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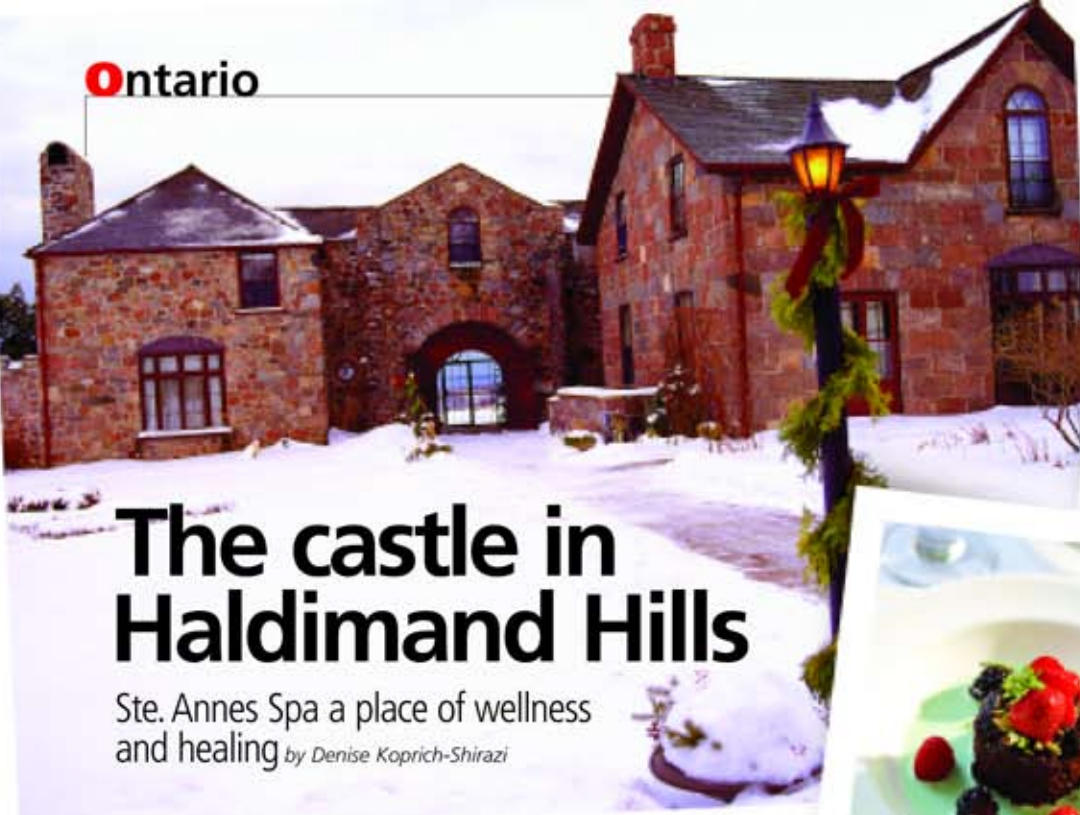
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The castle in Haldimand Hills

Ste. Annes Spa a place of wellness and healing *by Denise Koprich-Shirazi*



There was a time when we were nourished only by natural gifts from the earth. Our ailments were healed with natural elixirs and perfume was made of rose petals and herbs. Our homes were not polluted with the sounds of phones and televisions and were lit only by candlelight.

Today, there is a place tucked away in Haldimand Hills, where you can go and experience everything natural. It is an eco-friendly destination, which has spring water flowing from all the taps.

This castle, which overlooks Lake Ontario with 570 acres of forested, rolling hills, is a refuge where you can escape, de-stress, and be treated like royalty. This heavenly place is Ste Anne's Spa.

Ste Anne's is a place of wellness and healing. The staff tends to your body, mind, and soul. From the moment you arrive and slip into your cozy terry cloth robe, the healing begins and the staff nurtures all that ails you. The quest for balance in our lives, stress reduction, and relaxation can all begin with your very first treatment.

Vanessa Lee, Ste Anne's Wellness Co-ordinator, offers wellness sessions, yoga classes, meditation, and forest walks which are all geared to relaxing the mind and encouraging the body to connect with the spirit. During my visit, I chose the forest walk and immediately felt the damage caused by the pressures of the daily

grind easing away.

During my stay at Ste. Anne's I was treated to delicious, well balanced meals. I finished my main meal with a piece of decadent dark chocolate pie and did so without guilt or feeling that I had overindulged. The meals at Ste. Anne's are an essential part of your treatment, as food not only shapes our bodies, it affects our mind and spirit, as well. In the dining room the dress code is your casual best or your cosy robe. This allowed me to enjoy my meals in pure relaxed comfort.

Ste. Anne's Executive Chef, Christopher Ennew, understands the phrase, "you are what you eat" all too well. Chef Christopher Ennew uses only the freshest ingredients available when preparing the delicious meals for guests and their family or friends.

The spa experience was quite different from what I expected. The treatments offered at Ste Anne's are all natural and holistic. The "Aroma Stone" massage was the first service of my day, which began with selecting fragrant oil that appealed to me. The Aroma Stone massage is a combination massage of essential oils and hot basalt stones. This full body massage loosened and stretched my muscles while gently massaging away tension and stress. Adding to the relaxing ambience was soft music and gentle light that took me away completely.



I also indulged in the very popular "Vinotherapy Treatment". This treatment begins with a full body application of Moscato Mousse. Following the mousse application you are wrapped in warm towels to ensure full absorption of the product while you experience a refreshing minifacial infused with the aromas of Chardonnay and Chianti. This was the perfect end to a full spa day.

I cannot talk about healing or the full "Ste. Anne's experience" without mentioning Ste. Anne's secret weapon, the Reverend Edward Cachia. This smiley, warm chaplain will be the first person to greet you if you arrive at Ste. Anne's via the train. At any point during your stay if you feel you need a listening ear and a non-judgmental heart, the Reverend has time for you. There is a sense of warmth about the Reverend that is truly comforting and just having a brief chat brought a smile to my face and warmed my heart.

The owner Jim Corcoran and Ste. Anne's Innkeeper Nancy Corcoran are passionate about their Country Inn and Spa. Their passion shines through in all their staff as they care for each of their guests during their stay.

In this day and age we all find ourselves busy with the mad rush of life. It is not often that we take a moment to tend to ourselves. Whether you are celebrating romance or overcoming difficulty in your life, there is a fieldstone castle in Haldimand Hills, with a caring group of healing hands, ready to tend to the needs of all who walk through its doors.