



**nileGUIDE**

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



Anna Kucsma

# My Montreal Guide, featuring bonus side trips

## Montreal, 3 Days

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# Guide Description



**AUTHOR NOTE:** Montreal is a mystery to many. You read about its political and cultural uniqueness, its status as the sole bastion of the French language in North America. But there is so much to experience here OTHER than its language that your head will swim if you try to take it all in at once. This three-day sojourn invites you to sample Montreal's charm, culture, history and, indeed, its continent-leading cuisine... and then whisks you away on a romantic cruise from the Old Port, following a day trip to several stunning Laurentian mountain villages 45-minutes to two hours away. The Laurentians are lovely any time of year, so much so that international film productions are regularly seduced by the natural beauty here. Take this three-day tour and you'll certainly be back for more!

# Itinerary Overview

things to do  
restaurants  
hotels  
nightlife

## Day 1 - Montreal



### Mount Royal Park

Urban natural setting



### Underground City

World's Largest Underground Pedestrian Network



### Chinatown

Thriving and bustling



### Maison VIP

Night owl delight



### Old Montreal

Stepping into History



### Basilique Notre-Dame

Landmark Twin Towers



### Moishes

Tops for Steak



### Crescent Street

Anglo bar strip



### NewTown

Diners Galaxy

## Day 3 - Montreal



### Laurentian Mountains Day Trip from Montreal

Day Trips



### Croisières AML

Essential cruising

## Day 2 - Montreal



### Jean-Talon Market

Freshness and abundance



### Musée Redpath

Eclectic Architecture



### Le Taj

Elegant Indian



### Mary Queen of the World Cathedral

St Peter's replica



### Musée des Beaux-Arts

Golden Mile Area



### Village (The)

Vibrant Community

# Day 1 - Montreal

## QUICK NOTE

### contact:

tel: +1 514 843 8240  
fax: +1 514 843 8255  
<http://www.lemontroyal.qc.ca/>

### location:

1260 Chemin Remembrance  
Montreal QC H3H 1A2

### hours:

Dawn-dusk daily

1

## Mount Royal Park

**DESCRIPTION:** "The mountain", as Mount-Royal Park is known to locals, is the largest green space on Montreal Island. It was designed by Olmstead, who also designed Central Park in New York City. Mount-Royal Park is the playground for the city. During the week people traipse up and down the paths constantly: cutting across the mountain to work, running late to class toward McGill University and just taking the time to enjoy the moments of privacy that the mountain's hidden paths offer. Sundays during the summer the East side of the Mount-Royal (near the statue) explodes with activity and music. Crowds gather to play music, lounge in the sun and relax with friends in the sweetly hazy heat. © NileGuide



zemistor

### contact:

tel: +1 514 843 8000  
fax: +1 514 843 6092  
<http://www.toutmontreal.com/english/eguide/underground/underground.html>

### location:

800 de La Gauchetière Street  
West  
Montreal QC H5A 1J6

2

## Underground City

**DESCRIPTION:** The Underground city is one of Montreal's claims to fame. Its kilometers of passageways under the city allow shoppers and tourists to get to where they are going without the hassles posed by the sometimes seemingly interminable winter snows and slushy streets. One particularly interesting bit of this subterranean maze is in the Cours Mont-Royal, near Peel Street. At one point the atrium of the mall extends several stories high and the facades of the stores facing the atrium (inside the mall) are made to reflect exterior building design. © NileGuide



kalleboo

### contact:

tel: +1 514 873 2015 (Tourist Information)  
[http://www.tourisme-montreal.org/B2C/07/attraction\\_list.asp](http://www.tourisme-montreal.org/B2C/07/attraction_list.asp)

### location:

St-Laurent Boulevard  
Montreal QC H2Z 1E9

3

## Chinatown

**DESCRIPTION:** Chinatown in Montréal is only a few streets long. Centred on De la Gauchetière street it runs from St. Laurent Boulevard to past St. Urbain street. It is packed with ground level and sub-basement shops – above which live many of the residents of the quarter. This historic area is demarcated by four gates guarded by stone lions. Although the area is called Chinatown it is actually home to people of many diverse Asian origins, reflected in the diversity of its many restaurants. The quality and affordability of the restaurants are Montreal's Chinatown's claim to fame. © NileGuide



### contact:

tel: 514 861 1943

### location:

1077 rue Clark

4

## Maison VIP

**DESCRIPTION:** Some might find it strange to have to wait for a table at 2a. If that's you, then you shouldn't come to this Cantonese restaurant in the middle of Chinatown—especially on a Friday or Saturday night. But the late-night/early-morning crowd really appreciates being able

Montreal QC H2Z 1K3

**hours:**  
11:30a-4a daily

to find reasonably-priced food in a place where the atmosphere is upbeat and the conversation stimulating, no matter what time of day or night. The service is attentive and bustling, with college-bound waiters happy to explain the dishes. © wcities.com

**contact:**  
tel: +1 514 873 2015(Tourist Information)  
<http://www.vieux.montreal.qc.ca>

**location:**  
Rue Bonsecours  
Montreal QC H2Y 3B2

## 5 Old Montreal

**DESCRIPTION:** Old Montreal is the area immediately surrounding the Old Port. It was the first developed part of the city of Montreal, as reflected through its architecture and narrow cobbled streets. Many of the more historically significant buildings are in this area of town, as well as the Champ-de-Mars, an old parade ground where citizens used to be able to come to enjoy the spectacle of public hangings. It is very tourist friendly. The Place Jacques Cartier, an open square leading from the town hall (Hôtel de Ville) down to the water, is the venue for shows at all times of the year. © NileGuide



**contact:**  
tel: 514/842-2925  
fax: +1 514 842 3370  
[www.basiliquenddm.org](http://www.basiliquenddm.org)

**location:**  
110 rue Notre-Dame ouest  
Montreal QC H2Y 1T1

**hours:**  
Basilica daily 8am-5pm;  
tours daily 9am-4pm; light shows Tues-Thurs 6:30pm, Fri 6:30 and 8:30pm, Sat 7 and 8:30pm

## 6 Basilique Notre-Dame

**DESCRIPTION:** Breathtaking in the richness of its interior furnishings and big enough to hold 4,000 worshipers, this magnificent structure was designed in 1824 by James O'Donnell, an Irish-American Protestant architect from New York. So profoundly was O'Donnell moved by the experience that he converted to Catholicism after the basilica was completed. The impact is understandable. Of the hundreds of churches on the island of Montréal, Notre-Dame's interior is the most stunning, with a wealth of exquisite detail, most of it carved from rare woods that have been delicately gilded and painted. O'Donnell, clearly a proponent of the Gothic revival style, is the only person honored by burial in the crypt. The main altar was carved from linden wood, the work of Victor Bourgeau. Behind it is the **Chapelle Sacré-Coeur (Sacred Heart Chapel)**, much of it destroyed by an arsonist in 1978 but rebuilt and rededicated in 1982. The altar has 32 bronze panels representing birth, life, and death, cast by Charles Daudelin of Montréal. A 10-bell carillon resides in the east tower, while the west tower contains a single massive bell nicknamed "**Le Gros Bourdon**" which weighs more than 12 tons and has a low, resonant rumble that vibrates right up through your feet. Twenty-minute guided tours in English are offered throughout the day, beginning at 9am. Depending on his availability, the church's organist Pierre Grandmaison gives 90-minute tours of the organ on occasional Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings. And a sound-and-light show called "**Et la lumière fut**" ("And then there was light") -- advertised on garish banners in front of the church -- is presented nightly Tuesday through Saturday. © Frommer's



Basilique Notre-Dame

**contact:**

tel: 514/845-3509

fax: +1 514 845 9504

www.moishes.ca

**location:**

3961 bd. St-Laurent  
Montreal QC H2W 1Y4

**hours:**

Mon-Fri 11:30am-2:30pm and  
5:30-11pm; Sat-Sun 5-11pm

**7 Moishes**

**DESCRIPTION:** Those who care to spend serious money for a slab of charred beef should take their credit ratings here. The oldest steak-and-seafood house in town is also arguably its finest, and less afflicted with tourists than the popular Gibby's in Vieux-Montréal. It used to be dark, musty, and populated with crusty waiters, although the addition of four windows has brightened things up and the venerable retainers who bring the food have eased up on the crabbiness. Moishes now gets the trim new breed of up-and-coming executives as well as those of the older generation who didn't know about triglycerides until it was too late. The former are more likely to go for the chicken teriyaki or Arctic char, perhaps, while the latter stick with the steak. The wine list is substantial, and the restaurant offers wine tasting evenings. © Frommer's



Photo courtesy of Moishes



# Day 2 - Montreal

QUICK NOTE

**contact:**

tel: +1 514 277 1588 / +1 514 277 1379

fax: +1 514 937 7688

<http://www.marchespublics-mtl.com/>

**location:**

7070 rue Henri-Julien  
Montreal QC H2S 3A3

**hours:**

8a-6p M-W, 8a-9p Th-F, 8a-6p Sa, 8a-5p Su

1

## Jean-Talon Market

**DESCRIPTION:** If you are the type of person who likes wandering among the vegetables, and their vendors, the Market is a great place to spend a day, or plan a meal. Cheese shops, organic meats and vegetable and fruit vendors crowd into their stalls in this market that on the weekends is overflowing with not only the inhabitants of the nearby Little Italy, but people from all over the Island of Montreal. Parking is available under the market, bicycle racks are conveniently placed around most entrances, and it is less than a five minute walk from Jean-Talon metro. © NileGuide



**contact:**

tel: 514/398-4086

fax: +1 514 398 3185

[www.mcgill.ca/redpath](http://www.mcgill.ca/redpath)

**location:**

859 rue Sherbrooke ouest  
Montreal QC H3A 2K6

**hours:**

Mon-Fri 9am-5pm; Sun 1-5pm

2

## Musée Redpath

**DESCRIPTION:** This quirky natural history museum, housed in an 1882 building with a grandly proportioned and richly appointed interior, is on the McGill University campus. The main draws -- worth a half-hour visit -- are the mummies and coffin that are part of its collection of Egyptian antiquities, the second largest in Canada, and skeletons of whales and prehistoric beasts. If the unusual name seems slightly familiar, it could be because you've seen it on the wrappings of sugar cubes in many Canadian restaurants: John Redpath was a 19th-century industrialist who built Canada's first sugar refinery. © Frommer's



**contact:**

tel: 514/845-9015

fax: +1 514 845 8348

[www.restaurantletaj.com](http://www.restaurantletaj.com)

**location:**

2077 rue Stanley  
Montreal QC H3A 1R7

**hours:**

Mon-Fri 11:30am-2:30pm and 5-10:30pm; Sat 5-11pm; Sun noon-2:30 and 5-10:30pm

3

## Le Taj

**DESCRIPTION:** This remains one of the tastiest bargains downtown. The price of the lunch buffet has barely changed since it opened in 1985, and the five-course dinner costs C\$28 (US\$24/£12). The kitchen specializes in the mughlai cuisine of the subcontinent. Seasonings tend more toward the tangy than the incendiary, but say you want your food spicy and you'll get it (watch out for the innocent-looking green coriander sauce.) Dishes are perfumed with turmeric, saffron, ginger, cumin, mango powder, and garam masala (a spice combination that usually includes cloves, cardamom, and cinnamon). For a real treat, order the marinated boneless lamb chops roasted in the tandoor; they arrive at the table sizzling and nested on braised vegetables. Vegetarians have ample choices, the chickpea-based channa masala among the most complex. Main courses are huge, arriving in a boggling array of bowls, saucers, cups, and dishes, all accompanied by naan (the pillowy flat bread)

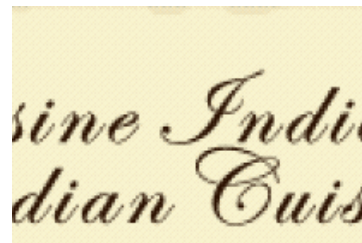


Photo courtesy of Le Taj

and basmati rice. Evenings are quiet, and lunchtimes are busy but not hectic. © Frommer's

**contact:**

tel: +1 514 866 1661  
fax: +1 514 864 5643  
[http://www.tourisme-montreal.org/B2C/07/attraction\\_detail.s.asp](http://www.tourisme-montreal.org/B2C/07/attraction_detail.s.asp)

**location:**

1085 de la Cathedrale  
Montreal QC H3B 2V3

**hours:**

7a-7:30p M-F, 7:30a-8:30p  
Sa, 8:30a-7:30p Su

**4 Mary Queen of the World Cathedral**

**DESCRIPTION:** This church, designed by Quebec architect Victor Bourgeau and built between 1870 and 1894, is an exact one-third replica of St Peter's Basilica in Rome. Set among the bleak skyscrapers of downtown, it makes a particularly striking sight. The 13 floodlit statues along its top are of Montreal's own patron saints. In the Mortuary Chapel can be found the final resting places for the city's bishops and archbishops, alongside a recumbent statue of Monseigneur Ignace Bourget, the church's founder. Admission is free. © wcities.com



**contact:**

tel: 514/285-2000  
[www.mmfa.qc.ca](http://www.mmfa.qc.ca)

**location:**

1379-1380 rue Sherbrooke  
Ouest  
Montreal QC H3G 1J5

**hours:**

Tues 11am-5pm; Wed-  
Fri 11am-9pm; Sat-Sun  
10am-5pm

**5 Musée des Beaux-Arts**

**DESCRIPTION:** Montréal's Museum of Fine Arts is the city's most prominent museum, opened in 1912 in Canada's first building designed specifically for the visual arts. The original neoclassical pavilion is on the north side of Sherbrooke. A striking new annex was built in 1991 directly across the street and tripled exhibition space, adding sub-street-level floors and underground galleries that connect to the old building. Art on display is nearly always dramatically mounted, carefully lit, and diligently explained in both French and English. Our recommendation is to enter the annex on the south side of rue Sherbrooke, take the elevator to the top, and work your way down. The permanent collection, which totals more than 33,000 works, is largely devoted to international contemporary art and Canadian works created after 1960, and to European painting, sculpture, and decorative art from the Middle Ages to the 19th century. On the upper floors are many of the gems of the collection: paintings by 12th- to 19th-century artists Hogarth, Tintoretto, Bruegel, El Greco, Ribera, and portraitist George Romney; and works -- representative, if not world-class -- by more recent artists including Renoir, Monet, Picasso, Cézanne, and Rodin. French-Canadian landscape watercolorist Marc-Aurèle Fortin (1888?1970) is well represented; a separate museum that had been devoted just to him donated its entire collection to Beaux-Arts in 2007. Temporary exhibitions can be dazzling: A recent show brought the treasures of Catherine the Great, including her spectacular Coronation Coach, from the Hermitage Museum of Saint Petersburg. An exhibition of art from Cuba is scheduled for 2008. The museum's street-level store on the south side of rue Sherbrooke has an impressive selection of quality books, games, and folk art. A good café is adjacent. © Frommer's





**contact:**

tel: +1 514 873 2015(Tourist Information)

**location:**

Saint Catherine Street East  
Montreal QC H2L 2H6

**6 Village (The)**

**DESCRIPTION:** Located partially in the Latin Quarter, this is one of the largest gay neighbourhoods in North America. Although known mostly for its wild nightlife, the area bustles with dozens of cafes, bistros, boutiques, antique shops, restaurants and taverns. There are also beautifully renovated homes, lovely gardens and a proliferation of flowers. August is the time for the Divers Cité gay pride parade, which, together with the huge Black and Blue party in October, attracts nearly half a million participants. © wcities.com

**contact:**

tel: +1 514 873 2015(Tourist Information)  
[http://www.tourisme-montreal.org/B2C/07/attraction\\_list.asp](http://www.tourisme-montreal.org/B2C/07/attraction_list.asp)

**location:**

Sherbrooke St south to de la Gauchetière  
Montreal QC H3G 2C1

**7 Crescent Street**

**DESCRIPTION:** Crescent Street is the busiest downtown drag West of St. Laurent Boulevard on any given evening. From Thursday until Saturday the streets are crowded from happy hour until the wee hours. Everyone from stumbling beer-drinking youngsters to a more refined and mature crowd can find a place to go out on Crescent Street; but unless you arrive early, you might not find a seat! The pub type joints are found South of Saint-Catherine Street (generally speaking) and the more clubby atmospheres are found between St. Catherine Street and De Maisonneuve Street. © NileGuide



Crescent Street

**contact:**

tel: 514 284-6555  
fax: +1 514 284 5777  
<http://www.newtown.ca/>

**location:**

1476 Rue Crescent  
Montreal QC H3G2B6

**hours:**

Su to Th from 11:30 AM to 01:00 AM, Fr to Sa from 01:30 PM to 03:00 AM

**8 Newtown**

**DESCRIPTION:** Created under the watchful eye of F-1 race driver Jacques Villeneuve, Newtown is everything you need to spend a couple of hours relaxing and having a good time. This tri-level club offers visitors' variety—with a club, a restaurant, lounge and a nice terrace patio overlooking the area. If you are looking for a quiet meal, head down to the restaurant that serves some authentic French cuisine with great decor and a lovely ambience. At the lounge you can guzzle down some well-mixed cocktails while you listen to some soothing music and those who prefer the quite can gaze at the night sky from the terrace. Those looking for a partying scene can hit the club which is pulsating and buzzing with fantastic music and groovy lights. Hours vary at each of the sections of this multi-dimensional place. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Newtown

# Day 3 - Montreal

QUICK NOTE

**contact:**

<http://www.partner.viator.com/en/6793/tours/Montreal/Laurentian-Mountains-Day-Trip-from-Montreal/d625-3355C6>

**location:**

Montreal Quebec

1

## Laurentian Mountains Day Trip from Montreal

**DESCRIPTION:** Take a day trip to the magnificent countryside surrounding Montreal to visit the mountains, lakes and forests of the Laurentians. You'll visit quaint French villages, including free time to explore and cruise the lovely Lac des Sables in Ste Agathe des Monts.

You'll be seduced by the Laurentians' breathtaking panoramas, speckled with mountainside cottages and lakeside villages.

You'll see numerous French villages on your journey, including Val-Morin, Val-David, Piedmont and Saint-Sauveur Village, a resort municipality nestled in the mountains. You'll be charmed by Saint-Sauveur's lively main street and distinctive shops, boutiques, cafes, restaurants and attractions.

Your 50-minute cruise on Lac des Sables takes you along a shoreline dotted with famous homes dating back to 1890. Enjoy splendid views of the lake's islands.

The Laurentians embrace a variety of landscapes with valleys, mountains, forests and lakes. Take the opportunity to get out into Canada's great outdoors and discover this beautiful countryside.

Note: This tour is seasonal and only operates from June through to October. © Viator



**contact:**

tel: +1 514 842 3871 / +1 514 842 9300

fax: +1 514 842 1201

<http://www.croisieresaml.com/>

**location:**

530, rue St-André,  
Montreal QC H2L 5B9

2

## Croisières AML

**DESCRIPTION:** With three ships ready to handle from 20 to 1000 passengers, this company is known as one of the most reliable cruise lines operating out of the Old Port. The hour and forty-five minute sightseeing tours depart four times daily from the King Edward Pier; many other longer cruises, including dinner and sunset cruises, are also available. © wcities.com

**hours:**

Sightseeing—Jacques-Cartier Pier: 10a, noon, 2:30p, 4:15p

**MY NOTE:** After a day of sightseeing or simply pounding the pavement, these cruises are the perfect aperitif... in more ways than one. Many of them included meals varying from simple snacks to fare sure to please any gastronome. The ultimate way to relax, enjoy... and reflect on your terrific times in Montreal!



# My List

**contact:**

tel: +1 800 461 8711  
fax: +1 819 681 5990  
<http://www.tremblant.ca>

**location:**

1000 Chemin des Voyageurs  
Mont-Tremblant QC J0T 1Z0

**hours:**

Daily 8a-4:30p

## 1 Mount Tremblant

**DESCRIPTION:** The skiing on this mountain is arguably some of the best anyone could find this side of the Rockies, largely because Mount Tremblant offers the highest vertical in eastern North America. With 92 runs, a substantial lodge, ski schools and lodging on the hill, this resort has everything needed for a great ski holiday. Boutiques, restaurant and nightlife options are also available. The 100-kilometre drive from Ottawa is well worth the trip. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Mount Tremblant

**contact:**

tel: +1 514 873 2015 (Tourist Information)  
[http://www.tourisme-montreal.org/B2C/07/attraction\\_list.asp](http://www.tourisme-montreal.org/B2C/07/attraction_list.asp)

**location:**

Parc Ave east to Papineau Avenue  
Montreal QC H2T 1P9

## 2 Plateau Mont-Royal

**DESCRIPTION:** The Plateau Mont Royal is a pleasing mish-mash of restaurants, shops and apartments. Considered one of the best places to live in North America, the cultural life on the Plateau is diverse and rich. It is easy to forget that the rest of the city exists when at your doorstep there is anything that you could possibly want: lively show venues, friendly green spaces, cozy restaurants and long boutique-lined boulevards. The Portuguese community is still strong in this area; reflected through the abundance of Portuguese restaurants and shops, as well as through the sounds of everyday life you hear on the side streets between the Main and St. Denis Street, South of Mount-Royal Avenue. © NileGuide



Photo courtesy of Plateau Mont-Royal

**contact:**

tel: +1 514 842 3871 / +1 800 667 3131

**location:**

rue de l'Hopital  
Montreal QC H2Y 3J6

**hours:**

May-Oct: noon, 2:30p, Sorel Island: 8a M-Su, Dinner: 7p M-Su

## 3 Montreal Harbour Cruises

**DESCRIPTION:** Whether you take the two-hour "Island Discovery Cruise" of Parc des Îles de Boucherville or the full day excursion around Île de Sorel, a cruise on the St Lawrence River is an enjoyable experience. Montreal Harbour Cruises also offers a special moonlight dinner/dance cruise for the romantically inclined. All cruises are on well-maintained, full-service White River Boats with bilingual guides on hand to point out the sights. © wcities.com

**contact:**

tel: 514 272 3522  
fax: +1 514 272 0178  
[www.milos.ca](http://www.milos.ca)

**location:**

5357 Avenue du Parc  
Montreal QC H2V 4G9

**hours:**

## 4 Milos

**DESCRIPTION:** While this may be the "in" spot in Montreal for Hollywood luminaries passing through town, this Parc Avenue institution's real secret to success is the simply prepared fish and seafood, using only the best and freshest ingredients. The décor is traditional Greek and the ambience loud and boisterous. It doesn't take much to get the whole room up and



Noon-midnight M-F, 6p-  
midnight Sa-Su

dancing. The wine list is extensive, with prices in the mid-to-high range. © wcities.com

**contact:**  
tel: 514/271-3095  
<http://www.lachronique.qc.ca/>

**location:**  
99 rue Laurier ouest  
Montreal QC H2T 2N6

**hours:**  
Tues-Fri 11:30am-2:30pm;  
Tues-Sat 6-10pm

## 5 La Chronique

**DESCRIPTION:** Montréal's top chefs have been recommending this modest-looking restaurant near Outremont for several years. It was feared that the resulting buzz might spoil the place, but it has only improved, unless you count the hefty increase in prices. You'll discover how remarkable traditional recipes can be in the hands of a master. Presentations are so impeccable that you hate to disturb them, and flavors are so eye-rolling that you want to scrape up every last smear of food. Even diners leery of organ meats will find the veal sweetbreads a silky revelation. The menu includes Mediterranean and Southwestern touches as well as expensive ingredients like foie gras and caviar. There's a price for that: Appetizers cost as much as C\$45 (US\$39/£19) and one tasting menu reaches C\$200 (US\$174/£86) per person, with wine. Good as it is, that's much too much, so stick to the available less costly routes. A small but judicious selection of cheeses can precede or replace the tantalizing desserts, which look as if they might take flight. © Frommer's



Photo courtesy of La Chronique

**contact:**  
tel: 514 843 4194  
[www.chuchai.com](http://www.chuchai.com)

**location:**  
4088 St-Denis  
Montreal QC H2W 2M5

**hours:**  
M-Sa Noon-3p, 5p-10p, Su  
Noon-3p, 5p-9p

## 6 Chuchai

**DESCRIPTION:** Tired of the same mundane vegetarian grub? Chuchai is for you. This purely vegetarian eatery is known for its faux meat and serves up a variety of Thai delicacies. Noodles, mock chicken, mock shrimp, mock fish and tofu entrees cover the major portion of the menu. The flavors and aromas speak of traditional Thai. Do try the mock fish with basil, coconut milk and spicy sauce. The non-vegetarians will be in for a surprise and for the veggie freaks, it will definitely be a first time experience. © wcities.com

**contact:**  
tel: 514/845-5333

**location:**  
3927 rue St-Denis  
Montreal QC H2W 2M4

**hours:**  
Mon-Fri 8am-3am; Sat-Sun  
10am-3am

## 7 L'Express

**DESCRIPTION:** No obvious sign announces the presence of this restaurant, only its name discreetly spelled out in white tiles in the sidewalk. There's no need to call attention to itself, since tout Montréal knows exactly where this most classic of Parisian-style bistros is. While there are no table d'hôte menus, the food is fairly priced for such an eternally busy place and costs the same at midnight as at noon. After a substantial starter like quiche jambon fromage you may opt for one of the lighter main courses, such as the ravioli maison, round pasta pockets filled with a flavorful mixture of beef, pork, and veal. Or simply stop by for bowl of soupe de poisson or a simple croque-monsieur. This is honest, unpretentious food, thoroughly satisfying, and unlike the flossy new breed of bistro, it's open from breakfast until 3am. Although reservations are usually necessary for



Photo courtesy of L'Express



tables, single diners can often find a seat at the zinc-topped bar, where meals are also served. © Frommer's

**contact:**

tel: 514/872-9150  
fax: +1 514 872 9151  
www.pacmuseum.qc.ca

**location:**

350 Place Royale  
Montreal QC H2Y 3Y5

**hours:**

July-Aug Mon-Fri 10am-6pm,  
Sat-Sun 11am-6pm; Sept-  
June Tues-Fri 10am-5pm,  
Sat-Sun 11am-5pm

**8** **Pointe-à-Callière (Montréal Museum of Archaeology and History)**

**DESCRIPTION:** A first visit to Montréal might best begin here. Built on the very site where the original colony was established in 1642 (Pointe-à-Callière), the modern Museum of Archaeology and History engages visitors in rare, beguiling ways. The triangular new building echoes the Royal Insurance building (1861) that stood here for many years. Go first to the 16-minute multimedia show in an auditorium that actually stands above exposed ruins of the earlier city. The show is accompanied by music and a playful bilingual narration that keeps the history slick and painless if a little chamber-of-commerce upbeat (children under 12 will likely find it a snooze). Pointe-à-Callière was the spot where the St-Pierre River merged with the St. Lawrence. Evidence of the area's many inhabitants -- from Amerindians to French trappers to Scottish merchants -- was unearthed during archaeological digs that took more than a decade. Artifacts are on view in display cases set among the ancient building foundations and burial grounds below street level. Wind your way on the self-guided tour through the subterranean complex until you find yourself in the former Custom House, where there are more exhibits and a well-stocked gift shop. Allow at least an hour for a visit. The exhibit is wheelchair accessible. New expansion has incorporated the Youville Pumping Station, across from the main building, into the museum. Dating from 1915, it has been restored to serve as an interpretation center. The main building contains **L'Arrivage café** and has a fine view of Vieux-Montréal and the Vieux-Port. Plan an hour and a half to visit. © Frommer's



**contact:**

<http://www.partner.viator.com/en/6793/tours/Montreal/Walking-Tour-of-Old-Montreal/d625-3321WALK>

**location:**

Montreal Quebec

**9** **Walking Tour of Old Montreal**

**DESCRIPTION:** Discover the fascinating city of Montreal on a walking tour through a city bursting with amazing art, intriguing history and spectacular architecture. Your walk will take you past Notre-Dame Basilica, Place Jacques-Cartier, City Hall and much more. Your guide on the walking tour will tell you about the history and architecture of Montreal through anecdotes revealing the city's secrets! Highlights on the tour include: Place d'Armes to Place Jacques-Cartier Royal Bank Notre-Dame Basilica Cours Le Royer St. Jacques Notre-Dame and St. Paul Streets City Hall Champ de Mars Bonsecours Market This tour is seasonal and operates from May through to October. © Viator



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**contact:**

<http://www.partner.viator.com/en/6793/tours/Montreal/Old-Montreal-Ghost-Walking-Tour/d625-3631GHOST>

**location:**

Montreal Quebec

**10 Old Montreal Ghost Walking Tour**

**DESCRIPTION:** Looking for something different to do in Montreal? Why not try an old-fashioned ghost hunt through the streets of Old Montreal. After the sun has set over the city, a number of ghosts haunt the streets of Old Montreal and the wharves of the Old Port. Go in search of Montreal's dark and hidden past on a walking tour through the streets at night.

**Traditional Ghost Walk (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday)**

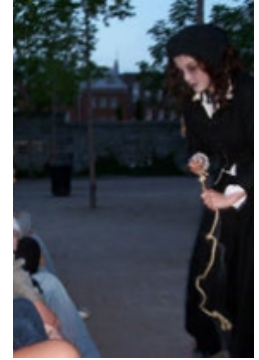
Accompanied by a "ghostly animators", you will explore Old Montreal as you've never done before. With your guide, you'll discover places where events of great importance in Montreal's history took place and that might still be haunted by some dark characters. On the menu, there will be fires, political demonstrations, serious crimes, hangings, heroic acts and mysterious legends. **Montreal Ghost Hunt (Friday)** -This tour alternates between the Montreal Historical Crime Scene Hunt and the New France Ghost Hunt

**Montreal's Historical Crime Scene**

Join this Ghost Hunt to Montreal's most notorious criminals. Relive some of the most famous crimes in Montreal's history. What would you say to meeting Mary Gallagher, still looking for her head; or Amedee-Charles Madry, the reputed charlatan and quack; or Claude Thibault, the ardent lover; or even the famous Hector Legault, who adored stealing expensive cars?

**The New France Ghost Hunt**

Each group must find the heroes and villains who lived in Montreal in the days of New France. All the ghosts lived here at the beginning of the colony at a time when adventure and danger were part of daily life. Who knows, perhaps you will have the privilege of meeting the great explorer, Jacques Cartier; or Pierre Lefebvre, who was hung for his crimes; or possibly Marie-Reine Besnard, known as the witch of Hotel-Dieu. This is an old-fashioned ghost hunt for the adventurous traveler! © Viator



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**location:**

350 Saint-Denis  
St-Sauveur QC J0R 1R3

**11 Mont Saint-Sauveur**

**DESCRIPTION:** A retreat for Montreal's wealthy, Saint-Sauveur is a collection of stately old cottages, ski resorts, golf courses, hotels and fine restaurants. The ski resort called Mont Saint-Sauveur refers both to a reasonably sized hill of that name and to an amalgamation of smaller hills, some (Mont Avila) connected to the main lift system and some (Mont Habitant) not. Though not on the same scale as resorts in the Upper Laurentians or Eastern Townships, these mountains distinguish themselves with excellent snow and location; it is just an hour from Montreal. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Mont Saint-Sauveur



# Montreal Snapshot

## Local Info

Bienvenue à Montréal! Now that's hospitality with a distinctly French flavor- and what could be more appropriate for the second largest French-speaking metropolis in the world? But French is only one of 35 or so languages you will hear on the streets of this international island city of 1.6 million inhabitants (more than 3.6 million if you include the suburban neighborhoods).

Demographics show that Montreal residents come from 80 countries, forming an urban mosaic of vibrant ethnic communities and neighborhoods safe to walk in day or night. Visitors will detect a distinct British influence in parts of the city, inherent in the culture since the days when English merchants controlled the city's trade. All in all, it's easy to see why "cosmopolitan" is the adjective most used in describing Montreal.

Characteristically, there's the *famousoie de vivre*- the ineffable combination of spirit and ambiance Montrealers exude without even trying. You will see it in the summertime cappuccino-sippers cramming sidewalk cafés; in the long lines outside Schwartz's, home to the city's best smoked meat; and in the lovers holding hands on Mount Royal, the city's parkland mountain rising 264 meters (866 feet). The same spirit can even be felt on an outdoor skating rink in the dead of winter, in the tuxedoed crowd listening raptly to the Montreal Symphony Orchestra (Orchestre symphonique de Montréal), or when hockey fanatics at the Bell Centre scream and pump their fists in unison with every Montreal Canadiens goal.

What makes Montreal one of the world's truly great cities? It starts with its location. The island sits at the confluence of three rivers: the mighty St. Lawrence, the Rivière des Prairies and the Ottawa. Montrealers describe their streets as going north-south and east-west, but the island itself is askew, tilted to the northeast.

## The Main (La Main)

Splitting the city in half, both physically and psychologically, is Saint Laurent Boulevard- The Main, as it is affectionately known. It is here where waves of immigrants first settled upon their arrival in the New World. Reminders of the past still abound in family-run Polish delis tucked beside upscale restaurants and in dollar stores located next

door to swank billiard emporiums. This is ground zero for the city's addresses (streets number east and west from St-Laurent) and, historically, this was the demarcation line between English and French Montreal, with the French predominating to the east and the English to the west.

These days, the dividing line is no longer completely rigid, but there are still distinct English and French areas. You will find the English restaurant and bar scene concentrated on Bishop Street and Crescent Street; the French on St-Denis Street and areas east in the Latin Quarter (Quartier Latin) and Gay Village. The traditional French residential areas are tightly packed districts that stretch all the way to the Olympic Park (Parc Olympique) and Hochelaga-Maisonneuve; English becomes more noticeable as you move west, culminating in the affluent suburb of Westmount.

## Old Montreal (Vieux-Montréal)

At the southern end of St-Laurent Boulevard, past, lies the historic district of Old Montreal (Vieux-Montréal), a major tourist attraction with its cobblestone streets, horse-drawn *calèche* rides and Old Port (Vieux-Port) activities. This is where, in 1642, the city's first European settlers staked their claim to a land they thought was theirs by divine right. You can still see the remnants of their original fortifications, and you can check out artifacts from the period at the Montreal History Centre (Centre d'histoire de Montréal) as well as the Pointe-à-Callière Museum of archaeology and history. Also found here are the oldest buildings in Montreal, with some, such as the Sainte-Sulpice Seminary (Vieux Séminaire Saint-Sulpice), dating back to the late 17th Century.

## Montreal Islands

Across the St-Lawrence River, the Expo 67 islands of Ste-Hélène and Notre-Dame still glitter from when Montreal hosted the World's Fair in 1967. Today the site is home to La Ronde amusement park, the Gilles Villeneuve Racetrack (Circuit Gilles Villeneuve) and Montreal's world-class Casino.

## Plateau Mont-Royal

On the other end of The Main is the Plateau Mont-Royal neighborhood, unusual in that it encompasses both ethnic shops and restaurants on Parc Avenue as well as the hip Francophone crowd along St-Denis Street. This is Canada's most densely populated area, and its smaller streets, with their winding staircases and small BYOW (bring your own wine) restaurants, remain a picture of true Montreal life.

## Little Italy (Petite Italie)

Just a little further north and you will hear Italian spoken on Montreal's streets over in the city's own Little Italy, the original home of the first Italian immigrants and now one of the liveliest areas in the city with its espresso bars, boutiques and authentic Italian cuisine.

## Underground City (RÉSO)

No visit to Montreal is complete without a visit to the Underground City- Montreal-above-ground has been described as the tip of the urban iceberg. Beneath it lies the world's most extensive system of interconnected pedestrian and Metro (subway) networks, linking buildings, boutiques, restaurants and even residential apartments. You could spend an entire winter in this subterranean city without ever once having to face the cold or snow.

The Metro system itself has lines running east-west and north-south (albeit, askew) to just about every part of the city. While you are down there, check out the 62 architecturally unique stations, each created by a different designer.

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## History

Although Montreal's history goes back long before Jacques Cartier "discovered" the island in 1535, the intrepid explorer can certainly lay claim to being the first European to see it from the top of Mount Royal, the city's centrally located mountain park.

Amerindians referred to these grounds as Hochelaga, and used the island as a meeting place where tribes could discuss trade and other important matters. The official founding date for Ville-Marie (later to become Montréal in honor of the King of France) is May 18, 1642, at which time

## Montreal Snapshot continued

Jeanne Mance and Paul de Chomedey Sieur de Maisonneuve came ashore with about 40 colonists and proceeded to drive out the Iroquois.

The buzzing colony, known as Nouvelle-France, became a major jumping-off point for fur traders, explorers and settlers who wanted to venture further inland towards the Great Lakes and down into the Mississippi Valley. In 1760, Montreal had a mostly French population of about 4000. The architecture of this period can be seen in buildings such as the Sulpician Seminary (Vieux Séminaire Saint-Sulpice) and Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours Chapel.

The second event that would eventually shape modern Montreal happened in 1763 when, following the British victory in the Seven Years War (1756-1763), France was forced to relinquish its North American territories.

Under British rule, Montreal became an important port (the largest inland port in the world, in fact) as well as Canada's largest city and commercial hub. It was home to Canada's first banks, mercantile houses and fur-trading companies, all of which centered around the rue Saint-Jacques (St James Street to the English speakers) in what is now Old Montreal (Vieux-Montréal). You can get a good look at buildings still standing from this era, including the Bank of Montreal.

Between 1800 and 1850, the city experienced a population explosion, increasing from around 9000 up to 57,000. For five years, between 1844 and 1849, the city even served as Canada's capital, until a rampaging crowd burned down the buildings that housed the legislature. The mid-19th Century saw the city expand into manufacturing and heavy industry, and Montreal became Canada's railway hub. A flood of job opportunities drew both immigrants from overseas and rural Quebecois, and the population continued to soar, reaching half a million by 1911.

By that time, the city's Golden Square Mile area—Atwater to the west, Parc to the east, Mount Royal to the north and René Lévesque to the south—contained some 70 percent of all Canada's wealth. Huge properties such as the 60-room Ravenscrag Mansion on Avenue des Pins West were commonplace.

It was also around this time that non-British immigration brought in the third wave of Montreal's development. European Jews, Italians and Greeks joined Irish and Scottish immigrants to make the city a much more cosmopolitan place.

Shortly after World War II, Montreal began a slow, steady decline in influence and power as the Canadian economy looked southward to the United States and away from a weakening Great Britain. Corporate headquarters migrated to Toronto, which began to receive the bulk of new investment.

The shift was accelerated by two factors: the building of the St-Lawrence Seaway, which allowed ships direct access to the Great Lakes, and the revival of Quebec nationalism, which started with the so-called Quiet Revolution in the 1960s and culminated in the election of a separatist government in the late 1970s. This led to a further exodus "down the 401," referring to the highway between Montreal and Toronto.

Despite these woes, however, Montreal managed to hold its head high through the 1960s and 1970s thanks to its tenacious mayor, Jean Drapeau. A man with grandiose visions, Drapeau orchestrated the building of the city's subway system (the Metro) in 1966, snagged the prestigious Expo 67 international exhibition, and then sold the city as the site for the even more illustrious 1976 Summer Olympics.

While Montreal may have relinquished the honor of being Canada's largest and most economically influential metropolis, it still relishes its role as the nation's most spirited and international city, in addition to being the French gastronomic center of North America and a place where historical strands join to create a potent mix of pride, art and culture.

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### Hotel Insights

Montreal, "The Paris of North America," essentially consists of a downtown, or modern city, and Old Montreal (Vieux-Montréal), the original city nestled around the Old Port (Vieux-Port). While most of the better hotels are located downtown, Old Montreal boasts some of the city's finest restaurants and historical sites and has a real sense of old world decor and charm.

Many European style hotels are available in this area, where many tourists visit but few stay overnight.

A modest hill separates the two areas, and both are accessible via the subway, or Métro, as it is called locally. In the winter, one need never even venture outside: Old Montreal is linked to downtown via the World Trade Center (Centre de Commerce mondial) and the Underground City (RÉSO). In fact, Montreal is one of the easiest cities to navigate in North America: no matter where one stays, one will never be too far from the action.

### Downtown

Downtown is the modern heart of the city and is where most businesses and upscale retail outlets are located. Virtually all of downtown is concentrated within a 10-block area, connected through the aforementioned 30-kilometer (20-mile) Underground City of shops, restaurants, theaters, banks and hotels for those who do not want to brave winter temperatures.

The Rue Sainte-Catherine is the main shopping area for modest to middle-income budgets, while rue Sherbrooke houses most of the city's best art galleries, high-end clothing stores and top-quality hotels. The Ritz-Carlton is the grande dame of local hotels, featuring splendid 19th-century architecture. The bar here is a favorite watering hole for locals and visitors alike. Nearby, the Hotel Omni serves as a preferred locale for visiting film and rock stars. The Hôtel Le Germain, meanwhile, is Montreal's leading boutique hotel, offering cutting edge style and high-end amenities at astronomical prices. Mid-range rue Sherbrooke-area hotels include the Best Western Ville-Marie Hotel and Suites and the Marriott Residence Inn.

### Downtown West

The eastern and western fringes of the downtown core reveal their own range of accommodations, from budget to high-end. The luxurious Le Méridien Versailles at Sherbrooke Street is a good example of a popular smaller hotel for out-of-towners. It is situated a stone's throw away from the west-end Guy Metro station, as is the more mid-range Hôtel du Fort.

### Downtown East

Another significant cluster of mid-range hotels centers around Sherbrooke Street

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just east of McGill University. The Quality Hotel, for example, just off Sherbrooke Street on Avenue du Parc, offers good value and is a five-minute walk from Place des Arts and the Metro station. Other popular mid-to-high range hotels on the eastern fringe of downtown include the Delta Montreal and the Sheraton Four Points Montreal.

### Old Montreal

Old Montreal's 18th- and 19th-century architecture make it a favorite location for film shoots, where it often doubles for 1920s Chicago or New York. So unique is its character that it was declared a historic site in 1964 by the Quebec government and afforded special protection. This area was originally a fortified town and the center of commerce before many businesses gradually moved uptown at the beginning of the 20th Century.

The area has enjoyed an enormous revival and has seen a number of hotels spring up, notably the Hotel Inter-Continental across from the Palais des Congrès Convention Center. This is the only truly modern hotel in Old Montreal, although architecturally it blends wonderfully with the surrounding older buildings. The Holiday Inn Select, in nearby Chinatown, is the nearest mid-range option.

For those eager or willing to leave the name brand hotels behind, Old Montreal offers a host of charming, reasonably priced options. These include L'Auberge du Vieux-Port and, for the truly budget-conscious, the attractive Backpackers of Old Montreal hostel.

The ultimate Old Montreal accommodations can be found at Hotel Pierre du Calvet, a converted home—built in 1725 and restored in 1966—where Benjamin Franklin once stayed. The magnificent 10-room hotel, located in the eastern part of Old Montreal near the IMAX Theatre, is accessible from the Champ-de-Mars Metro. This is a rare opportunity to spend a night in European-style opulence.

During the summer, Old Montreal is a favorite spot for visitors, thanks to its outdoor cafés, cobblestone streets, musicians, artists, calèche rides and boat cruises. In winter, the area comes alive with ice sculptures, light shows and a huge outdoor skating rink. For travelers

really looking to immerse themselves in Montreal's charms, it is a great option. ©

### Restaurants Insights

Montreal is the second biggest French-speaking city in the world, but you wouldn't necessarily know it based on its restaurants. Its incredible assortment of ethnic cuisines gives an accurate reflection of the myriad of cultures that contribute to the city's vibrancy, although unlike some other large North American centers, eateries here tend not to cluster according to cuisine type.

#### Old Montreal(Vieux-Montréal)

Old Montreal is home to one of the city's most popular French restaurants, Toqué!. Normand Laprise's fusion masterpiece has garnered international attention while draining the coffers of the gastronomic elite. Eggspectation, a popular brunch spot, is a modern operation that boasts massive portions and glitzy decor. Unfortunately, this establishments sports ponderous lines on Sunday starting at around 10a. On the bright side, this good-natured eatery serves as a great place to soak up local atmosphere and gossip.

#### Plateau Mont-Royal

The Plateau Mont-Royal is an area of older residential buildings and is home to thousands of students, artists and young professionals. The Boulevard Saint-Laurent's trendy clubs and pubs mingle with dozens of restaurants that run the gamut from upscale, decor-first hotspots(Buona Notte) to innovative sandwich shops(Grano), and from the cheap Italian fare at Euro-Deli to the steaks and buckets of coleslaw at Moïse's. If you are unsure where to go, following the crowds on Saint-Laurent is a safe bet.

A 10-minute walk east from Saint-Laurent will bring you to charming and bustling rue Saint-Denis, which is not to be missed especially during the summer. This is perhaps Montreal's most Parisian thoroughfare, offering restaurants, bars and cafés, most with cozy patios shoe-horned in wherever they can possibly fit. You could easily spend hours watching the world go by over acafé au lait, a beer or a meal.

Despite a number of ethnic restaurants, Plateau Mont-Royal is home to several

traditional French eateries such as Les Halles where one can find traditional, buttery fare and old-guard opulence, and L'Express, which lays claim to the best steak-and-frites. These restaurants can be found in the restaurant-rich strip between rue Sherbrooke and Mont-Royal Avenue, along with scores of smaller establishments of every conceivable ethnicity.

Brunches or late breakfasts are extremely popular ways to start the day, though whether this is a wholesome tradition or the result of a weekend's heroic consumption of cocktails is up for debate. Mont-Royal Avenue is home to Beauty's, the oldest and best-known brunch spot. If you'd rather grab a quick breakfast bite on your way to work, then try these two bakeries in the Mile-End part of Plateau Mont-Royal: the Fairmount or the Saint-Viateur. These two bakeries are known for their bagels. The Montreal bagel, a skinnier and less polished version of the New York variety, is an economical staple.

For a reasonable priced lunch, try Schwartz's Delicatessen. The city's large Jewish community has also contributed heavily to the local cuisine. While comparing Montreal Smoked Meat to pastrami is sure to raise the hackles of any traditionalist, no visitor should neglect to visit these cramped, dingy quarters.

The narrow, residential streets of the Plateau also conceal some gems, most notably a tight-knit community of French bistros where patrons are invited to bring their own wine. Exemplified by Le P'tit Plateau, Bistro l'Entrepoint and Au Petit Resto, these intimate, romantic spots serve some of the best food in the city at table d'hôte prices rarely exceeding CAD20. They are great places at which to appreciate local life and practice your French. Prince Arthur Street, located between Boulevard Saint-Laurent and Avenue Laval, also offers many BYOW(bring your own wine) options; however, with a few exceptions(notably the stick-to-your-ribs Polish fare at Mazurka), the food at these heavily tourist-oriented establishments is fairly middle-of-the-road.

#### Downtown

Downtown, many bars and restaurants are found on rue Crescent and rue Bishop. In the past, this was where the Anglophones came to eat, drink and be merry. This area overflows with tourists in summer, so it is



## Montreal Snapshot continued

best to know where you are going before you go; mediocre food is an unfortunate but avoidable fact of life here, as are high prices. Other downtown hotspots include the Old Dublin, which whips up great pub grub and fiddles each night away with live music.

And no trip Downtown is complete without a visit to the chic Golden Square Mile section where you will find the fancy Ritz Carlton hotel which houses the popular bistro, Café de Paris.

Though hardly comparable to the Spanish or Italian, Montrealers do eat late, especially on weekends. Most restaurants will be open to diners by 6:30p, but it's best to make reservations for 8p or later if you want company. Downtown hotels tend to direct their guests toward downtown restaurants and nightlife, not out of any animosity or collusion but simply because many tourists are reluctant to venture farther afield. The key to enjoying the hundreds of restaurants and bars that the city has to offer is to be adventurous; you are unlikely to be disappointed.

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### Nightlife Insights

Entertainment means just as many things in Montreal as it does elsewhere, but the city is perhaps most famous for its justifiably legendary nightlife. Bars stay open until 3a here, which is later than anywhere else in Canada, and even then, few customers leave willingly. As with dining and accommodations, however, the visitor will benefit greatly from exploring the less heavily toured areas of the city.

### Bars & Clubs

On Friday and Saturday nights, locals either make a beeline towards rue Crescent and rue Bishop or they avoid them like the plague. Traditionally known as the center of Montreal's Anglophone nightlife, they are now known mostly for their numerous dance clubs/meat markets (Winnie's being one of the most famous). Those in search of a more sedate pint in the area can find one at the Irish pub Hurley's, the charming Brutopia brew-up, and at numerous other places that are popular among an older, English-speaking crowd.

The Boulevard Saint-Laurent is the city's most famous street, as it is the traditional

dividing line between the city's English and French-speaking areas. Nowadays, booze serves as a very effective lingua franca, especially on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, when things don't cool down until dawn. The strip between rue Prince-Arthur and Mont-Royal Avenue features dozens of pubs, clubs, bars and assorted other dives that defy generalization.

In the latter category are the Bifteck, Copacabana and Roy Bar, three friendly, endearing, impossibly smoky taverns attracting a mixture of students and 20-somethings. Shoot some pool or catch a swing show at Le Swimming, cut a rug at Angel's or the Belmont sur le Boulevard, lounge among the hipsters at Tokyo, or just enjoy the quiet serenity of Else's, an arty but unpretentious pub full of Plateau-dwellers. It's all within a 20-minute walk around the Boulevard Saint-Laurent.

You can complete a similar if somewhat less bohemian pub crawl on St-Denis Street, St-Laurent's more French, polished cousin, located one major street to the east. The action on St-Denis is clustered around Ontario Street in the Latin Quarter (Quartier Latin), where mind-boggling bars such as the Saint-Sulpice compete with the quieter allure of pubs such as l'Île Noire, Cheval Blanc, Pub Quartier Latin and the Sainte-Élisabeth. The funky, eclectic bars and cafés situated farther north between Rue Rachel and Avenue Mont-Royal attract a suitably diverse crowd: check out Barouf, Quai des Brumes and Bily Kun. This street is home to dozens of patios (or terraces, in local parlance) that are perfect for watching the world go by.

For those unwilling or unable to go softly into the night, after-hours clubs such as Stereo Nightclub will let you stay until at least 10a on Saturday or Sunday morning, but not before extracting at least CAD20 from your wallet.

### Museums & Galleries

Place des Arts, meanwhile, is home to the Montreal Symphony Orchestra (Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal), Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and l'Opéra de Montréal.

The Canadian Centre for Architecture (Centre Canadien d'Architecture) presents exhibitions and multimedia displays that range from the straightforward to the thoroughly bizarre,

and as a result has gained a worldwide reputation.

Of course, Montreal is more than a university town on a bend. Museums, galleries, theater, cinema and unclassifiable fringe elements enjoy great public interest from a citizenry for whom the arts represent an integral component of having a good time. An impressive if not overwhelming collection of the European masters awaits visitors at the Museum of Fine Arts (Musée des Beaux-Arts), whose magnificent premises also host first-class touring exhibitions. The Museum of Modern Art (Musée d'Art Contemporain), itself an amazing building, offers a fascinating glimpse into Quebec's thriving community of modern artists. The Canadian Centre for Architecture (Centre Canadien d'Architecture) presents exhibitions and multimedia displays that range from the straightforward to the thoroughly bizarre, and as a result, has gained a worldwide reputation. There are also dozens of smaller galleries, museums and exhibition spaces that dot the cityscape and remain relatively undiscovered by tourists.

### Cinema

Montreal is at the center of the province's vibrant cinema community, as evidenced by its fine repertory houses and state-of-the-art first-run theaters. The Paramount Multiplex offers stadium seating, state-of-the-art sound and IMAX screens. The Ex-Centris Theatre showcases digital technology along with an impressive program of Canadian and international films. It also hosts the Festival International Nouveau Cinéma every autumn.

That's just one of the festivals Montreal has to offer. Other film fests include the World Film Festival, International Festival of Films on Art and FANT-ASIA. The Just For Laughs Festival is a joyous yearly tradition, while locals flock downtown to Place des Arts for the outdoor shows associated with the Montreal International Jazz Festival and the Francofolies.

### Theater

Theater buffs will find both English and French productions. Well-known companies include the Centaur, whose program features in-house Canadian and international dramas; the predominantly French Infinithéâtre; and the National Theatre School (École nationale de Théâtre

## Montreal Snapshot continued

du Canada), which hosts occasional presentations. Many smaller companies exist in the city, and though some are ethnically oriented, most enjoy a pleasantly diverse audience.

### Concerts/Performances

The Place des Arts is home to the Montreal Symphony Orchestra (Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal), Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and l'Opéra de Montréal.

Information on nearly every cultural event in the city, as well as local news and reviews, can be found in the two free arts weeklies, *Hour* and *Mirror*, which are available in coffee shops, convenience stores and various other locations.

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### Things to Do Insights

**Old Montreal (Vieux-Montréal)** To get an idea of life in New France during the 18th and 19th Centuries, a walking tour of Old Montreal is a must. A good place to start would be the Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours Chapel, which is located at the corner of the rue Saint-Paul and rue Bonsecours in the eastern end of Old Montreal. The nearby Bonsecours Market (Marché Bonsecours), built in 1847, is a testament to Montreal's influence in British North America. The building, comprising of a Greek Revival portico, a tin-plated dome and cast-iron columns imported from England, is a good example of that era's Neo-Classical style. Today it houses boutiques and exhibits.

A few blocks to the west lies Place Jacques Cartier, named after the French explorer who discovered the island of Montreal in 1535. The square is the central part of Old Montreal; City Hall (Hôtel de Ville) and the Château Ramezay Museum on Notre-Dame Street are situated just to the north, while de la Commune Street and the Old Port of Montreal are a block south. The square is especially enjoyable in summer, with street musicians, jugglers, artists and cafés lining both sides. Calèche drivers beckon strollers to hop on their carriages for a romantic guided tour of the old city. This would be a good time in your busy day to grab a bite for lunch and rest your feet. Try *Medi Medi*, a cozy Mediterranean restaurant nestled in the heart of Old Montreal. The menu is limited but everything on it is exceptional.

Moving west along tiny St-Amable Street, which is filled with shops and artists, you will find the Pointe-à-Callière museum of archaeology and history. It protects and displays the remains of the city as far back as when the first buildings were erected by French settlers in 1642. The old Customs House, now part of the museum, was designed by British architect John Ostell, who was also responsible for the Old Courthouse.

At the north-western edge of Old Montreal you will find the World Trade Centre (Centre de Commerce Mondial), which integrates a number of old buildings through the use of a spectacular atrium that stands several stories high over the former Rue des Fortifications; it's well worth a stroll. St-Jacques Street, one street south, features several buildings with stately architecture and lavish interiors: the Bank of Montreal, opened at the corner of rue Saint-Jacques and Avenue Jeanne-Mance in 1847, is a notable example.

Directly across from the bank is Notre-Dame Basilica, a Gothic Revival church built in 1829 and modelled after Notre-Dame in Paris. It's one of the most popular attractions in Montreal, welcoming over one million visitors a year. After a full day of sight-seeing (and a lot of walking) treat yourself to an up-scale dinner at *Marée (La)*. This charming French restaurant serves exceptional seafood—try the scallops or the lobster.

**Downtown** The museum district is perhaps the most attractive area of downtown Montreal. The Musée des Beaux-Arts, the city's most prestigious, is situated at the corner of rue Sherbrooke and Avenue du Musée. While in the area, visitors can enjoy eyeing or buying from chic boutiques along Victorian Crescent Street, especially between rue Sherbrooke and Boulevard de Maisonneuve. This area is also loaded with excellent dining choices, with many restaurants situated between Boulevard de Maisonneuve and Boulevard René-Lévesque. Make a pit stop at *Bombay Palace*. One of two locations, this restaurant serves traditional Indian dishes. The ambiance is relaxing and lovely. Sitar music fills the room. If Indian is not your cuisine of choice, try the *Beaver Club*. This Montreal institution serves traditional Canadian dishes. If it's your first visit to the

city, this is a great place to sample the local specialties.

Continuing east on Rue Sherbrooke, natural history aficionados can observe modern and prehistoric animals, rocks, crystals and precious stones at the Redpath Museum on the McGill University campus. The McCord Museum, just east of the University's Roddick Gates, boasts a permanent exhibition entitled "Simply Montreal." This eclectic exhibit offers a glimpse of yesteryear, with a selection of First Nations' (American Indian) objects, a collection of photographs, sports equipment, toys and magnificent gowns worn by the who's who of Montreal.

Oscar Wilde once remarked that there are so many churches in Montreal that if you threw a rock in any direction you would probably break a church window. Three of the better known churches are Saint Patrick's Basilica, Christ Church Cathedral and Mary Queen of the World Cathedral (Cathédrale Marie-Reine-du-Monde), all located within a stone's throw of each other and more or less downtown. Christ Church Cathedral stands over *Les Promenades de la Cathédrale*, an attractive underground shopping complex linked to the Underground City. If the weather proves too inclement for an outdoor stroll, enjoy 30 kilometres (20 miles) of underground shopping and dining facilities. Every day, an estimated 500,000 people pass through this network, which links some 60 buildings and provides access to nearly 2000 retail outlets. What better way to conclude your busy day than by tasting the delicacies of *Les Caprices de Nicolas*? This restaurant serves specialties from the south of France and boasts an excellent wine list.

**Plateau Mont-Royal** A tour of downtown Montreal would not be complete without a visit to trendy, multi-ethnic Boulevard Saint-Laurent, with its hopping bars and restaurants, and eclectic shopping. rue Saint-Denis, one major thoroughfare to the east, is the home of the city's Francophone upper crust and is equally essential on any itinerary. Originally a residential street, it is now home to fashionable and sometimes monumentally expensive boutiques, bistros and shops. Before concluding your stroll down the rue Saint-Denis, stop by *Vintage (Le)* for lunch. This charming little bistro serves Portuguese specialties at reasonable prices.

## Montreal Snapshot continued

The Plateau Mont-Royal is Montreal's most quintessential neighborhood, comprising of Saint-Laurent and Saint-Denis, quiet residential streets, beautiful green-spaces (notably Parc Lafontaine, Mont-Royal Park and St-Louis Square), charming BYOB bistros and an overwhelming sense of civility and grace. Tourists are thin on the ground here, but one can hardly claim to have experienced Montreal without spending a day wandering through the real heart of this unique city. To wrap up your day in the Plateau, try the best steakhouse in Montreal-Moishe's. These steaks will melt in your mouth.

**Guided Walking Tours** Old Montreal Ghost Trail. (+1 514 868 0303)

**Tram Tours** Balade de Vieux Port. (+1 514 496 7678/<http://www.quaisduvieuxport.com/>)

**Boat Tours** Montreal Harbour Cruises. (+1 514 842 9300/<http://www.croisieresaml.com/>)

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## Travel Tips

### Getting There

#### Air

Montréal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport (YUL) +1 514 394 7377/<http://www.admtl.com/>

Situated 25 kilometers (16 miles) west of Montreal, Dorval Airport is the major domestic and international air hub for the region (the newer Mirabel is limited to charter and cargo flights). Shopping outlets range from the common Tie Rack and Sunglasses Hut, to souvenir shops, newsstands and more upscale duty free offerings. Restaurants, bars and cafes are also dispersed around the terminal and the departures area. ATMs and currency exchange centers are also scattered about. Major airlines flying to and from the airport include:

Air Canada (+1 888 247 2267/ <http://www.aircanada.ca/>) Air France (+1 800 237 2747/ <http://www.airfrance.ca/>) Air Transat (+1 866 847 1112/ <http://www.airtransat.com/>) American Airlines (+1 800 433 7300/ <http://www.aa.com/>) British Airways (+1 800 217 9297/ <http://www.britishairways.com/>) Continental Airlines (+1 800 523 3273/

<http://www.continental.com/>) Delta Airlines (+1 800 221 1212/ <http://www.delta.com/>) KLM (+1 800 225 2525/ <http://www.klm.com/>) Lufthansa (+1 800 803 5838/ <http://cms.lufthansa.com/>) Mexicana (+1 800 531 7923/ <http://www.mexicana.com/>) Northwest (+1 800 225-2525/ <http://www.nwa.com/>) Swiss Air (+1 877 359 7947/ <http://www.swiss.com/>) United Airlines (+1 800 864 8331/ <http://www.united.ca/>) Zoom Airlines (+1 866 359 9666/ <http://www.flyzoom.ca/>)

### From the Airport

#### Car Rentals

From the airport, pick up Highway 20 and merge with Highway 520 to get into downtown. Rental car companies include:

Alamo (+1 800 327 9633/<http://www.goalamo.com/>) Avis (+1 800 321 3652/<http://www.avis.com/>) Budget (+1 800 268 8900/<https://rent.drivebudget.com/>) Hertz (+1 800 263 0678/<http://www.hertz.com/>) National (+1 800 387 4747/<http://www.nationalcar.com/>) Thrifty (+1 800 367 2277/<http://www.thrifty.com/>)

#### Taxi & Limo

Taxis and limos are readily available outside the ground level of the terminal. Both services have a flat rate to downtown: taxi CAD28, limo CAD48.

#### Shuttlebus

L'Airbus (+1 800 465 1213) is a good alternative to a cab, especially for those not chugging along too much luggage. For CAD12 one way/CAD21.75 round trip the bus links Dorval and Central d'Autobus Montreal via the Aerobus Station at 777 de la Gauchetière Ouest, which has access to hotel shuttles. Buses run daily every half hour from 7a-1a.

#### Bus

Montreal's diverse coach empire begins and ends at Central d'Autobus Montreal (bus station) (+1 514 843 4231). Bus companies include: Acadian Lines (+1 800 567 5151/<http://www.smtbus.com/>), with service to and from cities in the Maritimes. Greyhound (+1 800 661 8747/<http://www.greyhound.ca/>), serving all points across Canada and the United States. Voyageur (+1 800 668 4438/<http://www.voyageur.com/>), which links Montreal and Ottawa. InterCar (+1 418

627 9108/<http://www.intercar.qc.ca/>), which links Montreal with Quebec City. Orleans Express (+1 418 525 3000/<http://www.orleansexpress.com/>), serving destinations throughout the Quebec province.

#### Car

An excellent network of motorways converges on Montreal, although traffic is heavy during the peak rush hours. Highway 20 runs northeast toward Quebec City and southwest toward Toronto. Hwy 40 heads northeast along the St. Lawrence to Quebec City and west to Ottawa. Highway 15 enters the city from the south and veers northwest ascending the hills to the ski resorts. Highway 10 jaunts due east for Sherbrooke.

#### Water

From June to October, numerous cruise lines sail up the St. Lawrence and dock at the Iberville Passenger Terminal (+1 514 283 7011/<http://www.port-montreal.com/>) in the Old Port. From there, the streets of Old Town are just steps away.

#### Train

From the US, the most direct route by rail to Montreal is on Amtrak's (+1 800 872 7245/<http://www.amtrak.com/>) Adirondack train. The 11-hour scenic journey begins in New York City and ends at Gare Centrale (+1 514 871 1331) in the middle of downtown. The highlight reel of the trip as the train wanders though upstate New York is the chug along the shores of Lake Champlain. A couple of other routes, one from New York City and another from Chicago, will put you as close as Toronto, where you need to transfer to a Via (Canada's national rail company) train (+1 888 842 7245/<http://www.viarail.ca/>). Via trains, which also arrive and depart from Gare Centrale, link Montreal with every major city in Canada.

#### Getting Around

Vamos a Canada (+1 905 326 2880/<http://www.vamosacanada.com/>) offers services, information, and authorizations for transferring employees, students, immigrants, or visitors to Canada. Such authorizations include employment and student authorizations, visitors visa, permanent resident cards, passports, and much more.

#### Public Transport



## Montreal Snapshot continued

Société de transport de Montreal (STM) (+1 514 280 5100/http://www.stm.info/) controls the metro and bus lines in the city. The metro consists of four lines (Green/Orange/Yellow/Blue) and 65 stations. Trains dart into stations every four to ten minutes daily from around 5:30a until just after midnight. More than 150 bus routes complement the subway system including an array of night buses. A single fare runs CAD2.50 and monthly and weekly passes are obtainable. A Tourist Card costs CAD7 for one day and CAD14 for three days. Both buses and the metro merge at points with the five commuter train lines (+1 888 702 8726/http://www.amt.qc.ca/) which extend all directions off the island, way into the various bedroom communities.

### Car

Although you do not need a car to get around town, having one is by no means a drawback considering the road system is straightforward, parking is simple to come by (both curbside and lots), and traffic is limited to rush hours, and even then the only headaches are on the major expressways.

### Weather

Statistics Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Temperature C Average High-5-231018232625211360 Average Mean-8-6-16131821201693-4 Average Low-12-10-5291417161260-7 Temperature F Average High232837516574797770554432 Average Mean16730435665716962483826 Average Low101323364857636254423220 Rainy Days151414121213121112131415 Rain Fall (cm)8.76.79.18.19.29.79.810.19.79.19.99.4 Rain Fall (in)3.42.63.63.23.63.83.84.03.83.63.93.7

### Water

From late spring to mid-October, ferries (+1 514 281 8000) cruise the St Lawrence between the Old Port, St. Helen's Island and Longueuil. Fares begin at CAD3.75 one way.

### Bike

Montreal is continually ranked as the one of the best cities to ride a bike in, and once you get a look at the expansive urban and recreational trail system, you'll be convinced. Sure, you will still face the thrills (and possibly spills if riding in winter) and the intensity of maneuvering through the urban landscape, but the city set-up of bike lanes (many of which even have a separate left turn lane), makes pedaling just as effective as any other form of transport. If leisure is more your style, opt for a ride around Mount Royal, along the trails of Lachine Canal or the trails and roads on St. Helen's Island.

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### Fun Facts

**Montreal Province:** Quebec **Country:** Canada

### Montreal By The Numbers:

Population: 1.6 million (city); 3.6 million (metropolitan) Elevation: 36 m/ 118 ft Average Annual Precipitation: 94 cm/ 37 in Average January Temperature: -10°C/ 14°F Average July Temperature: 21°C/ 70°F Number of Students at McGill University: 30,000

### Quick Facts:

Major Industries: Aerospace, Biotechnology, Tourism, Pharmaceutical Electricity: 110 volts 60Hz, standard two and three pin Time Zone: GMT-5 ( GMT-4 daylight saving time); Eastern Standard Time ( EST) Country Dialing Code: +1 Area Code: 514

### Did You Know?

Montreal is sister-city to Hiroshima, Japan.

According to Forbes, Montreal is the tenth cleanest city in the world.

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