

HEADING TO A TORONTO THEATRE PRODUCTION? EASE THE STRESS

BUS IS A PLUS, WRITES TED BROWN



TED BROWN
Column

For decades I've attended concerts in Toronto.

Be it Massey Hall, Roy Thomson, or one of the Mirvish theatres, I've seen quite a few. I also used to take in a few Blue Jays games years ago.

In my younger days, I'd think nothing of climbing into the car and heading to downtown Toronto to park in a Green P parking lot, and walk a couple of blocks to the show.

But as the years have gone by, I've found my enthusiasm has waned when it comes to seeing a show in Toronto.

With parking prices going through the roof and the crazy downtown traffic, I've become a bit intimidated attending a show.

Some events are no-brainers. The Sidekick and I catch the GO Train in Oakville and arrive at Union Station, then either walk to Scotiabank Arena, or take a cab to the King Street theatre district.

The downside of that mode of travel to Toronto is that once we come out of the show, and take a cab back to

Union Station and then take the GO Train to Oakville, we still have another 45 minute drive home from Oakville.

A few years ago my eldest daughter gave us to the ultimate way to take in a show - she organized a group to buy tickets, rented a limo and we were dropped off at the door to see Paul McCartney.

After the show the limo was there waiting for us.

But that only works with a group of people.

My daughters often give The Sidekick and me tickets to current shows for our birthdays, and we usually do the GO-Union Station-cabby route.

But this time was different - the tickets were for a Saturday matinee to see Beautiful, The Carole King Musical.

I had recently been online, checking the Mirvish website, and under the "Plan Your Visit" drop-down menu, I came across the Mirvish Express, a luxury coach service consisting of three coach runs (London, Peterborough and Niagara Falls), which serves patrons attending Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday matinees at the Mirvish Productions' theatres in Toronto.

The London coach run leaves at 8 a.m., and picks up at Woodstock, Kitchener, Morriston and Milton, then on to Toronto. The Milton pickup time is 10 a.m. at the GO Transit carpool lot on

Highway 25 at the 401. Our bus arrived in Toronto at 11:15 a.m., dropping us off at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, which is a short walk to the Princess of Wales Theatre, where we would see Beautiful.

Arriving that early in Toronto is great. We walked around checking out the shops, and later had lunch, still leaving us loads of time to make it to the 2 p.m. show.

At the end of the show, we walked out the door of the theatre, down the street to the bus and climbed aboard.

At 6:30 p.m., we stepped off the coach bus in the GO Transit carpool lot in Milton, climbed into our vehicle and got home in 15 minutes.

The cost of the Mirvish Express luxury coach service from Milton is \$30 per person and a bit more expensive for those coming in from London. You must pre-register online - apparently it sells out pretty quickly.

I was impressed, not only for its convenience, but from a cost point of view.

To drive to Toronto for a show can easily cost \$30 in parking, and with the price of gas, another \$20 to \$30 for fuel. And that's not considering the stress of driving, especially during inclement weather.

On the way home, I leaned back and dozed a bit, reliving the show we'd just seen, while basking in the fact I didn't have to worry about the traffic around me as the rain trickled down the bus windows.

You know, I could easily get used to doing this

Ted Brown is a freelance journalist for the IFP. He can be contacted at ted-bit@hotmail.com.

THE WAY WE WERE



Esquesing Historical Soc. photo

This outdoor service at Georgetown High School was held after the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945. VE Day, as it is known, is celebrated on May 8 to mark the victory of the Allied forces in Europe during the Second World War.

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