



ONTARIO THEATRE

September 26, 2022 – 9 Days

Includes 10 shows in Toronto, Stratford and Niagara

Ontario is the place to be if you want to experience Canadian theatre with the greatest selection of shows. Toronto has firmly established itself as the Broadway of Canada, plus the long running Shaw Festival and Stratford Festival consistently attract the best of stage actors. You will see 10 shows on this tour and an optional 11th. The Stratford Festival was founded in 1952 and presents thought-provoking productions of Shakespeare's plays, as well as others from the classical repertoire. The Mirvish theatres in Toronto bring in the big shows, highlighted in 2022 by the blockbuster *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. The Shaw Festival was founded in 1962 in Niagara-on-the-Lake and produces plays from George Bernard Shaw's era and other contemporary plays. The Greg Frewin dinner theatre presents the spectacle of the world's greatest illusionist.

Activity Level: 2



11 Meals Included:

8 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 dinners

Fares per person:

\$4,645 double/twin; \$5,400 single; \$4,440 triple
Please add 5% GST.

Early Bookers:

\$250 discount on first 12 seats; \$125 on next 8

Experience Points:

Earn 107 points on this tour.

Redeem 107 points if you book by July 20, 2022.

Departure from: Lower Mainland



ITINERARY

Day 1: Monday, September 26

We fly on WestJet from Vancouver to Toronto. Our hotel is conveniently located in Terminal 3, just an elevator ride from baggage claim.

Accommodation: Sheraton Gateway Hotel

Day 2: Tuesday, September 27

Following the busy 401 freeway, we journey west through Kitchener to Stratford where we stay three nights. The small town of **Stratford** became the home of the largest classical repertory theatre in North America thanks to the dream of Tom Patterson. In 1952, he conceived the idea of a theatre festival devoted to the works of William Shakespeare. His vision won the support not only of Stratford City Council and an enthusiastic committee of citizens, but also of the legendary British actor and director Tyrone Guthrie, who agreed to become the first Artistic Director. The initial performance was on July 13, 1953, when actor Alec Guinness spoke the opening lines of *Richard III*. At 2 pm, you can attend *Chicago* at the Festival Theatre or *All's Well That Ends Well* at the Tom Patterson Theatre. Tonight, enjoy either *Hamlet* at the Festival Theatre or *1939* at the Tom Patterson Theatre.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Best Western Arden Park Hotel

Day 3: Wednesday, September 28

At 9:30 am, we go to Lazaridis Hall for a program "Meet the Festival" which is a fun and informal Q&A session with artists and staff. At 2 pm, we are at the Festival Theatre for the performance of *Little Women*. Tonight, the shows are *Richard III* at the Tom Patterson Theatre or *Every Little Nookie* at the Studio Theatre.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Best Western Arden Park Hotel

Day 4: Thursday, September 29

The morning program, "**Peer into the Playbill**" features a panel of special guests discussing ideas and issues about the afternoon show, *The Miser*. Mark Kingwell, professor of philosophy at the University of Toronto, psychologist Dr. Peggy Richter, and personal finance expert Rubina Ahmed-Haq consider the human impulses to hoard, to fear death, and to love money. At 2 pm, we

attend *The Miser* at the Festival Theatre. Tonight at 8 pm, there is an optional show at the Avon Theatre, *Hamlet-911*.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Best Western Arden Park Hotel

Day 5: Friday, September 30

We head back into Toronto, stopping first at one of Canada's most celebrated art galleries, the **McMichael Canadian Art Collection**. It showcases 6,000 works by the Group of Seven, Tom Thomson, Emily Carr, Clarence Gagnon and other contemporaries, as well as First Nations, Inuit and other artists who have contributed to Canada's artistic heritage. The sprawling galleries have a beautiful woodland setting along the Humber River Valley. Next is the venerable **Royal Ontario Museum** which exhibits an amazing collection of Ontario memorabilia. At 7 pm, the curtain rises at the Ed Mirvish Theatre for the hit show of the year, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Holiday Inn Express Downtown

Day 6: Saturday, October 1

A **sightseeing tour of Toronto** with a local guide passes landmarks such as the CN Tower, the stadiums of Rogers Centre and Air Canada Centre, Eaton Centre, Queens Park, City Hall, and the Lake Ontario waterfront. We visit districts like Yorkville and drive along famous streets including Bay, Yonge, and Bloor. This afternoon, we go to the **CN Tower**, one of the tallest buildings in the world at 550 metres, and enjoy a panoramic view of Toronto. Are you brave enough to stand on the glass floor? Tonight's show is *Singin' in the Rain* at the Princess of Wales Theatre.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Holiday Inn Express Downtown

Day 7: Sunday, October 2

It is a two-hour drive along Lake Ontario via Hamilton to **Niagara-on-the-Lake**, a quaint town of historic buildings and interesting shops, and home to the **Shaw Festival**. It was started in 1962 by lawyer and playwright Brian Doherty who organized eight weekend performances of George Bernard Shaw's *Don Juan in Hell* and *Candida* under the title "Salute to Shaw". Currently, the

Festival produces about ten plays each season with over 800 performances. Upon arrival, we take a backstage tour of the Shaw Festival Theatre, then attend the 1 pm performance there of *The Importance of Being Ernest*. There is free time for browsing the shops and dinner on your own, then we return to the Festival Theatre to see *The Doctor's Dilemma* starting at 7 pm. Afterwards, we drive to nearby **Niagara Falls** and settle into the luxurious Hilton Hotel for a two-night stay. The hotel has a prime location across the street from the huge Niagara Fallsview Casino and just over one block from the waterfront Victoria Park. Every room has a view of the falls.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hilton Fallsview Hotel

Day 8: Monday, October 3

A sightseeing tour of the Niagara area is conducted by a local guide. Niagara is one of the

world's mightiest waterfalls, measured by its great width of over 1,000 metres, its water volume of about 750,000 gallons per second, and its height of 50 metres. We ride the Hornblower (formerly Maid of the Mist) for an awesome view of the Horseshoe and American Falls from the river, see the floral clock, and stand at Table Rock. Lunch is included in the revolving restaurant atop **Skylon Tower** where we admire a fabulous view of the Horseshoe and American Falls. Tonight, we go to the **Greg Frewin Dinner Theatre** for a spectacular magic show.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Hilton Fallsview Hotel

Day 9: Tuesday, October 4

We drive back to Toronto Airport for an afternoon flight on WestJet to Vancouver.

Meals included: Breakfast

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Flight from Vancouver to Toronto and return
- Current air transport taxes and security fees
- Airline luggage fees for 1 checked piece
- Coach transportation for 8 days
- 8 nights accommodation and hotel taxes
- Choice of *Chicago* at Festival Theatre OR *All's Well That Ends Well* at Tom Patterson Theatre
- Choice of *Hamlet* at Festival Theatre OR *1939* at Tom Patterson Theatre
- "Meet the Festival" program
- *Little Women* at Festival Theatre
- Choice of *Richard III* at Tom Patterson Theatre OR *Every Little Nookie* at Studio Theatre
- "Peer into the Playbill" program
- *The Miser* at Festival Theatre
- McMichael Canadian Art Collection
- Royal Ontario Museum
- *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* at Ed Mirvish Theatre
- Locally guided tour of Toronto
- CN Tower observatory
- *Singin' in the Rain* at Princess of Wales Theatre
- Backstage tour at Shaw Festival Theatre
- *The Importance of Being Earnest* at Shaw Festival Theatre
- *The Doctor's Dilemma* at Shaw Festival Theatre
- Locally guided tour of Niagara Falls
- Niagara Parks fee
- Skylon Tower with lunch in revolving restaurant
- Hornblower boat trip at Niagara Falls
- Greg Frewin magic show and dinner theatre
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Gratuities for local guides and Ontario driver
- Luggage handling at hotels
- **11 meals:** 8 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 dinners

ON WITH THE SHOW!

Here are brief descriptions of the shows. Please note that there are choices in Stratford. There are 3 occasions when 2 shows are running simultaneously at different theatres, and you can choose one of them. You should do this at booking, but no later than at final payment.

STRATFORD

With William Shakespeare as its foundation, the Stratford Festival has set the standard for classical theatre in North America for 69 years. The company creates stimulating, thought-provoking productions of Shakespeare's plays, as well as presenting other plays from the classical repertoire, while attracting the best stage talent. Five productions are included with a choice for 3 of them, plus an option for a 6th show.

Chicago – In the Roaring 1920s, aspiring chorus girl Roxie Hart and fading vaudeville star Velma Kelly each face trial for murder. Both as cynical as they are sexy, the two women compete for the services of shady lawyer Billy Flynn who promises to make them media celebrities and win them acquittals. With its terrific score and spectacular dance numbers, this lurid tale of adultery, murder and justice as showbiz packs some serious heat.

All's Well That Ends Well (Shakespeare) – Having worked a miraculous cure on the deathly ill King of France, Helena claims as her reward the hand of Bertram, the young lord she adores. She already has the blessing of his mother, the Countess of Rossillion, but Bertram himself resents being forced into an arranged marriage. It looks like Helena needs another miracle to win his heart – until Bertram's own roving eye enables an audacious remedy. This production is set during the First World War.

Hamlet (Shakespeare) – Prince Hamlet, son of Denmark's late king, is horrified and placed in a moral quandary by the apparition of his father's ghost. This spectre claims to have been murdered by the brother who now wears his crown. The ghost demands vengeance, but can it be trusted? And can the taking of a life ever be justified? Can this troubled family tolerate any further loss? This production takes place in present day with modern dress.

1939 – Anticipating a visit by King George VI, an English teacher at a fictional Residential School in Northern Ontario enlists her students in a production of *All's Well That Ends Well*. But her rigid ideas of how Shakespeare should be performed are challenged as her Indigenous students start finding parallels between themselves and the characters in the play and, far from letting themselves be defined by colonial expectations, set out to make Shakespeare's bitter-sweet comedy defiantly their own.

Little Women – Aspiring writer Jo March and her sisters, Meg, Beth, and Amy, do their best to make ends meet as they navigate the road to adulthood. Struggling to reconcile societal expectations with their own hopes and dreams, the girls are held together by bonds of loyalty and love. They may differ in their ideas of what it means to be a woman, but each of their journeys poses the same universal question: How do you find your own path? This production takes place in present day with 1860s period costumes.

Richard III (Shakespeare) – As charismatic as he is cunning, as strangely seductive as he is utterly ruthless, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, is the very embodiment of lethal ambition as he manoeuvres and murders his way to the throne of England, sardonically revelling in his own villainy every step of the way. But once he has reached the top, the only way left to go is down, and in Richard's growing roster of vengeful enemies, none are more menacing than the ghosts of his past.

Every Little Nookie – When a suburban boomer couple return home to find their queer millennial daughter, Annabel, hosting a swingers' party to make cash, they're forced to question the state of their marriage. Annabel, in turn, must ponder her own future when she adds a new relationship to her chosen family of polyamorous and platonic roommates. In this high-spirited sex romp, it's not just the earth that moves, as shifting paradigms encourage new possibilities, both personal and political. This world premiere production takes place in Toronto in the near future.

The Miser – The paranoid old skinflint Harper hoards every dollar, believing his fortune will award him immortality. He has two grown children: Eleanor who is in love with Victor, her father's butler, and Charlie who loves the hard-up Marianne. Both siblings know that if they persist with their romantic choices, they can kiss their inheritances goodbye. And their plights only get worse when the widowed Harper announces startling marital plans of his own. It will take a miracle for the desires of youth to have their way.

Hamlet-911 – Actor Guinness Menzies has landed his dream role: he's playing Hamlet at the Stratford Festival. Just before a matinée performance, he suddenly finds himself in the Underworld, a strange realm as frightening as it is hilarious, where time is seriously out of joint. Has he gone mad? Is he dreaming? Meanwhile, teenager Jeremy reaches out to Guinness online as he wrestles with his own version of Hamlet's famous life-or-death dilemma. This is an optional show (\$105 + GST extra cost).

TORONTO

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child – This awesome spectacle originally cast a spell over Broadway as an epic two-part event. Now, the show has been boldly restaged as one 3½-hour performance by the award-winning creative team. Nineteen years after Harry, Ron and Hermione saved the wizarding world, they're back on a most extraordinary new adventure – this time, joined by a brave new generation that has only just arrived at the legendary Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Prepare for spectacular spells, a mind-blowing race through time, and an epic battle to stop mysterious forces, all while the future hangs in the balance. We have excellent seating in Rows K, L and M.

Singin' in the Rain – Journey back to the glamour of Hollywood during the Roaring 1920s. Silent movie star Don Lockwood has it all, a string of hit films and a romance with the most beautiful actress in town. What Don doesn't know is that the silver screen is about to find its voice, and a chance meeting with a talented young chorus girl set to steal his heart promises to change both Don, and Hollywood, forever. Andrew Wright's high-energy choreography and Simon Higlett's sumptuous set design (including over 14,000 litres of water on stage) combine with the charm, romance and wit of one of the world's best-loved films. Enjoy the glorious MGM score including *Good Morning, Make 'em Laugh, Moses Supposes*, and the legendary *Singin' in the Rain*.

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE & NIAGARA FALLS

Founded in 1962 on the work of George Bernard Shaw, Niagara-On-The-Lake's Shaw Festival is another of Ontario's great theatre destinations. The Festival produces plays from and about Shaw's era and contemporary plays that share Shaw's provocative exploration of society and celebration of humanity.

The Importance of Being Earnest – Subtitled *A Trivial Comedy for Serious People*, Oscar Wilde's last and greatest play concentrates all his incredible wit and observation into a dazzling satire of Victorian attitudes. All the tricks of romantic comedy and farce are employed to present us with a portrait of the most absurd people we will ever meet – ourselves.

The Doctor's Dilemma – One of Bernard Shaw's most popular plays, this exploration of medical ethics has again found its moment. If one patient can only live at the cost of another's life, how on earth do you choose? What is the value of a human life? Questions which have never lost their urgency are brought to thrilling life in this tragicomic tour de force.

Greg Frewin Magic Show – This spectacular dinner show at Niagara Falls has been hailed as a jaw-dropping magic experience with a rare White Siberian tiger and exotic birds from around the globe. Greg Frewin is currently ranked as The International Grand Champion of Magic, having won every major award offered within the magic community. He has placed first in numerous magic competitions including the International Brotherhood of Magicians, the Canadian Association of Magicians, the Society of American Magicians, the Federation Internationale Society of Magique (widely regarded as the Olympics of magic), and the Magician of the Year at the 2009 World Magic awards, ranking him as the world's top illusionist.

TOUR NOTES

How to choose your shows

Please choose at time of booking to be guaranteed your preferred shows.

- **September 27:** Choose between two performances at 2 pm — *Chicago* at Festival Theatre OR *All's Well That Ends Well* at Tom Patterson Theatre. Your tour fare includes one of these shows.
- **September 27:** Choose between two performances at 8 pm — *Hamlet* at Festival Theatre OR *1939* at Tom Patterson Theatre. Your tour fare includes one of these shows.
- **September 28:** Choose between two performances at 8 pm — *Richard III* at Tom Patterson Theatre OR *Every Little Nookie* at Studio Theatre. Your tour fare includes one of these shows.
- **September 29:** You can book an extra show — *Hamlet-911* at Avon Theatre. Cost is \$105 per person (plus 5% GST). Transportation from hotel to theatre and back is included.

 **Activity Level 2:** Moderate activity including short distances to walk and some steps, mainly to/from your theatre seats. There can be longer walks in the airports while travelling to/from Toronto; request a cart or wheelchair in advance or at airline check-in if this could be an issue for you. The coach cannot carry a scooter or motorized wheelchair. If Activity Level 2 could be challenging, you are urged to bring a companion to assist you. The tour director and driver have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance. If you are not capable of keeping up with the group or require frequent assistance, the tour director may stop you from participating in some activities or some tour days.

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$400 per person is requested at the time of booking and balance is due July 20, 2022. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

Discounts: Early bookers receive \$250 discount on first 12 seats and \$125 on next 8 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after July 20, 2022.

Cancellation Policy: Up to May 19, 2022, the cancellation charge is \$100 per person. From May 20 to June 20, the cancellation charge is \$200 per person. From June 21 to July 20, the cancellation charge is \$400 per person (your deposit). From July 21 to August 19, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After August 19, there is no refund.

Fare Changes: Changes to taxes and surcharges from airline and other suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond the control of Wells Gray Tours, therefore, Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes until departure.

Food Allergies: You must notify us no later than at final payment if you have a food allergy.

Travel Insurance: A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

Home pickups are available within Greater Vancouver for an additional charge of \$50 per person round trip. Transfer is to and from YVR. Please request no later than at final payment.

Photo Credits: Stratford Festival, Wikimedia (Niagara Falls), Mirvish Productions (*Harry Potter*)

Experience Points: This tour earns 107 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One e-point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until July 20, 2022.

Consumer Protection BC Licences: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924, Victoria 65842

VICTORIA

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