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Love letter to Toronto goes viral for local filmmaker



By Brock Weir

From the time he was a child, Toronto's Beaches neighbourhood always had a special place in Chris Hau's heart.

It was where the Aurora native's mother grew up, the place where his parents met, and reminders of the area loomed large in their home.

When Mr. Hau, a local filmmaker, and his friends set out with their camera to make a video love letter to the city, the Beaches was the obvious starting point. But it turned out to be the starting point in a video which went viral last week, garnering close to 100,000 combined hits from YouTube and Facebook.

?Show Me ? Toronto? is the latest video travelogue created by Mr. Hau to showcase the people and places he has a special passion for. After piecing it together after just one day of filming, he uploaded it to YouTube as a private video with the aim of launching it last Thursday.

On the Saturday before, however, he logged and gave Huffington Post a heads-up it was coming in the hopes they might share it with their large following. Evidently it struck a chord and they asked to spread the word right then and there.

?It has gone absolutely crazy,? says Mr. Hau. ?[I think it has resonated] because it is completely genuine. It was just me taking a day off work and going to have some fun with my friends wanting to shoot the city. It just happened to be an amazing and beautiful day in the summer, and even the little things just came together. It was all by happenstance. We had a general, loose plan for the day but we did just what felt fun and what felt good.?

The video follows a day in the life from the Beaches, to people wakeboarding ? a particular passion of Mr. Hau's ? on Lake Ontario, over to Toronto Island, the Distillery District, Kensington Market, Queen's Quay, the St. Lawrence Market, and many other locales ? both popular tourist attractions and other locales off the beaten path.

?The Show Me series has really been a passion project of mine; I love travelling and it started with an Arizona video,? Mr. Hau explains. ?It has just kept growing from there. Down the road I want to be working with tourism boards. Essentially, I just love capturing travel stories.?

That road might now be a bit shorter than it was just over a week ago. Since Show Me ? Toronto skyrocketed in popularity, he has since been approached by Tourism Ontario and Simcoe Region, in addition to his soon-to-be-launched video Show Me ? York Region, produced in conjunction with the Regional Municipality of York.

In the meantime, he is Ottawa-bound this weekend to make a similar video for the Nation's Capital, in addition to finding the time to work on his new series ?What SUP?, based on paddle-boarding, for the UK-based network The Nautical Channel.

?People are now saying I should make sure and do a part two of Toronto, which I am actually considering,? says Mr. Hau. ?I only got to check out most of the east end because there is only so much you can fit into one day, but I think I might do it, especially after the success of this one, hitting up the west end a bit more and maybe specific little villages that are there, unique and cool people, as well as hidden gems to showcase. There has been a lot of association between the video and Pan Am [in web comments] about people being so stressed out by traffic that it is nice to see the positivity.?

To see Show Me ? Toronto and the rest of the Show Me series, visit youtube.com/chrishau, or see below.