

BEST KEPT SECRETS OF NIAGARA

By Howard Morton, SRES

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You Have Earned This

You have spent decades building a full life, a career and a home in the GTA. Now you're evaluating what your next chapter looks like.

The city that once gave you everything is now asking for more than you want to give. The traffic, the noise, the pace and the rising cost of everything begin to outweigh the reasons you stayed.

You're not running away. You're making a smart move toward something better.

Niagara isn't a compromise. It's a shift in how life feels. Cleaner air, more space and a pace that lets you breathe again.

What matters most is this. You're opening a better chapter.

The city, your friends and family are still there, just a short drive away. The real opportunity is what happens when you sell in the GTA.

In Niagara, that same equity often translates into significantly more home, more space, more lifestyle for your investment and additional retirement savings you didn't expect to have.



Niagara Through the Seasons

Four seasons. Four completely different Niagaras.

Most visitors experience one or two.

Those who live here enjoy all four.

Spring

The trails wake up first, giving early explorers the region to themselves. Cherry blossoms line the escarpment, orchards come to life, waterfalls run full and wineries welcome the season with fresh tastings and new releases. Everything feels fresh and unhurried. This is Niagara at its most quietly beautiful.

Summer

Over 300 kilometres of cycling and walking trails, golf courses for every skill level and farmers markets overflowing with local produce. The beaches, waterways and waterfront parks across the region come alive and the outdoor lifestyle that drew you here becomes your everyday reality.



Fall

Wine country at harvest is one of the finest experiences Ontario has to offer. The vineyards turn gold and amber, the restaurants shift to harvest menus and the escarpment puts on a colour show that rivals anything in the province. Fall is Niagara at its most spectacular.

Winter — Niagara's Best Kept Secret

This is where most people are completely wrong about Niagara. Winter here is not something to survive. It's something to embrace.

The Winter Festival of Lights transforms Niagara Falls into one of Canada's most spectacular illuminated landscapes. Millions of lights, iconic landmarks lit up against the mist of the Falls and a magic that takes your breath away.

Christmas in Niagara goes well beyond any single town. Local Christmas markets, the charming shops of Jordan Village, the boutiques of Ridgeway and for the serious shopper, the Outlet Collection at Niagara offers exceptional holiday shopping without the city mall chaos. You'll live minutes away.

Ball's Falls Christmas Village in Lincoln is straight out of a Christmas card and it is in your backyard.



The Icewine Festival in January celebrates one of Canada's most iconic wines, poured right where the grapes were grown, in the cold that makes it possible.

Valentine's Day in Niagara deserves a mention. A spa day, a romantic fireside dinner and a horse-drawn carriage ride through Old Town dressed for the season.

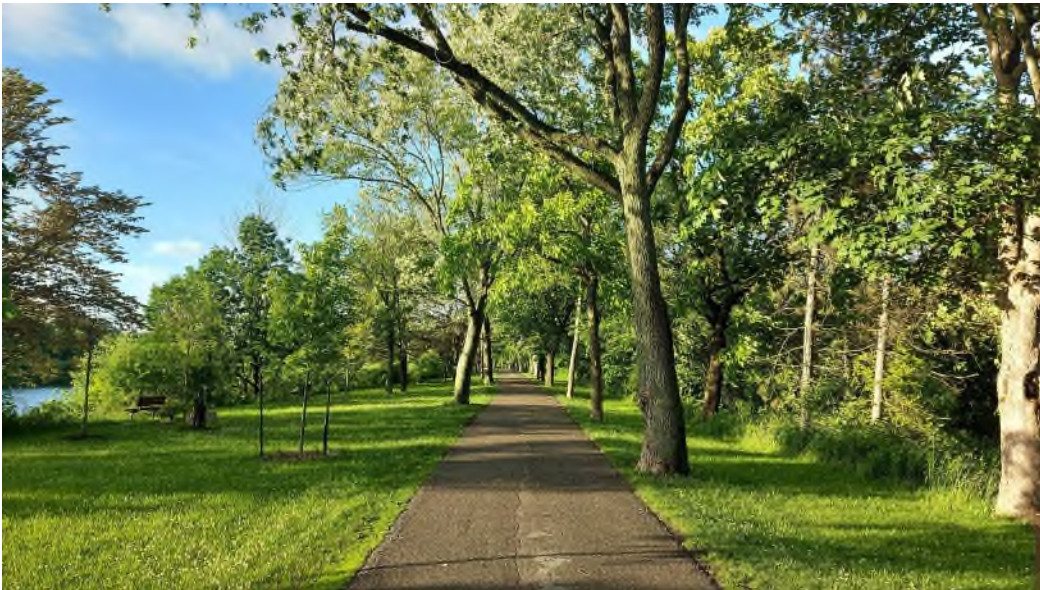
The hiking trails stay open year-round. Winter reveals snow-covered pines and waterfalls frozen in time. [Experience winter at Short Hills Provincial Park](#)

The Niagara River in winter is peaceful and stunning in a way that summer visitors don't see. Lake Ontario and Lake Erie create extraordinary ice formations along their shores, including remarkable snow volcanoes, natural cones that can reach up to six feet high. Stunning to photograph and witness from the shore, but locals know to never walk on them.

Fireside tastings, heated domes and open fire pits create an experience that summer cannot replicate.

For snowbirds, two airports just across the border in New York State make heading south remarkably easy. Toronto Pearson is under two hours away for connections anywhere in the world.

People who visit Niagara in summer think they know it. People who live here in winter know more.



Always Something to Do in Niagara

Two Great Lakes and a Magnificent River

Lake Ontario to the north, Lake Erie to the south. The Niagara River flows between them, acting as the border between Canada and the United States. Thundering at Niagara Falls and growing serene as it stretches toward Lake Ontario, the river corridor is breathtaking in every season. Beach communities, waterfront parks, boating, fishing, water sports and some of the best swimming in Ontario, all made possible by these bodies of water.

Golf

Niagara has one of Ontario's highest concentrations of golf courses. Play along the shores of Lake Ontario or tee it up on courses sitting high on the Niagara Escarpment with views that stretch across the entire peninsula. Championship layouts or a relaxed round with friends, Niagara has a course for every golfer.

Biking

Cyclists will feel right at home in Niagara. Ride north to south along the Welland Canals Parkway Trail from St. Catharines to Port Colborne, or east to west on the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail and the Friendship Trail. For something truly memorable, follow routes that weave through countryside and vineyards, scenery that rewards every pedal with the option to stop for a tasting. Routes suit every pace and every level, serious road cyclists to casual riders, with walkers welcome throughout.



Water Sports

Kayakers, paddle boarders and canoeists will find calm lagoons, and scenic river routes to explore. Jet ski riders, power boaters and sailors have open water in every direction with marinas and ports scattered throughout the region. Drop anchor off a sandy beach, swim off the back of the boat and let the afternoon take care of itself. For boaters, Niagara is not just a place to live. It is a playground.

Hiking

Conservation areas, gorge trails, waterfront paths and escarpment lookouts give you a lifetime of exploration. The Bruce Trail winds along the Niagara Escarpment with waterfalls, ancient forests and scenery that rewards every step. If you love to hike, you will never run out of places to explore here.

Equestrian Life

Niagara's equestrian community reveals itself once you settle in. Ride designated trails through Short Hills Provincial Park, explore the Niagara Escarpment and Lake Erie shoreline, or enjoy private ranch experiences in the countryside. Established stables support serious riders, and polo in Wainfleet adds an unexpected touch. Horse lovers will find their place here.



Wine Country

You don't have to drink wine to love Niagara's wine country.

Stunning vineyards with rolling views, restaurants, farm to table dining, boutique shops and culinary festivals that draw visitors from across the country. Some of Canada's finest wineries are right here, shaped by a unique microclimate that produces exceptional vintages year after year. Living in Niagara puts wine country close enough to enjoy anytime.

Arts & Culture

Niagara's arts and culture scene runs deeper than most people expect and it doesn't stop when the snow falls.

The Shaw Festival is right in your backyard, drawing theatre lovers from across the country to Niagara-on-the-Lake every season. Canal Days in Port Colborne fills the August long weekend with tall ships, live music and fireworks along the waterfront. The Niagara Folk Arts Festival in St. Catharines celebrates cultural diversity through music, food and performance. Community events bring all 11 communities to life year round. [Discover the magic of Fenwick Market](#)

Whatever the season, whatever your interest, Niagara always has somewhere worth going and something worth doing.



Healthcare — One of the Best Reasons You Chose Wisely

For most people at your stage of life, healthcare is not an afterthought. It is near the top of the list. Niagara delivers. You will be served by four major hospitals.

Finding a family doctor is a challenge across Ontario and Niagara is no different. If you are relocating from the GTA and have a family doctor you trust, keeping that relationship is worth considering if it is practical for you. When you are ready to make the switch, Niagara actively recruits physicians and maintains a live Find a Doctor tool at niagararegion.ca that lists doctors currently accepting new patients.

West Lincoln Memorial Hospital — Grimsby

Opened in November 2025, this facility is nearly 80 percent larger than the hospital it replaced. It's the first in Ontario to offer all single patient rooms. A 24/7 emergency department, surgical services and advanced diagnostic imaging make this one of the most modern community hospitals in the province.

Marotta Family Hospital — St. Catharines

A modern full service hospital providing acute care and specialized services for the northern end of the region.



Regional cardiac care, the Walker Family Cancer Centre, mental health programs and a dedicated Women's Health and the Paediatrics unit mean many treatments that once required travel to Hamilton or Toronto can now be done right here.

South Niagara Hospital

Scheduled to open in 2028. Replacing the current Niagara Falls Hospital, this brand new 12 storey state-of-the-art facility will feature specialized centres focused on stroke care, geriatric medicine and complex conditions. Niagara's southern communities will have one of the most advanced hospitals in the province.

Welland Hospital

Serving the heart of the region with acute care, currently undergoing provincially approved renovations. The Ontario government has also committed to a planning grant for a full redevelopment, confirming Welland's long-term role in Niagara's healthcare network.

Niagara Region has one of the oldest populations in Canada and the healthcare investment reflects that. You are choosing a region that has deliberately planned for you.

You came for the lifestyle. The healthcare makes it possible. Now let's talk about the home that makes it permanent.



The Home That Fits This Chapter

Niagara has one of the most diverse real estate markets in Ontario. Whatever this next chapter looks like for you, the selection exists here.

Waterfront properties, wine country estates, classic single detached homes, bungalows in established neighbourhoods and well-located condos for those who want to lock the door and travel without a second thought.

To put the value in real terms: a detached home in Oakville that lists at \$1.8 million buys you a comparable property in Fonthill for around \$850,000.

Same quality of life. Half the price tag.

Entry level bungalows in communities like Welland, Thorold and Port Colborne start in the \$499,000 to \$749,000 range.

The \$750,000 to \$1.2 million tier is where GTA buyers are consistently surprised by what their money buys here.

Prices reflect current market data and are subject to change.

Curious about a specific community or what your GTA home buys you here? Contact Howard for the latest numbers — 416-525-9942



The Communities – Your Future Neighbourhood

Grimsby

A quaint small town with a waterfront, sandy beaches and scenic bike and walking trails along the lake.

Just above the town, Beamer Memorial Conservation Area sits atop the Niagara Escarpment. On a clear day the Niagara Falls skyline appears to the east and Lake Ontario stretches to the north.

Most people who live an hour away have never stood there. You will be able to anytime you like.

Lincoln

Wine country at its most livable.

Charles Daley Park on Lake Ontario has a sandy beach and a marina nearby. The lagoon on the north side of the QEW has become a destination for rowers and kayakers.

The escarpment trails lead to waterfalls and the vineyards threading through Beamsville, Vineland and Jordan Village are welcoming rather than formal, and relaxed rather than curated.



St. Catharines

Niagara's largest city and your urban option if you want amenities close at hand. Two major beaches put Lake Ontario at your doorstep. The Bruce Trail winds through the Glendale neighbourhood, connecting residents directly to the Escarpment and beyond. Brock University, a growing downtown core and a wide range of housing, condos, family homes and bungalows in established neighbourhoods. The Meridian Centre brings concerts, OHL hockey and major events downtown, giving locals big-city entertainment without leaving the region.

Thorold

Rooted in history, set along the scenic Welland Canal. The historic downtown takes you back in time, a streetscape so well preserved it is unlike anything else in the region. Affordable housing, easy access to everything Niagara has to offer and neighbours who actually know your name. A practical base with real character and a community that still means something.

Pelham

Rolling orchards, country estates and a small town warmth. At the highest elevation in the Niagara Region, it offers sweeping views across the peninsula. Fonthill is a top choice for downsizers, known for walkable streets, local shops and a quiet upscale feel. Fenwick delivers classic village charm, while Ridgeville adds a café, shops and a vineyard set in the countryside. Pelham has a way of making the decision for you.



West Lincoln

Rural charm centred on Smithville, with some of the best priced properties in the entire region. Hamilton and Burlington are both an easy drive if you want some city life, yet the moment you turn into your driveway the city simply disappears. Horses in the field across the road. Skies dark enough to see the stars. If space, privacy and a true small town community are what this chapter calls for, West Lincoln delivers.

Welland

Once overlooked, now one of Niagara's most pleasant surprises. Beautiful new suburbs, well-priced homes and the Welland Recreational Canal running through the heart of the city, perfect for paddling, cycling and walking. Accessible price points and a strong sense of community make this one of the smartest choices in the region.

Niagara Falls

Niagara Falls surprises almost everyone who looks beyond the tourist corridor. A real city with established neighbourhoods, affordable homes and a community that takes genuine pride in where it lives. The Niagara River Parkway is one of the most beautiful urban drives in Canada and the Niagara Gorge trail system is a hiker's oasis. For buyers who want the beauty without the premium price, Niagara Falls delivers exactly that.



Hidden Gems – The Places That Will Surprise You Most

Grimsby's Painted Ladies

Beautifully preserved Victorian and Edwardian cottages along the Lake Ontario shoreline. A streetscape that delights photographers and charms everyone who discovers it, and yours to walk anytime you like.

Jordan Village

Right in the heart of wine country. Exceptional restaurants, boutique shops, wine tastings and a charming inn that makes you want to stay longer than you planned. A village atmosphere that is genuinely hard to leave. [Stroll through Jordan Village](#)

Port Dalhousie

A lakeside community within St. Catharines. Heritage buildings, a working carousel, a sandy beach, restaurants and a marina. If you want to wake up feeling like you are on holiday without leaving home, this is the neighbourhood. [Explore Port Dalhousie by the lake](#)



Queenston

A historic village sitting at the edge of the Niagara River, with Queenston Heights Park rising dramatically above it. The views are stunning in every season. A public dock draws fishermen year round, and in winter the Niagara River is beautiful and peaceful.

Dufferin Islands

A natural oasis tucked away just steps from the Falls. Interconnected ponds and walking paths, peaceful and unhurried in every season. In November it becomes the centrepiece of Canada's largest illumination festival, the Winter Festival of Lights. Locals get to enjoy it anytime they like.

Chippawa

A historic village just above Niagara Falls where the Welland River meets the Niagara River. The small town feel of a Muskoka cottage community, complete with swimming, boating and a main street where life moves at its own quiet pace. A world away from the Falls just minutes up the road.

Ridgeway & Crystal Beach

A charming little town that rewards those who find it. Boutique shopping, fine dining, to a great brewpub give you options for every mood. Crystal Beach is just minutes away. A perfect day in Fort Erie.



Staying Connected

The GTA is Closer Than You Think

GO Transit runs train and bus service from Niagara Falls, St. Catharines and Grimsby to Toronto's Union Station.

If you are driving, the 407 ETR offers traffic-jam-free travel that cuts the trip time significantly.

Most people who move here find something unexpected. They need the GTA a little less than they thought. Niagara has a way of making the GTA feel optional.

A Word About Family & Friends

There's something nobody warns you about when you move to Niagara.

Nobody will ever want to leave.

Beaches on two Great Lakes, parks, the Falls, jet boat rides, hiking trails and a region that feels like one giant adventure at any age.

Your place in Niagara is about to become the most popular destination in the family.

Friends who swore they would never leave the city will suddenly find reasons to visit every long weekend.

Make sure you have a spare room.



Buying in Niagara

When you are ready to make the move, you won't need two agents, two sets of negotiations and two separate processes. Howard sells in the GTA and buys in Niagara. One conversation. One trusted advisor. No gaps.

The market has shifted in your favour. Inventory is up, buyers have more time to compare and prices are still declining from their 2022 peak. This combination does not last forever. Knowing when to move with confidence is exactly where the right agent earns their value.

Niagara is not one market. It is eleven micro-markets, each with its own pricing patterns, its own inventory levels and its own sweet spots that only reveal themselves with experience. What is happening in Grimsby is not what is happening in Welland. What moves quickly in Fonthill sits longer in Fort Erie. Knowing the difference is not a small thing. It is everything.

The conversation worth having is about fit.

Which community matches how you want to live, what your budget genuinely unlocks here and how to move when the right opportunity appears. I guide my clients based on knowledge of the area and decades of experience.

When you are ready to have that conversation, I'm ready to have it with you.

Let's Talk

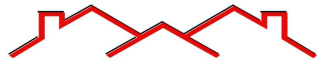
You have worked too hard and planned too carefully to move somewhere that almost fits.

Niagara has the community, the lifestyle and the value that makes this next chapter genuinely exceptional.

My job is to make sure you find the right place, on the right terms, with complete confidence.



WHEN TRUST IS A MUST, you know who to call:



HOWARD MORTON, SRES

SALES REPRESENTATIVE

WHEN TRUST IS A MUST

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About Howard

As a Seniors Real Estate Specialist (SRES), I help clients and their families navigate major life transitions with clear, patient guidance.

I bring over 30 years of real estate experience to every conversation, not just as your agent, but as an investor, landlord and renovator who has lived every side of the market.

I ask the right questions, listen carefully and focus on what actually matters. No spin. No sales pitch. Just practical guidance from someone who has been there.

Born and raised in Toronto and now calling Niagara home, I offer something few agents can — genuine expertise in both markets.

I can sell your GTA home and help you find the perfect place in Niagara to call home.

When you are ready to talk, I'm ready to listen.

Howard Morton, SRES ... **WHEN TRUST IS A MUST**



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