

## The Consulate ? A little bit of downtown in the country

By Brian Lockhart

It is a hidden gem surrounded by the gently rolling hills and tree lined country roads of Caledon and located on picturesque Innis Lake.

The Consulate Dining Lounge offers casual fine dining in an elegant setting with a view.

While many local residents are familiar with the Royal Ambassador Event Centre on Innis Lake Road, not everyone knows that the Consulate is the Centre's premier dining room that welcomes visitors for an experience that combines fine food and fine wine in a country setting while maintaining a refined atmosphere usually found in larger centres.

"I like to say it's a bit of downtown in the country," said owner John Giancola, when describing the restaurant he has created on the sprawling and beautifully maintained grounds and surrounding gardens.

The Royal Ambassador Event Centre is a familiar landmark to people who pass by on Innis Lake Road. With its imposing facade and notable gardens, the Centre hosts a variety of functions, both on the grounds as a wedding destination and in its ballrooms. However, a visit to the grounds reveals the Consulate Dining Lounge overlooking the lake on the west side of the main building. The property itself has a storied local background. At one time during the '30s, the facility featured live orchestras by the lake with dancing and was a popular venue for big band style music at a time when visitors arrived in the Model A Fords and danced the night away.

The Consulate dining room features individual, well-appointed tables suitable for an intimate dinner for two or a larger group of friends enjoying a night out.

Large arch-shaped windows look out over the grounds and illuminate the room during daylight hours and add a mystic quality of ambiance when the sun goes down.

The menu is varied and features something for everyone's palate with a continental flair.

A variety of Italian inspired dishes, including various pasta fare, top the menu for those who enjoy a delicious Mediterranean flavour.

For meat lovers, the kitchen specializes in steaks done the way you like and all are certified Black Angus beef products.

For a lighter meal, there are a variety of seafood dishes unique to the restaurant, each with its own distinct twist and the personal touch from the chef.

There are even vegetarian and vegan options that suit every lifestyle.

An award winning wine menu is available to compliment your meal with variety of vintages and they are reasonably priced.

During the warmer months, the Consulate opens the large patio area for outdoor dining.

With seating for 72, the patio area offers a French Cafe style of dining as visitors enjoy the day with a good meal and warm summer breezes.

With the patio overlooking the lake and the gardens, it is common for visitors to take a stroll through the grounds after their meal to soak up the atmosphere of the well manicured lawns.

The Consulate Dining Lounge offers all the amenities of fine dining in a beautiful country setting.

The Lounge is open for lunch, Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 3 p.m., and for dinner from Tuesday through to Saturday from 5 to 10 p.m.

Reservations are recommended.

The Consulate Dining Lounge is something of a hidden jewel in the heart of Caledon, surrounded by trees, gardens, and of course the lake, which makes a visit even more special once you discover this unique place for a fine dining experience that is also close to home.



The Consulate Dining Lounge Restaurant Manager is Diana Bonilla.



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