

# The Accidental Tourist Guide



Charlotte Bertrande, Bob Smith and Pierre Scanavino at Bob Smith's home in Glenholme. The hikers are packed up and headed to Newfoundland. Bob has to stay home. (Lisa McBurnie Photo)

By Bob Smith

(This is the conclusion of a two part story)

November, you may recall, was cold. It was -6C and windy and overcast when Pierre and Charlotte left Fredericton on November 23rd.

They received a drive from Fredericton to Petitcodiac with a couple who saw them on the side of the road, drove past and went to Tim Hortons for coffee and brownies before returning to pick them up, explaining that they figured they were cold, and could use a warm drive and a hot coffee.

This was a good ride for Charlotte and Pierre, but unfortunately after leaving this ride Pierre discovered that he had lost his wallet and credit card somewhere along the journey. The next couple to pick them up was going to Amherst, but kindly offered to drive them the rest of the way to Masstown when they found out about Pierre losing his wallet.

Pierre and Charlotte arrived at the Masstown Market and their accommodating ride from Amherst drove them to my home, which is also where my business is located. They were met by my secretary, Lisa, who I had asked to make them feel at home.

When I arrived home at 6:00 pm I happily found that they had done as asked and made themselves at home. They had showered, done a bit of laundry and were ready for something to eat. We enjoyed an evening of fine food, drinks, and conversation.

I learned a great deal about my guests during their stay at my home. Charlotte is 24 years old and is from Nantes in Bretagne, the North-West of France. Pierre is 25 and from Aix-les-Bains in the South East.

Before flying to Halifax in August, they spent two months in Iceland. Their introduction into Canada was favorable. On their week long journey in Cape Breton they

were overwhelmed with the hospitality of the people. Because of a problem with a misplaced credit card in Iceland, which resulted in a hold on the card, Pierre and Charlotte had to stay a few nights in what they referred to as "wild camp" or what I would call the woods.

They chose one night to stay at a "summer garden" by the harbor which turned out to be on the beach at the Bras d'Or Lakes in Baddeck. At 6:00 in the morning, a sail boat stopped at the shore and they met the captain. They shared the story of their travels and when they said that they had decided to head back without seeing the trail, he offered them his car for three days. The captain also extended an invitation to come on his boat, but it was not windy enough to sail that day. Pierre and Charlotte had already accepted a ride with a woman who was on a life changing journey of her own, and was headed to Montreal, so they graciously declined the captain's generous offers.

While in Baddeck, Pierre and Charlotte also met two gentlemen from Quebec, who urged them to see the rest of the Cabot Trail. They gave them \$100.00 to help with expenses. When Pierre asked the man for his address, so he could repay the money, he refused, insisting that it was non-returnable, but he did give Pierre an e-mail address to stay in touch. Pierre and Charlotte did stay and completed the trip around the Cabot trail, saying they could not imagine missing it. They hiked back to Truro, and it was then that I met them for the second time.

Back on August 21 when I dropped Pierre and Charlotte off on the ramp at Exit 12 for their trip west, they told me that they were hoping to make it to Moncton that night. Their first ride was along in minutes, and was a good one. He was headed to Montreal

and had already picked up one hitchhiker, who ironically was also from France.

They drove through the night, switching drivers, and arrived in Montreal the next morning with only one incident. They ran out of gas about a quarter of a mile from a gas station, and pushed the car to within 200 yards of the station.

Pierre and Charlotte stayed a week in Montreal before going to their destination in Sutton; Que. Sutton was a destination they had chosen through an international organization called "Wooffing".

"Wooffing" is a web-based organization that allows people to contact hosts in Europe and North America, to make arrangements to stay with them for a predetermined amount of time at no financial cost. By way of remuneration, the people work for their host, usually for 4-5 hours a day.

(Information on Pierre and Charlotte's host can be found at [www/woof.ca/node/5875](http://www.woof.ca/node/5875).)

Pierre and Charlotte's next stop was in Isle St Jean, north of the St. Lawrence and east Chicoutimi, where they remained for two months. They stayed on an organic farm where they met a "new family". Their work included an hour per day welcoming visitors and customers, taking care of children living on the farm, gardening, and carpentry work.

While on the farm, Pierre learned to overcome his fear of heights when he helped to build the roof on a new cook house. Pierre and Charlotte found the countryside very beautiful and spent much of their free time hiking in the forests, and canoeing in the rivers and lakes.

(Information on this host site can be found at [www/http://www.woof.ca/node/2460](http://www.woof.ca/node/2460).)

For one week Pierre and Charlotte worked with a gentleman named Jacques. He had built a remote camp on a lake which was accessible only by foot, and offered it to them for a week. They packed up their gear and food and hiked for two hours through thick forest to a log cabin on a beautiful inland lake. The ground was snow covered, but the lake was not frozen, and there was a canoe which they used to explore the lake.

One day they found themselves in predicament. They were out on the lake, but found it too windy, and struggled to get to shore. When Pierre got out of the canoe a gust of wind took it back out, with Charlotte still aboard, and she had no paddle. The wind was carrying the boat away and rather quickly it took Charlotte around a point of land and out of Pierre's sight. Pierre struggled through the forest along the shoreline to find Charlotte.

By the time Pierre caught sight of the canoe, fortunately the wind was driving it toward the shore. When the

# New Physical Activity Guidelines

By Robin Norrie

In January 2011, the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (CSEP) announced new Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines.

The new guidelines state that children (5-11 years) and youth (12-17 years) require at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity activity per day while adults (18-64 years) and older adults (65 years and older) must get at least 150 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity per week.

Why have the guidelines changed and why are they important? Well most notably the levels of obesity and inactivity in the Canadian population have continued to worsen over the last decade at an alarming rate. more than 55% of the population is not active enough to achieve health benefits; for the first time in our history this current generation of children has a shorter life expectancy than that of their parents; and there are more people OVER weight than UNDER weight in the world.

These are startling facts.

As leaders in physical activity, CSEP and other partners like the Public Health



Agency of Canada aim to increase the Canadian public's awareness, adoption and implementation of the new Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines. The new physical activity guidelines state:

**Children (5-11 years) and Youth (12-17 years)**

For health benefits, children and youth should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily. This should include: Vigorous-intensity activities at least 3 days per week; Activities that strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days per week.

**Adults (18-64 years)**

To achieve health benefits, adults should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more.

It is also beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week. **Older Adults (65 years and older)**

To achieve health benefits

and improve functional abilities, older adults should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more.

It is also beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week.

Those with poor mobility should perform physical activities to enhance balance and prevent falls.

For more information about the guidelines please visit: [www.csep.ca/guidelines](http://www.csep.ca/guidelines)

It's not just about what we want people to KNOW. It's about what we want them to DO. People know what is needed to live a healthy life. They just aren't doing it. It is a challenge for a whole host of reasons from busy, over-scheduled lives to convenience filled, sedentary choices. Quite simply people need to move more in their everyday life; to make physical activity part of their daily routine. You can do it! Just move more and get active!

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canoe came close enough for him to reach, Charlotte got out and together they pulled the canoe up out of the water and walked back to the cabin. After they were back inside the cabin and warm, Charlotte went to the lake to get some water. She plunged her arm into the lake to fill a container, and only then did she realize the water was paralyzing cold. Fate could easily have taken different turn on that day. When Pierre and Charlotte left the cabin on the lake, they continued their journey east to Masstown.

After a good night's rest and a "typical" Nova Scotia breakfast of bacon and eggs over easy, refried potatoes, toast, freshly perked coffee and orange juice, I left Pierre and Charlotte to relax for the day, and went off to work. Their next destination was Newfoundland, via Halifax. That afternoon, I dropped them off at Exit 11 on highway 102.

The weather was cool with a mix of rain and snow, but they didn't mind as they said they would likely get a ride fairly quickly in this type of weather. They had made arrangements through another web based organization called "Couch Surfing" to spend the night in Halifax. ("Couch Surfing" is basically a network of people who are willing to open their homes to travelers, with a system that allows both the travelers and hosts to qualify each other.)

About three weeks after Pierre and Charlotte left my home; I received a call from a woman in Moncton saying she had found Pierre's wallet in the back seat of her car. The only phone number was on my business card that I had given to them. She sent the wallet to me by courier and I sent an e-mail to Charlotte and Pierre. They were quick to respond saying that they had never expected to have the wallet returned and that I was "The Santa Claus". I was able to send the wallet to a mailing address in Newfoundland.

As I finish off this story (for now) the mail just arrived with a card from my new friends. They are in Pouch Cove Newfoundland, north

east of St. John's. They say the weather is good, the people very friendly, and the ocean scenery spectacular. They didn't mention getting "screeched in" yet. I had showed them my own certificate, and recommended it, but perhaps the trip to Trapper John's was holding them back.

Although Pierre and Charlotte do not have a set time schedule, their plan is to leave Newfoundland mid-January and return to Quebec, where they hope to get a work visa for a few months. When they are ready to leave Canada, their next adventure will take them to another country, on another continent, South America. I hope to stay in contact and learn more from these young adventurers.

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