

Road to hot springs paved with adventure



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English Tarts owners Bethan Lavie and Ruth Janes proudly bake British confections daily.

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Bridge to the falls

It's not Niagara, but Deroche's Cascade Falls is still a beautiful site with a whole lot fewer visitors than it deserves.

The suspension bridge opened in April 2015 with adjoining viewing platforms that allow a closer glimpse of falls that tumble 30 metres into Cascade Creek.

Cascade Falls Regional Park is 15 kilometres off Highway 7 on Ridgeview Road and once there, hike five minutes up a short trail to reach the bridge.

Tart it up

Stop on Mission's 1st Avenue for breakfast, lunch or a quick tea at The English Tarts, a cozy restaurant where British bakers Bethan Lavie and Ruth Janes are seriously skilled when it comes to confections.

With a framed Union Jack near the kitchen, dainty teacups and saucers and a delectable assortment of scones, flapjacks, buttercream cakes, strudel and Victoria sponges, the ladies run a warm, friendly eatery with English pride.

The restaurant is open Monday to Saturday and from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Soak in history

It's easy to step back in time at Kilby Historic Site in Harrison Mills, where the general store, post office and upstairs rooms for rent are preserved as they were back in 1930, when this was a bustling mill town.

Visitors can inspect the original merchandise at the general store, browse through the upstairs bedrooms and peruse images on the walls of the once-devastating floods.

Outside, families stroll through the five-acre farm, picking apples from the orchard floor to feed the docile cow or scattering seed for ducks and hens.

Don't leave without a slice of home-baked berry pie from the restaurant.

Talons on the river

November and December are eagle-viewing months on the Harrison River and this year up to 2,000 of the majestic raptors congregated on the river banks to feast on spawning salmon.

We headed 12 km upriver with Harrison Eco Tours, grateful for a heated boat cabin on a frosty morning. The eagles, which outnumbered seagulls two to

one, were a magnificent site, dotting the trees with their white heads and strutting on the sandbars ripping apart the soggy bodies of their prey.

Look out for breaching sturgeon and the odd harbour seal — a handful of seals has been tempted from their oceanic origins and taken up permanent residence in the salmon-rich waters of Harrison River.

Bites and trinkets

The journey and the destination rival for attention on a daylong meander like this, so be sure to take time to visit some of the quirky venues that catch your eye along the way.

We had to stop for crackers after tasting the creamy contours of Heidi, one of the award-winning cheese products sold at Farm House Natural Cheeses in Agassiz.

The First Nations art at the Happy Prospector was utterly unique, ranging from artsy horses pieced together from pieces of wood to dream catchers and hand-carved paddles (open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; 3005 Hot Springs Rd., Agassiz).

And the supersized cranberry muffins at Muddy Waters Cafe in Harrison Hot Springs were a culinary treat worth sampling (328 Esplanade Ave., open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.)

The writer was a guest of Drive Scenic 7 B.C. The article was not read nor approved by Drive Scenic 7 B.C. before publication.

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