

Stone Edge Estate:

The Escarpment Runs Through It

▲ The Terra Cotta Room is the smaller bedroom of the Escarpment Suite and can be rented on its own,

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Photographed by Mike Davis

There's a bed-and-breakfast residence in the country north of Georgetown that's far beyond the ordinary for several reasons: its impressive hand-built beauty, its luxury, its full accessibility, and its proximity to the Niagara Escarpment.

Stone Edge Estate is an 8,700 sq. ft. two-storey home on 96 acres with the Escarpment running through the back of it, which means that some of the land has a protected designation.

"There are small caves where the coyotes live," says owner Douglas Rapien. There

is no sign at the road, only the civic number at the head of a long driveway that is lit up at night. An entrance to the Bruce Trail is down the road about half a km away.

While this B&B attracts hikers and active outdoors people, it's unusual because of its accessibility for

people using walkers and wheelchairs. A doorway from the garage is at level grade, allowing easy entrance from a car into the first floor of the house. Just steps from the entrance is an elevator, the largest residential size there is, that goes to the bedrooms on the upper floor.

Accessibility Features

The entire house was built with accessibility in mind. All doors are 36 inches wide, more than usual, to fit wheelchairs. Hallways are also extra wide. Flooring is hardwood throughout.



▲ Stone Edge Estate is an 8,700-sq.-ft. house that was built in 2005 on 96 acres of farmland on the edge of the Niagara Escarpment, with interior trim done by the owner, Douglas Rapien.

All light switches are lower down the walls. Furniture is placed away from the walls to permit wheelchairs to get to the windows. There is no transition in level from the first floor to the raised outdoor deck. All the rooms

are large. Upstairs, one of the guest rooms has a wheel-in shower.

These features are only one of the reasons that make this B&B popular for wedding parties. Whole families can be accommodated here,

including grandparents who may appreciate easy accessibility. Even if this is not an issue, the elevator is a distinct advantage when getting luggage upstairs.

Luxury

The luxury in this home makes it more than a house. It's really a mansion or manor house with its 10-ft ceilings on the first floor, yet it remains cosy and comfortable. A curving staircase, popular for bridal party photos, rises majestically in the front hall. Solid cherry wood trim appears throughout the house, installed by Rapien himself. There is also extensive, beautiful built-in cherry wood cabinetry that was also done by Rapien.

To the left of the front hall is the formal dining room where guests gather for breakfast and an optional, extra lunch if arranged. To the rear is the living room with fireplace, also a common area for guests. There are four wood-burning fireplaces in the house, although for safety, they are not in the bedrooms. Smoking is only permitted outside, away from air intakes.

The most dramatic part of the house is the southern wing, which provides guests with a pool and Jacuzzi bath in front of a fireplace. The pool uses ozone instead of chlorine, which eliminates the

Continued on page 38 ▶

The beautiful indoor pool with ozone-treated water is available for guests. ▼



The Escarpment Room, part of the Escarpment Suite, has a king-sized sleigh bed and a large sitting area in a bay window. ▼



Stone Edge Estate ▶
Continued from page 19

▲ The Tobermory Room at the north end of the house has a queen-sized bed.

The Jacuzzi hot tub with wood burning in the fireplace can be a wonderful place to relax. ▼



strong unpleasant smell often associated with indoor pools. Walls of screened-in patio doors let in breezes in summer and give complete views of the surrounding fields in winter.

Guest Rooms

A B&B is, of course, more about the bedrooms. The ones at Stone Edge Estate do not disappoint. All have queen-sized beds except for one, which has a king. All have ensuite full bathrooms, with some having Jacuzzi tubs. All have a TV, bar fridge, coffee maker and hair dryer. Free WiFi is available throughout the house for casual use. Rooms to the rear have access to private balconies.

“All the rooms are named after parts of the Niagara Escarpment,” explains Rapien. The room at the north end of the house is called the Tobermory. In the middle of the house is the Escarpment Suite, a two-bedroom, two-bathroom complex that can be kept separate if guests want to book only one room. This suite consists of a large room with the king-sized bed, large sitting area, and a Jacuzzi



▲ Owner Douglas Rapien inside the useful elevator.

Continued on page 40 ▶



▲ At the south end of the house, the front-facing Queenston Room offers luxury with its two queen-sized beds.

Breakfast is served in the formal dining room. ▼



tub, two sinks and separate shower in the bathroom, with a door leading to the adjoining room. This is called the Terra Cotta Room, which has a queen bed, the wheel-in shower stall and patio door to an outdoor balcony. At the south end of the house is the Queenston Room, which has two queen beds, a full conventional bathroom and walk-in closet.

"This is the most expensive B&B in the area," says Rapien. Yet people are drawn by these luxuries and amenities. Prices range from \$176 to \$192 for two people per night. Breakfast is of course included, and lunches can be arranged at an extra cost.

The Food

Ah, the food. Rapien recently hosted a meeting for the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce and everyone thought he had had the food catered. No, he is a skilled cook and baker. This is surprising in someone who is also a high-quality cabinet

maker. As he is also the one who decorated the whole house, there may be no end to his range of talent.

But back to breakfast.

"I email or give guests the menu the night before, to let them choose from the options," says Rapien. The choices are generous: a made-to-order omelette, waffles, quiche or breakfast sandwich, in addition to side orders of fresh-baked muffins, toast, roast potatoes, fresh fruit or a smoothie, as well as your choice of juices and coffee or tea. Rapien prepares the food himself each morning, serving them elegantly on fine china in the dining room. **NEV**

Bookings

The Estate is open year round. Reservations can be made online through their website www.StoneEdgeEstate.ca or by phone: 905.702.8418.

Stone Edge Estate
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