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Welcome abroad *Pink Digest*, the Canadian edition of the world's premier consumer and business magazine. We are thrilled to launch this, our premier issue. It should be a fascinating, informative, educational and entertaining ride. Buckle up, and get comfortable. You're in for a pink treat! Before you dive into the Pink, we would like to shed a bit of light on what this magazine hopes to achieve.

The current gay consumer market is worth \$600 billion US annually, which is growing at a rate of 30% every year. Our objective of producing *Pink Digest* is to educate and inform how and why corporations should target gay consumers for their products/services. At present, there is no magazine which will offer the gay community's business and professionalism in a single publication.

Tourism in another market which is worth over \$150 billion US annually. Through this publication, we would like to educate and inform the tourism industry about the significant and unique opportunities offered by the gay market and how to tap into and serve this market.

Art and culture is another important area we would like to address regularly in our publication so that every marketer, professional and gay community member can get hands-on information about the current fashion styles, art, entertainment and other

subject matters related to this important lifestyle activity of the gay community.

As the magazine is an outcome of a comprehensive survey carried out by our sister company Pink Marketing and Advertising, the results showed us that many non-gay corporations, professionals and the gay professionals were looking for a publication which can offer them information on the gay community's business, professional, traveling, fashion, art and cultural lifestyle.

In the forthcoming issues, we will present many aspects of the gay lifestyle, current trends, and social and leisure activities to help everyone understand the gay community's importance to economical, social and professional contribution to the society.

We want the general public to enjoy this magazine similarly to other consumer trade magazines in the stands. Not only this publication will be enjoyable, we will also make sure the contents and graphics will not be harmful in any way to the readers.

We would also like your kind input in order to improve our services through the publication and thank all of you for supporting our premier issue. We look forward to bringing you the best as per our mission of launching *Pink Digest*. We are trying to make it a must-read and keeping it a safe publication for all.

As the Founding President and Editor of *Pink Digest*, I would like to thank all the contributors and staff who have sent their best wishes, articles and moral support to this unique publication. They have helped make my dream of *Pink Digest* a reality. And, to the readers of *Pink Digest*, I would like to personally welcome you to what I hope is the first of many pink adventures we will enjoy together through the pages of *Pink Digest*!

Very best pink wishes,

Tyrrel Igantius
Chief Editor & Founder

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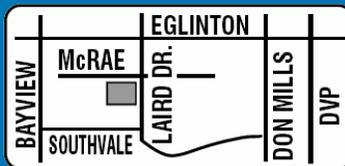


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Premier of Ontario – Premier ministre de l'Ontario



A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

On behalf of the Government of Ontario, I am delighted to extend warm greetings to all readers of the inaugural edition of *Pink Digest*. Congratulations on what, I am confident, will be the first of many issues!

In Ontario, we celebrate difference and thrive on diversity — two vital components of our society that are well represented within our province's dynamic periodical industry. *Pink Digest*, a new publication intended for the gay and lesbian community and the reading public at large, makes a significant contribution to magazine publishing as it sets out to deliver timely news, information and feature articles on business, tourism, arts and culture, and related topics. *Pink Digest* will be of particular interest to those who seek opportunity to better understand and more effectively meet the needs of gay and lesbian consumers.

The creation of a new magazine is a labour of love, a feat of collaboration — and sheer hard work. I would like to commend the management team of *Pink Digest* for devoting time, energy and enthusiasm to the realization of this innovative publishing venture.

Please accept my sincere best wishes for a memorable and inspirational launch of *Pink Digest* — and for much continued success.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dalton McGuinty".

Dalton McGuinty
Premier



Mayor
DAVID MILLER

A Message from the Mayor

It is my pleasure to extend congratulations and best wishes on the launch of the premier edition of Pink Digest, a new consumer and trade publication for our gay community.

In Toronto we encourage and welcome publications that play an important part in our social and cultural development, strengthen our neighbourhoods and meet the diverse needs and interests of people in our many communities who call our city home.

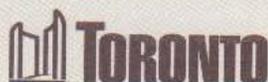
Pink Digest will feature a wide variety of topics that will not only inform, entertain and educate both the gay and non gay professional, but this new publication will help promote the sharing of news and ideas among people in our large and diverse city.

On behalf of Toronto City Council, I congratulate everyone involved with Pink Digest and wish you much success.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Miller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mayor David Miller





CANADIAN BOTTLED WATER ASSOCIATION

CBWA is a national trade association that supports and promotes bottled water as a healthy, safe and convenient food product. CBWA members are committed to environmentally sound and economically efficient practices.

The CBWA and its members educate, inform and encourage dialogue between the industry, government, consumers and other stakeholders

For additional information and a list of 'Brand Names You Can Trust', please visit our website at www.cbwa-bottledwater.org, or call Telephone: 905.886.6928 • Fax: 905.886.9531

The Importance of Safe, Clean Drinking Water

The Canadian Bottled Water Association (CBWA) is a national trade association that supports and promotes bottled water as a healthy, safe and convenient food product. CBWA members are committed to environmentally sound and economically efficient practices. The CBWA and its members educate, inform and encourage dialogue between the industry, government, consumers and other stakeholders.

Life Style Choices

With today's busy, 'on the go' and health conscious life styles, the awareness for safe, clean drinking water is on the minds of many consumers. As well, the information offered to the public can be overwhelming when you consider the various resources available: e.g., television, radio, newspapers and the Internet. Bottled water is certainly one option for safe, clean drinking water and fits into the 'on the go' and health conscious life styles. The CBWA's website is a proven educational tool for the public. Over the past 12 months, with more than 50,000 unique hits, the CBWA website has educated visitors on all aspects of the CBWA and the bottled water industry.

Bottled Water Regulations

Bottled water is fully regulated as a packaged food product by Health Canada, through the Food and Drugs Act. Health Canada has regulated bottled water as a food for decades. It is held to stringent standards for quality, identity and labelling, and packaging based on current science, technology and Canadian Food Inspection Agency Good Manufacturing Practices. Bottled Water is regulated in the same manner as all other food products in Canada. In addition, CBWA members are required to meet its Model Code (Standards of Quality), which is more strict than the Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines. All members must submit annually to an unannounced third-party inspection to ensure compliance with the CBWA Model Code. One of the most popular areas of the website is "Brand

By Elizabeth Griswold
Executive Director
CBWA

Names You Can Trust", which lists the CBWA member brands that meet the CBWA Standards of Quality. (cbwa-bottledwater.org)

Water Related Diseases

According to WaterCan (watercan.com), currently, one-sixth of the world's population (1.1 billion people) lacks access to safe water supply, and two-fifths (2.4 billion people) lack access to improved sanitation facilities. The vast majority of people who are seriously affected by or die from preventable water and sanitation related diseases are rural dwellers and the urban poor in the developing world. Current international estimates of deaths due to water-related diseases range from 2.2 million to 5 million annually.

Diarrhea is the most common type of water-borne illness, and is caused by consuming water contaminated with disease-causing bacteria, viruses, and/or tiny parasites like worms or amoebas, especially from human excreta. People who are sick from diarrhea suffer from problems of dehydration and malnutrition. Infants, children and the elderly are particularly vulnerable to the effects of diarrhea. People with severely weakened immune systems, such as those with HIV/AIDS, also are at risk. It is estimated that each year more than 2.2 million people, mostly children in developing countries, die from diseases associated with poor water and sanitation conditions.

Classification of Water-Related Diseases

Water-related diseases can be grouped into four general classes: water-borne, water-washed, water-based and water-related insect vectors (Table I). The first three classes are closely linked to people's lack of access to safe water supply.

Table 1: Classification of Water-Related Diseases

Disease Classification	Description
<i>Water-borne diseases</i>	Caused by the consumption of water contaminated by human or animal excreta (feces, urine) containing disease-causing organisms (pathogens) such as bacteria, viruses, worms and amoebas. Examples: dysentery, cholera, typhoid, other diarrheal diseases.
<i>Water-washed diseases (water-scarce diseases)</i>	Caused by poor personal hygiene, and skin or eye contact with contaminated water and/or insufficient quantities of clean water for personal hygiene and washing. Examples: scabies, trachoma (eye infections), and flea, lice and tick-borne diseases such as typhus.
<i>Water-based diseases</i>	Caused by parasites found in intermediate organisms living in contaminated water. These diseases are usually passed on to humans when they drink or wash with contaminated water. Examples: dracunculiasis (guinea worm), schistosomiasis (bilharzia), other helminths (worms).
<i>Water-related diseases (insect-vector diseases)</i>	Caused by insects, especially flies and mosquitoes, that breed in or feed near contaminated water sources. These diseases are not usually associated with the lack of water supply and sanitation facilities, and are typically excluded from estimates in water-related deaths. Examples: malaria, dengue, onchocerciasis (river blindness); trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness), yellow fever.

Morbidity and Mortality of Selected Water-Related Diseases

Each year, there are approximately 2.2 million deaths caused by diarrheal diseases related to poor water and sanitation conditions. Most victims are children under the age of five. This is equivalent to one child dying every 15 seconds. Table 2 summarizes the estimated morbidity and mortality of selected water-related diseases at the global level.

Table 2: Morbidity and Mortality of Selected Water-Related Diseases

Disease	Estimated Morbidity (a)	Estimated Mortality (b)	Relationship of Disease to Water & Sanitation Conditions
<i>Diarrheal diseases</i>	1.0 billion	2.2 to 5.0 million	Strongly related to poor sanitation conditions, poor personal/domestic hygiene practices, unsafe drinking water.
<i>Intestinal worms</i>	1.5 billion people infected	100,000	Strongly related to poor sanitation conditions, poor personal/domestic hygiene practices.
<i>Schistosomiasis (bilharzia)</i>	200 million people infected (20 million suffer from severe consequences)	200,000	Strongly related to poor sanitation conditions, the absence of nearby sources of safe water
<i>Trachoma (eye infections)</i>	150 million active cases (6 million people blind from trachoma)		Strongly related to lack of face washing, often due to the absence of nearby sources of safe water.
<i>Trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness)</i>	275,000	130,000	Related to the absence of nearby sources of safe water.
<i>Dracunculiasis (guinea worm)</i>	150,000 (in 1996)		Strongly related to unsafe drinking water

(a) Morbidity = episodes per year or people infected.

(b) Mortality = deaths per year

(Source: WaterCan, www.watercan.com)



International Council of Bottled Water Associations

The CBWA is part of the world-wide Association, the International Council of Bottled Water Associations (ICBWA). The ICBWA membership consist of Asian (and Middle East) Bottled Water Association, Australasian Bottled Water Association, Canadian Bottled Water Association, European Federation of Bottled Waters, Latin American Bottled Water Association and the International Bottled Water Association (USA).

CBWA Annual Convention and Trade Show

Each year during the month of April, the CBWA holds an annual convention and trade show. In 2006 the show will be held in Toronto at the Hilton Toronto Hotel (Downtown). Details on this show will be posted on our website regarding our trade show hours, educational workshops, seminars, speakers and social events.

Government and Other Stakeholders

The objective of the CBWA is to educate, inform and encourage dialogue between the industry, govern-

ment, consumers and other stakeholders. The CBWA has for more than a decade worked closely with Health Canada on revisions to Division 12 (regulations specific to bottled water), and Canadian Food Inspection Agency on labelling requirements to ensure the government has a clear understanding of the industry and the dialogue of positive and open. In addition, in 2001 the CBWA established an Environment Stewardship Code. This Code provides guidance to member companies to ensure long term groundwater protection and the sustainability of these renewable resources. As an industry, we have ongoing dialogue with government to ensure the implementation of sound, science-based regulations to protect groundwater resources. We encourage continued involvement with government and other stakeholders to promote a better understanding and appreciation of the bottled water industry.





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Niagara has more than 16,000 guestrooms and suites to suit every taste, budget and need. From resort properties with full service spa facilities and luxurious amenities, to intimate and elegant inns that pamper you with personalized attention. Whatever your choice, our hotels, inns, B&Bs and resorts have all well-earned reputation for taking extra special care of our guests.

There are several places to see the Falls up close and personal...from the Table Rock

By Niagara Falls Tourism
www.niagarafallstourism.com

area, by taking the Journey Behind the Falls, and downstream along the river through the Niagara Glen, aboard the Maid of the Mist as it takes passengers on a soaking wet ride near the base of the Falls or from high above on Niagara Helicopters or dining at the Skylon or Konica Minolta Tower.

Niagara is known around the world for its gardens and parks, which attract artists, gardeners and nature lovers. The Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens, Dufferin Islands, Oakes Garden, Queen Victoria Park, Queenston Heights Park, just to name a few provide inspiration and delight.

For bird and butterfly lovers, the Niagara Falls Aviary and Niagara Parks Butterfly Con-

Tourism

servatory are exciting and educational attractions for all to visit.

Built on a cliff overlooking the Horseshoe Falls, Niagara Fallsview Casino Resort is setting a new standard in Canada's hospitality industry. The Fallsview Casino Resort is home to 3,000 slot machines, 150 gaming tables, first class restaurants and galleria shopping. The resorts award-winning hotel features lavishly appointed rooms and suites as well a full service spa, pool and fitness facility. For those looking to enjoy the same world-class customer service and gaming atmosphere, but in a smaller, more casual environment, a trip to Casino Niagara might just be the thing. Casino

Niagara has over 2,500 slot machines, 79 gaming tables built on two levels and several restaurants

Niagara fascinating history and rich, cultural heritage is the foundation for many interesting discoveries. From Fort Erie through to Niagara Falls to Niagara on the Lake, you can visit the past, carefully restored and recreated at Old Fort Erie, Willoughby Historical

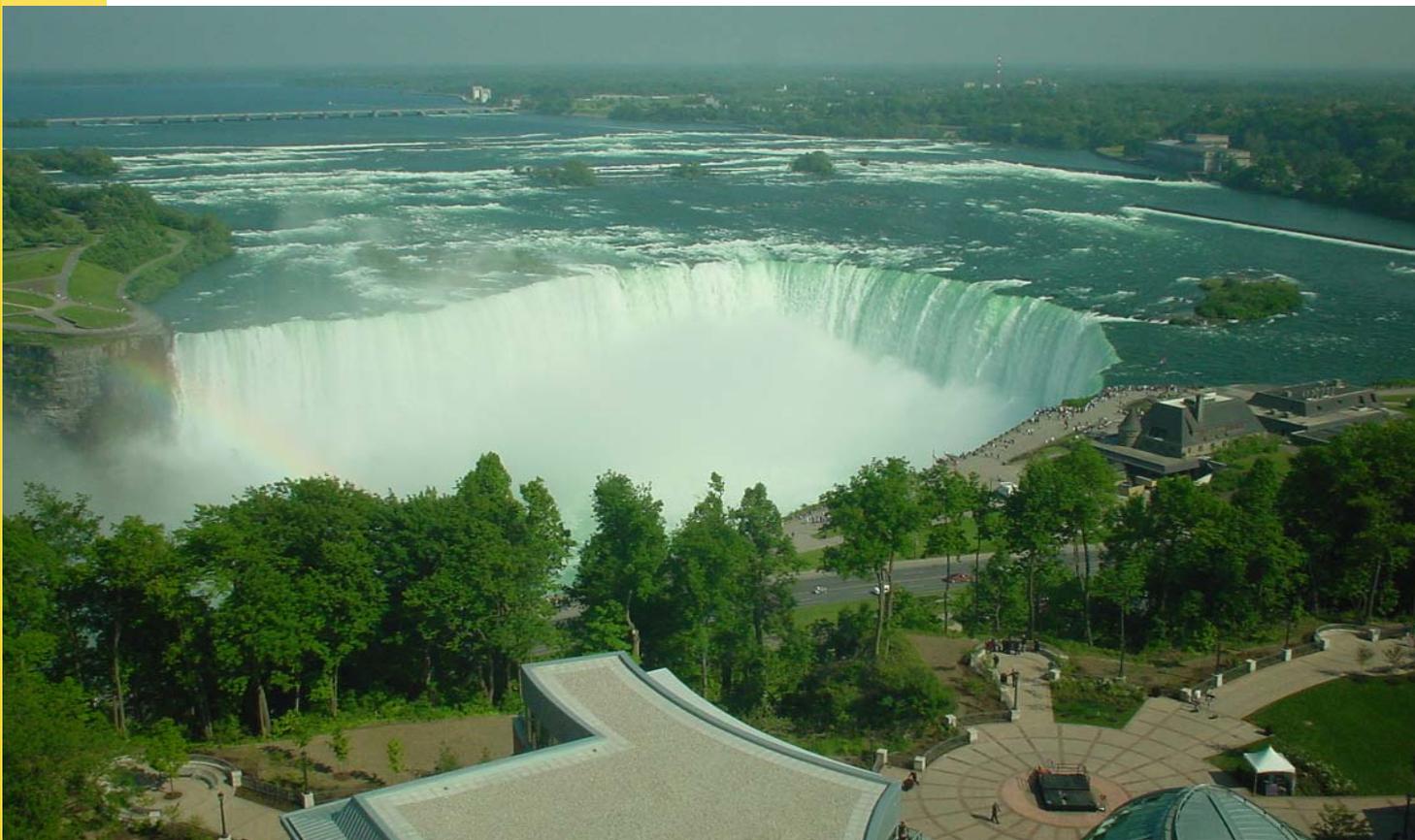


Museum, Lundy's Lane Historical Museum and Old Fort George.

Our internationally renowned wine region has gained an appreciative audience featuring vintages that wine lovers have come to enjoy and savour. Icewine is one of this area's most famous products, winning awards around the world, while our culinary expertise, flavoured by our agricultural heritage and regional cuisine has added to the rich dimension of Niagara as a sine and food destination.

No one leaves Niagara Falls without doing a little shopping. In Niagara, there are plenty of places to shop, many gift shops, trading posts, and specialty items at quaint

boutiques...a great variety to keep the discriminating shopper pleased, and souvenirs to bring home to treasurer. For the bargain hunter, no day is complete without a visit to Canada One Factory Outlets, a great collection of over 40 brand name stores. This is why Niagara attracts more visitors each year than perhaps any other tourist destination in North America.





The Village is one of the largest gay neighbourhoods in the world, and its principal metro station,

Beaudry, proudly bears the colours of the gay community. The neighbourhood stretches east to west along Sainte-Catherine Street, the main business thoroughfare, from Saint-Hubert Street to Papineau Street. The vivid nightlife is complemented by a high level of daytime energy, when the streets of the Village hustle and bustle with employees from nearby radio and TV production houses. Numerous events and festivals taking place each year keep the excitement going, with the highlights being the Festival des Arts in July, the Divers/Cité, Gay and Lesbian Pride Célébration in August and the Black & Blue Festival in October. These three events alone draw more than a million participants!

In the neighbourhood you'll find cafés, bistros, boutiques, antique shops, family restaurants and exotic eateries. To really get a feel for the place, take a stroll along the north-south side streets between Sherbrooke Street and René-Lévesque Boulevard and admire the

Montreal's Gay Village: Always Friendly and Welcoming

By Megalie Boutin
Tourisme Québec
www.tourisme.gouv.qc.ca



carefully restored brick homes, shaded backyard gardens and window boxes brimming over with flowers.

Be sure to drop into the Androgyne bookstore as well, the first in Canada devoted to gay literature. Or visit the superb neo-gothic Saint-Pierre-Apôtre church, built in 1851, at 1201 Visitation Street. It houses the Chapel of Hope, the first chapel in the world consecrated to the memory of victims of AIDS.

The southern end of Amherst Street fans out to afford a striking view of the elegant clock tower in the Old Port. If you pause near Saint-Pierre-Apôtre at the corner of René-Lévesque Boulevard and Visitation Street, you'll catch an arresting view of the modern Radio-Canada building soaring up in front of the majestic Jacques-Cartier Bridge.

The Art Deco architecture of the impressive Saint-Jacques Market building and the Écomusée du fier monde (across the way on Amherst Street) are also worth a stop. And all along Amherst Street you can visit antique shops that specialize in objects from the



1930s through the 1960s. The narrow, winding side streets nearby, particularly Lartigue Street, have a distinctly European feel.

But above and beyond all these attractions, you'll find it's the warm neighbourhood life and the hospitality of the people who live there which make the Village so unforgettable.

On October 25, 2001, on the occasion of the Annual Meeting of the Federation of Gay Games, Montréal was chosen as the host city for the seventh edition of the Gay Games that took place in the Summer of 2006, where over 24,000 participants and more than 250,000 visitors were welcomed.

Right from the beginning of the long bidding process, Montréal expressed its desire to make these Games a huge athletic and cultural festival with a "Rendez-vous in Montréal" theme. This idea, inspired by Montréal's well-known *joie de vivre*, gave the city's bid a unique flavour.

Held every four years, the Gay Games is considered the largest sport and festival and attract participants from every continent. Based on the principles of inclusion, participation and personal best, these Games are open to everyone regardless of their sexual orientation, age, gender, ethnic origin, race, religion, nationality, political beliefs, level of competition, athletic and artistic skills, state of health or HIV status.

Tourisme Montréal has recognized the importance of the gay and lesbian market since 1994, and has introduced a series of major promotional events to advance this aspect of Montréal life: an annual press trip for gay media, representation at a number of travel fairs and specialized conventions, the launch of a promotional magazine entitled "Gay Destination: Montréal" and the recognition of the Village as a tourism centre.

The choice of Montréal by the Federation of Gay Games reaffirms the friendly relations that unite Montréal and the gay and lesbian community, confirms Montréal's international status and reasserts its positioning on the North American and international gay markets.



With the third largest gay and lesbian population in North America, Toronto has one of the most vibrant gay and lesbian neighbourhoods anywhere in the world. The Village, the heart of the largest gay neighbourhood in Canada, oozes with life. Its nightclubs, restaurants, and shopping are buzzing around the clock, as residents and visitors alike always expect the unexpected. They are rarely disappointed!

In the heart of downtown Toronto, the Village over the last two decades has evolved from a quaint residential neighbourhood with historical homes and turn-of-the-century buildings to the centre of a thriving and dynamic gay community.

Many of the Victorian-era buildings have been converted to quaint Inns and Bed and Breakfasts, welcoming tourists who flock to the Village to enjoy what residents of the Village often refer to as the Village's 'state of mind'.

To explore what this 'state of mind' is all about, Church Street is a good place to start. The intersection of Church and Wellesely streets is the epicentre of the Village. Church Street is lined with rainbow flags, welcoming and celebrating diversity and freedom of expression of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender culture. On any given day of the week, Church Street is filled with people out shopping, dining, lounging, shmoozing, or meeting with new and old friends alike. Boutiques with leather goods are a staple, along with sophisticated fashion boutiques, salons, jewelers, and shoe stores.

Fashion and trends are a part of the Village state of mind. But it's the cafes and bars that make the Village hop. Seducing visitors to the Village are the myriad of cafes lining Church Street. Chic, sleek, raucous, outrageous, romantic, modern, sophisticated.. Whatever your fancy, the Village has a café or bar for you. A good place to meet friends and take part in the favourite Village past-time - socializing - is Zelda's Res-



Toronto's Gay Village: It's a 'State of Mind'!

By Shelley Smith
Pink Tourism

taurant and Bar, just south of Wellesely on Church Street. Zelda's is a Village landmark. It's packed around the clock as Villagers gather on the patio to meet and greet friends and passersby. Outrageous by night and bustling by day, Zelda's fuels the boundless energy that characterizes the Village.

Dining options are aplenty in the Village, home to some of the best restaurants in Toronto. One of the many culinary fancies in the Village is the succulent Le Petit Liban Restaurant. Located in a decadent Victorian manor on Church Street, Liban will

tempt you with its Roman statues, fountains, and expanse of its sensational front patio. But it's the indulgent dishes that hook the regulars and keep them coming back for more. But it is only one of many restaurants to check out for the culinary flavour of the Village.

A night on the town in the Village may begin with scrumptious dining but the real feast of the senses is apres dinner at one of the many nightclubs that keep the Village on its toes. Grab a pint at Woody's, another local landmark. Woody's has been around for as long as the Village itself. But to get a full taste of what's going on, Check out *XTRA!*, Toronto's weekly gay newspaper for club listings and events about town.

So what do locals mean by the Village being a 'state of mind'? For one, it can only be understood by a trip to the Village to experience it yourself. The Village to be sure is a vibrant, sexy, diverse and exciting piece of Toronto culture. But it's more than that. It's about living life to the fullest, embracing the diversity of Canada's gay culture and freedom of expression, choice and life. Its mantra is to celebrate life. Pink Life! Whether that celebration of life includes dancing the night away or enjoying a quiet night with your lover in a romantic café, Toronto's Village is not to be missed.



Attracting about 650,000 gay and lesbian visitors each year, the tiny subtropical island of Key West enjoys a well-deserved reputation as one of the most appealing gay-friendly destinations in the world.

Among the primary reasons for that reputation are the multiple efforts of the Key West Business Guild — a nonprofit organization devoted to meeting the needs of gay and lesbian travelers, providing comprehensive information about gay Key West and promoting the island to a national and international travel market.

Begun in 1978 to encourage summer tourism and support Key West's gay community, the business guild was the nation's first gay-oriented chamber of commerce-type business organization. From a small original membership it has

Key West, Florida: Come to See Where the Sea Begins!

By Steve Smith
Key West Business Guild
www.gaykeywestfl.com

grown to include more than 300 enterprises representing virtually every facet of the island's business community — from accommodations to banks, restaurants and art galleries.

Today, the Key West Business Guild ranks among the nation's leading gay business associations and its marketing efforts, supported by the Florida Keys tourism council, incorporate a gay-marketing specialist and an award-winning advertising campaign.

The business guild's office at 513 Truman Ave. is shared with the acclaimed Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Key West. There, walk-in visitors can find a warm welcome, a friendly introduction to the island city and information about member businesses and attractions.

In addition, the guild receives hundreds of tele-





phone calls and e-mails each week in response to national and international advertising. Information, accompanied by colorful, inviting brochures, is mailed to callers, providing them an enticing taste of the island's appeal. The Business Guild's Web site, www.gaykeywestfl.com, attracts tens of thousands of visitors each month, and brochures in several languages are available for downloading.

Guild officials report an estimated 20 percent or more of Key West's annual visitors are gay or lesbian — a testimonial both to the organization's successful marketing efforts and the community's welcoming attitude.

Upon arrival, gay and lesbian visitors are encouraged to stop by the Key West Business Guild office for a friendly greeting and details about attractions and lodging. The office is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week, except on major holidays.

.....

For more information about Key West and its many amenities, visit www.gaykeywestfl.com, write the guild at P.O. Box 1208, Key West FL 33041, or call (305) 294-4603. In the US and Canada, call toll-free (888) 294-4603



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Martina Navratilova to Open Outgames Ceremonies



By Pascal Dessureault
Press Secretary, Montreal Outgames
www.montreal2006.org



The First World Outgames Montréal 2006 are proud to announce that Ms. Martina Navratilova has joined their Circle of Champions. Ms. Navratilova will actively participate in the International Conference on LGBT Human Rights, which will be held for three days before the Opening Ceremony of the Outgames. The world-renowned tennis champion and sports legend will present the Declaration of Montréal with Olympic medalist and Outgames Co-President Mark Tewksbury at the Opening Ceremony on 29 July 2006.

"I am thrilled to be involved with the Outgames. Over the past three years, the Montréal

organisation has built a new model for LGBT sport and cultural events, one that honours the past, speaks to the present, and stands ready to embrace the future," said Ms. Navratilova, internationally respected sportswoman and eighteen-time Grand Slam champion. *"This model will result in the largest LGBT sport and cultural event ever held. This is why I am so proud to be part of this important development in the history of the international LGBT community."*

"We are extremely honoured to have the support of Ms. Navratilova to help us spread the word about this ground-breaking interna-

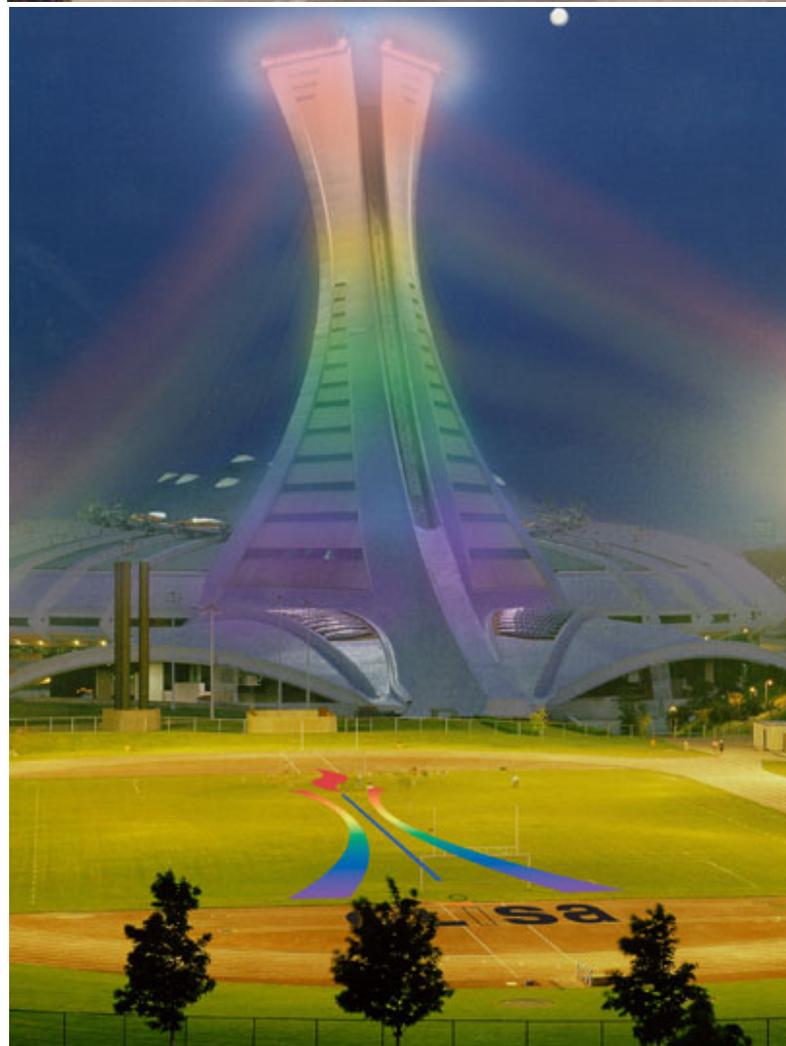


itional event,” added Mr. Mark Tewksbury, Co-President of the 1st World Outgames and Canadian Olympic champion. “*We have had extensive discussions and Ms. Navratilova will be participating in the International Conference on LGBT Human Rights, meeting with Outgames partners and participants and, finally, in what is sure to be a moving and unforgettable moment, she and I will read the Declaration of Montréal, the true legacy of the Conference, at the Opening Ceremony of the 1st World Outgames.*”

The International Conference on LGBT Human rights focuses on affirming LGBT rights as an international standard, in every country of the world. To this end, a final resolution entitled the Declaration of Montréal, will be adopted at the close of the Conference and presented at the Opening Ceremony of the 1st World Outgames. The Declaration of Montréal will then be introduced to the United Nations and other international forums.

The Outgames Circle of Champions is an international group of prominent individuals supporting the goals and principles of the 1st World Outgames. The Outgames will take place in Montréal, Canada, from 26 July to 5 August 2006 and will bring together 16,000 participants from 120 countries and 250,000 visitors for an unforgettable celebration of LGBT sport and culture. The programme features 35 sport disciplines, 6 cultural activities and the International Conference on LGBT Human Rights.

Martina Navratilova’s stellar career was crowned with one record-breaking success after another. She won 18 Grand Slam singles titles, 40 Grand Slam doubles titles (31 women’s doubles and 9 mixed doubles) and the women’s singles title at Wimbledon a record 9 times. She was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 2000, arguably one of the greatest tennis players of all time.



Dog Guides are Changing Lives by Providing Mobility, Safety and Independence to Canadians with Disabilities

By Lions Foundation of Canada
www.dogguides.com



Lions Foundation of Canada is a federally incorporated charitable foundation created by Lions clubs across Canada. Its mission is to provide service to Canadians with disabilities in the areas of mobility, safety and independence.

Since 1982, the lives of many men, women and children have been enriched by the services of specially trained Dog Guides from Lions Foundation of Canada. Dog Guide handlers from coast to coast have experienced the enrichment of their lives with new-found mobility, safety and independence with the presence of a devoted Dog Guide partner.

A renovated school in Oakville, Ontario houses Lions Foundation of Canada and its Dog Guide training programs – Canine Vision Canada, Hearing Ears Dogs of Canada and Special Skills Dogs of Canada. The facility contains administrative offices, student residences, kennels, and Dog Guide training areas. The Foundation also maintains a Dog Guide breeding facility and training centre in Breslau, Ontario. This centre includes a master kennel

used as a pre-training facility to prepare dogs for their transfer to the Oakville training school.

“They’ll never walk alone”

Lions Foundation of Canada has three programs, with Canine Vision Canada (CVC) being the first of the three programs to come into existence in 1985. Canine Vision Canada trains Dog Guides for Canadians who are blind or visually impaired. CVC Dog Guides assist their handlers by keeping them safe on the streets by avoiding obstacles such as cars, people, light posts and other obstacles. CVC Dog Guides are also specially trained to navigate stairs, escalators and other situations and places encountered on most daily routes.

The usual breeds used for this program are Labrador Retrievers and Standard Poodles and the CVC Dog Guides are recognizable by their black leather harnesses monogrammed with CVC on the chest. For the client to reach a goal of greater independence and mobility, both the dog and the client need to be trained

Miracles

together to become a solid working Dog Guide team. After the Dog Guide has received 6-8 months of training with a CVC trainer, the client will spend approximately 25 days at the Oakville facility to learn how to handle, trust and bond with the already trained dog.

When Craig from Kamloops, BC lost his sight in 2003 in an ATV accident, his life was changed forever. However, two years later, Craig's life took a turn for the better – he graduated with CVC Dog Guide Annie, a black Labrador Retriever.

“Annie has helped me become more independent,” says Craig. “She provides me with companionship and helps me to get out a lot more.” Annie guides Craig around obstacles and busy streets, helps him cross intersections and provides Craig with the security and confidence to be more independent and mobile outside his home.



“Their link to a world of sound”

Hearing Ear Dogs of Canada (HED) was the second program instituted by Lions Foundation of Canada in 1988. HED Dog Guides are trained to assist people who are deaf or hard of hearing by alerting them to everyday sounds. HED Dog Guides are taught to distinguish sounds, make physical contact with their handlers, and lead them to the sound. Each dog is trained to respond to the unique sounds of a client's home, such as a knock at the door, the telephone ringing, or an activated fire alarm. The dog can also be trained to respond to hand signals for clients who use sign language.

The usual breeds used for this program are Labrador Retrievers, Border Terriers and Miniature Poodles and the HED Dog Guides are recognizable by their orange harnesses. Clients undergo a two-week training period at the Foundation's Oakville training facility to learn how to work and bond with their fully trained Dog Guides.

Carole from Whitby, Ontario was diagnosed with

hearing loss twenty-five years ago while pregnant with her first child. Years later, while being treated for cancer, Carole lost all of her hearing due to a drug used in her chemotherapy treatment.



Carole is so thankful to have received Binni from Lions Foundation of Canada. Not only is Binni her ears, he is also

Carole's reassurance and safety. “Binni provides me with the assurance that he is going to alert me to sounds and keep me safe,” says Carole.

“They will never be alone”

Special Skills Dogs of Canada (SSD) was the final Dog Guide program established in 1991. SSD Dog



Guides are trained to assist individuals with physical disabilities and/or medical conditions. SSD Dog Guides can operate light switches, open and close doors, retrieve items, assist with getting in and out of bed, or call for help by barking or by activating an alert system. SSD Dog Guides provide their handlers

with greater mobility, safety and independence on a daily basis.

Special Skills Dog Guides are usually Labrador Retrievers and Standard Poodles; however, on occasion, smaller breeds are trained depending on the needs of the client. After the 6-8 month training period, the SSD Dog Guide is matched with a handler who stayed two and a half weeks at the Foundation in Oakville to learn how to work with their new partner

and to establish a strong bond.

Noelle, 15, was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy as a young child and requires the aid of a walker. Noelle used to have to rely on her family to assist her with various tasks, from picking up dropped items to helping her into bed. However, since receiving Whisper in 2002, a black Standard Poodle SSD Dog Guide, Noelle has greater independence.

In a household with ten siblings, alone time is rare. However, now with the help of Whisper, Noelle feels more confident to stay home alone. "I can count on her," say Noelle. "Before I had Whisper, I couldn't stay home by myself. I was too worried and always wondered what if something happened to me." Whisper provides Noelle with the peace of mind that she will be safe and independent while getting her much needed teenaged privacy.

Future Dog Guides – Puppies of the Future

All of the Dog Guides at Lions Foundation of Canada start out their lives as very special foster puppies.

The Foster Puppy Program is very fortunate to have approximately 200 foster families throughout the Greater Toronto Area; however, the Foundation is always looking to recruit more families into the program to love, train, socialize and raise healthy and well-behaved future Dog Guides.

The Foundation's puppies are bred at its breeding facility in Breslau, Ontario, or generously donated by breeders. The Foster Puppy Program breeds Labrador Retrievers, Standard and Miniature Poodles, and Border Terriers with plans to expand the breeding program to increase the number of puppies produced each year.

Foster families typically receive their foster puppy at eight weeks of age and raise the future Dog Guide until it is about one year of age. It is at this point when the families selflessly return the foster puppy to the Foundation where it is assessed and, if suitable, placed in one of the three training programs to become a Dog Guide.

Fostering a future Dog Guide is a very rewarding way to give back to the community. "This is the first time that our family has fostered a puppy and we are loving it," said a first-time foster family. "Our community is very interested in the puppy and what will become of her. It is a big responsibility and one that we are thoroughly enjoying."

The key to raising successful Dog Guides is



largely due to the dedication and hard work of foster families. Without them, the Foundation's programs would not exist.

Help make it happen

From the time a puppy is born until long after a Dog Guide team graduates, thousands of people help at every step along the way. Whether it is a breeder donating a puppy, a Lions Club donating a van, an individual sending in \$10, or a grant from a foundation for class expenses, each and every donation makes a difference. Each Dog Guide team costs the Foundation approximately \$20,000 to raise, train and place, yet with the support of many, Dog Guides are provided at no cost. Lions Foundation of Canada does not receive any government funding; therefore, the Foundation relies heavily on the support of general funding from individuals and groups, Dog Guide sponsorships, corporate support, commemorative giving and special events.

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To help provide the gift of mobility, safety and independence to a Canadian with a disability, or for more information, log on to www.dogguides.com or call 1-800-768-3030



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The Institute of Canadian Bankers Helps Professionals Shape and Advance Careers

By ICB

(The Institute of Canadian Bankers)

Everyone values money for all the obvious reasons: food, clothing and shelter. But studies have repeatedly shown money to be vital to our lives because of the link between wealth and happiness.

While such happiness can arise from sound financial planning, few people actually spend time devising a strategy to save money and invest in their future.

Many say they have a financial plan but don't stick to it because it's simply not a priority. In fact, many Canadians would prefer to focus on almost anything, including work, instead of preparing for and securing their financial future, according to recent studies by Desjardins Financial Security and Mackenzie Investments.

Sooner or later, though, everyone realizes there's a need for sound financial planning, especially the hosts of baby boomers who are retiring or on the cusp of retirement.

To sift through the plethora of financial products and services, many will turn to savvy professionals for advice. And to keep up with the growing demand for financial planning expertise, professionals will have to continually enhance their skills through formal education, training programs or short, intensive learning sessions.

Financial services professionals share a need for better and increased access to information and more in-depth knowledge about financial products so they can more confidently and competently fulfill their clients' needs.

For such specialized training and educational services, many professionals turn to The Institute of Canadian Bankers (ICB), which has awarded diplomas, designations and degrees to more than 100,000 individuals since it was founded nearly 40 years ago.

Now considered a leading international provider of financial services education, ICB offers more than 100 certification programs,

licensing and compliance learning activities and short, intensive training sessions in banking, investment, insurance, mortgage, trust services, wealth management and management studies.

Says ICB Executive Director Marie Muldowney: "At ICB, we subscribe to a different kind of wealth; one that's directly tied to learning. For our students, wealth through learning means they will acquire more in-depth knowledge and practical skills, daily working tools and heightened productivity—all of which lead to greater efficiency, competency, autonomy and recognition from their employer and the potential for career advancement.

"For organizations, we consider ourselves their partner, working with them—from concept to market—to develop cost-effective, industry-sanctioned programs. Our learning solutions contribute to boosting employee performance, generating return on investment, mitigating risks, increasing the bottom line, and, ultimately, wealth through learning."

ICB pioneered the delivery of training programs for financial services professionals. While its courses originally catered to employees in Canada's chartered banks, they are now available to a much wider audience across 36 countries.

Programs and learning activities, in both English and French, are delivered online, through distance learning or in classroom. They are taught by industry professionals or academics who are affiliated with major educational institutions. Credits from the ICB Professional Banking and renowned Personal Financial Planner™ Programs are recognized by Canadian universities and can be transferred toward a Bachelor of Commerce or MBA degrees (with a financial services specialization).

Since ICB is also affiliated with regulatory bodies in Canada and around the world, students can earn professional designations that are recognized both domestically and internationally, such as the prestigious Fellow, Institute of Canadian Bankers (FICB), Associate, Institute of Canadian Bankers (AICB) and Personal Financial Planner™.

Susan Barbeau-Wedsworth, who earned an FICB designation, has been taking courses with ICB since she joined the Bank of Montreal (BMO) more than 11 years ago. She has earned both the FICB designation and Mutual Sales certification. Barbeau-Wedsworth, who is a Commercial Account Manager—Mid Market for BMO, has started working on her MBA (Financial Services), which combines ICB and Dalhousie University courses.

“ICB has given me the foundational courses necessary for me within each and every position I had with BMO and given me the tools to move forward and advance my career,” says Barbeau-Wedsworth, who also received a Gold Medal in 2004—for achieving excellence in her studies—as part of the ICB annual recognition awards program.

“I think that without the ICB, there would be a lot of people within in the banking industry that would not have an opportunity to continue their education. ICB allows them to focus their efforts and thus plays a fundamental role in the development of the banking industry.”

Martin de Gannes, an HR and Industrial Relations professional who heads the Scotiabank HR department in Trinidad and Tobago, is an FICB holder who has said he credits his success to ICB courses because of their “practical-based” formats. “It was information and ideas you can actually use and not just concepts.”

Meanwhile, Marcia Stevens-Burgess, who works for National Bank of Industry and Commerce Limited, a subsidiary of Republic Bank Limited in Guyana, has earned a promotion thanks, in part, to the AICB program. She is now Research/Product Development Officer within the National Bank’s Marketing and Public Relations Department.

“ICB provides a platform for enhancing the specialized knowledge of financial services professionals,” Stevens-Burgess said in the February-March 2006 issue of *ICB Insider*, the organization’s bi-monthly newsletter.

“The ‘Consumer Behaviour and Financial Needs’ course captured my interest. It offered the opportu-

nity for financial service professionals like me to be further sensitized about the diverse needs of the customers we serve, which we must address to remain competitive.”

Marie Muldowney sums up that over the years, the ICB has evolved to keep pace—and even stay one step ahead—of a changing and increasingly global industry.

“As the financial services industry becomes more and more globalized, both businesses and professionals will have to confront greater challenges. ICB can help them sharpen their competitive advantage on the world stage as it aims to become the first, fully integrated provider of learning solutions to the financial services industry worldwide.”

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Quick Banking Facts

Canadians are not getting richer

Canadians spend more than they earn. The national savings rate dropped to -0.2 per cent in the last quarter of 2005.

The average annual household income in Canada is \$55,000. It has risen only one per cent or \$500 since 1990.

Total debt per household is equal to 125 percent of disposable income, up from 91 percent in 1990.

(Source: Vanier Institute for the Family)

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Canadian banks as employers

The financial services industry, which includes banks, trust and insurance companies as well as real estate and leasing operations, is one of Canada’s largest employers.

In 2005, Canada had an active work force of 16.2 million people. Almost six per cent, or close to one million people, were employed by the financial services industry—more than those in public administration or government services.

Canadian banks employ roughly 240,000 people in Canada and more than 40,000 people in other countries.

(Source: Statistics Canada)

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In 2004, 28.4 per cent of senior managers at the six largest banks were women, up from 20.3 per cent in 1998.

(Source: Canadian Bankers' Association)

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Canadian banks are gay and lesbian friendly

TD Bank Financial Group

In 2006, TD Bank Financial Group signed a three-year deal with the Québec Gay Chamber of Commerce to be its principal financial institution. TD is sponsoring various events in the gay community, including a contest with a \$15,000 first prize for "the most innovative entrepreneur."

Royal Bank of Canada

In 2005, the Royal Bank of Canada refused to open a bank account for a coalition of socially conservative organizations opposed to the holding of the Out Games in Montréal, scheduled for July 2006. RBC said the coalition's activities contravene the

Charter of Rights and the federal Human Rights Act, which prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Vancity Credit Union

In 2005, Vancity Credit Union, the country's largest credit union whose marketing strategy to the lesbian and gay community has been recognized by financial services and communications industry associations, was named one Canada's top employers by the *Financial Post*, *Canadian Business* and *Maclean's* magazines.

Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce

In 2004, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce hosted its first Gay Pride reception in Toronto. The CIBC was also one of the first banks to make same-sex benefits available to its employees.

(Source: Chartered bank and credit union websites)

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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Nobody enjoys financial market volatility. Over the short term, ups and downs can leave you with the feeling that you're on an investment roller coaster. But there is a way to make volatility your friend. You can use it to lower the overall cost of investing and potentially boost returns.

The best way to take advantage of volatility is through a strategy known as "dollar cost averaging." This involves investing a fixed amount at regular intervals, regardless of how markets are performing. The main advantage is that when markets dip and stocks or mutual fund prices fall, the amount you regularly invest buys more. The end result is that the average cost of an investment will typically be lower than the average market price.

Although dollar cost averaging can be used with a variety of investments, it's particularly well suited for stocks and mutual funds. Here's an example of how dollar cost averaging can work: Let's say you decide to invest \$500 every month during a period of fluctuating prices.

Month	\$ Invested	Share Price	No. of Units
One	\$500	\$20	25 units
Two	\$500	\$25	20 units

Average price per share \$22.50

Average cost per unit over two months \$22.22
(**\$1,000 divided by 45 units purchased**).

Of course, your strategy will be longer term. But the idea is the same—the amount you pay for a stock or mutual fund units will be the average of your cost, and you'll always benefit from purchasing investments

Take Advantage of Dollar Cost Averaging

By Jonathan Sceeles
Edward Jones'
Canadian Investment Representative
www.edwardjones.com



during market dips.

What's more, you'll take much of the work out of investing. By committing yourself to a regular investment strategy, you remain focused on financial goals. Instead of worrying about declining markets, you'll view them as an opportunity. Dollar cost averaging through regular investing

also means you won't be tempted to "time the market" by trying to buy low and sell high. While in theory this works to boost returns, it is difficult for most investors to accurately time the market.

The best way to put dollar cost averaging to work is by taking advantage of regular investment plans offered by financial institutions. These allow you to regularly and automatically transfer money from a bank account to investments. Regular investment plans are ideal for moving funds to brokerage accounts, Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs), mutual funds and other investments.

Putting money aside is a painless way to build wealth. It's easier to contribute smaller amounts throughout the year than to find large lump sums to invest. Not only do you take advantage of dollar cost averaging, you put money to work sooner. This provides the potential to build wealth faster, particularly in tax-sheltered investments such as an RRSP.

You can make regular investments in stocks on a monthly basis or mutual funds at any frequency you choose—including weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly or semi-annually. Most investors choose a monthly plan because it's easy to manage.

Your investment representative can provide more information on dollar cost averaging and help you set up a regular investment plan.

How do your finances stack up? Do you know how well you're doing financially?

Surprisingly, many of us have no accurate idea, because we've never taken the time to figure it out.

It's not that difficult to get a handle on your finances. And knowing where you stand in your financial and investment life is vital, because it dictates your strategy going forward. If you don't know where you are today, you can't plan your future.

One of the best ways to measure financial success is to calculate your net worth. This is the value of everything you own, less everything you owe. Or as they say in financial circles, assets minus liabilities. Net worth provides a picture of your financial life because it shows where

your finances and investments stand at a particular moment. (If you're a couple, make this a family project—including your and your spouse's assets and liabilities.)

While determining your net worth isn't as complex as it may sound, it can take time. Gathering information is the hardest part of the process. Once you've got everything together, computer software can make it easy to perform calculations. You can use a spreadsheet program, or personal financial management software. If you're using finance software, you may already have entered much of the information you need. (If you're not a computer user, you can always do the job on paper.)

To get started, determine the current value of everything you own. This includes your investments, house, cottage, car, collectibles, expensive jewelry and anything else of lasting value. On the investment side, be sure to include your Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), individual securities, mutual funds, employee shareholder plans, deferred profit sharing plans and real estate. Include the cash value of life insurance policies and workplace pension plans. If you are owed money, count it as well.



How do Your Finances Stack Up?

By Jonathan Sceeles
Edward Jones'

Canadian Investment Representative
www.edwardjones.com

Now do the same for debt. How much do you owe on your house, consumer loans and other debts? Include credit card balances, lines of credit and investment loans. If you owe income tax, include it, too.

And don't forget that you'll eventually face income tax liabilities on some of your assets, including the income generated by your RRSP and capital gains earned when you profit from non-registered investments.

These aren't easy to calculate in advance, because you don't know what your future tax situation will be. But these tax liabilities will eventually affect your wealth pool and retirement income.

Now do the math. Calculate the total dollar amount of assets and liabilities. Then subtract liabilities from your as-

sets to come up with your net worth.

If your finances are in good shape, you should own considerably more than you owe, resulting in a substantially positive net worth. If you come up with a negative figure, it's a sign that you have some serious work ahead of you.

Of course, your net worth will vary with age, income and other factors. For example, a negative figure may not be so bad if you and your family are young. You may have just bought your first house and are facing the costs of raising children. You still have plenty of time to build assets.

But in your peak earning years and beyond, you should have a comfortable cushion in savings, investments and RRSPs. These should far exceed debts, particularly if the mortgage is close to being paid off. It's important to have a solid positive net worth because this points the way to your financial future. The more you have, the more comfortably you can retire. You can enjoy life more today, or leave a larger legacy through your estate.

If you don't like your financial snapshot, speak to your investment representative. Get to work as soon as you can to improve the picture.



O'Connor Art Gallery: A Business Success in the Pink Community

By Dennis O'Connor
Owner of O'Connor Art Gallery

At 51 years old I have had a long history of involvement in the arts. It began way back when as a child of thirteen I purchased my first piece, a Michael Snow. I remember my mother being quite astonished that I would take my hard earned money to spend on what she thought was a very foolish purchase.

It was my Irish father who instilled this early interest in art. On Sundays my father, who was a miner in the Nickel mines in Sudbury, played recordings of opera hits featuring Mario Lanza and Caruso. On this day after church I would browse through art books. My father never allowed us to look at these books without supervision because they were meant to be treasured. I now own these books and still marvel at their power of capturing my interest.

As I grew older and discovered my love of books, art, music and the men involved in these arts, I realized early on that I was a homosexual. Naturally being Catholic I felt that this meant a life committed to the priesthood. It was only after a stint at a private boys school that I realized that the two, being gay and a priest, were not necessarily one in the

same. Years later I ended up living with my first lover in Montreal and decided after a stint in retail to go back to school. I chose Concordia University and completed my BFA in art history. I did take a few studio classes with Guido Molinari and the hugely talented Francoise Sullivan. There were trying times for both me and the Gay community throughout this time.

I lived in Montreal during the fabulous times of disco and pre Aids and left Montreal with a lover dying of Aids, to southwestern Ontario and London. These were very dark times for homosexuals the world over. After his death I finally settled here in Toronto. It took a few years for me to decide to begin my own business with my new lover and now husband John Fletcher.

O'Connor Gallery was born in February of 1995 and it's mandate was to feature gay and lesbian artists exclusively. In ten years



we have done over 100 shows with artists from all over the world. This in itself was not an easy task garnering critics from both straight and gay media. Years latter I had the honour of being elected the Church Wellesley Village BIA's first chair one which gave me the chance to work on the Alexander Wood sculpture, help found the Church Street Fetish Fair, the changing of area street signs to reflect our unique neighbourhood and to help in determining future changes to the area.

Recently I was asked and accepted a position on the board of the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives. John Fletcher, my husband, and I have relocated our gallery in a new exciting space in the Queen St. E. design area. Though it is no longer in the village its location allows us to reach out to a wider mar-

ket.

What do I attribute my success to? Sticking to your vision. Your gut instinct is usually the right way to go. You must be ready and willing to follow through on all your projects. Finally, Money, without it or backing it is near impossible to achieve your goal. Success requires not only all your hard work but a financial commitment. Believe in yourself.

My advice to young artists is to create as much as possible. I encourage them to spend time in the studio every day as they would in a nine-to-five job. The creation of incredible art is not just theory alone, one must put those ideas to paper or canvas or whatever medium one wishes to choose. Finally, I encourage young artists to show as much as possible but only show their best.



Enhanced Looks: Can You Benefit from Hair Transplants?

The field of hair restoration has changed drastically over the last few decades. Modern hair restoration, more commonly known as hair transplants, is the process of redistributing one's hair from the back and sides of the scalp (areas that are genetically programmed never to bald) to the balding or thinning areas of the scalp.

Hair restoration like other forms of cosmetic surgery, involves more art than science. Hair transplant surgeons must have a thorough understanding of facial design and structure and must consider many factors such as a patient's hair supply, hair characteristics, and surgical expectations. With the latest hair restoration techniques, skilled surgeons can produce results that appear completely natural and undetectable.

Dr. Antonio Armani is considered a pioneer in the field of hair restoration. As founder and director of AlviArmani Medical Inc., he is always researching new ways to improve his already industry-leading techniques. According to Dr. Armani, the most critical factor when considering hair transplant surgery is the hairline. The AlviArmani approach to hairline restoration involves two critical factors: placement of the hairline and seamless closure of the temple angles.

AlviArmani follows the principles of facial anatomy as defined by famous artist and inventor Leonardo Da Vinci. The hairline in most individuals starts at half the distance above the eyebrows, from the distance between the eyebrows and the chin. By using this formula, a completely natural and original



By Alvi Armani Hair Transplants

www.alviarmani.com

looking hairline can be produced for every patient.

Temple angles give shape and definition to the face. They provide the connection from the hairline to the sides of the head. Traditionally, temple angles have been disregarded in the hair restoration industry due to the time and technical difficulty involved in angling each hair. However, closing the temple angles is essential to creating an attractive frame around the face that makes each person unique.

The most common complaint found in hair transplant surgery is density. Without density, results from hair transplants may appear too thin and therefore, unnatural. AlviArmani employs their industry leading "dense-packing" techniques. Using these techniques, it is now possible to dense-pack as high as 150 hairs per centimetre squared. In addition, patients who are in the early stages of hair loss can stay ahead of their balding as grafts can also be placed amongst thinning hairs to restore original density.

The reality is that hair loss affects millions. Some are uncomfortable with being bald while others simply accept their fate. For those seeking a solution to overcoming hair loss once and for all, hair transplant surgery is the most permanent and effective solution.

alviarmani

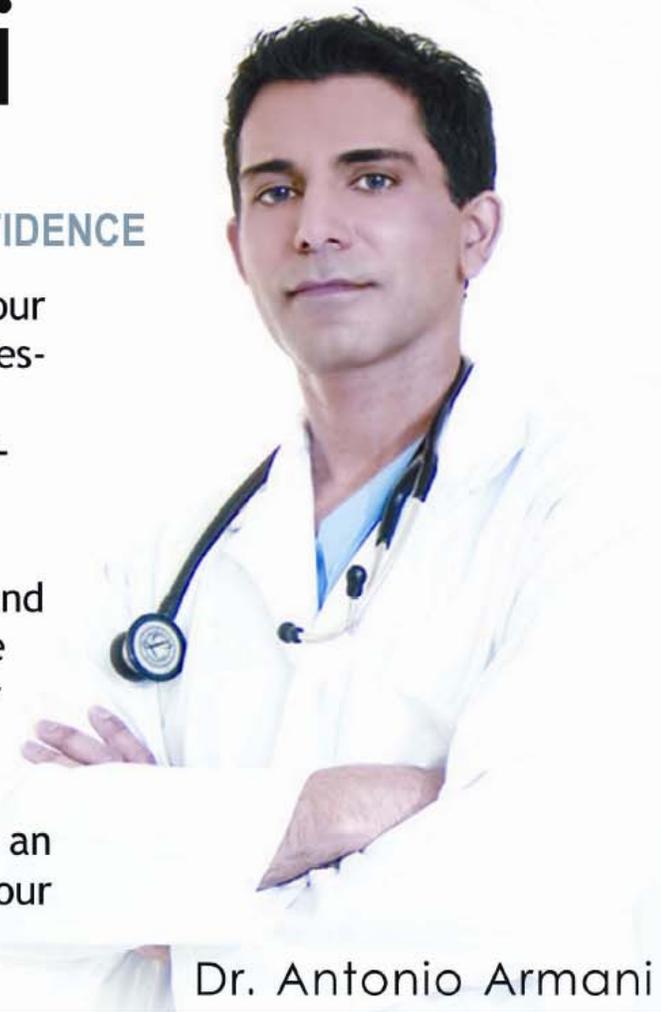
TRUST OUR EXPERIENCE

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AlviArmani understands how strongly your hair loss affects your personal and professional life, whether in daily business, during leisure activities or when socializing with friends and family.

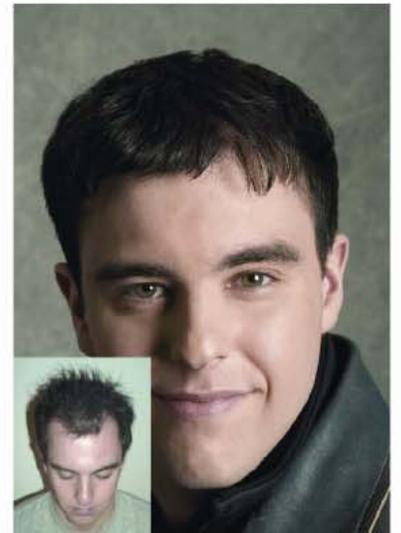
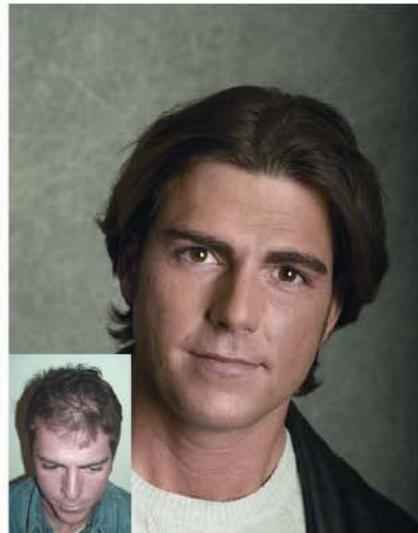
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Upcoming Tradeshow: Gay Life Expo in New York City

By Ricardo Rivera
Account Executive
HX Media, LLC

The main objectives of the Gay Life Expo is to bring businesses (both small and large), corporations, organizations and non-profit groups together with the lucrative and brand-loyal gay and lesbian marketplace. New York City is the world's epicenter and also the largest gay consumer marketplace. The Gay Life Expo is the perfect environment in which businesses can capitalize on this fact, in a face-to-face process.

The Gay Life Expo continues to be a phenomenal success. Now in its 6th year, the Gay Life Expo experiences a growth rate of approximately 20% per year. This is measurable in both the number of exhibitors, the quality of our sponsors, and the number of attendees. For example, in 2005 we had over 200 exhibitors, a large increase from the previous year's 165 exhibitors.

The main reason for our success can be approached from several different angles. First and foremost, businesses are continuing to recognize the favorable statistics of the gay consumers who come to our show. For instance, our attendees have an average annual income of \$100,116 compared to the general public's \$46,000. Our marketing of the Gay Life Expo also continues to become more focused but within the broader framework of the gay and lesbian publications of New York City along with television and radio ads that are targeted to entice potential exhibitors to look into our event as a worthwhile marketing tool.

Gay businesses and professionals benefit from our show in the fact that they are able to network with other gay and gay-friendly businesses in a fun and exciting environment. Here people are able to acknowledge that being gay need not hinder any business growth, future career plans,



or comfort of living. We bring people and businesses to the Gay Life Expo who all have something to gain from being there, be it financially, or otherwise.

As far as I know, the Gay Life Expo is one of only two annual, all-inclusive business expos that occur around the United States. Other expos, such as the gay travel shows are exclusive to travel companies and are much smaller in comparison.

As the show continues to thrive and grow, the quality and level of support from our sponsors continues to increase as well. In 2005, Virgin Atlantic Airlines, Jean Paul Gaultier, Finandia Vodka, Czech Tourism Authority, and Amtrak were among our sponsors.

I do think that the mainstream public visits the Gay Life Expo but almost always come with friends or family who are gay or lesbian or are somehow connected to the community.

In 2006, we will be growing almost two-fold as we have reserved both Halls C & B (rather than just Hall C) which will add another 200 booths to the show floor, increasing the square footage by 80,000. We will also partner with a national film festival organization to feature the first annual Gay Life Film Festival, in conjunction with the Gay Life Expo.

As far as future business plans are concerned, I can only ask that you keep tuned in to the Gay Life Expo and HX Media LLC. as we have major plans for growth in our future!



The Society of Internet Professionals (SIP) is an international not-for-profit organization. SIP's mission is to enhance educational and professional standards for the Internet professionals. As such, SIP has created the Accredited Internet Professional (AIP) designation. Practicing Internet professionals are invited to apply for AIP designation under various streams. Membership in SIP is equally open to all non-internet professionals.

Objectives

- Standardize professional accreditation and certification
- Provide a forum for Internet business and career opportunities
- Form a network of talented professionals intent on collective success

Member Benefits

- Networking opportunities with peers and industry experts
- Free admission to our leading-edge presentations
- Saving on many members services and benefit programs
- Listing in membership directory and access to online members' directory
- Enhanced professional skills that accelerate your career
- Enjoy membership services and affinity programs: Health Insurance, Privacy Compliance Plan, Online Conferencing, etc.

Corporate Sponsor Benefits

- Company profile published in SIP newsletter
- Event sponsorship privileges
- Opportunity to create affinity programs & offer the program from the SIP booth at trade shows (we participate at major shows in Canada & USA)
- Online business listing with logo and link to your web site.
- Listing in membership directory (Online & Print) and access to online members' directory
- Sponsorship plaque
- Seat on Advisory Board

SIPpost - bimonthly Newsletter

This newsletter focuses on upcoming events, trade shows, affinity programs and SIP initiatives, which are broadcast to over 10,000 subscribers.

To subscribe to Events Mailing List/SIPpost visit our Web site: <http://www.sipgroup.org>

AIP: Accredited Internet Professional

SIP is a professional body, which was established in 1997 with a mandate to establish a standard for its members. Accredited Internet Professional (AIP) designation is recognition of an Internet professional's qualifications and experience in accord with our standards.



AIP is a voluntary certification, designed to elevate professional standards, enhance individual performance and identify those, who demonstrate knowledge essential to the best practices of Internet professionals. The SIP designation is key to enhanced recognition of professional stature. Accredited professionals are awarded a plaque, a Pin and AIP digital-seal.

AIP in various streams (web, security, e-Learning, Internet Law, privacy, etc.) is granted by meeting SIP's stream requirements:

- Passing Core Examination or exempted qualifications
- Passing SIP Examination for the selected stream or exempted qualifications
- Professional Experience in the selected stream
- Committing to SIP Code of Ethics and professional conduct.

Details: <http://www.sipgroup.org/certification.html>

Memberships Fees

- **SIP Member:** \$100 per year.
Applications from Asian and African countries are given 50% discount.
- **Corporate Sponsor** for one year is \$1,000 to \$25,000 depending on the sponsorship level, size of the business and event/program being sponsored.
- **Educational Institution Member/ Accredited Training Centre,** \$1,000 to \$5,000 per year.
- **Full-time Student Member:** \$50 per year.
- **Accredited Internet Professional (AIP):** \$400.

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The Significance of Links for your Website Ranking

By Max Haroon

Founding President

Society of Internet Professionals

If you have just visited a new web site, then the chances are, you clicked on a link directing you to this newly discovered website. A website without anyone linking to it is like a business without any coordinates – no one knows about you.

Links not only direct a person to a website but they also direct a spider (a search engine's information gathering program) to the website. Links help your site to get noticed and indexed by search engines. The number of linkages to your website demonstrates the popularity of your website to search engines. The more the better. There are three ways that people can find your website:

1. The Internet surfer types the entire URL (website address) into the command line of their browser. This option requires that your URL is pre-selected or known.
2. The Internet surfer clicks on an advertisement or sponsored links that sends him to your website. This is a huge form of paid internet advertising.
3. The Internet surfer locates you by typing certain keywords (let us call it a key phrase) or your company name into a search engine. Eighty five percent of all traffic to websites is directed by search engines.

Therefore it is very important that your website is listed in the results provided by search engines, when you type a key-phrase in your favourite search engine. Not all websites are listed in the results, and the top page is restricted to only ten websites. If your website is not listed on the top page of a search engine, then the probability of people clicking on your website is next to zero.

There are over 5 billion documents on the World Wide Web today. You use search engines such as Google, MSN, or Yahoo to help sift through this gigantic collection of

documents to find the specific information you need.

Research has shown that Internet surfers who are looking for something on the Internet by typing a key-phrase into a search engine, hardly ever read beyond the first page of search results. If the surfer does not find what he or she is looking for in those 10 websites listed, only then will he or she go to the next page.

Thus your goal should be to get your website listed on the first page of search engines for site-relevant key-phrases. The art of making your website ranking high with search engines is called Search Engine Optimization (SEO). SEO is the way to go if you are looking to *increase targeted traffic* to your site.

If you are marketing products or services via your website, using search engines works better for promoting your site for a number of reasons:

- A top search engine ranking often translates into hundreds of new qualified visitors each month. It is reasonable to anticipate a steady stream of qualified traffic when your Web site achieves continuous top rankings on multiple search engines.
- When an Internet surfer types a keyword into a search engine, they have already identified the product or service they need more information about. The search reflects a definite level of interest by a potential buyer.
- Search engines are the most important tools for locating companies and their products on the Internet. Over half of all

Internet users search the Web every day, which is the second most popular Internet activity after Email.

Since Google is the dominant player, I will use the word Google synonymously with ‘search engine’. Google ranks a website high if the website is popular (i.e. has high traffic). An important method to boost traffic is to get links pointing to your web site. Although PPC (Pay per click) provides the links (incurring expenses) but many visitors hesitate to click on such sponsored links, therefore I favour non-paid links which I call “organic” links (which are found listed below the sponsored links).

One method to get links is to exchange links with related industry/sector's websites. So before you build your website have a linkage strategy in place; they may be your suppliers, customers or media. In the case of the Society of Internet Professionals (SIP) we were not proactive and waited for media, directories, magazines and our members to provide us links. This worked for SIP as we have been around since the early days of the internet, as of the last count there were 316 pages linking to our website.

A blog (web diary) linking your web site is also a good visibility. We just started a SIP blog called: <http://sipgroup.blogspot.com> — within a month we had the blog listed as one of the sites in a Google search for SIP’s home page links.

Please note that link popularity alone does not necessary ensure high ranking of your web site (for your keywords). I will cover some other SEO techniques in future notes, starting with Significance of Keywords or Key-phrases.

In summary, start by getting your web site indexed by search engines (there are hundreds of search engines but Google, MSN and Yahoo predominate). Filling in forms and submitting them to the search engines is no longer very effective; let the spiders of these search engines find your website. One way these robotics programs find your website is through a link from another web site.

When you build a website, build a content rich, well-structured and user friendly website. Both spiders and humans like these type of websites. Make sure your links are not broken. Neither spiders nor humans do forgive you for that 404 error “page not found”.

.....

What’s After Getting the Website Up? Are You Getting the Traffic?

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Step 1:

Get Traffic and Get High Ranking with Search Engines

Web surfers who do not know the URL of your website will look for it using search engines. In fact, the largest numbers of surfers to any web site typically come from click-throughs from search engines. If your website is not among the 10 to 30 entries on the first page of the search engine’s listing, it will not be seen at all by the surfer, as most surfers do not look at the second or subsequent pages. Remember, your website has lots of competition for surfers; there are about a billion visible web pages on the internet. So setting up your site to command a high ranking with search engine is critical to generate traffic.

Step 2:

Retain your Traffic

If a surfer experiences anything negative in the website, then their visit does not last more than a few seconds. This can happen if your web site was not designed for usability, has broken links, missing anchor text, or is too slow to load. Worse still, your site may be down! So, designing your website for usability and continuing monitoring is essential.

Step 3:

Analyze your Traffic

Finally, do you know anything about your surfers – your traffic? You go to considerable expense to analyse traffic to your brick and mortar business, then why not invest into analysing traffic on your web site? The majority of web sites have no tools or resources to get traffic reports and to analyze them in a meaningful way for their effectiveness.

Sponsoring a Same-Sex Partner to Canada: What You Need to Know

Immigration Law in Canada has undergone a tremendous amount of change since I first started working in the field in 1978 but the most significant and profound change came with the new Immigration Act in 2002. After two decades of fighting for the rights of the gay and lesbian community, the Government finally recognized in that year that loving, long-standing relationships were worthy of being recognized for immigration purposes. With that Act, we saw the addition of sponsorship for common-law and conjugal partners and with the change in the Marriage Act, sponsorship for same-sex spouses. Since that change, thousands of gay and lesbian couples of different nationalities have been united or re-united in Canada.

The provisions for sponsorship are not however straight forward. Over these past three years I have seen numerous applications refused on the basis that they have not 'proved' their case or have not met the specific guidelines.

Here is a brief overview of the essential elements of each category.

Spousal Sponsorship

If you qualify as a sponsor (some exceptions such as being an un-discharged bankrupt) you may sponsor your spouse to Canada only if you were married in Canada. If you were legally married in a country outside of Canada, the government will not process the case as a spouse. They will however consider your case either under the conjugal partner or the common-law partner if it applies. Sponsorships of spouses may be filed either inside Canada, if you are already living together in Canada, or outside Canada if your partner has not yet come to Canada. If it is from within Canada, your spouse must not be under a removal order that can be executed.

Common-law Sponsorship

In order to be considered 'common-law', you must have continuously resided with your

partner for at least one year or more. As in the spousal sponsorship, you may do this while your partner is outside Canada or inside Canada. The same exceptions as in the spousal sponsorship applies.

Conjugal-Partner

A conjugal partnership is a 'marriage like' relationship without actually living together. The relationship must be at least one year old. This is the most problematic of the sponsorship categories as you must be able to provide a good reason why you have not either married or are not living together. Many conjugal sponsorships are refused because the Immigration officer considers the relationship to be simply a dating relationship. You may **only** sponsor a 'conjugal partner' from outside Canada. That means, that if you are in a conjugal relationship with someone that lives in Canada, you may not sponsor them from within Canada. Again, you must meet the requirements as a sponsor in the same way that you must in either a common-law or spousal situation.

The following Q & A reflects the most common questions couples have asked regarding eligibility.

.....

Q. I have been in a relationship with my partner who lives outside of Canada, for the past 8 months. Can I sponsor him to Canada as my partner?

A. *No. The conjugal relationship must be in existence for at least one year.*

Q. My conjugal partner lives outside Can-

ada. We have been dating for over three years, and now I would like to sponsor her to see if we are compatible to live together.

A. *Your application will likely fail. A conjugal relationship is considered to be 'married like'. That means that you have already made a long term commitment to one another and that commitment was made at least one year prior to the sponsorship. In addition, you must have joined much of your material lives together such as holding joint finances. You must also have a good reason why the two of you have not lived together over the period of your relationship. Usually, those reasons are the fact that the immigration requirements of each other's countries are prohibitive or you must maintain your individual professions until such a time that a visa can be issued for immigration.*

Q. I have lived with my partner in Canada for 9 months but we have been together over 4 years. Will immigration consider the time that we were in a conjugal relationship prior to our moving in together in order to sponsor my partner from within Canada as a common-law partner?

A. *No. The definition of common-law is very clear. You must have actually co-habited for at least one year. You could however sponsor you partner through your partner's home country in the conjugal partner category. In order to do this, you must have a home address for your partner in that country even if you state that his mailing address is in Canada.*

Q. I married my partner in Canada last year and we have been together ever since. My partner however is a refugee claimant and her application has been refused. Can I still sponsor her from within Canada.?

A. *Yes, provided that your partner has not finished and been refused on the Pre-Removal Risk Assessment (PRRA). Once that happens, their removal order becomes eligible to be executed and they no longer qualify.*

Q. I have been in a common-law relationship with my partner in Canada for many years but my partner is underground and has no status. Can I sponsor her inside Canada anyway?

A. *Yes, provided, as in the refugee case above, they are not under an executable removal order.*

Q. I want to sponsor my partner but I am a student and have not earned any money. Can I still sponsor?

A. *Yes. Sponsoring a Spouse, Common-Law or Conjugal Partner does not require that you make a certain amount of money in any given year. There are some exceptions to sponsorship such as if you are on Welfare or other social assistance outside of Disability Social Assistance.*

Q. I want to sponsor my spouse but we are in an 'open' relationship. We are committed to one another, but that does not preclude us from occasional sexual encounters with other people. Can I still sponsor him?

A. *The application will likely be refused. Part of the definition for spouse, common-law and conjugal partners is that the relationship is monogamous. This is not set out specifically in the law, however Immigration Canada considers this to be an important aspect to determine the bona fides of the relationship. This is one area that is often appealed.*

Q. My partner has a record. Can I still sponsor him?

A. *Yes, but serious criminal offences will make him inadmissible. In some cases, that inadmissibility could be processed under rehabilitation and in some you would have to appeal to the Immigration Appeal Board under Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds.*

Q. My partner has a serious medical condition. Will she be allowed an immigrant visa?

A. *Yes. All of the partnership categories are exempt from medical inadmissibility.*

.....

The above information constitutes basic information about gay and lesbian immigration to Canada and is not exhaustive. It is always recommended that you consult a qualified lawyer or consultant before you file your application to determine if your case meets the criteria and to determine if the laws and policy have changed since the time of this publication.

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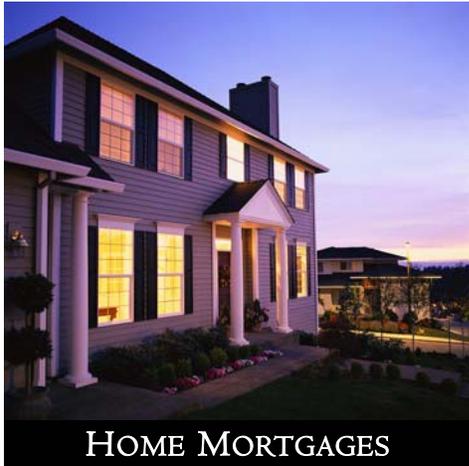
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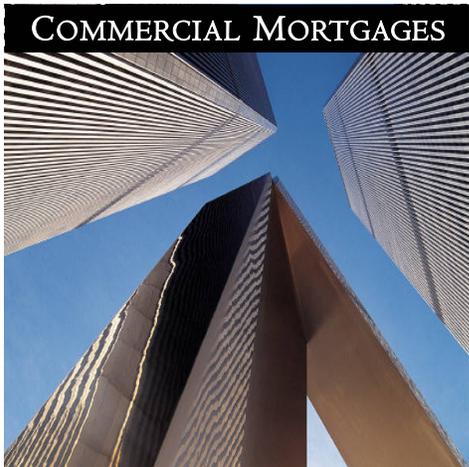
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Wines of  *ntario*

AS MUCH CHARACTER AS THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE THEM

Entertaining With Wines: Take the Stress Out of Party Hosting With Helpful Tips

Hosting a party can be stressful for anyone and one of the biggest challenges that people often face is the selection of wine. You can make your party special by treating guests to a selection of some of Ontario's award winning VQA wines.

There are many factors to consider when planning your wine purchases.

How much should I buy?

As a general rule, you can pour five to six glasses of wine from a 750 ml bottle. If you're planning a sit-down affair, count on one bottle for every two guests. If you're having a stand-up gathering, plan on 1 to 2 glasses per hour, per guest.

For either event, it's always a good idea to have an extra bottle or two on hand.

How much should I spend?

Price doesn't necessarily guarantee a wine will suit your taste. There are many choices from different price ranges that will pair well with the foods you are serving.

It's better to let your budget and the occasion guide your spending.

How do I choose?

Offer guests a choice of reds and whites. You may be serving different wines before dinner, during dinner, with dessert and after the meal. Log on to www.winesofontario.org to see the *Great Grapes* section for wines to match your specific menu. Above all - have fun! Parties and dinners are a great time to experiment and try new varietals. And relax – the best wine is the one you enjoy!

Serving Ontario Wine

You chill white wine and serve red wine at room temperature...right? Well, not exactly. The taste and bouquet of wine can be significantly affected by its temperature, so it's worth taking a few minutes to make sure you're serving the wine at the best temperature.

By Ontario VQA Wines

www.winesofontario.org



At what temperature should I serve wine?

Ideal serving temperature for most white wines is 10° - 14° Celsius. Most red wines should be served a little below room temperature, 18° -20° Celsius. Chill wines in the refrigerator as follows:

- 10 mins: Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Baco Noir
- ½ hour: Gamay Noir, Pinot Noir, Rose
- 1 hour: White and sparkling wines (A fuller bodied white, such as oaked Chardonnay, may be served closer to room temperature to allow the rich flavours and aromas to come forward)
- 1 ¼ hours: Icewine, Late Harvest Wine

If you're surprised that Red Wines should be slightly chilled, it's because the old adage "room temperature" originated in Europe many years ago when room temperature was around 15 degrees Celsius, not the 18 to 20 degrees it is today. The slight chilling of red wine helps improve the taste and bouquet of the wine as it warms after serving.

What about wine glasses?

If you have red and white wine glasses so much the better, but if you're relying on a universal glass make sure it is stemmed with a bowl broader than the rim. The shape of the glass helps to capture the aroma and the stem ensures your hand is not touching the bowl and warming the wine.

How do I pour the wine?

Pour the wine without touching the rim of the glass. But don't overfill! The aromas of the will be fully released if the glass is only filled to the bulge of the bowl. The wine will be able to breathe and you'll be able to comfortably swirl the glass and enjoy the bouquet.

How do I taste the wine?

Start by holding your glass by the stem. It might seem pretentious, but it actually keeps you from warming up the wine with your hand (and avoids fingerprints on the glass).

Wine is enjoyed through three senses: sight, smell, and taste. First, evaluate the *look* by holding the glass up to a white background (like a tablecloth or wall) and looking for a clear and intense colour. Colour can vary from pale straw to rich amber for whites (many whites deepen in colour as they age) and translucent cherry to deep ruby for reds (reds become more muted in colour – mahogany or brick - as they age).

Next, move on to the *smell* of the wine. Usually, we think the taste is what we enjoy most. But in reality, our tongues only recognize four tastes (sweet, sour, bitter and salt) but our nose can identify thousands of different smells. To smell the wine, swirl it in the glass and take a few short sniffs. As you swirl, the wine mixes with the air to release the bouquet. Words often used to describe the aromas in wine are: apple, melon, citrus, berry, vanilla, grass, butterscotch, and chocolate, to name a few.

Finally, it's time to *taste* the wine. Take a sip and keep it in your mouth. Try to notice both the taste and texture. Feel the "body" (or weight) of the wine as either light bodied (less alcohol) or medium or full-



bodied (higher alcohol). Then swallow, and note the finish (the kind and length of taste) of the wine.

What's the best way to save what's left?

Opened, unfinished wines should be re-corked and placed in the refrigerator. Generally, white wines have a life span of up to four days and reds, two days.

Where's the best place to store Ontario Wine:

Unopened wine, if stored correctly, can last months or even years depending on the varietal.

Do's: Store wine in a cool (14 – 16 degrees Celsius), dark, dry place away from vibration and direct sunlight (at home, this could mean the basement or a closet). Also, lay bottles on their sides so the corks don't dry out.

Avoid: Storing unopened wine in the fridge. This can make the wine taste flat over time, and some whites can even be over-chilled.

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Food and Wine matches

For some helpful hints on how to match your wine with your food, log on to www.winesofontario.org and click on the food and wine matching tool kit.

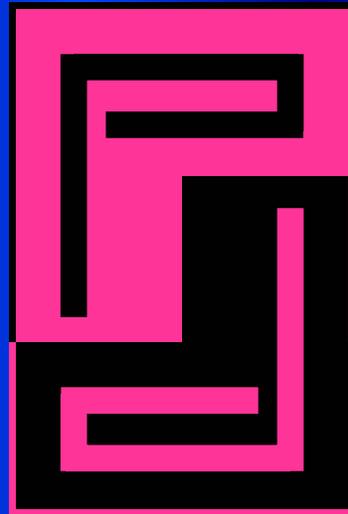
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Pink Digest caters to both gay and non-gay communities. Pink Digest comprises of departments such as marketing, business, tourism, finance, economics, and many others! The publication hopes to meet the needs of corporations that wish to market their products and services to the gay community, and desire to serve as a link between the gay and non-gay communities. Pink Digest is committed to gay-centered advertisements consisting of gay themes, colours, and graphics in order to ensure that advertising investment dollars will bring good return on investment.

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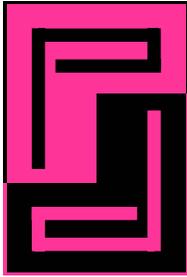
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Battle of the Professions: Defend Yourself!

Who is important to a company - an accountant or a marketer?

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Reader's Forum



Now that you have read the first issue of the world's premier consumer and business publication of the gay community, please share with us your ideas regarding which properties of magazine you liked, disliked, or would like changed for future issues of the magazine. Please take a few minutes to fill out the form below to help us improve this publication to suit your needs. Your feedback will be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

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1. How informative did you find the main departments (business, economics, marketing, finance, and tourism) of the Pink Digest?

- Very informative
- Somewhat informative
- Not very informative

2. How useful did you find the other features of Pink Digest?

- Very useful
- Somewhat useful
- Not very useful

3. Did you feel the advertisements in Pink Digest were gay-oriented and appealing to your needs?

- Very appealing
- Somewhat appealing
- Not very appealing

4. How impressed were you with the format, layout, and the design of Pink Digest?

- Very impressed
- Somewhat impressed
- Not very impressed

5. Do you think the contents of Pink Digest were useful to both gay and non-gay communities alike?

- Very useful
- Somewhat useful
- Not very useful

Comments:



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