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### The Miss Teen Canada Experience

By: Jill B

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This past summer I took part in something, which many only get to dream about. I was in the Miss Teen Canada International pageant in Toronto, Canada. I may not have brought a crown home to the area, but I experienced the chance and opportunity of a lifetime. I know what you're thinking, how horrible "beauty" pageants are, but your wrong. I am about to tell you of the 10 days that have changed my life forever.



The face that launched a thousand ships.

It was not about beauty and finding the most gorgeous girl. It was about personality, intellect, intelligence and confidence, all of which come from the inside. Before I was even able to go to the national pageant I had a ton of work to do. I had to write a portfolio about myself (eight full essays), get pictures taken for the photogenic category, and the hardest part, the fundraising. I had to raise \$2000.00 by myself to take part in the pageant. I was able to do so with a car wash, a 3-day yard sale, a potluck supper, selling numerous tickets for a picture and going from business to business getting sponsors. That was definitely not the easy part, but it was worth it. Then came the day that felt like it would never come. The day I flew out to Toronto, Ontario.

When the girls and I arrived at the hotel we bonded instantly. It was as if we had all been friends for years. The week sprung into action and we all loaded onto a bus and took part in a square-dancing comboil! To be completely honest I wasn't sure at the time how well that was going to go over. Lucky for me it was nothing but a fun time. The square-dancing itself only lasted for a half an hour or so and then it turned into a regular dance. Also at this farm there was the famous "Haunted Barn", which I just had to go through twice. It was super scary! I am sure you are all familiar with the face mask character from *Scream*? Well, I was fortunate enough to have him following me around in the dark. That entire day together with the girls was a strong icebreaker for all of us.

During the week we went to many places as a group. An example of one of our days was going to Canada's Wonderland, the CN Tower and Planet Hollywood. Canada's Wonderland was fun and I, Jill Butler, went on my very first rollercoaster. My time at the CN Tower was absolutely overwhelming. I

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