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JAMES BOND ITINERARY

HALF DAY

You can search Monaco, Moscow or Manhattan but Bond—the real James Bond—is hiding out in Winnipeg. It all began in a clapboard house in the inner-city neighbourhood of Point Douglas—Syndicate Street to be precise. Here, William Stephenson began the journey that would take him from this working-class neighbourhood to the world of international intrigue.

To live like a spy, you have to think like a spy and start your day of Bond-worthy indulgence with breakfast at The Velvet Glove located inside The Fairmont Winnipeg. Dine on a world of choices as diverse as the Bond girls with peanut butter and banana-stuffed 'power' French toast or head to the eggs Benedict bar and choose from toppings like crispy Manitoba bacon and candied smoked salmon.

On Sundays, The Fort Garry Hotel caters to foodie indulgence with briny oysters on the half shell, a four-tiered chocolate fountain and a bevy of odiferous cheeses, served beneath an ornately carved ceiling.

After your meal, sit back and relax with a piping hot espresso as you reflect on Stephenson's departure from Winnipeg. Off to fight in the First World War, our hero shot down 26 enemy planes after just five hours of flying instructions before being tossed into a German POW camp.

A man cannot become a spy without dressing the part. Make your way to Hanford Drewitt on Broadway (once dubbed "Millionaire's Row") for the finest in luxurious men's clothing—after all, Stephenson made a fortune between world wars dabbling in radio and steel. Don a debonair

suit, drape yourself in tweed and don't forget the perfect silk socks. To complete your transformation into the life of international mystery, make your way to Thomas Hinds Tobacconist and pick up a polished humidior of Cuban Cohiba Behikes.

Once appropriately suited up, make your way to the homes of the city's most elite citizens. Stroll the sidewalks of Armstrong's Point and Wellington Crescent to marvel at stunning mansions and do what Stephenson would do—search for evidence of an international security breach. Spying was Stephenson's greatest gift and his clandestine ways landed him in the position of Sir Winston Churchill's most trusted confidant as he trekked his way between London and Washington, attempting to convince President Roosevelt to join the Second World War.

Even spies need to recharge their minds and bodies and for that, head to Bistro 7 ¼ for a succulent lunch of mussels swimming in leek and pernod, chicken livers brewing in dark ale or veal and foie gras sliders sprinkled with black truffle sea salt.

You can also immerse yourself in the city's historic (and wealthy) past at Peasant Cookery in the Exchange District. Don't let the name fool you—this humbly-named spot belies its real intentions as it serves up foie gras and chicken liver terrine, brandied escargot and freshly-shucked oysters. As you sidle your way through the city, don't miss the chance to investigate the area's beautiful turn-of-the-last-century architecture.

FULL DAY

Make your way downtown and indulge your cultural side at the Winnipeg Art Gallery where masterpieces adorn walls and pedestals. Head to the next-door Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art and witness the art of innovation in its crisp, white interior.

Nearby, it's time to pay homage to the man himself. On a small grassy strip surrounded by the bustle of the city, stands the man they called Intrepid. The name given to Stephenson by Churchill, was earned when he led the team that broke Enigma, the essential German coding machine.

Cast your eyes to the Manitoba Legislature where the Golden Boy sits atop one of the city's most intriguing mysteries. The building is a riot of perplexing symbology, Masonic secrets and temple treasures. Partake in a Hermetic Code tour to decipher them all.

As the sun sets, pull up to fine dining at 529 Wellington, where luxury is served inside a stunning 1912 mansion. Canadian prime beef is cooked to perfection and served alongside tender seafood like fresh PEI lobster. Don't forget to talk with the sommelier before picking out a fine vintage from the restaurant's impressive wine cellar. Although spies do need to watch their waistlines, a departure without at least a few bites of blueberry bread pudding would be remiss.

If you'd like to try your hand with Lady Luck, then a visit to the blackjack table is the perfect spot for reconnaissance. At Club Regent Casino, you can hearken back to tropical beaches and glistening bodies as you roll the dice beneath thundering waterfalls and the chirps of colourful birds.

Or, wrap yourself in the opulence of 18th century splendor at McPhillips Station Casino, where games of chance are enhanced by plush velvet, crystal chandeliers and the spirit of decadence.

A day as an international spy wouldn't be complete without a dry martini—shaken, not stirred. G Martini Bar in Osborne Village serves up more than 60 varieties ranging from the classic straight up with an olive to the creative with banana liquor and chocolate kisses. (Naturally, any spy worthy of his name would toss back a 007 with nary a thought as well.)

You can also retrace your steps (perhaps you missed a clue earlier) to the Lounge at The Fairmont, where sparkling martinis, adorned with fresh fruit are served in elegant comfort. Secure yourself a booth in the corner and keep an eye on the regulars.

But, if you're anything like Stephenson, you won't be drinking alone—for our hero's other claim to fame is that he once cozied up to ingénue Greta Garbo, convincing her to spy for him. No wonder he referred to his activities as "The Ministry of Ungentlemanly Warfare."

All that is left of the man they called Intrepid is a headstone in Bermuda, claiming he died in 1989 at the age of 93. Of course his legacy lives on today, thanks to the imagination of a young writer called Ian Fleming, who brought Stephenson back to life behind the suave silhouette of the world's most beloved spy—James Bond. Whatever really happened to our hero remains a mystery, but perhaps that's exactly how he wanted it.