

Hi Everyone!

Thanks to the Internet, I can keep up with what is going on in Thailand through BangkokPost.com and readbangkokpost.com while I am away in Canada. Apparently, the hot summer break in Thailand has boiled over with the serious political conflicts. Fortunately, I have been able to get away for a while on another job assignment traveling in Canada. Here are some of the interesting places that I have been visiting recently:

The Badlands and Dinosaurs

This area is only two hours drive east of Calgary, Alberta. Few would imagine that there would be places so rich in fossils, dinosaur bones and other pre-historic material dated about 75 million years back in time. I went to Drumheller Valley the weekend before. This offers visitors a unique combination of spectacular scenery and interesting things to do, especially for those who are interested in palaeontology. It is the biggest dinosaur find in the world.

There you will find the Royal Tyrrell Museum where all the famous palaeontologists around the world would visit and do their research. The museum once appeared in the movie "The Jurassic Park I". If you can still recall the opening of the movie, you will remember the professor's office on the deserted island. There, hundreds of complete bones and fossils of dinosaurs are on display.

Upon entering the museum, visitors find displays of palaeontologists' laboratory, fossils and exhibitions on the development of life on earth from the very first organic evolution until the last ice age before the first human beings set foot on the planet. Visitors from all age ranges and various backgrounds will be fascinated.

For more information, please visit the site: www.canadianbadlands.com / www.tyrrellmuseum.com



Hoodoos

The Hoodoos, five to seven meter tall rock pillars, took millions of years to form and can erode rapidly if their capstones are dislodged. A Canadian friend of mine told me that there had always been plenty of the Hoodoos when she was young. Unfortunately, the visitors have been careless. Each time they touch or climb on these giants, they are destroyed. I myself noticed that there were fewer Hoodoos than they used to be when I visited last year.



Dinosaurs are displayed in the main hall. In summer, visitors are welcome to explore by taking a day tour digging in the land not so far from the museum. The visitors are guided by the paleontologists working at the museum. However, summer starts in July, not in April as is the case in Thailand.

Niagara Falls and St. Catharine's Museum at Lock 3

Then last weekend I flew to Toronto, Ontario where the famous Niagara Falls are situated. As you know, Niagara Falls is one of the seven natural wonders of the world. The Falls were formed 12,000 years ago. It was in the Wisconsin glaciation (visit en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niagara_falls for more information on the Falls). The Falls are located between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, which are two of the Great Lakes of North America.

Niagara Falls is renowned for its beauty, and is both a valuable source of hydroelectric power and a challenging project for environmental preservation. A popular tourist site for over a century, the natural wonder is shared between the twin cities of Niagara Falls, New York and Niagara Falls, Ontario. There are millions of tourists visiting the Falls all year round. If you come in May, you might be able to take a cruise "Maid of the Mist" along the Niagara River.

Unfortunately, Spring has already started and what you get is rain and wet weather so I did not get the best view of the Falls this time.



This is the town called "Niagara-on-the-Lake", the first English Settlement in Canada.



The Horseshoe Fall

The next day I visited the Welland Canal which is a ship canal that connects Lake Erie to Lake Ontario. The Canal is the man-made wonder. It helps the transportation from the Atlantic into the mainland via the Great Lakes possible.

The canal was the result of the dream of a man named William Hamilton Merritt who owned the Welland Canal Company. He wanted to make it possible for ships to be transported to the inland areas of the continent through the Great Lakes. Originally, shipping was limited to Lake Ontario, the first lake in the Five Lakes because Niagara Falls is in between. To make a connection possible, the waterway needed to be built.

Since Lake Ontario is so much lower than Lake Erie, the locks, or **navigation locks**, devices that lift or lower boats, barges or other vessels from one water level to another, were built. Shipping to the inland continent has been made much faster and easier because of these eight locks—thanks to the vision of William Hamilton Merritt.

When I arrived at the Museum, there was a ship in the canal so I had a chance to see the ship coming in and going out of the lock which is so amazing. It is just only a simple idea when you look at how the lock works, but try to imagine when this simple idea first started. It was not that simple for just anyone to come up with it—that is why we call those who have such ideas 'geniuses'.

For more information:

www.city.niagarafalls.on.ca/about_niagara_falls/history/index.asp
or http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Welland_Canal



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4



5

1. when the traffic was waiting for the ship to enter the canal
2. the ship was entering the canal
3. and 4. the ship was in the lock waiting to be lifted up to higher level
5. when it was ready to move to the other level of the canal
6. the signs point the places and their distances from the canal

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Well, before I come back home to Bangkok and start my weekly contribution early next month, I hope I can write about other interesting places in Canada one more time. Until then...

