

Aline and I were married on this day five years ago. It's amazing how quickly that time has passed and what's transpired in between: selling our downtown condo and buying a new house. Countless little renovations to make the place truly ours. Two beautiful kids that haven't yet learnt the comforts of sleeping in. Canoe trips. Musicals. Starting our own garden patch and maple syrup sugar shack.

On serious reflection, they've been happy years that I'll treasure always and as I penned Aline a little love letter, getting her a KitchenAid mixer when I proposed was the smartest thing I ever did.

To celebrate we went down to Gananoque for dinner and a show and an overnight stay. Our original plan was to check out the farmers market in Brockville before heading to the Upper Canada Playhouse in Gananoque for the afternoon showing of 'The 39 Steps' but we arrived just as the market was closing shop so we only stayed for lunch and then realized to our dismay that Gananoque was 50km further down the highway and not just a short 15 minute drive. We ended up being a tad late for the show but didn't miss much: Richard Hannay, a man with a boring life meets a woman one day with a thick accent who says she's a spy. When he takes her home, she is murdered. Soon, a mysterious organization called 'The 39 Steps' is hot on his trail in a nationwide. The show was originally a British spy novel turned into a Hitchcock movie and it's been updated to add a dash of Monty Python for a hilarious, fast-paced whodunit for anyone who loves the magic of theatre. This smash hit fresh from Broadway is packed with nonstop laughs, over 150 zany characters (played by an incredibly talented cast of 4!), an on-stage plane crash, handcuffs, missing fingers, and some good old-fashioned romance! It was well done but the reviews made it sound better than it really was.

Afterwards we strolled around downtown before settling on Watermarks Restaurant at the Gananoque Inn and Spa for dinner. Aline had the roasted apple soup and I had gazpacho with shrimp. Aline tried the vegetable and bean ragout and I had the sea scallops with a raspberry coulis topped with a Bergeron Vidal glass of wine. We treated ourselves to dessert as well where Aline tried the double chocolate mousse and I really enjoyed the cheese plate with walnuts and honey.

After dinner we checked in at the Quality Inn Hotel and enjoyed a child-free evening. No crying. No interruptions. Nice.

The next morning after a continental breakfast we hiked a bit of the Catarquai Trail which led us back to the waterfront area downtown. We picked up a few kids souvenirs at a local toy shop, then had lunch at a grassy knoll by the docks of Joel Stone beach from Pal's Fish & Chips. Very tasty haddock and cod fillets for me and a Philly sandwich for Aline. Seagulls enjoyed the fries. Picked up a few soap souvenirs and then had a Sunday drive back along the back roads to Ottawa.