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Feb. 2, 1993

Dear Sirs / Madame :

I hope you like my story. My husband and I had a wonderful honeymoon visiting Eastern Canada. The Niagara region truly is beautiful and so peaceful. We do hope we can return again one day.

Thank you for the opportunity for us to share our memories.

Sincerely,
Pam McCarten

1991

THE HONEYMOON

Niagara Falls only a couple of hours drive out of Toronto? Really! So close, we'll have to go won't we, being in that part of the country? Yes? Oh my god, how exciting!

As a Canadian, I'm ashamed of my limited knowledge of our country's geography. As a resident of B.C. and then Alberta, having travelled no further east than Calgary, it was understandable.

How fortunate could a person get? Here I was about to marry the most wonderful man in the world and embark on a dream honeymoon. Our prime destination, one of Canada's jewels, P.E.I., a four day stop in Toronto and now our itinerary included a trip to the honeymoon capital of Canada, Niagara Falls. I could hardly believe it, I was going to experience all those great "Canadian" things - Anne of Green Gables, see and touch one of the Great Lakes, walk through the Maple Leaf Gardens, home of the Toronto Maple Leafs, the best hockey team as far as I'm concerned, tour the Muskoka country and hear the roar of Niagara Falls. I was as excited as any kid would be.

Thursday, August 8th, 1991, one of those sunny/cloudy days as we drove down the Queen Elizabeth Way to Niagara. A very interesting trip. The different cities all seem to run together along the highway, like one big continuous populated area. Out west you travel for long stretches before a town or city appears. Trivial to some people, fascinating to me, as I had never experienced this before. I learned B.C. wasn't the only place with lots of real trees and orchards that produced big, ripe, juicy peaches.

My goodness! It's the Welland Canal, I remember studying about this in school, now here I was watching a ship pass through the locks!

Finally we arrive at our destination, the Falls. The parking lot is huge and reminds me of one in Disneyland. They even have a people mover bus which takes you to different drop off areas of the park. Everything is green and lush and fresh. We head straight for the falls along the walkway which runs parallel to the river. As we get closer the roar gets louder and my excitement increases. It starts to drizzle warm, light rain ... no wait a minute ... that's not rain, you mean it's actually mist from the falls, this far away, amazing!

There they are!! What can I say, you've heard it all before, powerful, incredible, awesome. The smooth rush of the river suddenly disappearing over the rocky ledge dropping with such force and grace it totally mesmerizes me. I stood for a long time just staring, my mind working like a camera, stamping the picture forever in my memory. The cold green water tumbling and churning as it crashed into the earth far below creating a cloud of mist which drifted through the rock cliffs of the canyon displaying a myriad of rainbows. At the base of the Falls so far down, the tour boats looked like toys bobbing in the waves beneath the rushing water from a faucet in a bath tub. It was then I wished with all my heart that I was one of those great gifted writers or poets who could put into words how breathtaking the scene before me was, and how the feeling which encompasses you reaches your very soul and brings tears to your eyes. This was part of Canada, my country, this incredible product of nature, mine, ours. How can anyone not be proud to be Canadian?

Of course, we did the usual honeymoon activities. Rode the Maid of the Mist, strolled hand in hand through the beautiful gardens, licking an ice-cream along the way. Drove the length of the parkway down to the Sir Adam Beck Power Station. My husband had actually worked in the powerhouse in his engineering days and filled me in on its history. On to Queenston Heights and General Brock's Monument (whom my husband is named after) and then supper at a pub in Niagara-On-The-Lake. What a beautiful, quaint town. How I wish we had more time, to tour a famous winery, stay over at a country bed-and-breakfast, time to just drink in the beauty and history of the area. What a wonderful day!

I hope we'll return some day. After seeing this small portion of our country, I know my future holidays will be right here in exotic Canada. What next?....the northern lakes of Manitoba, the Yukon, the great maple sugar gathering in Quebec, the historic parliament buildings in Ottawa, the Grand Banks of Nova Scotia or perhaps the Gulf Islands?

Canada truly is a great country!!

Pam McCarten



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