

Fractionals offer up four-season fun



By JAKE GOOD

For most people, the time to take holidays and enjoy time at the cottage is in the summer. The kids are out of school, there is a guarantee of warm weather and if the vacation is near any of Ontario's amazing lakes, it is ideal for swimming, boating and fishing.

Of course, a vacation is not just something that is taken during July and August, and the term "summer vacation" is often inadequate to describe how people spend their holiday time. Many individuals, retired couples and even families prefer to take their holidays in fall, winter or spring — or for the lucky ones, in all four seasons.

Many of today's fractional owner-

ship vacation properties offer the opportunity to do just that.

By spreading out the time spent at a fractional development, more people are discovering the joys of year-round holidays, where fall colours, winter skiing and spring hikes are becoming just as popular as lazy summer days by the lake.

According to Helen Lovekin, media relations co-ordinator for Ontario Tourism, four-season holidays have been gaining in popularity for the past decade.

"Getting people to explore what we have to offer in all seasons is something that people in the industry have been working on extremely hard for the past 10 years," she says. "It is really getting noticed now. For most families, it is no longer the case that they can take six weeks off at a

time to spend at the cottage. So they are faced with the prospect of just coming up on weekends or taking time off at other times of the year."

Fractional developments take this into consideration by spreading out the time allocated at the property throughout the year.

"Resorts across Ontario are grasping what is going on and focusing their efforts on seasonal tourists," says Lovekin. "Spring is the sweet season with many events planned around maple syrup and seasonal foods appearing on menus. In the fall, golf courses are staying open later — some right into November — to cater to people who are taking later season breaks. Winter is not just about snowmobiling and skiing, with spas having great deals or restaurants offering culinary delights



Four-season holidays have been gaining in popularity as people discover how much fun and variety can be had when spreading vacations throughout the year.

year round."

To cater to people who are exploring the province year round, Ontario Tourism offers a seasonal getaways section on its website.

"We are extremely lucky as most people who choose to take their holidays in Ontario are Ontarians," she says. "They know about all the

great things there are to do here and find that they do not need to go to another country or province to have a great experience. People in the tourism industry understand this. They have to be as many things to as many different people as possible. Four-season tourism does just that."



A vacation is not just something that is taken during July and August. Many of today's fractional ownership vacation properties offer the opportunity to take advantage of amenities, such as golf courses, staying open past the summer season.



Lazy summer days by the lake aren't the only way to spend a vacation, although they remain popular, especially with families.

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