



# CHILLIN' IN KELOWNA

After the hard grind of an NHL season, more players are pickin' K-Town to spend their summers relaxing and rejuvenating

By Budd Stanley

**F**or those who make their living in hockey, winters can be long, hard, cold affairs. With long seasons in places such as Buffalo, New York, New Jersey, Chicago and Detroit, players are more than happy to see the light of spring. With a need to melt the winter's daily grind and warm in the sun, a number of NHLers – Tyler Myers, Carey Price and Jordan Tootoo, to name a few – are now calling Kelowna, B.C., home.

As the only desert in Canada, the Okanagan Valley is a slim northern finger of a massive desert that reaches north from the Sonoran Desert. As such, Kelowna's summers are particularly warm with daytime temperatures often exceeding 35°C. However, while it may be hot, it's not stifling like the humid heats of Montreal or Toronto. Kelowna is a dry heat, which cools to a comfortable room temperature at night, ideal for drinks on the deck.

With up to 300 hours of bright sunshine per month in the summer, Kelowna has an ideal climate for growing grapes. If you are a wine lover, other than Niagara, there is no place in Canada where you will enjoy such a concentration of wineries, as the entire valley is riddled with vineyards and tasting rooms. With good wine, comes good food and Kelowna is in no short supply of fantastically unique fine dining. Winos will want to grab a reservation at the Waterfront Grill, where head chef, Mark Filatow, will introduce dinners to fresh local produces, while the wine list is stacked with

a who's who of Canadian vinos to be enjoyed with the best tapas in town.

With Okanagan Lake filling the floor of the Okanagan Valley, sandy beaches make the most out of a lazy afternoon. The most popular, City Park Beach, is a beautiful combination of warm waters, powder sand and green spaces only steps from Kelowna's boardwalk and nightlife. However, before you hit the clubs, best to pull out a set first. Hockey players love golf and here you will find a plethora of beautiful and challenging courses. A mid-afternoon nine holes at Tower Ranch is a wonderful way to end the day, ideally set high in the hills with the city and valley making an impressive backdrop as you watch your ball sail away into the rough.

After the activities, Kelowna also boasts a respectable nightlife once the sun goes over the mountains. It doesn't rival Toronto or Montreal, but several good bars and clubs can be found with a stroll down Leon and Bernard avenues where patios await.

Don't let Kelowna's popularity in summer make you think this is a one-season town. This is a four-season town and it is ideally situated in the heart of central B.C. activity with world-class skiing, mountain biking, snowmobiling and hiking. Couple this with million dollar views as most neighborhoods are built on the narrow slopes of the valley and Kelowna has proven itself to be a popular off-season draw for those who shoot puck.

## Survival TIPS

### WHERE TO DINE

#### Waterfront Grill

*Specializing in Canadian wines, excellent tapas and fresh local eats*

#### Raudz

*Excellent food and fine bar for a good price right in the heart of the city*

#### Wild Apple Grill

*A cosmopolitan dining experience right on the lake*

#### Minstrel Cafe and Bar

*Casual dining with live music in the heart of wine country*

#### Bouchons Bistro

*Classic French-style bistro cuisine in a quiet setting*

### WHERE TO LET LOOSE

#### The OK Corral

*Get your country fix and do a bit of bull riding*

#### Flashbacks

*A little bit of everything, from hard rock to hypnotic beats*

#### LeVel

*Popular club with a long list of guest DJs*

#### Saphire

*Hip-hop beats*

### WHERE TO HAVE A PINT

#### Doc Wallaby's

*Great classic old-English atmosphere and style with lively music*

#### Station Pub

*Transformed train station with a cosmo atmosphere*

### WHERE TO TASTE

Cedar Creek  
Burrowing Owl  
Quailsgate  
Tantalus  
Calona  
Mission Hills

### WHERE TO GOLF

The Bear  
The Predator  
Tower Ranch  
Shannon Lake  
Gallagher's Canyon  
Mission Creek  
Sunset  
Black Mountain  
Harvest