

# EXCESS

Well. I don't know about you but our Spring Break and Easter plans just didn't seem to work out. Daughter, husband and three grandsons were supposed to come and spend a few days but we couldn't seem to arrive at a satisfactory arrangement.

"Let's go to Toronto for a few days" Valerie said one day and before you know it we were going in on Saturday, having dinner with all the five grandchildren and their parents, staying two days and then leaving Buffy at son's house and spending a couple of nights in the Intercontinental Hotel at Bloor and Avenue Road. We picked the Intercontinental because of its location across from the museum and close to the shops on Bloor Street and we could leave the car in the tender care of Valet Parking.

We are planning to go to Egypt next Spring. Egyptian History has always been a favourite topic of Valerie's and will be even more so when she finishes, as I have, the Pagan Christ by Tom Harper. We booked out tickets to the museum and proceeded through the exhibit at the ROM of Egyptian artifacts brought over from the British Museum. I found the dissertation by the Curator on the Book of the Dead to be particularly interesting.

Look I can see the consternation on some of your faces, particularly since my elder granddaughter (age 7) announced that Valerie and I were going on a little honeymoon. At our stage of life, 'a little honeymoon' consists of being pampered in an hotel and for Valerie shopping on Bloor Street.

Our Family reunion almost was a flop. We were unaware of plans made by the kids so we did our usual visit to Tilley's on the way in and had a sushi lunch in the Japanese restaurant beside the store. When we arrived we were told that the plan was to have sushi and sashimi brought in. After much phoning between son and daughter a new plan was agreed upon. We would all (11 of us) go to a Chinese Buffet near my son's home in Richmond Hill which also served sushi and sashimi.

All of this background brings me to the comment I would like to make on eating habits in North America. No not the etiquette of knife and fork use and no elbows on the table - I've already done that and apparently intimidated people who eat with us!! but rather the type of food we eat

and the quantities we waste.

The newspapers have been full of obesity, trans fats, ordinary fats, salt, sugar and all the other bad stuff we tend to eat. A new movie Super Sizing is out which concerns a guy who eats at least one major meal in a 'Golden Arches' restaurant for thirty days under concentrated medical supervision which grew to a real concern as his weight increased dramatically.

Which leads me to a little comments on dieting. Valerie recently joined Weight Watcher (please note Valerie does not consider it dieting but rather a life style change) and since I tend to do the cooking we both have been impacted. One purchase at Tilleys was a smaller belt for me since I've gone down two waist sizes.

On the Weight Watcher program you can eat whatever you want as long as you count the points. For example a person of Valerie's size and loss goals should consume approximately 27 points a day. At Macdonald's a big mac with a medium fries and a chocolate shake is 37 points or about 1 1/2 day's supply. One of our favourite restaurants - Swiss Chalet - turned out to be even worse.

Our family dinner at the buffet was in many ways 'gross'. With 250 items in this huge buffet, hundreds of people filling their plates it was an orgy of excess. My grandchildren are quite good eaters but the amount of food consumed was astonishing as was the amount wasted.

When we were on our own we decided not to worry. We ate dinner at a downtown seafood restaurant, had breakfast at an Over Easy and had a Pad Thai lunch. We also ate dinner at the Hotel dining room Signatures and had a last

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