

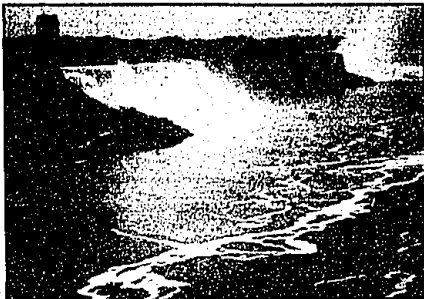
TRAVEL

Family will enjoy trip to falls

BY SANDRA DALKA-PRYBY
SPECIAL WRITER

"Spontaneity" might be good for some things, but not for travel. That's what I, my husband and children discovered on our recent getaway to Niagara Falls.

It started with a "spontaneous" idea (by some "naïve" family member) of going to Niagara Falls for an overnight mini-vacation. After all, it was only five hours away (approximately 250 miles) and this popular tourist attraction offered a wealth of activities for a family of five including three children ages 11, 13 and 16. Although Andrew, 15 said that "looking at a whole lot of water wasn't his idea of a good time."



SANDRA DALKA-PRYBY

Wondrous sight: The majestic Niagara Falls overshadow the Maid of the Mist boats.

Undaunted by mixed opinions and emotions, the family packed the car and early one rainy Saturday afternoon took off for the Canadian side to experience what has been labeled "a natural wonder, mesmerizing travelers from around the world."

We did leave without reservations, but, according to friends, "that shouldn't be a problem, because there are hundreds of motel/hotel rooms at and around Niagara Falls." Also, we left without trading our American currency for Canadian funds at a bank or the border to get the best exchange rate — something our friends did advise!

The first part of our journey — from Windsor to London, Ontario, was fairly dull. The only sites were vast stretches of farmland. It wasn't until we reached the city of Hamilton and the Hamilton Harbour that both the views and the weather improved. Brief glimpses, first of hills, then of Lake Ontario and finally of wine vineyards, made the journey more pleasant along Q.E.W. (Queen Elizabeth Way).

It was on the final leg of our journey that we discovered our first mistake. We stopped for dinner and gas at a place with the uncreative name of "Stop 50." (It was right at Exit 50.)

The menu selections at this

musty-smelling restaurant were varied, but also very expensive. "That's OK," we thought. "With the 35-40 percent exchange rate, the prices will be much lower."

We were wrong! This place gave only 10 percent on our American dollars, so the \$6 BLT sandwich (fries extra) was \$5.40. And our \$40 bill was not \$24 to \$26 as we expected, but a whopping \$36.

We sure learned a lesson! The lessons: If you don't exchange your currency (a MUST!), at least ask what percentage the establishment is giving on American dollars! If it's not good, leave!

Had we made reservations, we could have stayed close to the falls, at reasonable rates, and at one of the lodgings offering such family features as indoor pools and game rooms. (Fall rates range from \$28 to \$190 for two persons, two beds, with a minimal or no charge for children.)

After eight hours and more than 100 miles searching for a room, any room, we arrived at the Niagara Falls (Ontario) Parks Police station. It was 3:30 a.m. We were desperate and exhausted.

The officer on duty offered a solution. We could park on the circular drive in front of the building and sleep in our car. It was the only option left, and we took it.

The next morning we discovered we had one of the best views in this tourist town. We overlooked the falls on one side, and a lovely garden, with washrooms, was just feet away on the other side. Also, we were parked in a bona fide parking space, a rarity in the main tourist areas.

After washing up and changing clothes, this "homeless" family began what turned out to be one of the best vacation days ever.

Seeing the falls

The falls, we discovered, are

truly spectacular. Even Andrew enjoyed watching "a whole lot of water" crash into Niagara River from heights of 177 (Canadian Horseshoe Falls) and 184 feet (American Falls).

We saw the falls from the top, from the Canadian side and from the American side and, best of all, from a Maid of the Mist boat at the bottom of the falls.

Covered in vibrant blue hooded raincoats (provided), we traveled so close to the falls that the deafening roar and the spraying water made us realize how truly awe-inspiring and powerful this water flow is. (Maid of the Mist continues its operation through October 24.)

Other views of the falls can be obtained from such attractions as the Niagara Spanish Aero Car, an aerial cable car that travels over a spectacular whirpool (open until the end of November), and Journey behind the Falls, which, like its name, takes you behind the falls to observe the full force of the falls (open all year).

Also, on the New York side, Goat Island offers spectacular views from the edges of both falls, and the Cave of the Winds trip (Goat Island) takes visitors on wooden walkways to within 25 feet of the base of the falls (open through October 31).

Viewing the falls is just a small part of the Niagara experience. The area offers a menagerie of other attractions, many of which were enjoyed by the Pryby children.

Tourist attractions

Dazzleland, a family fun center with arcade and video games, was among our favorite hangouts. This attraction is on Clifton Hill Street, which also sports such amusements as Louis Tussaud's Wax works and Movieland Wax Museum, Guinness World of Records, Ripley's It or Not, the Magical Houdini Hall of Fame and the Adventure Dome.

Anyway, we eventually arrived home with lots of memories. "It wasn't what we expected, but "a wonderful time was had by all!"



ART ON THE TOWN

Arts and Crafts Fair

NOVI TOWN CENTER

NOVI ROAD (just look for the tent!)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Call 810-347-0400 for information

Novi Parks and Recreation Presented by Novi Community Education



Admission: Adults \$5.00, Children \$2.50, Under 10, Manager

NIGHT SCHOOL

ARMY AT DUKE

TONIGHT 7:56 ET

CHANNEL 31

MetroVision

MORE THAN JUST TELEVISION

OAKLAND

553-7300

REDFORD
538-1313

LIVONIA
422-3200

ESPN THURSDAY NIGHT CFA FOOTBALL

SATURDAY NIGHT



JULIO CESAR
CHAVEZ
VS.
MELDRICK
TAYLOR

WBC SUPERLIGHTWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP

PLUS 2 MORE WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHTS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 AT 9 P.M.
FROM THE MGM GRAND, LAS VEGAS

Channel 44

'29" Advance

'34" Day of Event

To order call

1-800-379-8080

MetroVision

CARD SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.

Tailor Balli's
Alterations
For Ladies & Men
473-1363

Bloomfield DECOR, INC.
FAUX FINISH & STENCILING CLASSES
FULL LINE OF SUPPLIES
626-0609
4185 ORCHARD LAKE RD.
SUITE 100, BURLINGTON

YEAR-END COLEMAN SPA MODEL CLEARANCE SALE



Experience the peace and tranquility of the night from your own Coleman spa. For a limited time only, take advantage of 90 Days with No Down, No Interest and No Payments! Relaxation has never been more affordable! Visit Cornwell Pool & Patio today and Ease into Coleman Comfort tonight!

Coleman

On approved credit. Offer expires December 31, 1994.
• No Down Payment • Free Spa Cover
• No Interest for 90 Days • Free Chemical Kit
• No Payments for 90 Days • Free Delivery

CORNWELL POOL & PATIO
Ann Arbor
3500 Pontiac Trail
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
313/862-3117

• Spa & Tube
• Accessories
• More

Plymouth
874 W. Ann Arbor Rd.
Plymouth, MI 48170
313/459-7410

Two Great Locations:
Store Hours: Mon., Tue., Thur. & Fri. 10-6 • Sat. 10-4 • Closed Sun. & Wed.