

CANDACE WEST

The Detroit skyline serves as a background to the lights of a Windsor street by night.

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

OK, OK, we all know what Windsor is known for. Yeh, yeh, so it would almost be impossible to avoid the naked truth about why people flock over the bridge and through the tunnel with mouths watering to partake in such sinful delights. Those soft and warm beauties... why it's the apple muffins of course.

MUFFINS
Yes, the muffins. For some reason, the muffins they serve at the numerous coffee shops around Windsor are par excellence.

Grandma's baked goods couldn't hold a candle to these scrumptious morsels of delight. Apple, blueberry, raisin and chocolate chip; you name it, they have it. And nothing goes finer with a cup of coffee after a night on the town than one of these babies.

But baked goods are only one of many things to be experienced in the quaint city of Windsor, our Canadian friend. There's an abundance of restaurants to eat at, stores to shop at, and things to see and do.

Before we go over to Canada, though, there's a little quiz you should take.

Question No. 1: When entering the country the customs guard asks if you're carrying any firearms with you. You tell him with a straight face:

- a. "Yeh, Mack, I have a Sherman tank in my trunk, a grenade launcher in my back seat and four M-16s in my glove compartment. What's it to you?"
- b. "No, but I hear there's a sale on bazookas at Eaton's. I think I'll bring back a dozen."
- c. "No sir."

Question 2: John G. Diefenbaker is:

- a. A baker at Tim Horton Doughnuts.
- b. A defenseman with the Windsor Spitfires.
- c. A former Canadian prime minister.

Question 3: A kilometer is:

- a. Someone who goes around destroying parking meters on Ouellette Avenue.
- b. A Canadian cousin of the caterpillar.
- c. 62 of a mile.

IF YOU answered C to all the above, it's time to see Windsor. If you didn't, well, Toledo, Ohio, is still a great place to spend a day.

First, there are a few tips before you leave. It's wise to get your money exchanged before you head over.

"Most of the charter banks around here don't accept \$50 and \$100 (U.S.) bills unless you have an account at the branch," said Paul McLean, operations manager at Bank of Commerce in Windsor. "Once in awhile, we do run into a problem where a Michigan resident has large bills and the stores and the banks won't take them."

This process involves going down to the bank and plunking down some hard-earned George Washington dollar bills. In return, you'll receive something colorful resembling Monopoly money. Don't panic. It's real. The exchange rates vary daily, depending on how the Free Trade talks between the U.S. and Canada are going.

ANOTHER THING, gas up before you go. It seems petro runs a little high in Canada.

Plus, they sell gasoline by the litre.

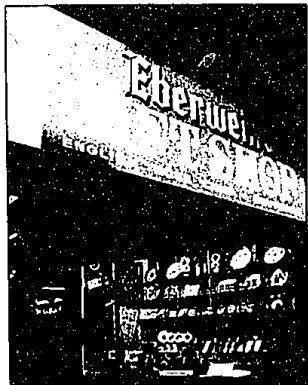
"The average fill up is 48 to 60 litres," said Mike Gilligan of Gilligan's Esso Service Station on Huron Street, near the bridge. "If you buy 57.2 litres at 46.3 cents a litre... it comes up to \$2.10 a gallon Canadian or \$1.75 U.S."

Whether you take the bridge or tunnel is a matter of personal preference. If you're claustrophobic, take the bridge. If you're afraid of heights, take the tunnel.

You should carry proper identification such as a birth certificate and a driver's license when entering Canada. And whatever you do, don't smart off to the customs official on the other side. They're not particularly known for their sense of humor.

"We deal with it 24 hours a day, 365 days a year," said Tom Jobin, a supervisor at Canadian Customs at the tunnel entrance in Windsor. "We get some people who think they can come up with a wise crack line.

WINDSOR



There is no shortage of shops south of the border.

Fuel up here,
then head
south for
foreign flavors



Restaurants are waiting in Windsor for Michigan visitors.

We've heard it all before."

WHEN DRIVING through Windsor, it's also important to know some of the different traffic laws. Most importantly, the seatbelt laws are strictly enforced there.

Also, the speed limits are posted in kilometers, not miles.

"A lot of times, they see a sign which says 60 and they go 60," said Sergeant Edward Jee of the Windsor Police Traffic Division. "But they're going 60 miles in a 40-mile zone."

"It's even worse on the 401 (Highway) where it's 100 kilometers. Sometimes we wonder if they're going to reach 100 miles because they're going so fast."

Another thing is that the traffic lights are on the opposite end of the intersection. So people who pull right up to the light usually look like dolls parked smack dab in the intersection.

With that out of the way, let's eat. There's so many top-notch eateries to mention them all. Here's only a few suggestions:

- Wong's Eatery, University Drive, is rated one of the top restaurants in Canada, specializing in Cantonese food. For reservations, call (519) 252-8814.
- Tunnel Barbeque, near the tunnel, is also rated as one of top restaurants in Windsor.
- Milano, 1520 Tecumseh Road, is one of many fine Italian restaurants in Windsor. They specialize in veal, steak and seafood dishes. For reservations, call 962-9558 (Detroit number).
- Sir William's, 650 Ouellette, serves up both steak and seafood. The specialty of the house is prime rib. They also have a piano bar. For reservations, call (519) 254-5119.
- Tim Horton Doughnuts, various locations in Windsor. Again, just can't say enough about those muffins. The coffee is pretty good, too.

Want to shop? Here's a few places to go:

- Ouellette Avenue Mall, downtown, is dotted with specialty shops where you can buy furs, linens, woolens, gold jewelry and china.
- Devonshire Mall, Howard Avenue, off EC Row Expressway, is the biggest indoor shopping facility in Windsor with department stores (like Eaton's), fashion stores and specialty shops.
- University Mall, Tecumseh and Huron Church roads, is another indoor mall with a slew of department stores and restaurants.
- Ottawa Street Mall, specialty shops, department stores and restaurants fill this several block-long area in Windsor's oldest shopping district.

Want to see some sights? Here's a few places to see and things to do:

- Hiram Walker Historical Museum, 254 Pitt St., is a former private residence known as the Francola Baby House and features a variety of special exhibits. It is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday and Saturday and from 2-5 p.m. Sunday. Admission is free.
- Art Gallery of Windsor, 455 Riverside Dr. West, has selected works from private Windsor collections. For more information, call 258-7111.
- Windsor Raceway, on Highway 18, six miles south of Windsor, has harness racing Tuesday nights and Friday through Sunday evenings from October to June. For more information, call 981-9245 (Detroit number).
- Windsor Compuware Spitfires, Windsor Arena, Wyandotte and McDougall, provide a fast-paced, hard hitting brand of hockey and feature future National Hockey League stars like Adam Graves and Darin Shannon. The Spitfires' season runs from October to March. For ticket information, call 962-8282 (Detroit number).
- University Players, University of Windsor, are in the midst of their 1987/88 season at Essex Hall Theatre. Mark Medoff's "Children of a Lesser God" will be playing Thursday, Dec. 10, through Sunday, Dec. 13. For ticket information, call (519) 253-4665.

Had enough? Remember if you've been in Windsor less than 24 hours, you're only allowed to bring back \$25 worth of merchandise into the U.S. For more information, call U.S. Customs at 226-3138 or 226-3187.