

Finding more than just the right path

Going a little out of the way can sometimes lead to wonderful places to visit



Day
Tripper

Sarah Keaveny Vos

Sometimes you need to get a little lost before you can find your way again, in life and on day trips.

So it was for me, on a recent outing to The Kitchen Witch tea room in Long River, when I broke the cardinal rule of day tripping: "Thou shall not set forth without a map."

I'd invited my friends, Susan Tweel and Stephanie Rainnie, out for a little girlfriend's getaway to have our tea leaves read. It was a gorgeous Sunday afternoon, our husbands had the children and we were footloose and fancy free.

I realized my mistake before we even left Charlottetown and I confessed to it just as we hit Milton, but my travelling companions were undeterred. (As I said, the guys had the kids and we had sweet freedom!)

However, it had been a couple of years since I'd travelled to Long River. I was with a couple of girlfriends who happily never run out of lively conversation and I'd taken a couple of wrong turns along the way.

Looking back, I believe the words, "I don't think this is right guys, but let's try it" actually came out of my mouth — but heck, we were



Tea leaf reader extraordinaire Janice Mulligan sees great fortune in Stephanie Rainnie's future. Photo special to The Guardian by Sarah Keaveny Vos

all having such a good time that no one seemed to . . . at first.

Finally, fed up and famished, we decided to ask the very next person we saw to help us get back on track. (I don't know why this hadn't occurred to us earlier in the afternoon? Honestly, you'd think we were men or some-

thing!) Five minutes later we came across was a pleasant-looking man out doing a little yard work and pulled over right away.

As we explained our predicament, we noticed the man was standing next to a colorful flag that read "Open". After getting us back on track, he said with a twinkle

in his eye, "And after you have your tea leaves read, why not come back and visit the Olde Lovely shop." We gratefully promised to do just that and were on our way.

Sure enough the tea room was mere moments away and before we knew it we were sipping our Earl Grey

and nibbling on a delicious plate of homemade hummus and tortilla chips.

Housed in the original Long River school house, The Kitchen Witch has a charm about it that warms you from the inside out, like a steaming cup of tea.

For owners Debbie and Geoff Crowther, who happily

call themselves IBCs or "Islanders by Choice," it's a dream come true to be running this enchanting little spot with their family.

And as a patron, you feel welcomed like a guest in their home, which you actually are, since they live in the cozy apartment upstairs.

The food is great, the surroundings are beautiful and the Kitchen Witch herself, Janice Mulligan, is a total delight.

It was so neat to watch her as she "threw the cups" and examined the patterns that formed in the tea leaves.

During each of our readings she was quite specific and almost eerily on target. And in one case, (I won't say which one) she was right on the money — literally.

On our way home, we stopped by the Olde Lovely and were captivated by its spell as well. Bubbly proprietor Cyndy Crawley and her helpful husband, run a wonderful little gift shop that features "historic rubbish" and other fantastic finds.

We all found a little something special to take home as a memento of our day together, thanked the Crawleys warmly and headed for Charlottetown . . . with a map firmly in hand.

Sarah Keaveny Vos is a freelance journalist and stay-at-home mum of three. Her life has become way too busy to be logically making these day trips, which is precisely why she needs to make them! If you have any ideas for fun outings to take on the Island, please contact her at peidaytripper@hotmail.com.