

**For Immediate Release
October 28, 2008**

Toronto welcomes visitors to get wrapped-up in the season with new holiday packages

Toronto, ON - This season visitors traveling to Toronto can catch the festive spirit of the holidays with exclusive special offers and trip packages starting from \$289 per couple. Packages feature the best of accommodations with breakfast for two, tickets to a holiday show such as *The Nutcracker* or *The Sound of Music* and admission to one of the favourite attractions, the Frank Gehry redesigned Art Gallery of Ontario, the *One of a Kind Christmas Show and Sale*, or the Royal Ontario Museum's award-winning *The Nature of Diamonds*.

Other special offers booked through Tourism Toronto include:

VIA Rail - 50% off Comfort Class and 25% off VIA 1 regular adult fares for one-way or round-trip travel when Toronto is the destination. Offer valid between November 3 - December 19 and December 26 - 30.

The Bay - 15% off purchases at The Bay flagship stores at Queen Street and Yonge & Bloor Streets, where the fabled Christmas windows adorn, when booking a Toronto getaway through Tourism Toronto.

City Pass - Six of Toronto's top attractions for one low price of \$61/adult and \$41/child, a value of \$119.

To plan and book a Toronto holiday visit www.VisitTorontoNow.com or call 1-866-843-8286.

This year's holiday highlights include:

Holiday Shopping

- **Inspiring downtown neighbourhoods** - Shopping is a true holiday tradition in Toronto as the streets fill with shoppers and the sidewalks and squares are adorned with decorations and set aglow with lights. Come explore the stylish boutiques of Yorkville, the bohemian energy of Queen West, the charm of Old Town Toronto and the deep pulse of Downtown Yonge Street where signature Toronto shopping experiences come to life for the holidays.
- **Shopping beyond downtown** - The holiday spirit extends across Greater Toronto from two of Canada's largest malls, Vaughan Mills and Square One, to the truly unique Pacific Mall and the quaint boutiques of Mississauga's Port Credit and Streetsville to Vaughan's Old Town Markham and Unionville.
- **One of a Kind Christmas Show and Sale** - More than 800 artisans and designers fill the Direct Energy Centre at Exhibition Place offering a vast range of creative, handcrafted gifts at Canada's largest craft show and sale on from November 27 - December 7.
- **Art Gallery of Ontario Shop** - Designed by world- renowned architect Frank Gehry, the new shop is home to some of the most unique merchandise in Canada. Spanning some 7,000 square feet, the store offers one-of-a-kind jewellery designed by up-and-coming

Queen's Quay Terminal at Harbourfront

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Website: www.seetorontonow.com

Canadian and International artists, a comprehensive collection of art books, exclusive Frank Gehry furnishings and original art.

- **Window Wonderland** - 'Bringing Back the Holiday Magic' is the theme for the bustling Downtown Yonge Street lined with decorated window displays at 21 of Toronto's most popular shops. Don't miss the reveal on November 5.

On Stage & On Display

- **The Nutcracker** - Synonymous with Christmas celebration, The Nutcracker is one of Toronto's treasured holiday traditions on from December 6 - 28 at the acoustically designed Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts.
- **The Sound of Music** - Toronto is alive with the North American premiere of the West End's biggest hit, the new David Ian & Andrew Lloyd Webber production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's The Sound of Music. Wine and dine in Toronto's Entertainment District, and enjoy this much anticipated performance.
- **Nature of Diamonds** - Royal Ontario Museum's dazzling exhibit, The Nature of Diamonds exhibit captures imaginations with 500 objects including the world's third largest cut diamond at a staggering 407.48 carats. This once-in-a-lifetime glimpse into the rich and storied history of the most precious of gems, Diamonds wows audiences everywhere.
- **A Christmas Carol** - Produced by Toronto's stars of independent theatre, Soulepper presents the Victorian-era story at the Young Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto's very own Victorian style cobblestone neighbourhood, The Distillery District from November 27 - December 24.
- **Twelve Trees of Christmas** - From November 22 - December 10 the Gardiner Museum will fill their gallery with professionally-decorated Christmas trees interspersed among magnificent collections. A perfect way to kick-off your holiday season!

In The Crisp Air

- **Skating at City Hall and Harbourfront** - Toronto's holiday postcard experience, skating at two iconic outdoor rinks is complete with music and rink-side hot chocolate. Both rinks provide on-site skate rentals.
- **Cavalcade of Lights** - Starting with the Lights First Lighting Celebration on November 29, Toronto will glisten with the annual Cavalcade of Lights. The month-long festival's highlights include Saturday Night Fireworks and a fair trade artisan market at Nathan Phillips Square, hosted bus tours to view the energy-efficient lighting displays in 19 cultural neighbourhoods and attractions and more.
- **Bills in Toronto** - The NFL is coming to Toronto for the first regular season game ever played in Canada. Fans travelling to Toronto to watch the Buffalo Bills take on the Miami Dolphins at Rogers Centre on December 7 can purchase tickets as part of specially priced packages through Tourism Toronto. For a weekend of entertainment visit www.BillsTorontoTickets.com.
- **Royal Agricultural Winter Fair** - The 87th annual largest indoor- combined agricultural, horticultural, canine and equestrian event in the world is coming to the Direct Energy Centre at Exhibition Place November 7 - 16.
- **Santa Claus Parade** - More than a half million people attend every year, the world's longest running children's parade has been going strong since 1905 displaying over 25

floats, 24 bands and 1,700 participants. The parade begins at Bloor and Christie Streets on November 16 at 12:30 p.m. and winds to an end at Front and Church Streets.

- **Trail of Lights**- For 34 consecutive nights starting November 28, Canada's largest walk-through holiday light show takes place at Downsview Park. The interactive indoor and outdoor winter festival includes free photos with Santa, a mesmerizing 2km walking trail with 407 light displays and more open throughout Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Eve.
- **Celebrate the Season** - The City of Mississauga celebrates the season with free events at the Civic Centre for the whole family to enjoy, starting with the magical Tree Lighting Celebration on November 23 as the Mayor counts down to Mississauga's largest light spectacular, entertainment and cirque show.

A full calendar of holiday events and festivities in Toronto is available at www.VisitTorontoNow.com.

About Tourism Toronto

Tourism Toronto, Toronto's Convention and Visitors Association, is an industry association of more than 1,200 members established to sell and market the Greater Toronto Region as a remarkable destination for tourists around the globe.

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