

Make your honeymoon

From the hush of the desert to the dazzle of Disney

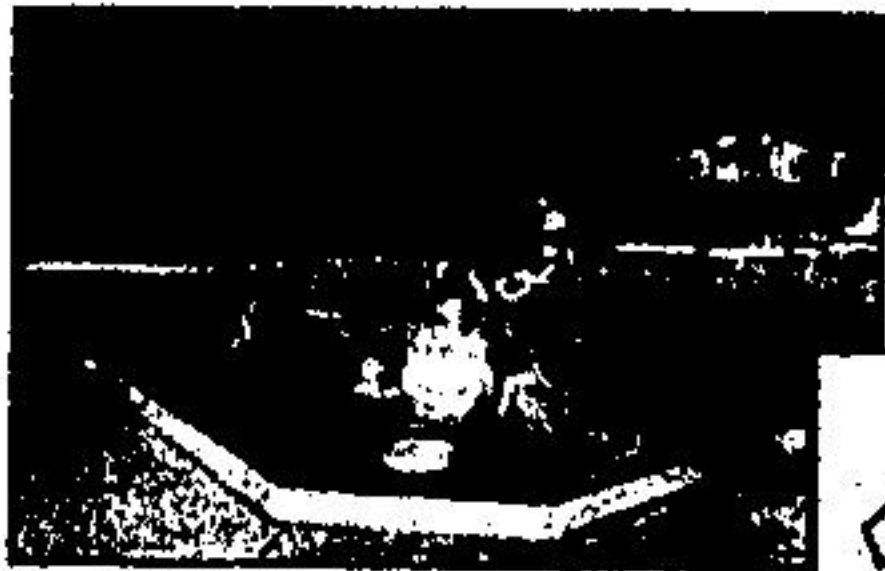
I got a crush on the place the moment I arrived — the incredible Sarasota and Village des Pins! A friend had told me about it, and indeed, the charm, serenity and bewitching beauty of the surroundings provided the perfect formula for what I sought: a place to relax ... far from the hubbub of the big cities and the blatant commercialism of so many locations on the Atlantic coast of Florida.

Situated on the Gulf of Mexico about 50 miles from Tampa and two hours by car from Orlando, Epcot Center and Disney World, the elegant Sarasota extends lazily along a stretch of inviting beaches. Siesta Beach, in particular, with its soft, white, powdery sand, far surpasses other beaches in the world, including European ones, most of which I have visited on my many trips abroad. Above all, there were hidden pleasures, such as the unexpected discovery of secluded desert spots, while hiking on the beaches, the frequent pauses for a dip into the 30° Celsius ocean water!

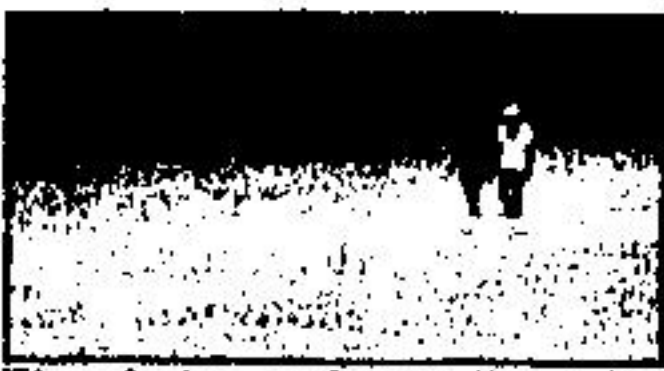
The Village was more beautiful than I'd expected. Nestled in a lovely park, with an abundance of pine and palm trees, hibiscus, laurel shrubs and bougainvillea, the 112 pearly-tinted villas with red tile roofs form several harmonious circles. I felt that I had found the haven I was searching for.

All the comforts of a luxurious home

Each villa is air conditioned and tastefully furnished over its surface of 1,400 square feet. Comfort is the key note here. With two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a living room, a dining room, kitchen, screened verandah and garage with automatic controls, four to six people can enjoy a relaxed uncrowded atmosphere of air-conditioned luxury. The fully-equipped kitchen is ready for the gourmet chef to spring into action. Other practical features include a washer and dryer, very handy for towels and bathing suits.



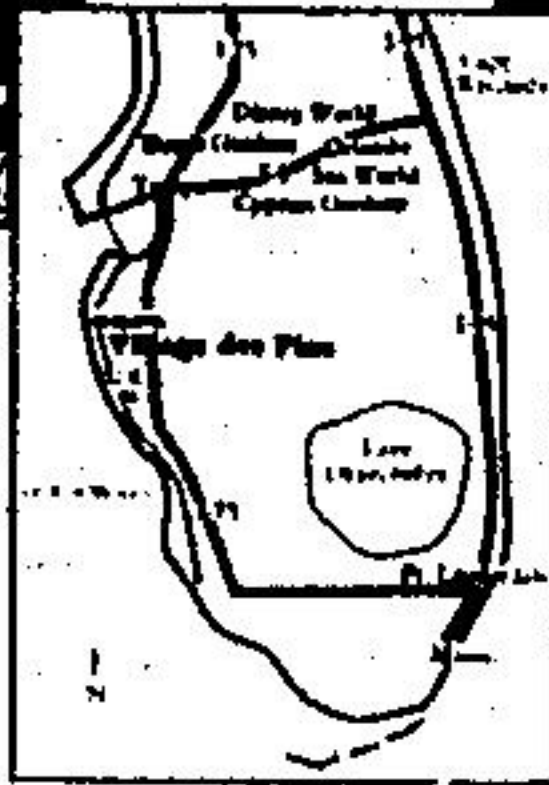
Fun for the entire family.



The pleasure of a stroll on the beach.



The internationally-known Van Wezel Theatre.



The beautiful lake at Village des Pins.



Ideal courts for tennis buffs.

The beautiful Village des Pins located in Central Florida, offers a haven to Canadians seeking solitude relaxation, sport and the arts.

From the verandah, I admired the graceful swans on the Village lake, the blue and white herons and other exotic birds whose songs infuse the air in this idyllic corner of the world. Every day, if I wished, I could watch tv, selecting from a wide choice of American shows.

Or, if you crave more action, you are only two hours' drive from the spectacular Disney World.

Country club atmosphere

But right here at the Village, there

are many diversions such as a big swimming pool, two tennis courts, bicycles for young and old, miniature golf, shuffle-board, horse-shoes and more. The spacious Club House provides the usual indoor games as well as a well-stocked library.

Everything is close at hand. The Village is located next to a golf course, and two minutes' away are three shopping centres, including the huge Sarasota Square Mall, 12 movie houses, and — what else — a

food market open 24 hours a day!

First class restaurants

At Saint-Armand on nearby Lido Island, elegant boutiques, art galleries and first-rate restaurants form a pleasing architectural facade. I took note of my favourite eating spots: the Cafe d'Europe (splendid decor, excellent French cuisine); l'Osteria (superb cuisine from the north of Italy); and at Siesta Key, the Summer House

(fairy-tale decor in an illuminated garden, and delicious foods).

Culture capital of Florida

Sarasota can indisputably lay a claim to the title of the culture capital of Florida. With its own "arts centre," the rose-coloured Van Wezel Performing Arts Theatre, where first class theatre and musical shows are presented, Sarasota also boasts the Ringling Museum, housing an art collection that includes a Reubens. The Museum also recalls to memory the old days of touring circuses. It's worth the entire visit to see the completely-furnished estate of John Ringling, the terrace with its huge Italian garden with a profusion of nymph statues, facing Sarasota Bay.

I thoroughly enjoyed a bilious bedroom farce at the Asolo State Theater, entitled, "How the Other Half Loves," by the famous British playwright, Alan Ayckbourn. This 18th century Italian theatre was transported from Italy to Sarasota and reconstructed in 1957. It was a great evening of entertainment.

All-Canadian project

Village des Pins is a 100% Canadian enterprise. The year 1986 marks the end of the first year of operations, but the place is not yet overrun with tourists. The prices are reasonable. Up to middle-December, villas can be rented for \$1200 per month. During July and August, the Canadian dollar will be accepted at par.

With regret I left the Village des Pins, which I have dubbed the "Superstar" of vacation centres. But, like Ginetto Reno, Michael Bossy, Patrick Roy, Gaetan Boucher and many others whose photos adorn the walls of the Village Club House, I'll be back. Maybe, with a little luck, next year, for sure!

So you're going on vacation?

In Canada, going on vacation often means packing up the children, dog, suitcases, jumping in the car and rushing away for distant parts. Unfortunately, too many people return home to find the criminal element has visited them and a lot of their valuable property is missing. There is much you can do to prevent this and much you can do to assist the police in recovering your goods if you should be the victim of burglars anyway.

First, there's home security. Most locks installed on houses and apartments by the builders will give pause to the professional thief for about five seconds. You should install a deadbolt that shoots a hardened steel bolt into the doorframe and can only be opened from the outside with a key. If there is a window ad-

acent to the door a deadbolt that opens from both sides only with a key is in order. Timed lights in several rooms are a good idea; they make the house look occupied at night when thieves like to operate. Basement windows are favourite means of entry. They can now be protected with attractive steel grills that screw right into the frame and efficiently prevent access.

There are many reasonably-priced alarm systems on the market now that will announce to the entire neighbourhood that your house is being broken into. Also, be sure to do the things we have all been told about a thousand times like cancelling the newspaper, telling neighbours to keep watch or even asking the local police to patrol your street regularly.

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