

Frontenac News

Frontenac Rentals – taking advantage of the growing accommodation market

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Allan Zahara has been living on 14 Island Lake for a number of years, and for most of that time he has been working in the e-learning sector in healthcare. “It has meant heading off to Toronto from time to time, and maintaining a professional profile outside of where I live. My goal now is to live and work in South Frontenac and Frontenac County, and that’s what got me into the accommodations field,” he said, in an interview from Sharbot Lake in early November.

Zahara has been developing his new company, Frontenacrentals.com, for a couple of years. “I saw that there is a lot of potential for waterfront property owners to take advantage of the global market for the lifestyle that some of us enjoy all the time around here, but don’t know where to start and what they need to do,” he said. Using himself as a bit of a test case, Zahara developed a 500 square foot cabin on 14 island lake, on his own property, which he rents out on a nightly basis at a premium price. He uses Airbnb as a booking service, and his cottage is booked from early spring until well into the fall, even into the winter, belying the traditional concern that it is only possible to rent out a cottage in the summer months.

Frontenacrentals.com provides a set of services for property owners looking to generate revenue from their waterfront properties. These include: online marketing and customer service, concierge and security services, staging and design, professional cleaning and maintenance, and account setup and training.

“There are some key factors involved in establishing the kind of 5-star ratings that can elevate a property to a gold star rating on Airbnb. We managed to get there for our property and the increase in interest has been dramatic,” he said. One of the key factors to get to that point is to cover all the bases, from staging a property the way a realtor might, to excellent photography and making sure that visitors are greeted, the house rules are clear and reasonable, and that everything is impeccably clean.

"Homeowners may not realize they are sitting on tens of thousands of untapped revenue potential and that it can be done with very little effort or risk. They just need to ensure the whole experience, both online and on site, is white glove to appeal to a global market. When online shoppers see top reviews from people from many countries, the bookings flow in. It's all about knowing how to get those top reviews while ensuring your property and guests are in good hands." Zahara thinks that the development his business, and others, reflects a change in the tourism potential for Frontenac County in the near future, "I think that something is happening in our region. New businesses are coming up, visitors from all around the world are interested in coming. It is a good time for new people to step forward, and we are hoping our business can help that happen," he said.

For a full list of Frontenac Rentals services go to their website or contact allan@frontenacrentals.com.