

Canada Blooms

THE FLOWER AND GARDEN FESTIVAL

Kids learn, live and play healthy this March Break at Canada Blooms

Bienenstock Natural Playground and Family Rest Area from Barbie Presents Thumbelina on DVD make Canada Blooms a great family 'get-away'

February 2009 – Toronto, ON – This March Break, more and more families will be looking for ways to 'get-away' while staying close to home. With free admission for children under 12 and plenty of activities for both parents and kids, Canada Blooms will transport families to a springtime garden oasis– without digging deep in their pockets – from March 18 to 22 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

Surrounded by Canada Blooms lush feature gardens, kids will have the chance to explore nature and learn important eco-friendly tips in the Bienenstock Natural Playground and Family Rest Area from Barbie Presents Thumbelina on DVD.

Bienenstock Natural Playground

In the fully accessible Bienenstock Natural Playground, children will be transported into another world guided by their imagination. They can play to their own beat on the xylophones and whale drums and travel through the Living Willow Tunnel. They will meet Nellie, the water flute that shoots water from her back in the living pond, and see life-like sand sculptures by Canada's world champion Karen Fralich. Children will also be encouraged to use creativity to build their own sand play areas and contribute to Debbe Shannon's nature mural that wraps around the playground.

"Our playgrounds use natural features and elements like rolling green landscapes, slides embedded in hills, mature trees, tree stumps for seating and tables, musical instruments and art to engage all children and the child in-full," says Adam Bienenstock, principal designer and founder, Gardens For Living Inc., the company that designs and installs all Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds. "We've found that when children reconnect with nature, they are happier, healthier and inspired to learn."

Experts from the Toronto Botanical Garden's Children's Programs will be on hand to engage kids of all ages in ecological and nature activities. The McMaster Child Health Research Institute (MCHRI) will also share their knowledge of the benefits of nature's effects on our children.

"We'll be getting dirty again this year," says Liz Hood, TBG Children's Program Supervisor, "By sculpting clay creatures, creating seed balls for birds, meeting worms and encouraging kids to sift through the earth's layers, we'll be helping them reconnect and explore the wonders that live beneath our feet."

The Bienenstock Natural Playground will be open daily at Canada Blooms from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Stroller parking available. Parent supervision required.

The Family Rest Area brought to you by Barbie Presents Thumbelina on DVD

Take a break by visiting the Family Rest Area brought to you by Barbie Presents Thumbelina, now on DVD on the 700 level of the MTCC. Every day from 10am – 5pm, get a sneak peek of the movie and learn some important eco-friendly tips at the same time. The all-new movie Barbie Presents Thumbelina promises to teach everyone how even the smallest person can make a difference.

Other March Break highlights include:

- **Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with Canada Blooms' opening night celebrations** – Be the first to preview the spectacular gardens. Enjoy a St. Patrick's Day parade, Celtic dancers. Special guests include the Honourable, David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and His Excellency Declan Kelly, the Irish Ambassador to Canada. Sponsored by Tourism Ireland, Sobeys and the Royal Bank of Canada.
- **The RBC Speakers Series** – The RBC Speakers Series presents five education days featuring North America's premier gardening experts. Themed days include: March 18 – Organic Gardening Day, March 19 – Design Day, March 20 – Scents and Sensibilities: Plant Day presented by Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, March 21 – Ecology

Day and March 22 – Urban Gardening Day. Take advantage of the **RBC after 5 pm** rate with \$6 dollars off the regular admission.

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Canada Blooms takes place at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, South Building from March 18 to 22. For more information or to purchase tickets visit www.canadablooms.com or any Sobeys Ontario Store.

About Canada Blooms

Dedicated to providing horticulture expertise, education and resources on an ongoing basis, Canada Blooms is a not-for-profit organization that gives back to the community throughout the year by funding community garden projects around Ontario. Now in its thirteenth year, Canada Blooms was founded by Landscape Ontario and The Garden Club of Toronto. Each year it is supported by a committed group of partners, sponsors and volunteers. In 2009, sponsors include The Home Depot, Canadian Cancer Society, City of Toronto, Dairy Farmers of Canada, Heart & Stroke Foundation, Miracle-Gro, Pick Ontario, RBC, Sobeys Ontario, Tourism Ireland, VIA Rail, Vincor, The Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, CN Tower, Nestle Canada, Sinclair-Cockburn, CanWest Media, The National Post, EZ Rock and CFRB. Visit: www.canadablooms.com.

About Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds

Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds create opportunities for all our children to play and learn -- and engage the child in-full. Employing natural features and elements like rolling green landscapes, slides embedded in hills, mature trees, amphitheatres, garden beds, fallen logs, tree stumps for seating and tables, vertical logs for forts, musical instruments, art walls and other components we create a wide range of open ended play options for children. Gardens For Living Inc. designs and constructs all Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds

About Universal Studios Home Entertainment Canada

Universal Studios Home Entertainment Canada is a division of Universal Studios Canada Inc. (www.universalstudioscanada.com). Universal Studios is a part of NBC Universal, one of the world's leading media and entertainment companies in the development, production, and marketing of entertainment, news, and information to a global audience. Formed in May 2004 through the combining of NBC and Vivendi Universal Entertainment, NBC Universal owns and operates the No. 1 television network, the fastest-growing Spanish-language network, a valuable portfolio of news and entertainment networks, a premier motion picture company, significant television production operations, a leading television stations group, and world-renowned theme parks. NBC Universal is 80%-owned by General Electric, with 20% controlled by Vivendi Universal.

About Toronto Botanical Garden

Toronto Botanical Garden is conveniently located in mid-Toronto, adjacent to Edwards Gardens. Four acres of contemporary display gardens and a LEED® Silver Certified building are designed to educate and inspire urban dwellers, while demonstrating eco-friendly gardening practices and plant selections. Toronto Botanical Garden also offers gardening and earth-friendly programs and events for all ages, year-round. For more information call 416-397-1341 or visit www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca.

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