



## The Toronto Star (Metro)

Order/Commande

54918

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### TRAVEL ADVISORY

## Wine lovers can go to extremes in Niagara-on-the-Lake

**GREG COATES**  
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Niagara-on-the-Lake's Peller Estates is hosting three weekend "boot camps" for wine lovers, with everything from blind tastings and barrel samplings to vineyard lunches and a firsthand experience of what it's like to walk in the boots of winemaker Lawrence Buhler.

Hosted by *The Wine Enthusiasts* — Angela Aiello and Paxton Allewell — Extreme Wine Weekends are being offered June 28-29, July 19-20 and Aug. 2-3. The price (excluding accommodation) is \$550. Space is limited to 24 people per weekend.

Special hotel rates of \$275 (plus taxes) per night are available at Queen's Landing for Friday, Saturday and Sunday night stays (call 1-888-669-5566 and let them know

you're a Peller Estates Wine Club member).

The \$550 price includes tasting journal, transportation to and from Queen's Landing, two lunches and a six-course Year in the Vineyard dinner.

Throughout the weekend guests will engage in a variety of intensive wine-training sessions. During Vineyard Viticulture 101, guests will don their boots for a tramp into Peller Estates' vineyard to learn how to prune shoots, train the vines and cut back the leaf canopy. The Barrel tasting takes guests to Buhler's private realm, the Cellar House, to sample the most recent vintages directly from the barrel. Test the difference between American and French oak and find out what a "Wine Thief" and "toasting"

arc.

For details, call 1-888-673-5537 or visit [www.peller.com](http://www.peller.com)

**SAILING FROM BALTIMORE:** Carnival Cruise Lines will launch the first year-round cruise program from the port of Baltimore in the fall of 2009 with seven-day cruises aboard the 2,124-passenger Carnival Pride.

The program kicks off Sept. 13 and encompasses two week-long itineraries departing Sundays from the historic Maryland port.

Exotic Eastern Caribbean departures will call at Grand Turk, Turks & Caicos; the private Bahamian island of Half Moon Cay; and Freeport, The Bahamas; while Bahamas/Florida departures visit Port Canaveral, Fla.; and Nassau and

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# New Year's snow means flurry of free vacations

### ADVISORY from T12

Freeport, Bahamas. See [www.carnival.com](http://www.carnival.com).

**LET IT SNOW:** itravel2000 has brought back its Let It Snow program that will again have Canadians tuning in to the weather forecasts for New Year's Day. The program will give out a free winter vacation if more than five inches of snow fall on Jan. 1, 2009. To be eligible, vacations must be booked between June 17 and Oct. 19, for departures between Nov. 1 and April 30, 2009.

Thousands of Canadians entered last year. Participants in Quebec won free trips while Torontonians missed out by about an inch. For more information, see [www.itravel2000.com](http://www.itravel2000.com)

**EXPO SAVINGS:** Eurail Pass holders in Spain will be entitled to a 12 per cent discount on the entrance fee to Expo 2008 in Zaragoza through Sept. 14. The Expo venue is easily accessible by rail, situated within walking distance of the new Zaragoza Delicias station. Rail connections to Zaragoza are convenient with direct high-speed AVE trains from Madrid making the trip in under 1½ hours. Barcelona is

less than two hours away. See [www.Eurail.com](http://www.Eurail.com).

**ALOFT MONTREAL OPEN:** Starwood Hotels' new "lifestyle brand" aloft hotels has opened the first of what's expected to be at least 88 international properties, the 136-room aloft Montreal Airport at Trudeau International Airport. Aloft is meant to offer "a total sensory experience" with loft-like units, platform beds, and the most high-tech room amenities. See [www.alofthotels.com](http://www.alofthotels.com).

**PHILLY FUN:** More than a dozen hotels in Philadelphia have teamed up to offer visitors "The Philly's More Summer Fun Hotel Package," available through Sept. 7. Packages can be booked at [www.gophila.com/summerfun](http://www.gophila.com/summerfun) and each comes with a \$50 (U.S.) American Express gift card.

**DOUBLE MILES:** Through Sept. 4, Wyndham Rewards members can earn double Acroplan Miles on up to four stays at participating Days Inn locations or Wyndham Worldwide family of hotels in Canada and the United States.

Members will receive four Aero-

plan Miles for every \$1 (U.S.), instead of the usual two. For further details, call 1-866-996-7937 or visit [www.wyndhamrewards.com](http://www.wyndhamrewards.com).

**FOUR DIAMONDS:** American Automobile Association (AAA) and Canada Select have recognized British Columbia's The Westin Bear Mountain Victoria Golf Resort and Spa with the Four Diamond Award and Five Star Canada Select Resort Award, respectively. Nearly 31,000 hotels and resorts across North America are approved by the AAA and CAA, but less than four per cent are recognized with this prestigious distinction. See [www.bearmountain.ca](http://www.bearmountain.ca).

**DID YOU KNOW?** SouthBridge, Arizona's new \$41 million (U.S.) urban development along the south bank of downtown Scottsdale's ancient irrigation canal system, is a shoppers' paradise boasting more than 25 high-end independent boutique shops in four separate buildings.

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