

NOTICE TO READER: The client's name to this posting remains anonymous.



My family and I recently spent a week in the South Okanagan community of Osoyoos in support of my little sister participating for the first time in the Ironman Canada Penticton Triathlon. We had been planning our trip for several months and originally were planning to camp north/east of Penticton. However, after learning of other family members planning to attend the race and their plans to stay in Osoyoos, we cancelled our camping plans and began searching for reasonable accommodations in Osoyoos.

Of course this was all about one month before the Ironman and accommodation availability was definitely limited in the South Okanagan at this time of year. After scouring on-line for several hours we found a number of accommodations available in and around Osoyoos that appeared suitable for a family of 5 (kids aged 3, 5 and 8). We were looking for a total of 6 nights and in addition wanted to bring our boat along to enjoy on the waters of Lake Osoyoos.

Osoyoos has a fair number of hotels and resorts “along the strip” that splits the lake almost in half. The north side of the strip is very busy and popular with tourists. There are number of chain branded hotels which are fairly old and are typical of what you find in most cities. Most have some private beach access and can accommodate boats but being on the north side of the strip are quite pricey – we were looking at around \$280 per night on average at the chains. There are a couple of very nice new resorts that are also suitable for families but they are much pricier and were fully booked so they were not an option for us at all.

So after hours of disappointment of searching out accommodations on line, I stumbled upon Destiny Beach Resort deep in the Google search pages. I checked out the website and it is very simple but very informative. I'll tell you right now that the website accurately represents what Destiny Beach Resort is and has to offer. The pictures are not enhanced nor do they only showcase the good. In fact one of the most unusual things I encountered on the website were the testimonials, good AND bad! How often do you see honest testimonials on a hotel website? The other thing that was impressive about the testimonials is the owners addressed the concerns in the testimonials, and not in a defensive way. Yes I definitely started to get a sense this place was somewhat different.

So as I delved deeper into the information in the website I learned the Resort changed owners about three years ago. Since then the owners have been working hard in the offseason to update the resort from datedness that occurs over some 50 years. It is a small resort with only 14 or so units on two floors with outside access – much like a small motel you'd see in any city. On the website there is a downloadable PDF that describes each room, its size and layout in addition to suitability for guest numbers. Very useful information indeed. The pictures on the website portray the cleanliness and amenities which turned out to be a very fair representation.

With that information in hand we called for availability and reservations and were fortunate enough to get a booking. The new owners, husband and wife, Trish and Chris were absolutely fantastic from the get go. They are very hands on; making sure everything has their own personal touch. Trish handled our booking and confirmation and was extremely helpful. We immediately felt very comfortable with our booking and we hadn't even set foot in the place. Originally our booking was split between two rooms (requiring us to change rooms mid-stay due to availability) but a few days after our booking Chris called offering us a one room for the full stay. Awesome service!

On the date of our arrival we were very late – we called ahead to Trish to warn her we were going to be in around 11pm. No problem she said – she'd leave the room unlocked with the keys and everything we'd need for our arrival. And that is exactly how it went with no problems!

Our room was on the top floor very near the gathering area and entry is by a sliding glass door. The room had a separate bedroom with bunkbeds and a single bed for the kids and the main area had a queen size bed and kitchenette. In addition there is a full bathroom. The room was very clean and had some updating complete but this is a 50 year old building after all so it does have some character to it! But the most important thing is it was clean, comfortable and roomy enough for our family of five. Perfect. Now let me talk about the outdoor amenities.

The resort has a heated swimming pool steps from your front door (with plenty of area for seating and observing small children) that is meticulously maintained by Chris. It seemed Trish and Chris were constantly outside cleaning/maintaining/fixing etc. – not sure when they get a break, LOL! A really cool feature is the covered outdoor gathering area upstairs that overlooks the pool complete with complementary barbecue, couches and table to hang out and relax. There is also a barbecue downstairs near the pool and another at the beach. Speaking of the beach, it is very private, has a covered gazebo with couches and table, along with soothing music piped into outdoor speakers, a fine sand beach which is cleaned and raked each morning by Chris. In addition there is a fresh herb garden and tomato plants available for the guests to pick and choose at their leisure. This resort set up very much reminds me of similar resorts I have experienced in Mexico.

The beach while small, leads to the warm Lake Osoyoos and its shallow clear waters. There is a small dock to accommodate boats and/or cast fishing attempts. Speaking of boats, the resort offers two anchored buoys to tie off boats for overnight stays – the resort does not have a boat launch but there is one about 1 km away at Haynes Point – in fact you can see the launch from the resort's beach. There is also a swim platform anchored at about a five foot depth that is great fun for all. In addition, there is a kids paddle boat to tool around in and kayak and canoe available for guests. You could easily spend a week just hanging out at this resort with everything it has to offer.

I need to talk about one unheralded feature of this resort and that is its location. As I mentioned this resort is about 50 years old and I'm not sure what was around it at the time it was built but it is now part of a residential subdivision that has grown up all round it. Chris and Trish know all their neighbours and along with being only 14 or so units, lends nicely to its family oriented charm and sense of safety and security. It is located at the end of a residential cul-de-sac so there are literally no traffic worries. It is very quiet and peaceful. But the best part is the lake location – the resort is on the south side of the Osoyoos Lake split near Hayne Point.

This is the very quiet and non-busy side of the lake. You have ABSOLUTELY no concerns about security and safety at this resort which makes it IMHO the most suitable family style resort in town!

Like most hotels in Osoyoos, on-site parking can be an issue, especially if you have a boat trailer. Not to fear, the town of Osoyoos has a secured boat trailer parking facility that is just off the strip and literally minutes from the resort. It is open from 7 am to 8 pm and accommodates easily 100 trailers. If full there is an overflow next to it that is unsecure, but does not seem to be an issue. We happily left our boat and trailer all week long at the secured facility which by the way is FREE! As mentioned you can just as easily leave your boat moored to one of the two anchor buoys at the resort.

Okay, one last final point – value for money. This family friendly, homey feeling resort with almost Mexican resort type flair to it has got to be the bargain of the century in Osoyoos. Our 6 night stay for our family of 5 with all the amenities was less than HALF of what the cheapest chain hotel on the strip was offering. Unbelievable value. Throw in the absolutely wonderful personal touch of Chris and Trish and this resort experience knocked our socks off. We will be back next year and the year after and the year after that... because we had so much fun – what a great vacation stay!