

Embracing the warmth of winter

At a time of the year when most urbanites are holed up indoors, financial advisor Kathryn Del Greco is putting in several hours on woodland trails and ski slopes most weekends. It's a great way, she says, to put problems in perspective

BY RUDY MEZZETTA

WHETHER IT'S A CHANCE TO get the heart racing, to feel the bite of winter's chill, or simply to take in the beautiful landscape of Ontario's Georgian Bay region, the sport of snowshoeing has no end of appeal for Kathryn Del Greco.

"There's something very powerful and rejuvenating about fresh air and being in Mother Nature," says Del Greco, vice president and investment advisor with **TD Waterhouse Canada Inc.** in Toronto. "I come back from snowshoeing feeling invigorated."

While many people hunker down in the winter months, sticking to city streets and waiting for the snow to melt before venturing into the country, most winter weekends will find Del Greco and her husband, Mark Reidl, leaving Toronto behind and heading north. That means making the two-and-a-half-hour trip from Toronto to snowshoe and ski near their weekend home in Collingwood, Ont.

"We'll spend a Saturday afternoon snowshoeing up and down the Niagara Escarpment after a morning of skiing," Del Greco says. "Sundays, we'll try to get another snowshoe [session] in as well."

Del Greco and her husband have been heading north, out of the city, for 20 years. They added snowshoeing to their winter sports routine

about 10 years ago as they became more familiar with the activity.

Del Greco says she likes the vigorous workout snowshoeing provides. "It's very physically challenging, both aerobically and in terms of endurance," she says. "You're working your body in a completely different way than you might on a cardio machine at the gym."

At the same time, the sport of snowshoeing allows you flexibility, either to take it easy by planning shorter treks and walking slowly or to be adventurous by taking longer or more challenging treks and walking or running faster.

"It's entirely up to you — how strong you feel, what kind of physical exertion you want," Del Greco says. "There are so many trails in the area to choose from."

Snowshoeing also allows Del Greco to take in the natural wonders of the region, whether that's catching sight of deer, which are plentiful in the area, or just enjoying the wonderful winter views.

"When you stand on the top of the escarpment, you can see Georgian Bay all around you," Del Greco says. "Everything's frozen over and, if it's clear, the sun is shining and reflecting off the snow. It's just gorgeous."

A big part of the appeal of the snowshoeing treks for Del Greco



PHOTOS COURTESY OF KATHRYN DEL GRECO

TD Waterhouse investment advisor Kathryn Del Greco heads north from her home in Toronto on most winter weekends. She says that snowshoeing and skiing with her husband and friends provide both good workouts and opportunities to experience dramatic winter landscapes.

is the opportunity to spend quality time with her husband or with her friends while out on an afternoon trek. Del Greco and Reidl belong to a ski club in the area, and often take time to connect with fellow members. "It's extremely social," Del Greco says. "We have a great time

talking and catching up with each other."

Weekly treks out into the snow — whether skiing or snowshoeing — also provide Del Greco with plenty of quiet time, the perfect opportunity to reflect and get perspective. "Something that may

have seemed a big problem, really, after an trip out, doesn't seem as big as you thought it was," says Del Greco, who started in the advisory business 25 years ago. "You've taken yourself out of that stressful situation and been able to think calmly."

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