

Niagara Falls: Adventure Beyond the Falls

by Tacey Atkinson, PassPorter Guest Contributor

Upon arrival in Niagara Falls, the first thing everyone wants to see is the falls themselves. There are actually three falls, the American Falls, the Canadian (Horseshoe) Falls and the adjacent Bridal Veil Falls, which was originally part of the American Falls. When approaching the falls, the thunderous roar of the water and the cascading water is mesmerizing. The mist rising from the falls can reach for two city blocks, depending on the weather, and makes it seem like it is raining at all times. Many a bride and groom have used this wonderful backdrop for their wedding photos.

But today I want to cover some of the more "tourist-y" aspects to the Niagara region, some of the truly fun and adventurous things to do on the Canadian side of the falls in Niagara Falls, Ontario.

Let's begin with Clifton Hill. This is the main tourist area and at night, reminds one of the Las Vegas strip. The neon glows with a warm, inviting light and the sounds of excitement and thrills from arcades and theatres abound. At the very top of the hill, you will find all of the Ripley's family of entertainment activities. There is a moving 3-D theatre and of course the famous Ripley's Believe it or Not Museum. Allow yourself at least a couple of hours to tour that, you will find everything from shrunken heads to a car made of pennies. The exhibits change regularly so this is worth a glance every time you visit the falls.

Further down the hill, you will find the wax museums. There is the Movieland Wax museum and Louis Tussaud's Waxworks are filled with many of Hollywood's finest. From Katherine Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart through to Harry Potter and the Lord of the Rings, there is something for everyone here. You'll be amazed at how lifelike the statues are, right down to their garments, shoes and even hair. These are a "must see" in my opinion.

Then there is the Guinness World Records Museum. Here you will find accounts of some the most amazing yet true things that have happened in our world. There are incredible displays, interactive games, trivia and themed galleries. I suggest this as a rainy day activity as one can easily be engrossed for 4-5 hours here.

One other "must see" on the hill is Greg Frewin's Las Vegas Magic Review Show. Enjoy an evening of Las Vegas style entertainment

complete with tigers and show girls. The lighting and special effects keep you on the edge of your seat. Quite a spectacular show.

At the foot of Clifton Hill, is the Maid of the Mist Steamboats. Where else in the world can you get on a old fashioned steamboat, don a rain poncho, cruise right up to the edge of an awesome falls, and walk away unscathed? Everyone from celebrities to your next door neighbor can grasp the awesome force and splendor of the falls through this unique view.

Just down the road from the Maid of the Mist is the Skylon Tower. Soaring 775 feet above the Falls, you can see both the Toronto and Buffalo skylines on a clear day. There are many types of entertainment offered inside, from Pirates 3-D to games and arcades. There is a five star revolving restaurant at the top of the tower that gives you a 360-degree view. The view is breathtaking during either a daytime or an evening seating.

In the wintertime, the Festival of Lights that runs from November through January adds a touch of holiday magic to your trip. All along the Niagara Parkway there are magical moving Christmas light displays. When the falls experience a touch of snow, there is nothing quite as pretty as all the twinkling light displays.

There are many hotels with a that offer a falls view from your room, but truly, the falls are meant to be experienced with the wind is in your hair, the mist in your face and the thunder in your ears. There is so much more to see and do, you'll just have to experience it for yourself! This is a must see place for everyone - old, young, from near or far. Come and enjoy the fun, fantasy and awe that are the Niagara Falls.

About The Author: Tacey is a huge Disney fan - so much so that her friends call her "Snow," in tribute to her favorite princess. She makes an annual trek to Walt Disney World.

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