



Country Spa

By Stacy Kennedy

Located just an hour west from the hustle and bustle of busy Toronto, Ste. Anne's is a quiet inn and situated on sprawling farmland near Grafton, Ontario. The main building was originally a 16th-century castle, dating back to 1838 and owned by a farm equipment dynasty. Then, over a century later, the nearby guest building was discovered and turned into a home by the Conover family. It still bears much of the original architecture. Over time, a number of cottages on the 370-acre property have also been renovated to provide more space for guests. Ste. Anne's has been operating as one of the country's most popular destination spas for the past 15 years.

Owner Jim Conover says the design of the lounge, the dining area and the guest cottages, modified after a country home, can be described as "downside chic," and features plenty of floral patterns. Most of the furniture and decorations are antiques, picked up by Jim's mother, Nan. Even rolling hills, decorative glasses and Lake Ontario make up the beautiful view from the main focus, and combined with the fresh air, makes this spa a great escape for city dwellers.

In the spa rooms, however, the colour theme is quite different from the other areas. Softest colours were chosen to emphasize warmth and comfort. According to spa director Christine Pearson, the treatment rooms are painted a desert sand shell, with flowers of trees outside the Bay's shoulder towel trays, complemented by a variety of creams and fawn colours, distributed the room's accessories. The accent pieces are Eastern in theme, and include beautiful pillows, wooden trays to display products, and wares filled with peony oil. "The idea of the room was to 'blend into' them," says Pearson. "The products and items are out of sight, and when you enter, the rooms are warm and inviting."

