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## Carriage Ridge Resort – A Year-Round Destination

By Julie Fitz-Gerald

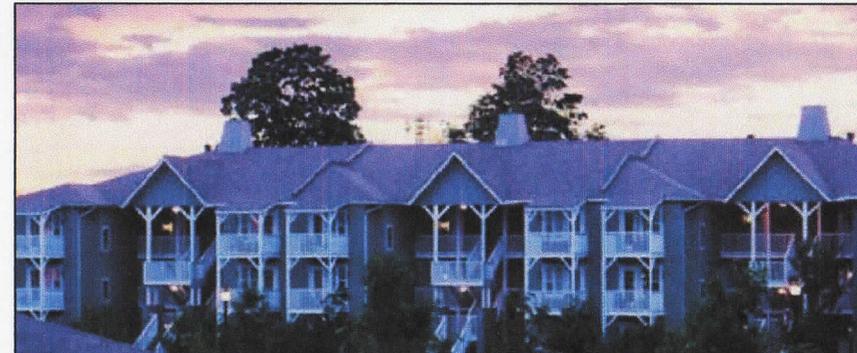
A weekend spent amongst the hardwood trees and pines of Horseshoe Valley was exactly what my family and I needed to break up the long winter stretch that follows the holiday season. With the minivan loaded and our two boys fastened into their car seats, we headed north to Carriage Ridge Resort, a destination favoured by skiers during winter months and golfers during spring, summer and fall.

After a quick drive up highway 400, we exited at Horseshoe Valley Road and within minutes arrived at our destination. The 153 condo suites that make up Carriage Ridge were built in 2004 and are situated just steps away from the picturesque fairways and slopes of Horseshoe Resort. As we entered our suite, my four-year-old son's eyes widened in disbelief. Standing on our private balcony, we were just a stone's throw away from the skiers and snowboarders who were enjoying the final days of the spring ski season.

Carriage Ridge's sister resort and neighbour, Carriage Hills Resort, was built in 1999 and offers 338 condo suites, some that overlook the tenth hole of Horseshoe Highlands Golf Course. Guests staying in these suites can enjoy the panoramic view of the golf course

from their private balconies. Both resorts are a golfer's paradise, with several championship courses located mere minutes away.

We were happy to discover that both resorts, developed and managed by Shell Vacations, offer a variety of daily activities for children in their respective recreation houses: the Carriage House and the Ridge House. Daily crafts range from puppet-making to tie-died t-shirts and activities often include movie nights and scavenger hunts. The gem of the resorts is a heated indoor/outdoor pool located in the Carriage House, accompanied by a sauna and indoor and outdoor hot tubs. The Ridge House has a large indoor pool, kids' pool and hot tub, which is where we spent the majority of our stay. The kids loved jumping into the large pool, splashing in the



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DAILY CRAFT SESSION AT THE RIDGE HOUSE.



kiddie pool and warming up in the hot tub, with mom and dad in tow.

If a short excursion off the resort is in the cards then there is no shortage of excitement within five minutes of your suite's front door at the Adventure Park at Horseshoe Resort. In addition to offering Canada's only fully operational Ogo adventure, the park also features a zip line, water tubing, climbing wall, skate park, euro bungy, a maze and the coolest mini put around. For an added adrenaline boost, adventure enthusiasts can experience ATV riding, treetop trekking, horseback riding, Hummer tours or a Segway adventure. Visit: [www.Horseshoeresort.com](http://www.Horseshoeresort.com) for details. If hanging out with exotic wildlife is to your taste then the Elmvale Jungle Zoo is just around the corner on Hwy 27: [www.elmvale-junglezoo.com](http://www.elmvale-junglezoo.com).

After a day of swimming and fresh air we were happy to return to our suite and sink into the king-size bed for a well-deserved rest. Both Carriage Ridge and Carriage Hills offer the standard Resort Suite, which includes a king-size bed, pull-out sofa couch, kitchenette and private balcony. However, an upgrade to the one-bedroom suite is well worth the

money and includes extras like a Jacuzzi tub, a gas fireplace for cozy evenings and a full kitchen complete with appliances and dishes. Anyone with kids will appreciate the spaciousness and functionality of the one-bedroom suite. Two-bedroom suites are also available for larger groups, offering the same amenities as the one-bedroom option.

While there are no restaurants located on resort premises, meals were made easy with the full kitchen and the conveniently-located barbeque pavilions dotting the property. We made our family favourites for breakfast and lunch, while dinner was reserved for the nearby restaurants. There are a variety of dining options located minutes away, including fine dining cuisine at The Restaurant at Settlers' Ghost, Abbots or Silks Dining Lounge, pub fare at Crazy Horse, or home-cooking from the local greasy spoon in Craighurst known as Loobies. Given our two-year-old son's tendency to be a bit boisterous at dinner, we opted for the casual atmosphere of Crazy Horse at Horseshoe Resort and were pleasantly surprised by how quickly our food came out, especially considering almost every table was full.

Competitive rates at both resorts mean that a family getaway doesn't have to break the bank either; a mid-summer stay for a family of four ranges from \$95 to \$170 per night, depending on the room and time of booking. Golf groups with a minimum five room booking can get a head start on the season with a value-packed "Stay and Play" package with Settlers' Ghost Golf Club. The package is \$80 per person based on double occupancy and is available until May 31, 2012. After May 31 the "Stay & Play" package start at \$89. It includes an overnight stay in a Resort Suite at Carriage Ridge, an 18-hole round of golf per person, free shared power cart, free shared bucket of balls and a golfer's welcome gift.

Carriage Ridge Resort was a relaxed setting where we could enjoy our energetic boys, spending much needed quality time together. This home away from home is a destination that summons guests back throughout the changing seasons of the year.



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Settlers' Ghost 18 holes  
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Simoro 18 holes  
[simoro.ca](http://simoro.ca)

Shanty Bay 27 holes  
[shantybaygolf.com](http://shantybaygolf.com)

Heritage Hills 18 holes  
[heritagehillsgolfclub.com](http://heritagehillsgolfclub.com)

Orr Lake 18 holes  
[orrlakegolfclub.ca](http://orrlakegolfclub.ca)

Orellia Golf 18 holes  
705-322-0678

Hawk Ridge 45 holes  
[hawkridgegolf.com](http://hawkridgegolf.com)

Trehaven 18holes  
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Springwater 18 holes  
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Landings of Willow Creek 9 holes  
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