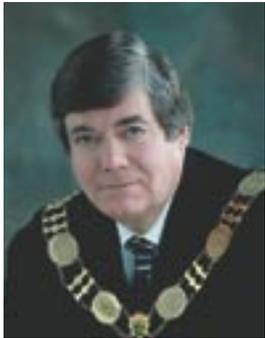
Come and experience the advantages our region affords the traveller and investor. See for yourself why Niagara's tourism growth rates will continue to be among the highest in Canada. ■



Niagara, Canada. Golf, wine, gaming, and so much more!



# Global trends, natural amenities, and strong entrepreneurial spirit propel success of Niagara's tourism sector



**Peter Partington**  
Chairman, Regional Municipality of Niagara

Tourism is a multi-billion dollar industry in Niagara — one of our primary engines of economic growth. We come by it naturally and through planning. Our potential is unlimited, and we are committed to success — yours and ours!

Niagara is Canada's premier location for tourism investment. Visitor and spending growth rates in our region continually outpace global averages. This opens a floodgate of opportunity for tourism and tourism-based businesses in Niagara.

Whether it is eco-tourism or historic sightseeing, the excitement of casino gaming, or the enrichment of a theatre experience — tourism is flourishing in Niagara.

Local tourism developers are capitalizing on global trends. Entrepreneurs are helping to shape Niagara's future by developing destination

experiences and themed excursions that include exploration, adventure, recreational sports, opportunities to learn about local history, heritage, culture, nature, wine and cuisine with quality accommodations and superior services in picturesque locations.

Niagara's public-sector agencies work with investors to enhance the array of tourism product by advocating and supporting new infrastructure, attractions, events, and hospitality services throughout the region. Our community is building a powerful calendar of things to see and do throughout the year by tailoring developments to the contemporary tourist. This strategy is showing results by increasing overnight stays and spending.

I encourage you to take a few minutes to review the **2004 Advantage Niagara Tourism Investment Update**. This publication offers an informative introduction to Niagara's dynamic tourism sector by providing insight into how local entrepreneurs and their municipal partners are capitalizing on global trends to meet the demands of tomorrow's tourist — today! ■

## Niagara to lead Canada's tourism sector recovery - Conference Board of Canada

The Conference Board of Canada's Canadian Tourism Research Institute (CTRI) has conducted a study that showed how the Niagara region is expected to lead the recovery of Canada's tourism sector.

Commissioned by the Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation, the study entitled **Economic Impact of Tourism Development on the Niagara Region, 2001, 2002 & 2007** provides an overview of the economic impact that tourism investments have had on Niagara's economy during 2001 and 2002 and projections to the year 2007.

One of the key reasons for optimism for the tourism industry in Niagara is the significant tourism-related investment recently completed, currently taking place, or slated to occur in the next few years. While the city of Niagara Falls has experienced the majority of recent tourism-related developments, a modest amount of growth continues to occur throughout the rest of the Niagara region. The projects in Niagara Falls alone, led by the completion of the Niagara Fallsview Casino & Resort in June 2004 and others that will be operational within the next five years, will provide Niagara with valuable infrastructure which will be used to service both the tourism sector and the local community.

The impact analysis takes a high, medium, and low scenario approach in developing projections of where the Niagara economy will be in the next five years with regard to tourism product development. The high scenario relates to the assumption that most of the developments currently under consideration will actually be approved and completed, while the medium and low scenarios relate to correspondingly reduced levels of approval and completion.



**Canadian Tourism Research Institute Associate Director Greg Hermus (left) and NETC Senior Economic Development Officer Renato Romanin, during the release event for the CTRI study "The Economic Impact of Tourism Development on the Niagara Region, 2001, 2002 & 2007."**

Findings in the CTRI study indicate:

- ▶ Niagara can expect to see an increase in the number of visitors from 14.2 million in 2002 to between 15.3 and 18.1 million in 2007.
- ▶ Visitor spending will rise from \$1.9-billion in 2002 to between \$2.41 and \$2.93 billion in 2007.

Please see Findings page 2

## Findings

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

- By 2007, tourism-related jobs will account for between 20.6% and 25.5% of all employment in the Niagara region.

According to NETC officials, the results of the study prove that the Niagara region can put 2003's disappointing tourism season in the past. "Clearly what we are seeing in this study is a message that the Niagara region is poised for the future when it comes to new tourism-related investments," notes Renato Romanin, senior economic development officer for the Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation. "Our key to realizing these projections is to ensure that we continue to market the Niagara region as a complete tourism experience that offers investors new opportunities for product development that extend beyond the falls and the casinos."

The Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation (NETC) continues to provide local business operators with valuable industry and economic statistics relating to Niagara's tourism and hospitality sectors. A complete version of the study **Economic Impact of Tourism Development on the Niagara Region, 2001, 2002 & 2007** is available online and can be downloaded free of charge by visiting [www.niagaracanada.com](http://www.niagaracanada.com). ■

## Report Highlights

### Economic Impact of Tourism Development on the Niagara Region, 2001, 2002 & 2007

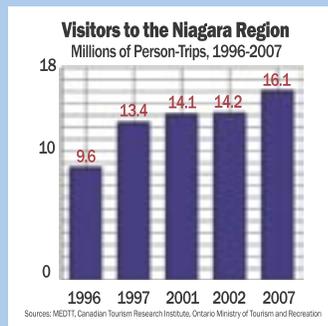


Chart highlighting the number of tourists visiting Niagara in 1996, 1997, 2001 and 2002 and provides an estimate of visitation levels to 2007.

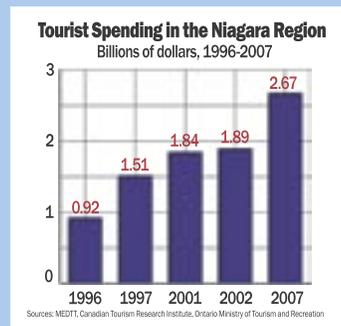


Chart illustrating the increase in tourist direct spending for 1996, 1997, 2001 and 2002 and the mid-range projection for 2007.

# Global tourism trends help shape Niagara's tourism sector

Niagara's success in becoming a world-class, year-round tourism destination is no accident. Local entrepreneurs are tapping into the natural drawing power of Niagara and developing attractions and experiences that are tailored to meet the needs of tomorrow's tourists. Trends in the global marketplace are being explored and integrated into Niagara's increasingly diverse range of tourism product. The following global tourism trends are emerging in Niagara. ■

Global Trend	Description	Niagara Example (Existing & Announced)
<b>Urban Entertainment Centres</b>	Multi-attraction complexes incorporating destination/theme restaurants, sports and/or cultural facilities, multiplex theatres, hotel accommodations, leisure/recreational, activities, and specialty retailers.	Niagara Fallsview Casino Complex (NF), Great Wolf Lodge & Ripley's Aquarium (NF)
<b>Sports Tourism</b>	Amateur and professional sports events and/or facilities for sport activities.	Niagara Golf Trail (NR), Fort Erie Leisureplex (FE), St. Catharines Four-Pad Arena Complex (SC), Martindale Pond/Henley Rowing Course (SC)
<b>Live Entertainment and Theatres</b>	Live staged performing arts including music, theatre, concerts, and variety shows.	Shaw Festival Theatre (NOTL), Gypsy Theatre (PC), Roselawn Complex (PC), Oh Canada Eh? Dinner Theatre (NF), Showboat Festival Theatre (PC), Port Mansion Dinner Theatre (SC)
<b>Luxury Hotels, Resorts &amp; Inns</b>	Properties (large or small, including Bed and Breakfasts) offering the highest standard of accommodation including an extensive range of facilities, amenities, and guest services.	Prince of Wales Hotel (NOTL), Queen's Landing Inn (NOTL), Hilton Hotel (NF), Great Wolf Lodge (NF), Harbour House Hotel (NOTL), Millions of dollars in hotel upgrades and new developments (NR)
<b>Shopping</b>	The full-range, from downtown retail specialty stores to retail factory outlet malls.	Canada One Factory Outlet Mall (NF), Pen Centre regional shopping mall expansion (SC), Village Shopping Centre (NOTL), Jordan Village (L)
<b>Cultural Tourism</b>	Attractions/activities involving heritage, art, music, museums, and architecture.	Niagara Symphony (NR), Underground Railroad (NR), Rodman Hall Arts Centre (SC), Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre (FE)
<b>Eco-tourism/ Agri-tourism</b>	Activities focused on a combination of natural, outdoors, and cultural experiences ranging from exploring habitats, landscapes, waterways and conservation areas to visiting farms, rural Bed and Breakfasts, and sampling locally grown food/beverage.	Niagara Wine Route (NR), Zooz Nature Park (FE), Sport fishing in Niagara (NR), Niagara Equestrian Trails (NR), Niagara Falls Aviary (NF), Twenty Valley/Jordan Harbour Tourist Area (L)

NF = Niagara Falls, SC = St. Catharines, FE = Fort Erie, PC = Port Colborne, NOTL = Niagara-on-the-Lake, PE = Pelham, L = Lincoln, NR = Niagara Region

## GLOBAL TREND: URBAN ENTERTAINMENT

## \$200 million Ripley's entertainment destination

Ripley Entertainment has unveiled plans for a \$200 million family destination project that will include a Ripley-owned Great Wolf Lodge®, a premier indoor waterpark resort, and a state-of-the-art Ripley's Aquarium of Canada. The project is situated on a 25-acre parcel of land in Niagara Falls.

Great Wolf Lodge represents Ripley Entertainment's first resort and the first international license that The Great Lakes Co., developers of the Great Wolf Lodge brand of indoor waterpark resorts, has ever granted. Ripley's Aquarium of Canada will become the third sea-life attraction for the company. Related properties include Ripley's Aquarium in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and Ripley's Aquarium of the Smokies in Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

"This is a historic day for our brand and Niagara Falls, Ontario," said Bob Masterson, president of Ripley Entertainment. "We have added our first international world-class aquarium to our growing portfolio and look forward to extending our brand name into the resort business with Great Wolf Lodge. Niagara Falls, Ontario, will now become a year-round destination for families who want to enjoy the Falls, take a swim, and discover some of the most exotic marine life from around the world!"

Great Wolf Lodge is set to open in 2005. The resort is designed to capture the atmosphere and adventure of the north woods. A log-sided, four-storey, 404-suite indoor waterpark resort will provide a



Computer model of the new \$200-million Ripley Aquarium (lower) and Great Wolf Lodge (upper) developments slated for opening in 2005.

comprehensive package of destination lodging amenities, including a 90,000-square-foot indoor waterpark.

The lodge will also offer a themed family restaurant, arcade, gift shop, confectionery, Aveda® Concept Spa, a state-of-the-art meeting symposium, fitness centre, outdoor recreation and pool area, animated clock tower, and Cub Club activity centre. The resort will offer travelers an alternative to the expenses associated with traveling to warmer climates, making a family getaway affordable and convenient.

Ripley's Aquarium of Canada is scheduled to open in 2006. The 115,000 square foot world-class aquarium will include interactive

Please see Ripley's page 8

## GLOBAL TREND: LIVE ENTERTAINMENT &amp; THEATRE

## Live entertainment takes centre stage in Niagara!

Whether it is a play at Shaw Festival Theatre in Niagara-on-the-Lake, a concert at Roselawn Centre for the Arts in Port Colborne, or a show on the stages of Brock Centre for the Arts, live theatre and entertainment flourishes throughout Niagara.

The Shaw is one of Canada's premiere destinations for live theatre, attracting some 350,000 theatre goers through 800 performances every season. Dedicated to the works of George Bernard Shaw and his contemporaries, the company presents its works in three theatres in a picturesque town. The flagship property is the Festival Theatre, which at 869 seats, is still intimate by most standards. The Court House Theatre, in the heart of Niagara-on-the-Lake, seats 327 people, and it is where the company stages the most challenging or intimate works. A third site, the Royal George Theatre, resembles a small glittering opera house. The most popular fare including musicals, comedies, thrillers, lunchtime readings, and the occasional romance are staged here. This popular venue is designed to appeal to people who are not necessarily regular theatre-goers.

The company continues to grow in physical size and popularity. Investments by the private and public sector have enabled a 43,000-square-foot expansion. This is all part of a recent \$50 million overall investment in Shaw facilities.

Shaw is just one of a growing list of live theatre and entertainment



The Shaw Festival Theatre prepares for the 2004 season.

experiences in Niagara. Just minutes from the Lake Erie shores and the famous Welland Canal is the Roselawn Centre for the Living Arts. Port Colborne's unique arts complex seats up to 160 people for formal dining and offers a 300-seat theatre. Roselawn is home to Showboat Festival Theatre, a professional company now entering its 17<sup>th</sup> summer season.

Brock University's Center for the Arts presents an extensive live entertainment program throughout the year. Two major theatres, each seating in excess of 500 people, feature music, dance, theatre, comedy, and variety performances. Theatre Beyond Words is the theatre in Residence at Brock University. The company has garnered international acclaim for its artistic and entertaining performances that

Please see Entertainment page 8

## GLOBAL TREND: FESTIVALS &amp; EVENTS

## Festivals and events help extend tourist season

“Niagara has something to offer every visitor,” notes NETC Tourism Manager Gary Hardy. “We are rapidly becoming a year-round destination which offers travelers the opportunity to experience Niagara regardless of the season. And with more than 14 million visitors each year, this is no small accomplishment.”

Signature festivals and events such as the Niagara Wine Festival, Friendship Festival, Rose Festival, and the Winter Festival of Lights have been attracting international visitors to Niagara for decades. Now they are successfully catching the attention and financial support from national sponsors including the likes of Xerox, Disney, and Kodak. New events such as the Niagara Wine and Food Classic and Poultryfest celebrate the region’s agricultural heritage and have garnered instant popularity with both American and Canadian travelers.

As a result of the increase in the number and quality of Niagara’s festival and events, local hotel and accommodation operators are enjoying longer tourist seasons as visitors seek new experiences in the late fall and winter months. “With the exception of last year, we have seen significant increases in the number of ‘off-season’ tourist enquiries over the past several years,” notes Gateway Niagara Visitor Information Centre Manager Leah Barnes. “It is nice to be able to offer visitors experiences all year-round and know that people can enjoy all that our region has to offer.”



Niagara is home to more than 50 festivals and events each year.

Local festival and event community representatives recognized several years ago that significant advantages could be realized if they pooled their efforts and resources to collectively market and promote their events to the visiting public. The formation of Festivals and Events Niagara (FEN), a collective committed to advancing the importance of festivals and events in Niagara’s tourism sector, is helping to ensure visitors to our region become aware of the more than 50 festivals and event attractions that are celebrated throughout Niagara each month of the year. For an introduction to some of the festivals and events that are held year-round in Niagara, visit [www.tourismniagara.com](http://www.tourismniagara.com). ■

## GLOBAL TREND: LUXURY HOTELS &amp; INNS

## Hotels target affluent tourists on large and small scales

Niagara’s accommodation and hospitality operators are capitalizing on opportunities to serve tourists in search of a high-calibre travel experience.

At the Harbour House Hotel — Niagara-on-the-Lake’s first new hotel in more than a decade — the concept is luxury B&B (bed and breakfast), with a twenty-first century twist. Located beside the town’s harbour, Harbour House is a 31-room, elegantly decorated, purpose-built inn serving the niche market of high-end, high-yield tourists. Harbour House helps to round out the accommodation experience and bridge the bed and breakfast and luxury hotel experience that Niagara has to offer.

North America’s largest Embassy Suites Hotel is also the first and only all-suite Fallsview hotel in Niagara Falls. It towers 42 storeys over the brink of Niagara Falls and offers 512 luxurious two-room suites overlooking the magnificent world wonder. The \$150 million development is one of the most recent additions to the popular vacation destination.

Located in the heart of Niagara’s premier Fallsview tourist district, the hotel offers a shuttle to Niagara’s most famous sites and attractions. “We are thrilled to announce the opening of the Embassy Suites Hotel into Niagara Falls,” said Mike Rotundo, general manager of the new hotel. “In addition to the hotel’s ideal location and value-added amenities including 9,000 square feet of banquet and meeting space, indoor pool, shops and fitness centre, the hotel is unique in providing



Harbour House Hotel in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

up-scale all-suite accommodations in Niagara Falls.”

A ten-year plan is also under way to double the size of the White Oaks Conference Resort and Spa in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Once completed, an additional nine floors will be added to the recently renovated seven-storey hotel and office tower.

Both the Ameri-Cana Resort and Conference Centre in Niagara Falls and Inn On The Twenty in Jordan Village have expanded their amenities to include full-service spas for both patrons of the venues and day spa guests to indulge in. ■

## GLOBAL TREND: ECO-TOURISM

## The lure of sport fishing

For years, sports and nature publications have touted the Niagara region as an exceptional destination for world-class fishing. “Whether it’s monster muskies in the upper Niagara River, tackle-busting smallmouth bass off Port Colborne, salmonoids and trout from Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, or even the crappies and catfish in Jordan Harbour, stories and articles have all said the same thing — recreational fishing in Niagara is superb,” states Joe Montgomery, the author of a Niagara sport fishing economic impact study.

Montgomery’s research confirmed that fishing is growing in popularity and it already has a noticeable impact in the local economy. The annual expenditures related to sport fishing in Niagara are estimated to be \$53 million. In addition to direct expenditures, the aggregated financial and employment impact of sport fishing on Niagara’s economy has been estimated to be more than \$87 million annually.

“What’s becoming even more exciting about the growth of this sport in Niagara is that fishing’s popularity is becoming noticed by the corporate world,” states Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation Senior Economic Development Officer Renato Romanin. “Throughout Ontario we are seeing that leading corporations such as Tim Horton’s and Wal-Mart have taken note of the growing popularity of this sport and are incorporating it into promotional programs. Over 6 million Canadians fish. That’s a huge market and one that is waiting to be addressed in a



**Sport fishing in Niagara is a \$53-million dollar industry.**

more aggressive manner,” he added.

There are many reasons for Niagara’s compelling appeal as a sport fishing destination. The region is centrally located in the Great Lakes basin, offers a diversity of fish species throughout the year, and it is easy to travel to. This makes for a perfect destination not only for anglers but also for everyone else to take part in the experience. World-class hospitality services are available and growing in number to complement the pleasure of the fishing experience. ■

## GLOBAL TREND: REGIONAL CULINARY EXPERIENCES

## College opens \$10 million Niagara Culinary Institute

### Facility to support growing tourism & hospitality sector

Niagara College recently opened the new home for its School of Hospitality and Tourism and the Niagara Culinary Institute at its Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake. “This facility is a key component of our strategy to support and respond to the growth and development of the tourism industry,” said Dan Patterson, college president.

“The addition of this facility to our regional training infrastructure further demonstrates Niagara’s commitment to developing and sustaining a world-class tourism destination location,” notes NETC Director Paul-André Bosc. “Training future culinary professionals here in Niagara, using Niagara-grown foodstuffs and produce, will greatly contribute to the ‘Niagara culinary experience’ which our region is quickly becoming recognized for.”

Ground was broken on the \$10 million project in August 2002. The facility has been financially supported by a \$4.29 million grant from the provincial government and a \$1.2 million contribution from students. The college’s \$3 million FutureReady Campaign has raised \$2 million from the private sector to date.

The 40,000-square-foot facility allows Niagara College to increase enrollment in its hospitality and tourism programs from approximately 500 to 800 students, while providing state-of-the-art equipment and technology to enhance an industry-focused approach to education and training.



**The new \$10 million Niagara Culinary Institute will train between 500 and 800 students each year.**

Designed by Moffat Kinoshita Architects, the facility features a circular, glass 100-seat dining room overlooking college vineyards, two food labs, a bake lab, and a combination food and bake lab, a culinary demonstration theatre, classrooms wired for Internet access, a main service kitchen, wine tasting room, offices, and meeting rooms.

The addition adds to the college’s facilities and learning environments, which were ranked second among Ontario colleges in a recent provincial student survey. The new facility’s location at the Glendale campus also creates opportunities for key synergies and learning opportunities with existing program areas, including horticulture, winery and viticulture, and business. ■

## GLOBAL TREND: URBAN ENTERTAINMENT

## \$1 billion gaming complex largest in Canada

The largest casino in Canada opened to the public on June 10, 2004. The new \$1 billion Niagara Fallsview Casino Resort Complex is the second gaming facility in Niagara Falls, and it is expected to draw tourists from around the globe. In fact, officials expect the new facility, along with the existing Casino Niagara, to attract up to 12 million visitors each year.

Construction of the new \$1 billion Niagara Fallsview casino complex was overseen by Falls Management Co., a consortium of five private companies from both sides of the border. The Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation chose Falls Management Co. to finance, design, build, and operate Niagara Fallsview. The company will also continue to operate Casino Niagara. "What we are building is really the crown jewel of all properties," said Falls Management CEO Jim Dougan. "We feel that the market can sustain two Niagara casinos plus what's out there right now."

Larry Lewin, president and CEO of Chicago's Hyatt Gaming Services, one of Falls Management's principals, said the new Fallsview Resort Complex will court high-end gamblers in the U.S., as far away as Texas and California. He also expects patrons from Asia and Europe to find their way to the new facility, which will focus on a more sophisticated market demographic than Casino Niagara. "The two properties will not compete against each other," said Lewin. "They will complement each



The Niagara Fallsview Casino Resort opened to the public on June 10, 2004.

other. Casino Niagara will cater to more of a regional market, while Niagara Fallsview Casino Resort will serve a global market."

The Niagara Fallsview Casino Resort will be open 24 hours a day, all year-round and feature:

- ▶ 3,000 slot machines and 150 gaming tables, including 10 gaming pits and a private salon;
- ▶ A five-star, 30-storey hotel with 368 guestrooms, all of which overlook the Falls;

Please see Casino page 8

## GLOBAL TREND: ECO-TOURISM

## \$15 million converts museum into aviary

One of the region's newest attractions, the Niagara Falls Aviary, opened in the summer of 2003. Located in the heart of the Niagara Falls tourism district the new \$15 million, 46,000-square-foot aviary is housed in the former Niagara Falls Museum building. Much of the original museum remains giving the aviary an old, mysterious atmosphere.

"The redevelopment of the former Niagara Falls Museum building into such a unique attraction as the aviary is a prime example of how local business operators are seizing opportunities that international travelers are seeking," notes Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation Business Development Manager Alan Teichroeb. "Ecological attractions are among several trends that we have identified in the global tourism market. The Niagara Falls Aviary, in addition to the recently renovated Niagara Parks Butterfly Conservatory and the many other regional ecological and agricultural attractions, is helping us to further develop Niagara's loop-tour concept for promoting the region's themed experiences."

When touring the aviary, visitors begin their experience on the third floor where they'll encounter a cage housing several smaller birds such as the wax bill, wattled jacana, and red whiskered bulbul. From there, visitors are led through a darkened corridor housing nocturnal animals like screech owls, poison arrow frogs, and brown tree snakes.



The Niagara Falls Aviary was named 2003 Niagara Falls Attraction of the Year.

A journey through the aviary will take visitors from the depths of the jungle at night and then descend 600 feet to the jungle floor to ancient ruins hidden in the rain forest. The setting includes 40-foot waterfalls, vertical gardens, and a hand-carved house from the island of Java.

In addition to the aviary, the property includes Explorer's Café and the Aviary Gift Shop. Owners Larry and Marilyn Vann indicate that the aviary is also available for evening functions and events.

For more information about the Niagara Falls Aviary visit [www.niagarafallsaviary.com](http://www.niagarafallsaviary.com) ■

DEVELOPMENTS TO WATCH: Port Dalhousie, St. Catharines

# \$60 million transformation planned for Port Dalhousie's commercial core

A Niagara-based real estate development company has announced plans for a \$60 million redevelopment of a popular waterfront recreation area in St. Catharines. Port Dalhousie Vitalization Corp. (PDVC), working in partnership with internationally acclaimed Diamond and Schmitt Architects Inc., will design an upscale, mixed-use development in Port Dalhousie's commercial core. The development will replace several bars in the commercial district and cater to an upscale client base.

"We're approaching the Port Dalhousie development from a global perspective," said PDVC Principal Eric Moog. "Including the surrounding areas in our master plan and trying to improve as many aspects of Port Dalhousie as possible makes sense, not only for us, but for the residents of Port Dalhousie and the City of St. Catharines. Our development fits in well with the city's official plan and the Niagara Region's Smart Growth strategy for development in the area."

Internationally acclaimed architect Jack Diamond unveiled the development plans to St. Catharines municipal leaders in early April. Key components of the redevelopment plans include: a small-footprint 20-storey condominium building in the centre of the commercial core; a new circular, glass building for a popular historic carousel; the relocation of the proposed outdoor skating path; the realignment of the existing surface-level parking lot; and the excavation of a section of the first Welland Canal to create a new basin with boat slips.



A \$60 million waterfront development is planned for Port Dalhousie.

"This project will not bar public access to the lake or Lakeside Park," said Diamond. "There will be the creation of a new public space and you will still have the ability to traverse a square in the centre of the complex. This is intended to be both public and private," he added.

The plans also include a 400-seat theatre, a 70- to 80-room boutique hotel on two floors above 65,000 square feet of retail space, and 175 underground parking spaces.

PDVC was formed in 2003 when Argosy Construction Ltd. President Eric Moog partnered with York-Bancroft Corporation President Ralph Terrio to form the new real estate development company. PDVC announced they had assembled the land for the project in March 2004. The firm's holdings in Port Dalhousie include the Port Mansion Theatre Restaurant, Old Port Candy & Sweets, My Cottage, the Seaside Convenience Store, the Old Port Dairy Bar, the Oasis, Sculler's Restaurant, the Jail House Café, the Lions Tavern, Cooke's Cycle, and the Motor Vessel (MV) Dalhousie Princess. ■

## Ripley's

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

exhibits, showcase colourful species from around the world, and take visitors on a journey through the evolution of the Canadian Seas and the Ancient Savage Sea to present day in a unique, entertaining way. One of the main attractions will be the Greenland sharks, one of the largest predatory sharks in the world.

The aquarium combines technology from the themed entertainment industry with lighting, music, and viewer-friendly design to create a one-of-a-kind aquarium experience. One of the spectacular exhibits is an acrylic tunnel under a four-million litre (one-million gallon) aquatic habitat featuring a moving walkway that transports visitors through multiple marine exhibits, highlighting a wide variety of sharks, eels and hundreds of brightly coloured tropical fish.

Ripley's commitment to conservation and education will also be a key element of the facility. Ripley's Aquarium of Canada will house opportunities ranging from an interactive Discovery Centre where visitors can explore fun and interesting facts about the mysterious underwater world to classrooms, a wet lab, and both public- and curriculum-based educational programs for all ages. ■

## Entertainment

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

transcend cultural barriers and incorporate mask, mime, puppetry and music.

The Niagara Symphony and Brock University formed a strategic partnership in 1999 that is the first partnership of its kind in Canada. Now in its 56<sup>th</sup> season, NSO covers an array of musical expressions.

Other popular Niagara live theatre experiences include a Oh Canada Eh? Dinner Theatre and Gypsy Theatre in Fort Erie. Oh Canada Eh? provides a unique evening of Canadian food and entertainment. Since 1994, the company has offered more than 2,100 musical comedy performances in celebration of the country. Gypsy has a diverse play bill running through the summer season. ■

## Casino

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

- ▶ 4,500 square metres of conference space;
- ▶ A 1,350-square-metre full-service health spa;
- ▶ A shopping Galleria;
- ▶ An arts centre, with 1,500 seats.

The new casino is part of an overall strategy to encourage more development in the Niagara region as it is transformed into a year-round tourist destination which will expand on the existing tourist base and increase visitors' length of stay. It is estimated that the new casino will spur the development of 30 new projects worth \$2 billion in the Niagara area. The Niagara Fallsview Resort will employ approximately 5,500 people. ■

**NIAGARA**  
ECONOMIC & TOURISM  
CORPORATION  
2201 St. Davids Road, P.O. Box 1042  
Thorold, Ontario Canada L2V 4T7  
T. 905.685.1308  
E. info@niagaracanada.com  
www.niagaracanada.com