

Toronto

Toronto countryside idylls

By [PAT SAPERSTEIN](#)

In the late 1800s, people came from all over Ontario and Quebec to take the cure in the mineral-filled waters of the spas of Carlsbad. In those days, as in European spas, three weeks was not considered too long for a proper curative regimen. But visitors to the quiet retreat of Ste. Anne's Country Inn and Spa are more likely to spend only a weekend -- two days is just enough to revitalize a stressed-out person.

If a 1-1/2 hour drive from Toronto through rolling Ontario farmland doesn't sound relaxing enough, the Stress Express takes visitors to the inn by train and limousine ride.

Ste. Anne's started life as a castle like mansion on a farm. After it became a bed and breakfast, guests commented on the wonderful water and a bottling operation was started. Then a few hundred elk found their way to the farm, finally followed by masseuses, mud baths and spa tubs.

Despite the luxurious surroundings, there's still a touch of the farm at Ste. Anne's. Vegetables and herbs served in the restaurant come from the on-site organic garden, water from a spring and all waste is carefully recycled.

The specialty mud here is 30,000-year-old moor mud, from a Canadian glacier, said to help detoxify the body. The cuisine is natural and healthy but not specifically dietetic -- the better to work up a healthy appetite after a walk on the cedar-lined trails or a swim in the spring-fed pool. In addition to moor mud, services include seaweed body wraps and several types of massages. All meals are included in room rates that range from approximately \$100 to \$250 dollars a night for a single.

Inn at Manitou

A bit further than the farmland of Ste. Anne's is the forested lake country of the Inn at Manitou on the shores of Lake Manitowabing. Known for its tennis clinics, the inn also features a brand new spa and fitness center. Golf, fishing, hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking are favorite outdoor activities; the inn is open from May to October.

The mud here is imported from Austria, used for facials and body wraps as well as baths. Chalet-style lakefront rooms have log-burning fireplaces; the suites add sunken living rooms and private saunas.

All meals are provided, with a choice of regular or spa cuisine. Rates are between \$200 and \$350 a night, with all meals included.

Ste. Anne's Country Inn and Spa

Phone: (905) 349-2493 or (888) 346-6772

www.steannes.com

Inn at Manitou

Phone: (705) 389-2171 or (800) 571-8818

www.manitou-online.com