

WINTER WONDERLAND

Whether it's coasting on champagne powder or sipping chilled champagne, here are five Ontario destinations that make for a dreamy winter escape

Written By Jennifer Cheng



◀ HOCKLEY VALLEY RESORT TOWN OF MONO



In 1985, Hockley Valley Resort began as a 28-room hotel located in some of Ontario's most picturesque countryside, one hour away from downtown Toronto. The lodging, which has since grown to 104 luxury rooms and suites, is now a foodie haven with three restaurants, all offering fresh fare sourced from its gardens on-site. The resort touts 15 ski/snowboard runs, an 8,000-square-foot spa and indoor-outdoor pools, among other amenities. www.hockley.com

ACTIVITIES	Snowshoeing, skating, skiing, snowboarding
HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES	Princess manicures and twinkle toes, movie nights, face painting, balloon making, T-shirt art, magic show, pottery party, Zoo to You
PRICES	Accommodation, from \$212 a night; single-day lift tickets, \$47; Ski & Stay offer, starting Jan. 1, 2015, \$119 a night; average daily food budget, \$120

▲ THE WESTIN TRILLIUM HOUSE BLUE MOUNTAIN



People-watching is all the better at 42 kilometres an hour. Westin Trillium boasts Ontario's first mountain coaster, affording majestic views of Georgian Bay or skiers tackling the slopes of the Niagara Escarpment. And the lodging? A wellness haven of dark wood furnishings, touches of natural stone and gas fireplaces in all 224 rooms. Guests also won't want to miss Oliver & Bonacini Café Grill's urban-meets-country charm fare. Nearby, spa-goers will rejoice in the Scandinave Spa and year-round Plunge! Aquatic Centre (think indoor-outdoor pools, hot tubs, slides, rope swings). Oh, and New Balance apparel and athletic shoes are available to rent for just \$5. www.westinbluemountain.com

ACTIVITIES On-site skiing, snowboarding, skating, snowshoeing; off-site snowmobiling, tobogganing, caving (\$70 per person)

HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES Horse and carriage rides, candy cane scavenger hunts, carols

PRICES Accommodation, from \$249 a night; single day/night lift tickets, \$55 for kids, \$74 for adults; current ski offer from \$299 a night for accommodation and lift ticket



▲ ALGONQUIN LOG CABIN ALGONQUIN PARK



Want to unplug from the hustle and bustle of the city? The Algonquin Log Cabin, listed as a Canadian Tourism Commission Signature Experience in 2013, transports guests back in time with the ultimate wilderness retreat — sans electricity. While living off the grid, guests can indulge in a wood-fired sauna cabin and hot shower by the lake, a library, home-cooked Canadian feasts and other charming amenities. Downsides? Be prepared for running cold water in the two bathrooms. C'est la simple vie. The four-day Christmas adventure comes with homemade eggnog, stockings and champagne brunch. www.voyageurquest.com

ACTIVITIES Dogsledding, snowshoeing, backcountry skiing, skating

PRICES The cabin sleeps 12, \$644 for three nights; all meals and winter sports included

▼ THE ROSSEAU MUSKOKA



As Canada's first JW Marriot Resort & Spa, the Rosseau is oh-so chalet chic. Stone fireplaces are ablaze, pine cone and oak leaf light fixtures adorn the walls. A common refrain? "I could live here!" From a breakfast buffet to a dinner bistro, guests will find the food at the resort to be both delish and diverse. And while the nearest ski hills — say, Hidden Valley — are an hour away, sports abound. At sunrise, the resort offers hatha yoga; after dark, a 45-minute guided hike under the stars. "It's nature on your terms," the staff says. Yep, that captures the Rosseau experience. www.therosseau.com

ACTIVITIES On-site: skating, snowshoeing, tobogganing (all included in resort fee); dogsledding (\$75 for adults, \$60 for kids); ice fishing from \$45; off-site snowmobiling from \$299

HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES Christmas carols, fireplace fables, movie nights, scavenger hunts

PRICES Accommodation, from \$179 a night + \$29 resort fee; average daily food budget, \$80



▲ DEERHURST RESORT HUNTSVILLE



Since 1896, Deerhurst Resort has been known for Canada's longest running musical variety show, where country star Shania Twain's career took off. It's also the host of storied events (most notably, the G8 summit in 2010) and home to Muskoka's original Sunday brunch. The resort—a founding Savour Muskoka partner—has two winter restaurants serving locally inspired cuisine. The main pavilion, with its stonework and wood beams, evokes the rugged natural beauty of the idyllic lakeside surroundings. For downhill skiing and snowboarding, you'll have to visit Deerhurst's neighbour Hidden Valley, but its roster of on-site activities is impressively extensive. www.deerhurstresort.com

ACTIVITIES Cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, skating, indoor rock climbing, snowmobiling, hockey, dogsledding, sleigh rides

HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES Giant indoor holiday playzone with inflatables, movie nights

PRICES Accommodation, from \$139 a night + resort fee from \$29.95 (covers skating, skiing and snowshoeing); Shizen spa facial, \$70-\$195; average daily budget, \$80

