

The Joys of Jordan

By Brette McWhorter Sember

Jordan, Ontario is a well-kept secret. This quaint town is located between Hamilton and Fort Erie in southern Ontario. However, it is worth the trip from wherever your starting point. Reach Jordan by taking the QEW to exit 57. Follow Victoria Avenue to Regional Road 81. Turn left and follow it through the Jordan Valley. Turn left on Main Street. Parking is available on the street or in a town parking lot.

As you drive, be sure to enjoy the beauty of the Jordan Valley. As you wind through this small valley you will feel transported back in time. The natural beauty that surrounds you is breath-taking.

The centerpiece of Jordan is On the Twenty, one of Ontario's finest restaurants. It is named for its proximity to Twenty Mile Creek. On the Twenty is described by its owners as a "winery restaurant". The restaurant itself is in the heart of town and is in partnership with Cave Spring Cellars. The restaurant believes in focusing on local ingredients and the results are stunning. A recent visit offered caramelized onion and porcini mushroom bisque, roasted tomato soup with parmesan crostini, potato cakes with smoked salmon, horeseradish cream and caviar, salmon with red pepper sauce, rosti potato and rapini and smoked pork tenderloin with root vegetables and potato gratin. Other menu choices include giant shrimp on saffron rice, citrus roasted chicken, stuffed peppers (with wheat berries as one of the ingredients), beef tenderloin and duck. Desserts use local berries and all include some type of liqueur. The restaurant features a wide range of wines from Cave Spring Wineries as well as other

Niagara Peninsula wines. The dining rooms are elegant yet warm. An outdoor terrace allows an excellent view in warm weather.

The Vintner's Inn, just across the street, offers eighteen luxurious suites with fireplaces and either antique or new furnishings. The Vintage House Bed and Breakfast is also located on Main Street and offers traditional bed and breakfast accommodations.

Some lovely shops dot the sidewalks of Jordan. The finest is the Cave Springs Boutique, located in the same building as On the Twenty. Local wines as well as a large selection of gifts is available here. There are several interior decorating and furniture shops in town. Acquisitions offers furniture, accessories, art and fabrics and wall coverings. Parkwood Galleries offers replicated antique furniture. Celia Cross & Company focuses on interior decoration with some antiques.

Other shops include Vinifera, a decorative home and garden shop. The Copper Leaf is an earthy yet sophisticated garden shop with an outdoor area as well. Ninavik showcases native sculpture and arts. Most of the sculptures are large, yet intricate animals that seem embodied with the animals' spirits. The Art Vine & Books specializes in local art and books about wine and food. Cat's Glass is an interesting little shop that offers stained glass - many of the pieces are cats. There is also a live big fat orange cat who supervises visitors. Visitors can watch the artisans at work in the rear of the shop. Santa Fe Trading Company houses southwestern furniture, pottery and home accessories. It is rustic, yet charming. Tintern carries Canadian designed women's clothing.

The highlight of the shops must be the Jordan Antiques Centre. This shop is made up of four large rooms filled with carefully displayed antiques from over twenty-five dealers. There are beautiful pieces of furniture, a case of old toys, clothing, jewelry and a very large collection of glass and china. Prices are rather reasonable and there is much to see. Allan Tiffany Antiques also carries antiques.

Zooma Zooma is a coffee lounge and casual café that offers light lunches and cookies as well as its selection of coffees and teas.

Winery tours are offered by Cave Spring Wineries. Inquire inside the Cave Spring Boutique. Cave Spring wines are of very high quality and there is much to be learned during a tour. Also in the area are two golf courses and a nature conservancy, open to hikers, called the Jordan Valley Resort Trail. The Jordan Historical Museum of the Twenty features a one room schoolhouse from 1859.

Jordan is about one hour from Toronto or half an hour from Niagara Falls or Hamilton. It is in close proximity to Niagara-on-the-Lake and is also accessible from the Buffalo, New York area. Contact the Jordan Village Merchants Association at www.jordanvillage.com. They can provide you with a detailed map as well as a brochure listing contact information for all of the shops and restaurants. Special events in the village include Pioneer Days in October and Christmas in Jordan at the end of November.