

Outlook on Lifestyle

Quality travelling reflects the price

Bargain trips can be good buys, but the quality of travel services is often a direct reflection of price, experts say.

The more expensive of two similar trips would normally offer higher quality, says Hal Burns, Ontario Travel Registrar.

"Price shouldn't be your sole guideline when choosing a trip, but it can be a good indicator," Burns says. "People in Ontario are into late bookings and last minute sell-offs. If it's available at the last minute, it may be a legitimate bargain, but the seats may be available because nobody wanted them. You've got to wonder why..."

Complaints are often filed with the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations by travellers who expected too much from a bargain tour. They shopped around for the cheapest package on the market, ignoring location and other important factors in the search for the lowest price tag, says Marilyn Gurevsky, a consumer advisor with the ministry.

"Yes, we get legitimate complaints about travel services," she says. "Yes, it can be difficult to ensure you are booking a good hotel at a destination you'll enjoy. But don't compound the risk of dissatisfaction by looking for luxury in economy class. If you pay box lunch prices, don't expect the elegant dining pictured in glossy travel brochures."

Travel brochures are designed to sell trips, Burns notes. They invariably feature the most attractive aspects of a destination, while highlighting the lowest prices.

Burns warns travellers to read promotional material carefully to clarify exactly what is included in prices before comparing trips and especially before spending money.

"The most dangerous word in travel advertising is 'from' followed by a price," says Burns. "The most prominently displayed price is generally the lowest one offered and it may only be available on a few seats or there may be other disadvantages that are not immediately obvious."

When reading travel ads, be aware that hotel and restaurant standards differ from one nation to the next, Burns advises. A five star hotel in one country may not be on par with similarly rated accommodations elsewhere. Adding to the confusion, travel brochures often use their own rating systems and consumers should find out how they work before using them as guidelines.

"I saw one brochure that used five stars as the lowest rating," Burns says.

Woodpecker's retreat

By DON SCALLEN
Herald Special

North Halton is home to six varieties of woodpeckers. These colourful, noisy birds are generally easy to locate and observe.

The most familiar of our woodpeckers is undoubtedly the downy, a small black and white bird that makes regular visits to suburban yards. Downy woodpeckers scour the bark of trees for insects and are easily attracted to feeding stations that offer suet. They'll also eat sunflower seeds.

The hairy woodpecker is another common Halton resident, albeit seldom observed in town. These woodpeckers are coloured almost "exactly like downys but are about twice the size. A much longer, heavier bill also distinguishes the hairy from its smaller closely related cousin.

Hairy woodpeckers are woodland birds and like all woodpeckers, proclaim their territories by "drumming." Drumming describes the

behavior of pounding the bill into resonant objects within a woodpecker's territory. From a woodpecker's point of view the louder, the better, for the noise tells other competing woodpeckers to "back off."

Old, dead trees are generally selected for drumming but any resonant material can serve as a woodpecker's sounding board. Metal garbage cans, pipes and drain spouts have been used for this purpose.

Backyard Naturalist

By DON SCALLEN
Herald Special



The hairy woodpeckers, in common with other woodpeckers, excavates nesting holes in living or dead trees. These locations are fairly easy to find in late spring and ear-

ly summer by listening for the clamor of the hungry young. I've found several nests this way, usually located high up in aspens, birches or poplars.

Another is the northern flicker. The eating habits of this large, robust woodpecker differs somewhat from those of our other woodpeckers. The flicker's bone structure, lacking some of the strength of other woodpeckers and a bill that is noticeably curved, prevent it from finding grubs under tough tree bark the way most woodpeckers do.

These deficiencies however, do not mean that flickers go hungry. Rather than pound the bark of trees for their meals, flickers more often search the ground for ants. Their long, barbed tongues make them very efficient anteaters - as many as 5000 are consumed in a single meal. Other insects supplement the diet as well.

The flicker's dependency on ants explains why most of them leave Ontario for more temperate climes further south in the winter. The bark feeding downys and hairys however, stay with us the year round.



Travel

VINCENT EGAN

These "bargains" may involve second rate hotels, frequent stops enroute, and no extras. They can be great for those who are aware of potential shortcomings, but too many travellers have unrealistic expectations, Gurevsky says.



DEMAND THE BEST

Home

Post Scripts



By Glenda Hughes

877-5296

If there ever was a scariest looking document, I don't know what it is (oh maybe your Separation Agreement would run a close first!!) That Offer to Purchase is just full of all sorts of legal jargon, which we, as real estate agents, become very used to - but for the everyday person, it is pretty wordy.

There are a lot of terms and terminology in there that can be easily explained in everyday language, and you needn't feel "stupid" if you don't understand it. When you put an "Offer" together to buy a house, you will see a legal size document, with lots of blanks that are filled in by typewriter, a section in the middle that is basically typewritten, containing different clauses pertaining to your particular situation, and then finally, at the bottom and on the reverse side, a lot of small print.

These forms are standard throughout the industry, and are nothing to be afraid of, but you should understand what you are signing. Ask your agent to explain the terminology that he or she will no doubt use, like: "escape clause," "bump," "48 hr.," "waiver," "Statement of Adjustments," "at the Purchasers expense, or the Vendors expense," and definitely have them explain what happens to your cheque that you give as a deposit, and when it will be deposited.

I often think that someone must have made a lot of money thinking up all that legal talk just to confuse the greater part of society, and then have the lawyers charge us for explaining it to us.

Actually your lawyer will be more than happy to explain the form to you, and it will be included in the regular legal costs that you pay him for closing your transaction.

Your agent can do a whole lot to help you through the mist of confusion - don't hesitate to ask - and I wish you a happy purchase!

Homes Sold Creatively

THIS WEEK'S MORTGAGE RATES

AS OF AUGUST 5/87

	VARIABLE	3 MO. OPEN	3 MO. CLOSED	1 YR. OPEN	1 YR. CLOSED	2	3	4	5	7	10
Bank of Nova Scotia	10	-	9%	10%	10%	10%	11	11%	11%	-	-
Bank of Montreal	9%	9%	-	10%	9%	10%	10%	11	11%	11%	-
Canada Trust	-	9%	-	10%	10%	11	11%	11%	-	-	12
CIBC	-	9%	-	10%	10%	10%	11	11%	11%	-	-
Halton County Co. Union	-	-	-	10%	10%	-	-	-	-	-	-
TD Bank	9%	-	9%	10%	10%	11	11%	11%	-	-	12
Bank of Toronto	10	9%	-	10	10	10	11	11	11	-	-



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