

CONTRIBUTORS

This issue, we asked our contributors: What is your favourite outdoorsy winter activity that you've done on your travels?



ANNE BOKMA

COLD PLAY, PAGE 42

Anne traces her writing career back to age 11, when her parents presented her with a portable Olivetti manual typewriter for her birthday. She's been pounding at a keyboard ever since. A full-time freelance writer in Hamilton, Ont., Anne has been a journalist for more than 25 years and has written for most of Canada's major magazines and

newspapers. Her travel writing has been recognized with awards from the Travel Media Association of Canada and the North American Travel Journalists Association. In addition to her geographic travels, Anne has been on an experiential spiritual journey this year, which she writes about in her biweekly blog, *My Year of Living Spiritually*.

"While travelling on assignment in Winnipeg last year, I had the unique experience of doing a yoga class on a frozen lake at FortWhyte Alive during its first annual Fire and Ice Yoga Festival. Can you say snowvasana?"



MELANIE CHAMBERS

ESCAPE TO THE BERGS, PAGE 46

Climbing North Africa's highest peak, mountain bike racing in Israel and South Africa, Melanie craves movement—of all kind. Travelling to over 40 countries for almost 20 years, Melanie has produced adventure stories for markets, including *Outside Magazine*, *Air Canada*, *Canadian Geographic*, the *Toronto Star*, *Canadian Cycling* magazine, *The Globe and Mail*, and *Mountain*

Life. When she's not on the road, she teaches food and travel writing to wanderlusting undergraduates at Western University.

"I spent a Christmas in Norway and went dog sledding. Imagine: standing before the tiny platform, gripping the sled tightly, crashing through snowbanks on the corners, freezing cheeks looking out onto glaciers and neverending snow. It made me love winter."



MARGARET SWAINE

A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT, PAGE 36

Margaret Swaine has visited over 120 countries, writing about the good things in life, such as wine, spas, restaurants and fine hotels. She spent over two decades as the wine and drink columnist for both *Toronto Life* and *Chatelaine* magazines and 16 years writing features and columns for the *National Post*.

She has covered spas for *Best Health* magazine in her column "Paradise Home and Away," golf for *ScoreGolf* and *Fairways*, and the ski scene for *SkiPress*. Her current, bi-weekly column "Global Gourmet" for *Travel Industry Today* focuses on culinary travel.

"My favourite winter activity is downhill skiing, which I've done in Switzerland, Austria, France and Andorra, as well as in the Americas."



STEPHEN WEIR

DIVE IN (LITERALLY!), PAGE 62

Stephen Weir is a well-known Toronto communicator, author and active scuba diver. For 30 years he has been researching, watching and writing about the History of Diving in the Movies. Mr. Weir is the travel editor of *Diver Magazine* and has a blog on Huffington Post.

"My favourite things are always adventure-related: I was part of an expedition to travel from Alaska to Russia north of the Bering Straits. Got as far as Big Diomed Island when the Russian Navy sent us back!"

TravelLife



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A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT

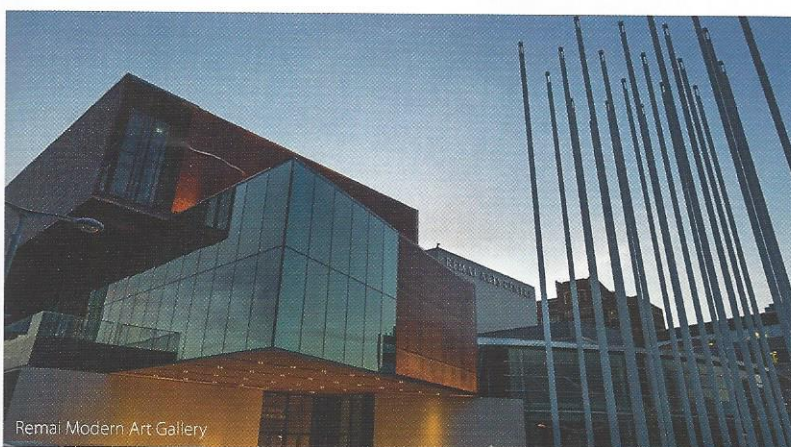
Saskatoon is alive with great restaurants, breweries, spirit makers, music venues, artisans and art

By Margaret Swaine

I have to admit, when friends asked me where I was heading to next and I responded with "Saskatoon," they sniggered. I'm on the road about every two or three weeks, and they were used to me naming somewhere exotic like Oman or exciting like Paris. However, their laughter was misguided. I had a ball in Saskatoon. I ate, drank and slept well, expanded my learning, and I even found some great retail therapy. Here are some recommendations for when you visit this vibrant city.

SEE

The Remai Modern (remainmodern.org), which had its grand opening on October 21, 2017, is arguably Canada's most stunningly beautiful art gallery, as well as the largest for modern art. I was blown away by its design and by the gorgeous vistas of the South Saskatchewan River and city, seen through floor-



to-ceiling windows on cantilevered sections. Designed by Bruce Kuwabara, of the renowned Canadian architectural firm KPMB, the museum was winning awards even before construction began.

It houses the world's largest Pablo Picasso linocut collection and the Mendel Art Gallery Collection draws from more than 8,000 works by artists of local, national and international significance. There is also a restaurant, run by Toronto's Oliver & Bonacini company.

STAY

The James Hotel (thejameshotel.ca), a contemporary boutique hotel, centrally located in downtown Saskatoon on the banks of the South Saskatchewan River, is the coolest spot in town. Its thoughtfully designed suites are spacious and modern in décor. Mine had a balcony overlooking the river, a living room separate from the bedroom and a Keurig in-room brewer with coffee, hot chocolate and tea selections. The chef-attended complimentary breakfast included an array of hot and cold items with daily features.



On other visits, I have stayed at The Delta Bessborough (marriott.com), an historic Canadian National

Railway hotel designed in the same château style as many of Canada's other railway hotels. "The Bess" is on the waterfront, half a block from The James and surrounded by five acres of lush Elizabethan gardens. Part of the Marriott group, it's much larger and more corporate than the James, but has the advantage of its Damara Spa and several in-house dining options.

EAT

Saskatchewan has more than 40 per cent of Canada's farmland and Saskatoon's culinary

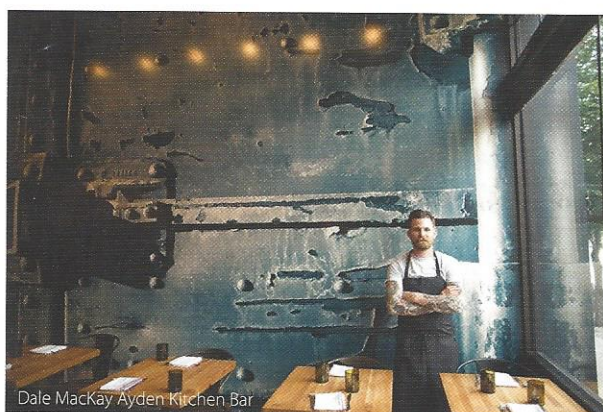
scene takes full advantage of it. Ayden Kitchen & Bar (aydenkitchenandbar.com), under chef Dale Mackay (The Food Network's *Top Chef Canada* season one winner), shows off the bounty of the land with its on-site butchery putting out sausage platters, charcuterie boards and dry-aged steaks. In the summer 90 per cent of what comes out of the kitchen is local and fresh, such as cornmeal-crusted Diefenbaker trout with hen-of-the-woods mushrooms. Chef Mackay's second restaurant, Little Grouse on the Prairies (grassrootsrestaurantgroup.ca), headed by executive chef Jesse Zuber, is an intimate spot serving up awesome hand-made pastas and has really fun dishes, such as veal scallopini and risotto al funghi. My group ordered alle famiglia sharing plates, which is the way to go here. Sticks and Stones, Mackay's newest eatery, features Korean/Japanese dishes, such as kimchi, ramen, sushi rolls, steamed buns and gyoza. The sake list and cocktails, created by mixologist Chad Coombs, are terrific.

Equally exciting are the restaurants run by chefs Kyle Michael and Christie Peters: Primal (primalpasta.ca) and The Hollows (thehollows.ca). Primal practices whole animal butchery, hand makes pastas using Saskatchewan heritage grains and has crazy fun dishes, such as the bone marrow luge. One of my tablemates ordered the luge and had us convulsing in laughter. After she had eaten the marrow, she was given a small pitcher of sherry to pour down the bone into her mouth. It looked both rude and difficult to achieve. The amaro list has flights any three bitters for \$13—another unique and unusual offering.



The Hollows

The Hollows, housed in a former Chinese restaurant—complete with squat red banquettes still in place as well as the Golden Dragon signage outside—features superb \$75 tasting menus based on cultivated plants grown from heirloom seeds, wild-harvested leaves and mushrooms, flowers, sap and roots, local



Dale Mackay Ayden Kitchen Bar

sustainable fish and pastured meats, poultry and eggs from small farms. Cocktails created by mixologist Adrienne Chappell, using foraged ingredients, house made syrups and fresh squeezed juice, are the best in town.



Baba's Perogies

SNACK

The Night Oven Bakery (thenightoven.ca) puts out fantastic breads and pastries using local, organic and heirloom grains that are milled in-house and baked in a wood-fire brick oven. One bite of their chocolate croissant and their famous canelé de Bordeaux had me begging for more. Owner/baker Bryn Rawlyk has won best bakery in Saskatoon several years in a row.

Baba's Perogies (babasperogies.com), which may be the only perogie drive-thru in the world, hand-makes perogies, borscht and cabbage rolls daily on the premises. They are so popular they go through up to 8,000 perogies per day (seven kinds are available, including potato and cheddar, sauerkraut, and Saskatoon berry).

SHOP

Opened in 2004, Garden Architecture & Design (gardenarchitecture.ca) is a shopper's destination for home and garden. I was wowed by its enormous collection of luxury outdoor furnishings and garden products, such as fountains and wind sculptures. Situated in a huge indoor and outdoor environment in the revitalized Riversdale community, I could have spent hours there. I was sorely tempted to buy something and have it delivered to my home in Toronto (delivery across Canada is available).

Bricker's Shoes opened in 1975 and is owned and managed by Daniel Côté, son of the founder. It's one of the only places I've found left in Canada that carries designer shoes in narrow widths. I bought six pairs!



Saskatoon Farmers' Market

SaskMade Marketplace (saskmade.ca) partners with local farmers, processors and artisans to offer a wide range of Saskatchewan goodies at one retail location. I found wild harvested herbal teas, freshly baked bread, lots of jams and preserves, chocolate-coated berries, local cheeses, and much more. Even better, there were tasting stations where I could sample the local produce for free.

SIP

Black Fox Farm & Distillery (blackfoxfarmanddistillery.com), owned and operated by John and Barb Cote, has truly fabulous gins, vodkas and liqueurs for sale, made largely from local grains, fruits and botanicals. Their oaked gin won the world's best casked gin at the 2017 World Gin Awards, beating out entries from Australia, Sweden, Iceland, the United Kingdom and the United States. Their products are so good, I bought one of everything and had them shipped home.

Lucky Bastard Distillers (luckybastard.ca) has an excellent shop and sampling room. They make seven different styles of whisky from local ingredients along with some unusual flavoured vodkas, such as Horilka, a Ukrainian honey pepper vodka and Birmingham's Dill Pickle Vodka.

Living Sky Winery (livingskywinery.com), just 50 kilometres west of Saskatoon, makes wines and ciders from local fruits, including an excellent dry, refreshing, rhubarb cider and a rhubarb wine that sells out quickly. You can find their cider at 9 Mile Legacy Brewing (9milelegacy.com) in the heart of the city and while there, sample the craft beers on tap, such as Rafiki Moja IPA, coffee porter and Odd Couple, an Asian-inspired Belgian dark ale.



Wanuskewin Heritage Park

EXPLORE

At Wanuskewin Heritage Park (wanuskewin.com), you can learn about the nomadic tribes who roamed the Northern Plains and the 6,000-plus years of First Nations history. The tribes gathered on this site of natural beauty to hunt bison, gather food and herbs, and escape the winter winds. Today there are art exhibits, teacher programs, outdoor walking paths, a shop and a restaurant that features a mix of traditional First Nations cuisine and modern dishes, such as three sisters soup, bison stew, rabbit pot pie, and whitefish and chips. I highly recommend the pike tacos.



Black Fox Farm Distillery