WEEKEND GET-AWAY: TORONTO

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This time our Weekend Get-Away guide is all about the vibrant city of Toronto. It was written by the lovely Brandy who works in the Toronto fashion industry and who is the founder of Baby Blackbird, a blog about children's fashion. Very nicely, she took some time off writing for her own blog and put together a list of things to do and see in Toronto. I had no idea that Toronto had so many child-friendly things to do!

EAT:

MILL STREET BREWERY - Truly a great place to bring the family to eat - the food is delicious, along with a great well-optioned kids menu. The servers are friendly and wonderful with kids, and as the name would suggest, it houses one of Toronto's best microbreweries. After lunch you can step outside and explore one of North Americas best-preserved areas of Victorian industrial architecture, The Distillery District.

MARCHÉ - A European-market style concept restaurant, where you visit different stations and the food is prepared in front of you. It's fun for kids to be able to watch their food being made, as well as walk around choosing what they would like to eat. Also directly above is the Hockey hall of fame, which is a must see for any hockey fan.

LICK'S – A Toronto fast food staple, with atmosphere and décor similar to a 50's diner. This burger and ice cream joint caters to kids, also if you hit the right Lick's location you will be lucky enough to be taken care of by singing servers.

PLAY:

TORONTO ZOO -Definitely worth the short trip away from the heart of the city. The Toronto Zoo is Canada's largest, and best. Make sure to bring your walking shoes as the zoo is over 710 acres in size, and boasts over 500 species, a water park, and even a few rides. A *great* place to spend an entire day (it will take a full day to see everything).

CANADA'S WONDERLAND - Just a hop skip and a jump outside Toronto, you will find Canada's best amusement park. Hundreds of rides for both kids and adults alike.

CENTER ISLAND - Just a short 5 min ferry ride from downtown Toronto, you will find a secluded man-made island. The island has everything you need to spend a day outdoors - restaurants, beaches, parks and even a small amusement park. A nice way to get away

from the hustle and bustle of the city without going too far.

ONTARIO PLACE - Along Toronto's waterfront sits a fantastic little amusement center for kids. Ontario place is a great place to get in a little fun without going far from downtown. Rides, splash pad, kid's shows, and not to mention the view of the lake is fantastic.

SEE:

CN TOWER - You can't come to Toronto and not check out the panoramic sky-high views of the city. For the adventurous type the glass floor is sure to be the highlight of the 553.53 meter high trip.

NIAGARA FALLS - Just a short 2-hour drive from the city, but well worth the trip to visit a great wonder of the world. Niagara also boasts an entire street dedicated to haunted houses, arcades, restaurants and wax museums. Basically, Las Vegas for children.

HIGH PARK- Toronto's largest urban park is nestled along beautiful lake Ontario. A beautiful place for an afternoon walk, grab a bite in one of the cafes or a pack a picnic. Don't miss the free outdoor zoo, greenhouse and the medieval inspired playground.

SHOP:

EATON CENTER - In the heart of downtown, lies this fantastic 4 level mall. Be sure not to miss the stores lining the streets outside the mall along with the view of billboards and giant televisions surrounding Dundas Square.

WEST QUEEN WEST - A mecca of kid and baby centric independent shops, and boutiques for mom and dad. Looking for one of a kind clothing, and gifts, this funky neighborhood full of culture and creativity will have you spending your travel budget.

KENSINGTON -One of the city's most vibrant and diverse neighborhoods houses a treasure trove of vintage and second-hand clothing stores. A fantastic selection of eclectic restaurants and cafes makes this a great place to shop and drop.

BLOOR-YORKVILLE - Home to high-end designer boutiques, and unique fashions. Some great kid's wardrobe shopping hidden within all the chic-ness this neighborhood has to offer.

SLEEP:

SHERATON - Take a shuttle from the airport right to your doorstep. Just a small step outside and you will find your self in the cities largest urban mall and some of the cities best dining and boutique shopping. Endless attractions include restaurants, which cater to kids, a cinema, play center as well as on call babysitting. Also they house a limited amount of rooms that house a toy chest, and kids sized furniture. An indoor/outdoor pool and the comfiest beds around will make it hard to ever leave this hotel.

FOUR SEASONS – Just up the block from the newly renovated Royal Ontario Museum in the heart of chic Bloor-Yorkville. Amenities include free bicycles to borrow, video games, and an indoor pool. After check-in, room service brings the kids milk and cookies.

DELTA CHELSEA – An economical choice right in the heart of the

city. Close to all amenities as well as offering some of the best family fun within a hotel. A play area, video arcade, indoor waterslide, are some of the great perks offered for kids.

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