

# A MAN OF MANY CONNECTIONS

**FRANK VISMEG**

BY MELANIE CUMMINGS

Long term success in the travel and tourism business requires an instinct for changing tastes, willingness to adapt and hard work.

"My parents expected me to always do my best and be proud of myself," says Frank Vismeg, director of business development for the Sheraton Hamilton Hotel and managing director of the Pinestone Resort, Conference Centre, Spa & Golf Course - Haliburton. "It's something I've carried with me throughout my career."

Vismeg was born in Croatia and studied the economics of tourism. He immigrated to Canada at age 22.

His 35-year work journey in the travel and tourism industry began at the Top Hat Supper Club in downtown Windsor and he has since crossed countless cultures and international borders.

He's also had a pleasure serving from celebrities as Tom Jones Pat Boone, Zsazsa Gabor, Christopher Plummer... to Pierre Trudeau, Joe Clarke, Brian Mulroney, Jean Chretien, Paul Martin, Stephen Harper several premiers and ambassadors.

"As a hospitality executive specializing in hotel startups, I've worked in leading centres around the world, from Europe to Canada, U.S. and the Caribbean," said Vismeg.

He is now putting his global experience to work in Hamilton. His primary responsibility is increasing revenues at the recently refurbished Sheraton Hamilton Hotel operating under general manager Peter Tosh. Together, with the support of a young and innovative sales team, they're active on a variety of fronts, from hosting prestige conventions, to attracting wedding parties, to booking business meetings.

Vismeg plays a specialist role in a team game.

"My strength is relationship building. For me, a typical week includes meetings with community stakeholders who have a share in making our city a top destination for tourism and conventions."

This includes business leaders, politicians and organizations such as the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Hamilton, the Hamilton Convention Centre and City Hall.

Clearly Vismeg understands the benefits of friendship and cooperation. These are principles he has applied in markets worldwide. And Hamilton is no exception.

"The growth of our Sheraton Hamilton Hotel and the growth of Hamilton go hand in hand," he says. "Improvements we're seeing in Hamilton are increasing our business. And in turn, our guests are patronizing local shops, restaurants, galleries and sports teams. It's a cycle that will only get better."

The months ahead will be even busier for the hard charging Vismeg. He'll be helping to market the new Staybridge Suites, a property of Darko Vranich, President & CEO of Vrancor Development Corporation, owners of the Sheraton Hamilton Hotel. The 128-unit Staybridge in downtown Hamilton will open in mid-2012 and is expected to provide a significant boost to the local economy.

Vismeg sees a bright future for Hamilton based on its ability to adapt to changing times.

Vismeg will also continue to head up business development for Pinestone Resort, Conference Centre, Spa & Golf Course, a Vrancor property located in the Haliburton Highlands less than 200 km north of Toronto. "This is a significant asset for us and we're pleased to see it growing as a major destination of choice" - [www.pinestone-resort.com](http://www.pinestone-resort.com).

In addition, he intends to remain an active member of Skål International, the world's leading association of travel and tourism professionals from more than 90 countries. Vismeg is a former president 2010 of the Skål International Toronto North Club and now has transferred his membership to Skål Hamilton Club. Vismeg has participated in five world congresses, garnering a broader perspective of the industry that will bode well for the Vrancor family of hotels and host communities - [www.vrancor.com](http://www.vrancor.com).

"Hamilton will continue to prosper as part of an expanding region connected to the world by our international transportation system. And the Sheraton Hamilton Hotel, and other Vrancor properties, are here to serve."



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