

Spa inspired

Gourmands and hedonists alike flock to Ste. Anne's Spa, the perfect country escape

CURRIED GREEN lentil soup with coconut drizzle. Pan-seared tandoori turkey tenderloin. Lime and chili marinated tofu. Sound good? While you'd expect these dishes to be on the menu of a famed restaurant in New York or Toronto, the whimsical-sounding concoctions are actually just a sampling of the delicious low-cal creations served up by Chef Christopher Ennew at Ste. Anne's Spa. Set in the rolling Northumberland hills in Southern Ontario, just 90 minutes east of Toronto, the 20-year-old spa owned and run by the Corcoran family is the delightful setting for the ultimate country getaway.

History, luxury and the spectacular outdoors combine to create the perfect spa experience. An integral part of the spa's magic (in addition to the food, of course) is the Main Inn. Built in 1857, the original mansion has been slowly added to—always with the help of talented masons and locally quarried materials—and now sets the standard for comfortable spa decor. Locally known as the Grafton Castle, the building houses a multitude of comfortably appointed guest rooms. From cozy down-filled duvets to whirlpool tubs to fireplaces, the guest rooms are decorated in traditional country style with an eye to quality.

Guests can choose to stay in the Main Inn or can rent their own country guest house. The nostalgic farmhouses, all

purchased over the years as they became available, range from the historic Farmhouse and Gables, a quarter-kilometre hike from the Main Inn, to the Haldimand, a renovated schoolhouse 500 metres away. Guest houses rent daily or weekly and are the perfect escape for privacy seekers.

The day begins at Ste. Anne's with a glass of cucumber or lemon-infused water, and then a home-cooked breakfast of freshly squeezed orange juice and granola. Overlooking the rambling Grafton hills, with the waters of Lake Ontario in the distance, the sunlit dining room



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is a quiet respite from city life. Following breakfast, guests are invited downstairs to the charming treatment rooms.

Many therapies integrate natural, seasonal and local ingredients, from specialized chocolate scrubs to eucalyptus body wraps. Not to be missed is the Inn's Moor Mud bath, where guests are immersed in a tub full of the viscous black mud to experience a treatment that dates back to Roman times.

After a day of spa treatments, take a walk down the country

roads or hop into your car and go antiquing in the lovingly restored town of Grafton. A little further south you can go hiking in the Nawautin Nature Sanctuary, a restored wetland habitat on the shores of Lake Ontario. And art enthusiasts will delight in the tiny village of Colborne, where local artists are showcased at the 19th-century registry office.

For golf-loving visitors, the Timber Ridge golf course is a mere 30 minutes away in Brighton. Oenophiles can participate in wine tastings and picnic lunches at the nearby Oak Heights Estate Winery, located just outside of Warkworth.

Back at St. Anne's, nighttime is quiet and peaceful (there's nary a TV unless you request it) and the night air drifting off the lake seems to have therapeutic qualities of its own. Visit www.steannes.com for more details.



Taste of Home

NAN CORCORAN'S SCONES ARE A TASTE OF THE GOOD LIFE

MAKES 1 DOZEN

- 2 scant cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cold butter, cubed
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup dried fruit (such as raisins, currants or cranberries)
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup buttermilk

Combine flour, sugar and baking powder in a bowl. Using 2 knives or a pastry cutter, cut the butter into the mixture until a consistency of cornmeal is reached. Stir fruit into mixture. Pour eggs and milk over the surface of the mixture, and promptly stir the entire mixture quickly but lightly. The mixture should begin to take



the shape of a soft dough; knead the dough 15 times. Prepare a floured surface for the dough, then roll out onto the flour. Using a cookie cutter, cut the dough into individual scones. Place on an ungreased baking sheet and brush tops with another beaten egg. Bake at 400°F for 20 to 30 minutes.