

COOL CANADA



FOUR SEASONS RESORT WHISTLER

HOME OF THE 2010 WINTER OLYMPICS, TORONTO FILM FESTIVAL & CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

BY NORAH LAWLOR

Some may say my Canadian background and having repped some of these mentioned hotspots gives me an edge. Celebrated for its year-round natural beauty, Canada is the perfect site for a weekend holiday. Surprised? Don't be—Canada's scenic, versatile cities are home to the world's finest in dining, shopping, and luxury—not to mention home to the upcoming 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver and Whistler, and the Toronto Film Festival. All this and more—right in our backyard. Here's the scoop on Canada's hottest cities. There is something for everyone, look and decide for yourself:

WHISTLER

One of the sites of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, Whistler is known around the world as North America's largest ski area. Experience Whistler before the rest of the world does.

Where to stay: FOUR SEASONS RESORT WHISTLER—Situated at the base of Blackcomb Mountain, Four Seasons Resort Whistler is on the cutting edge of service excellence, whether quiet solitude amid nature's majesty or hair-raising extreme sports atop a glacier. The hotel's 273 rooms, including 95 suites, are spacious and have a luxurious modern, yet rustic feel. Designed for comfort, guest rooms feature deep-soaking tubs in the bathroom. (www.fourseasons.com/whistler) Or, for the travelers looking for the boutique hotel experience, there's always Adara Hotel (www.adarahotel.com).

Restaurants: ARAXI (www.araxi.com) - TRATTORIA DI UMBERTO (www.hotelvilladelia.com/restaurant_trattoria.cfm) - SUSHI VILLAGE (www.sushivillage.com)

MONT TREMBLANT

Mont Tremblant has consistently been voted the "Best Resort" by Ski Canada Magazine. During the warmer days, travelers can take advantage of the four award-winning golf courses, or breathtaking views on the hiking paths.

Where to stay: HOTEL QUINTESSANCE—Canada's best kept secret, this five-star hotel exudes extravagance while managing to fly under the radar. The hotel's Sans Sabots Spa is reason alone to visit. The 30 elegant, estate-sized suites feature individual terraces, oversized washrooms with therapeutic spa bathtubs, and wood-burning fireplaces to create a warm, inviting ambiance. (www.hotelquintessence.com)

Restaurants: LA QUINTESSANCE RESTAURANT & WINEBAR (www.hotelquintessence.com/en/restaurant.php) - PATRICK BERMAND (www.patrickbermand.com) - LA PETITE CACHEE (www.petitecachee.com)



HOTEL QUINTESSANCE

QUEBEC CITY

This historic city offers a blend of past and present, set against the beautiful St. Lawrence River. Quebec City exudes romantic European charm.

Where to stay: AUBERGE SAINT-ANTOINE—This hotel has been included as one of Travel + Leisure's Top 100 Best Hotels on the planet. Retreat to one of 95 luxurious rooms of elegance, culture, and history. (www.saint-antoine.com)

Restaurants: PANACHE (www.saint-antoine.com) - INITIALE (www.restaurantinitiale.com) - RESTAURANT TOAST (www.restauranttoast.com)



AUBERGE SAINT-ANTOINE

MONTREAL

With a charm that matches Old Europe, Montreal offers the finest in dining, architectural innovation and historic grandeur—located less than an hour's flying time from New York City, it is the ideal escape when Paris is not an option. Guy Laliberté has made the city legendary, with Cirque du Soleil. From the streets of Saint-Michel, to the lights of Las Vegas, the world-famous spectacular is a rags-to-billions story, with the spotlight on Montreal.

Where to stay: OPUS HOTEL MONTREAL—Blending modern design with a nod to history, Opus Montreal provides a brilliantly chic and one-of-a-kind boutique experience. Comprising two distinct sections, Opus Montreal's 136 guestrooms and suites are uniquely stylish, blending a sleek aesthetic with modern technology and luxurious comfort. The

opulence does not stop there, as Opus offers twice daily housekeeping service, full room service, a complimentary morning newspaper and a 24-hour reception desk. (www.opushotel.com/montreal)

Restaurants: KOKO RESTAURANT & BAR (www.kokomontreal.com) LA QUEUE DE CHEVAL (www.queuedecheval.com) - BUONA NOTTE (www.buonanotte.com)

TORONTO

According to studies on globalization, Toronto ranks as the world's fourth best city to experience culture, behind only London, Paris and New York. Toronto boasts the world's best in live theatre, world class attractions, festivals, and fine dining. Take part in the famed Toronto International Film Festival from September 10-19, 2009.

Where to stay: THE HAZELTON HOTEL—This property is Toronto's most exclusive, luxurious hotel, setting a new standard for elegance in style, detail and service. The Hazelton Hotel features a unique mix of stunning rooms, sensational art collection, private screening room, and world-class cuisine at One restaurant, by chef Mark McEwan. The Hazelton Hotel is only one of two five-star hotels in Toronto. (www.thehazeltonhotel.com)

Restaurants: ONE (www.onehazelton.com) - SOTTO SOTTO (www.sottosotto.ca) - HARBOUR SIXTY STEAK HOUSE (www.harboursixty.com)

VANCOUVER

Also host city of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, Vancouver is an exciting destination, voted the "Best City in the Americas" for 2004, 2005, and 2006 by Condé Nast Traveler magazine. Vancouver is one of the most visually breathtaking cities in the world - majestic mountains, the ocean, rainforests, and beautiful autumnal foliage make a Vancouver getaway picturesque.

Where to stay: SHANGRI-LA—The legendary chain of hotels, Shangri-La, arrived in North America with the opening of Shangri-La Hotel, Vancouver. Located in vibrant downtown Vancouver, this luxury hotel occupies the first fifteen floors of the tallest building in the city. The opulent guestrooms and suites are decorated in a contemporary Asian style, with many rooms featuring private balconies and stunning views of the city. Visitors can enjoy personalized spa treatments at CHI, or experience fine dining with the hotel's signature restaurant, MARKET, by chef Jean-Georges. (www.shangri-la.com/en/property/vancouver/shangrila)

Restaurants: ELIXIR at the Opus Hotel Vancouver (www.elixirvancouver.ca/accolades.php) - BLUE WATER CAFE (www.bluewatercafe.net) - UMBERTO (www.hotelvilladelia.com/restaurant_umbertos.cfm)



HOTEL SHANGRI-LA