

Riverbend Inn & Vineyard

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Last weekend I went on my [SambaDays Gourmet Getaway](#) with the Sambassador program to [Riverbend Inn & Vineyard](#) in Niagara-On-The-Lake. I have previously been to [Inn On The Twenty](#) in Jordan Station, but never down Niagara-on-the-Lake. It was Jason's birthday weekend as well and we had the best time.



Included in this SambaDays package was:

- One night's accommodation in a Deluxe guestroom
- A \$25.00 voucher to go towards dinner in our Dining Room
- Breakfast for 2 in the morning
- A farewell Riverbend gift upon departure

We turned down the beautiful tree lined driveway to Riverbend around 430pm and immediately felt like we were swept back in time.

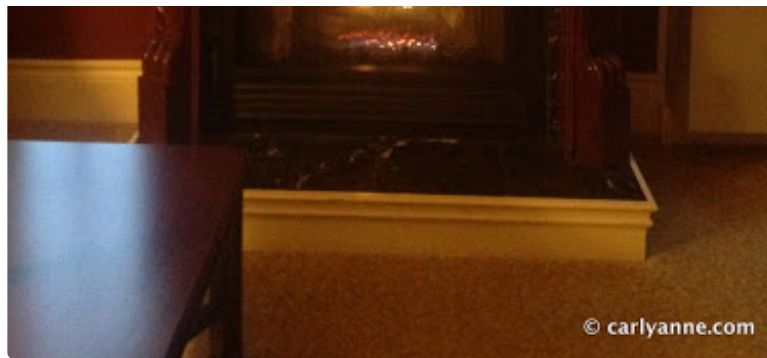


The Inn is an old Georgian mansion and it sits in the middle of 12 acres of vineyard. We were checked in by Linda the Concierge, who was very friendly and helpful. We asked for info on the area and she told us to come back to see her on our way to dinner and she would put together a little package.



We went straight up to our room and when I opened the door to our beautiful room I was extra excited to see that we had a fireplace!

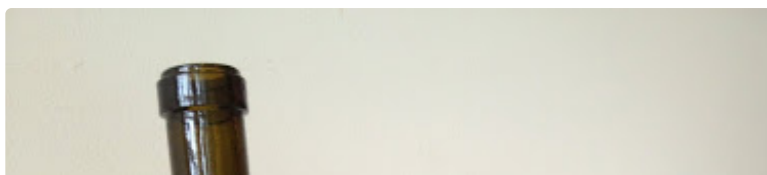




We relaxed and got ready for our dinner reservation at 6:00pm in the Inn's dining room. We were seated at a beautiful little table by the window, which looked out onto the vineyard.



Our server for the evening was Amy, who is the dining room manager and has been with the owners of Riverbend, the Del Ben family, for 18 years. She used to work at their sister property – the [Old Stone Inn](#) (which you can also get with your Gourmet Getaway card). Amy was also very knowledgeable about the inn, the area and of course, the menu! She was absolutely fantastic and you can tell she loves her job. She was very attentive and when she came to check on us/the food she asked “how are the flavours” which was very unique and my goodness, were the flavours ever scrumptious!

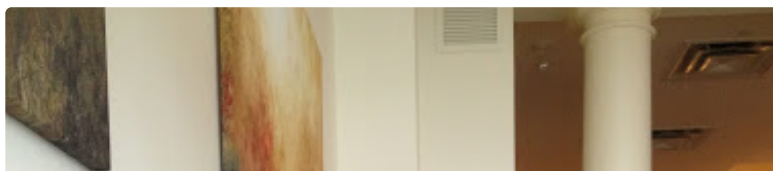




We started off with Amy's recommendation on wine, the 2010 Riverbend Cabernet Sauvignon (Vineyard managed by Klaus Reif of Reif Estate Winery & estate bottled using only Riverbend's own grapes exclusively) which was absolutely fantastic.



So good that we drank a bottle at the table and took a second up to our room for the night! (Please excuse some of the blurriness of the photos, my photographer is learning the fine art of taking pictures of his girlfriend for her blog!)





She then brought us an Amuse Bouche from the chef which was a Crab Salad Tarte and it was delicious.



Next we had freshly baked rolls & butter and I had the soup of the day, Celery Root Soup with a Paprika Creme Fraiche.



Jason had the Beef Carpaccio – Thinly Sliced Beef Tenderloin with Shaved Fennel, Arugula in a Fig Balsamic Vinaigrette, Pine Nuts, Shaved Grana Padano, Lemon Infused Extra Virgin Olive Oil.

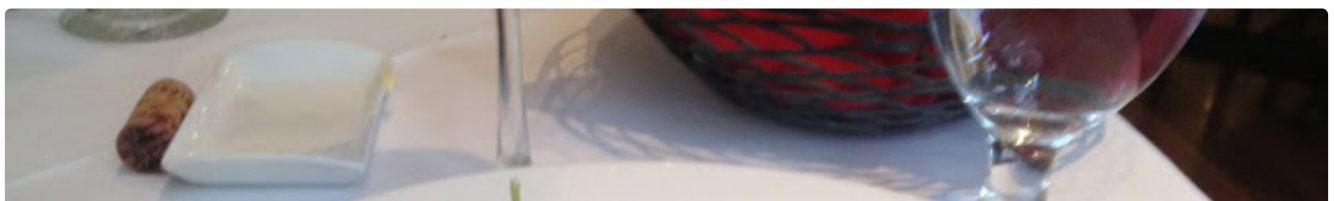




My soup was the perfect blend of flavours, and Jason's carpaccio was fantastic.



For our main course, I had the Pest & Lobster Risotto - Creamy Italian Style Arborio Rice, Lobster Meat, Pesto, Grana Padano – which was a very unique dish for me to eat and it was delectable. The perfect amount of lobster and a real treat for this picky vegetarian eater. (Yes, I know lobster isn't vegetarian, but I try to eat seafood if I can).





Jason had the Stuffed Grain Fed Chicken Supreme -Woolwich Goat Cheese, Walnuts, Calimyrna Fig Stuffing, Potato Puree & Butter Braised Rapini – and he said it was delicious.



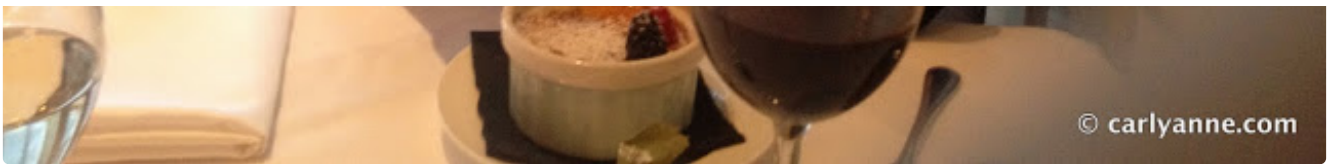
For dessert I had the Creme Brulee (one of my all time favourite desserts) and it was delectable,

followed by a Rivebend Coffee (I can't remember the liquer in it).



Jason had 2 fingers of Crown Royal for dessert, and yes, that's exactly what he asked for – the equivalent to about 4 shots.



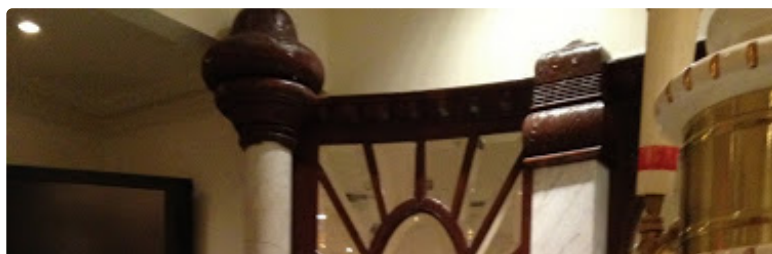


After dinner we wandered back to the lobby (bottle of wine in tow) to chat with Linda and pick up our information. She gave us a whole package of info, including a history of the Riverbend Inn building and 2 wine tasting tickets for Peller Estates and Trius. Thank you very much Linda for all your info and help.



Obligatory Fireplace Pose

We went back up to our room, turned on the fireplace and relaxed with a few glasses of wine and some TV. Then Jason decided he needed some fun, so we headed back down to the dining room to sit at the bar. We both tried the [Oast House](#) beer (Jason a pint, me a half-pint) and he had another shot of Crown Royal.





The bar was closing, so we went for a quick walk around the outside of the inn and then back to our room to polish off the bottle of wine. We were both exhausted after our day and were asleep at about midnight.

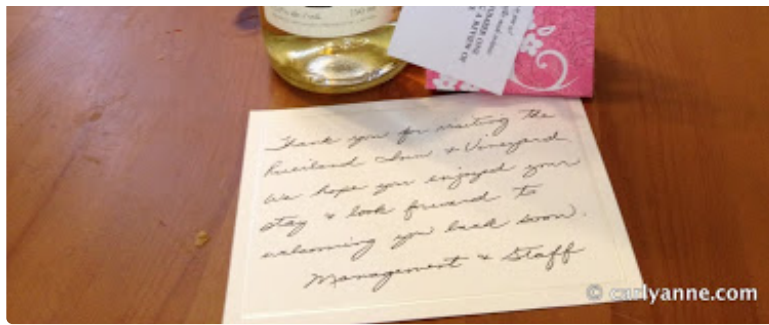




The next morning we woke up and went to breakfast at 930am. I got a picture of the menu and then we both dove into our meals as soon as they came and I completely forgot to get pictures! We both got the Country Breakfast (I gave Jason my bacon & sausage) and then we headed back to our room to pack and then down to checkout.

Our farewell gift was a bottle of Riverbend Vineyard 2011 Vidal & Riverbend Truffles. Of course, we ate the truffles right away, but the wine is chilling for a special occasion aka this weekend 😊

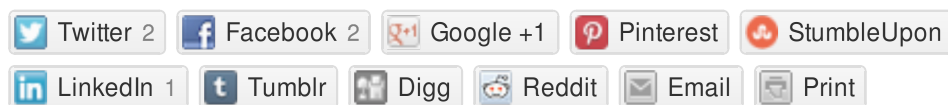




We had the best time at Riverbend Inn & Vineyard and I highly recommend adding it to your “to do” list. The inn was gorgeous, the staff were all very knowledgeable, friendly and were happy to be there, and the food & wine... well it was absolutely delicious and one of the highlights of our weekend.

Thank you to [SambaDays](#) and the Sambassador program. I can't wait for my next adventure!

p.s. For all the photos from our adventure check out my [Picasa HERE](#)



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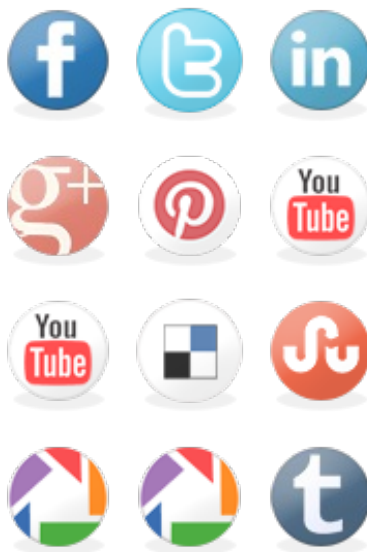
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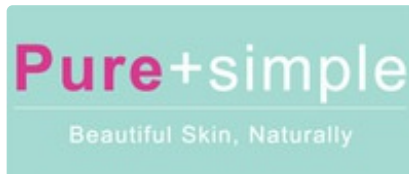
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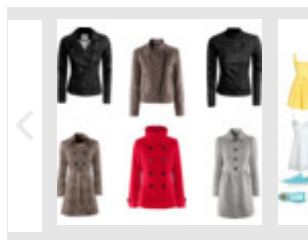


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