

Visit Ottawa in style

by Sam McEvoy

If you enjoy a really first class hotel, then you should plan to stay at the Four Seasons when you come to Ottawa. This beautifully appointed 230-room hotel has taken the lead in comfort in the capital region.

Just a few blocks from the parliament building, it is in the process of completing a million dollar renovation program which has given the bedrooms, lobby, dining room and lounges a completely new look. The accent is on soft pastels, flowered prints and a natural look which is very appealing.

The Four Seasons is competing for the patronage of executives, administrators and diplomats who flock to Ottawa when parliament is in session. The goal is to provide a relaxing, comfortable and friendly ambience which will encourage the busy executive to relax. This happens to be just right for the holiday visitor too. Travel Times recently surveyed the hotel's facilities which offer just about everything a traveller would need in most attractive surroundings.

We asked Mr. Jean-Paul Horst, General Manager, what he thinks is the secret of a quality hotel. "You can have the most beautiful establishment," he declared, "but unless you have a well-trained staff, you won't make it in this business. The secret is to establish a good relationship with each guest.

"Today's executives are very sensitive to the attitude of the people they meet. They are quick to detect a lack of sincerity. This means that not only must our staff be efficient, but they must be friendly too and show a real interest in their comfort. The cliché 'it must begin at the top' is very true in our business. So I take care that the staff sees members of the management team providing friendly, helpful service to our guests."

Mr. Horst is particularly proud of the hotel's Concierge service which is in the European tradition. It is intended to help the guest get the most out of a visit to Ottawa by providing information and services such as airline schedules and reservations,

scenic tours, good places to eat, entertainment, theatre, shopping and even jogging maps. A pocket telephone pager is available so that guests can be advised of important telephone calls as they move about the city.



Jean-Paul Horst, General Manager, meeting newly arrived guests at the registration desk.



The hotel's Concierge Service provides information on Ottawa after dark as well as booking theatre tickets, making airline reservations and taking care of other travel needs.



The Four Seasons Hotel, Ottawa, Ontario.

ONTARIO

Ottawa's disco patrons have a reputation for quickly tiring of popular haunts. We asked Mr. Horst about Sacha's an intimate discotheque off the main lobby. "Sacha's is popular for lunch and in the evening too," he replied. "Disco is a very competitive business in Ottawa. The key to the success of Sacha's compared to other places in town is the consistency of the product at a good price. Not everyone is willing to go through the trouble to maintain the product."

The beautiful new look of the Four Seasons is most noticeable in the dining room. It is a very elegant in French country style with soft pinks and greens. The 18th century furniture and fixtures blend in with the informal atmosphere. We asked Maitre d'hôtel Branko what changes had been introduced into the Restaurant Carleton since it had been redecorated.

"We are most fortunate to have a talented and creative chef who changes our menu to match the change in the seasons. It's an inspiration to our dining room staff and makes it easier to perform the more personal service which guests appreciate. It's a challenge because we have a wide range of international clientele who come here regularly. Many entertain here and some expect special little services which one must remember. For example, one ambassador likes to have his favourite liqueur on the table along with the spices as soon as he arrives. Another likes to begin lunch with a chilled white wine. We don't wait for him to ask for it."

The Sidewalk Café will round out the extensive reservation program when it becomes a wine bar with a choice of connoisseur and moderately priced house wines. Mr. Jean-Jacques Pergant, Executive Assistant Manager has recently purchased a stock of French, German, Swiss, Austrian and California wines, with emphasis on recent good vintage years, for both the dining room and wine bar.

The Maitre d'hôtel summed up the reason behind the hotel's substantial investment in good taste. "Today, people are so much better informed compared to even a decade ago when I came to Canada from Europe." If you would like to sample the elegant comfort of the Four Seasons in Ottawa, call toll free 800-268-6282. □