



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



Anna Kucsma

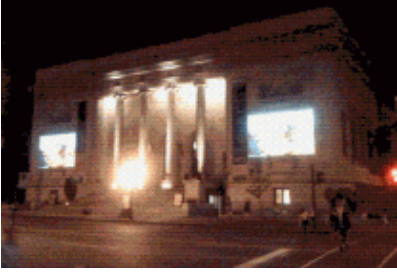
A Medley of Montreal Museums

Montreal, 3 Days

Table of contents:

Guide Description	2
Itinerary Overview	3
Daily Itineraries	5
Montreal Snapshot	14

Guide Description










AUTHOR NOTE: Montreal is one of the oldest and most diverse Canadian cities. This is reflected in the diversity of museums available for our perusal!

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Montreal








DAY NOTE: Montréal is one of the best Canadian cities to visit if you are interested in museums. From the prominent Fine Arts Museum and Contemporary Art Museum to the less well known Ecomusée du Fier Monde, there is a little something for everyone. Day one starts with the well-known Musée des Beaux Arts (Fine Arts Museum), located on Sherbrooke Street near Guy-Concordia Metro. Entry is free to the permanent collection, and there are Wednesday night student specials for the exhibits. There are a myriad of smaller museums that surround the Fine Arts Museum. Walking along Sherbrooke Street will give you an idea of the distinct flavour of Montreal's downtown and lower Plateau neighbourhoods. It will also whet your appetite for the tasty food at the typical Montreal style little bistro just North of Sherbrooke St., on St. Denis St. Following a morning of more traditional art, spice it up a little with a visit to the Contemporary Art Museum, located at the Place des Arts. This major cultural centre for the island of Montréal plays host not only to the museum, but is also to prominent visiting musicians, plays and operas.

	Chez Cora Breakfast theme
	Musée des Beaux-Arts Golden Mile Area
	Sherbrooke Street Stylish and elegant
	Café Cherrier From Dawn to Dusk
	Musée d'Art Contemporain Boutique Uncluttered & Welcoming
	Ferreira Café Sunny & Warm
	Hotel Le Cantile Suites Understated Elegance

Day 2 - Montreal


DAY NOTE: Day two of the museum fest is spent in an outdoor museum venue. The Botanical Gardens of Montréal are located near the Olympic Stadium, in the East end of the city. This display of flowers, trees and shrubs is more than a

big garden; it has guided tours and seasonal special events; particularly spectacular is the Chinese lantern exhibit in the month of October. During this event the gardens are open late, and the multi-coloured lighting along the paths creates an enjoyably surreal feeling. If you want to enjoy this show go to the Insectarium or the Biodome, located within a five minute radius first, and head towards the gardens as the sun sets. There is a restaurant at the Gardens, so for if you are there for lunch pick up a sandwich from the small but satisfactory cafeteria and have a picnic in the park; do not forget to pick up behind yourself!

	Eggspectation Lowly egg delight
	Jardin Botanique Veritable Oasis
	Biodôme de Montréal Self-serve eco-centre
	Insectarium de Montréal Bugs Galore
	Olympic Park City wonder
	Altitude 737 European-Asian fusion
	Hotel Le Cantile Suites Understated Elegance

Day 3 - Montreal

DAY NOTE: Day three has a Canadian and historical theme, from the - slightly out of the way - fur trading museum in Lachine to the Inuit Art gallery and Bonsecours Ceramic Centre in Old Montréal. The suggested breakfast spot is Movenpick, downtown, where you can either sit down to eat or pick up something to munch on "to go". This is the last day of a hectic three day museum fest, and so dinner is scheduled at one of my favourite restaurants in Old Montréal, Bonaparte. Sit back, relax, and enjoy the service.

	Marché Movenpick New dining concept
---	---

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife



Musée de la Ville de Lachine

Fur-trading post



Louisiane (La)

Friendly with zing



Bonsecours Ceramic Centre

For Special Gifts



Galerie Elca London

Inuit Exclusive



Bonaparte

Murder, Mystery and French Cuisine



Hotel Le Cantile Suites

Understated Elegance

Day 1 - Montreal

QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Montréal is one of the best Canadian cities to visit if you are interested in museums. From the prominent Fine Arts Museum and Contemporary Art Museum to the less well known Ecomusée du Fier Monde, there is a little something for everyone. Day one starts with the well-known Musée des Beaux Arts (Fine Arts Museum), located on Sherbrooke Street near Guy-Concordia Metro. Entry is free to the permanent collection, and there are Wednesday night student specials for the exhibits. There are a myriad of smaller museums that surround the Fine Arts Museum. Walking along Sherbrooke Street will give you an idea of the distinct flavour of Montreal's downtown and lower Plateau neighbourhoods. It will also whet your appetite for the tasty food at the typical Montreal style little bistro just North of Sherbrooke St., on St. Denis St. Following a morning of more traditional art, spice it up a little with a visit to the Contemporary Art Museum, located at the Place des Arts. This major cultural centre for the island of Montréal plays host not only to the museum, but is also to prominent visiting musicians, plays and operas.

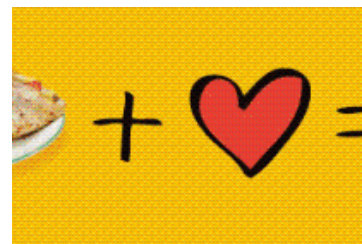
contact:
tel: 514.286.6171
<http://www.chezcora.com/>

location:
1240 Rue Drummond
Montreal QC H3G 1V7

hours:
6a-3p M-Sa, 7a-3p Su

1 Chez Cora

DESCRIPTION: This extremely popular breakfast chain offers well-above-average quality and huge portions, the menu includes choices for both the health-conscious and for those who eat as if they are heading to the woods. Dishes include the usual bacon and eggs, crepes, waffles and maple syrup on each table. © wcities.com



http://www.chezcora.com/img/accueil_bottom.jpg

contact:
tel: 514/285-2000
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

2 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:

http://www.tourisme-montreal.org/B2C/07/attraction_list.asp

location:

Sherbrooke Street
Montreal QC no zip

3 Sherbrooke Street

DESCRIPTION: Running from the far east end of the city to the far west, this broad street is one of the most stylish and elegant in Montreal, with much of the architecture still preserved both in private homes and in the various businesses and institutions along the way. Olympic Park dominates the east end, and the street's downtown passage is defined by the McGill University campus and high rise towers. To the west lies what is called the "Golden Square Mile," home to elegant buildings and the Musée des Beaux-Arts. © wcities.com



Sherbrooke Street East

contact:

tel: 514/843-4308

location:

3635 rue St-Denis
Montreal QC H2X 3L6

hours:

Mon-Fri 7:30am-10pm; Sat-Sun 8:30am-10pm

4 Café Cherrier

DESCRIPTION: The tables on the terrace that wraps around this corner building are filled whenever there's even a slim possibility that a heavy sweater and a bowl of café au lait will fend off frostbite. In summer, the loyalists get to stay out until way past midnight. Brunch is popular even if the food is unexceptional, but do consider this place any time a snack or a meal is in order. Portions are ample and inexpensive. An easygoing atmosphere prevails; it's popular with musicians, actors, and artists, so contrive to look mysterious or celebrated. © Frommer's

contact:

tel: 514/847-6904
fax: +1 514 847 6292
www.macm.org

location:

185 rue Ste-Catherine ouest
Montreal QC H2X 3X5

hours:

Tues-Sun 11am-6pm (until 9pm Wed)

5 Musée d'Art Contemporain Boutique

DESCRIPTION: The boutique of the contemporary art museum sells much of what might be expected, including poster-size reproductions of paintings and prints, postcards, and art books. Added to the mix are tasteful design pieces and unusual gifts as well as souvenirs that eschew the lowest-common-denominator standards of too many Vieux-Montréal shops. The museum's bookstore, Oliveri, has a wide selection, in both French and English, of monographs on Canadian and international artists since the 1950s. © Frommer's



contact:
tel: 514/848-0988
www.ferreiracafe.com

location:
1446 rue Peel
Montreal QC H3A 1S8

hours:
Mon-Fri 11:30am-3pm and
5:30-11pm; Sat 5:30-11:30pm

6 Ferreira Café

DESCRIPTION: Cataplana is the name of both a venerated Portuguese recipe and the hinged copper clamshell-style pot in which it is cooked. Ingredients vary depending on the cook, but at this extremely popular downtown spot, that means a fragrant stew of mussels, clams, potatoes, chouriço sausage, and chunks of cod and salmon. Mostly middle-aged and dressed in business wear, customers fill every seat at lunchtime but go home at night, which is when to visit if you prefer a bit of tranquillity with your grilled squid or classic fried cod. Many dishes are priced according to the daily market, so they can be higher than outlined below. © Frommer's



Photo courtesy of Ferreira Café

contact:
tel: 1 800 567 1110
fax: +1 514 844 7808
<http://www.hotelcantie.com/>

location:
1110 Rue Sherbrooke Ouest
Montreal PQ H3A 1G9

7 Hotel Le Cantile Suites

DESCRIPTION: This luxury hotel on Sherbrooke Street West features a wide variety of well-appointed suites, some extravagantly decorated. Though there is a swimming pool, fitness club and restaurant (Bistro Dell'Arte) on the property, most guests take full advantage of the dozens of area restaurants and attractions: the Musée des Beaux-Arts is just a few blocks to the west. Ideally suited for business travelers, each suite features a fax machine and large working desk in addition to the usual amenities. © wcities.com



Day 2 - Montreal

QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Day two of the museum fest is spent in an outdoor museum venue. The Botanical Gardens of Montréal are located near the Olympic Stadium, in the East end of the city. This display of flowers, trees and shrubs is more than a big garden; it has guided tours and seasonal special events; particularly spectacular is the Chinese lantern exhibit in the month of October. During this event the gardens are open late, and the multi-coloured lighting along the paths creates an enjoyably surreal feeling. If you want to enjoy this show go to the Insectarium or the Biodome, located within a five minute radius first, and head towards the gardens as the sun sets. There is a restaurant at the Gardens, so for if you are there for lunch pick up a sandwich from the small but satisfactory cafeteria and have a picnic in the park; do not forget to pick up behind yourself!

contact:
tel: 514 282 0119
fax: +1 514 282 8115
<http://www.eggspectation.ca>

location:
201 St. Jacques Street West
Montreal QC H2Y 1L6

hours:
6a-5p M-Sa, 6a-4p Su

1 Eggspectation

DESCRIPTION: One of five outlets in Montreal, this restaurant takes the lowly egg and creates an entire menu around it. Set in a renovated office building, the décor features a two-storey space with wrought iron, huge windows and exposed brick. Dishes include two eggs any style with bacon, ham or sausage, toast, baked beans and grilled potatoes and ham and potato gratin topper. Service is cheerful and helpful and breakfast for two, excluding tip, comes to between. © wcities.com



contact:
tel: 514/872-1400
www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/jardin
in

location:
4101 rue Sherbrooke est
Montreal QC H1X 2B2

hours:
Daily 9am-5pm (until 6pm in summer, until 9pm mid-Sept to Nov)

2 Jardin Botanique

DESCRIPTION: Spread across 75 hectares (185 acres), Montréal's Botanical Garden is a fragrant oasis 12 months a year. Ten large conservatory greenhouses each have a theme: orchids, begonias and African violets, ferns, flora from the rainforest. Outdoors, spring is when things really kick in: lilacs in May, lilies in June, and roses from mid-June to the first frost. The **Chinese Garden**, a joint project of Montréal and Shanghai, evokes the 14th- to 17th-century era of the Ming Dynasty and was built according to the Chinese landscape principles of yin and yang. It incorporates pavilions, inner courtyards, ponds, and myriad plants indigenous to China. The serene **Japanese Garden** fills 6 hectares (15 acres) and includes a cultural pavilion with an art gallery, a tearoom where ancient tea ceremonies are performed, a stunning bonsai collection, and a Zen garden. A small train runs through the gardens from mid-May to October and is worth the small fee charged to ride it. The grounds are also home to the **Insectarium**, displaying some of the world's most beautiful and sinister insects. Birders should bring along binoculars on summer visits to spot some of the more than 190 species that have been spotted here. An extensive website provides great details on everything. © Frommer's



abdallahh

contact:

tel: +1 514 868 3000
fax: +1 514 868 3065
<http://www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/biodome/bdm.htm>

location:

4777 Pierre-de-Coubertin
Avenue
Montreal QC H1V 1B3

3 Biodôme de Montréal

DESCRIPTION: Housed in what was the Olympic velodrome, this science centre and ecological zoo is home to four distinct ecosystems. You will find a lush Tropical Forest, the temperate Laurentian Forest, the St. Lawrence Marine Ecosystem and the Polar worlds of the Arctic and Antarctic. Plenty of interpretative panels and staff are on hand to help you on your self-guided tour. The Environment Place amphitheatre presents films, performances and lectures, all related to conservation and environmental protection. © wcities.com



contact:

tel: 514/872-1400
fax: +1 514 872 0662
www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/insectarium

location:

4581 rue Sherbrooke est
Montreal QC H1X 2B2

hours:

Nov 1-May 14 daily 9am-5pm;
May 15-Sept 6 daily
9am-6pm; Sept 7-Oct 31 daily
9am-9pm

4 Insectarium de Montréal

DESCRIPTION: Live exhibits featuring scorpions, tarantulas, hissing cockroaches, assassin bugs, praying mantises, and other "misunderstood creatures, which are so often wrongly feared and despised," as the Insectarium puts it, are displayed in this two-level structure near the rue Sherbrooke gate of the **Jardin Botanique** (Botanical Garden). Needless to say, kids are delighted especially by the creepy critters. More than 3,000 mounted butterflies, beetles, scarabs, maggots, locusts, and giraffe weevils also are featured, and during the summer, the Butterfly House is full of beautiful live specimens fluttering among the nectar-bearing plants. In September, visitors can watch monarch butterflies being tagged and released for their annual migration to Mexico. The annual award-winning **"Insect Tasting"** (Croque-insectes) dinner seems to have been suspended, which is a shame. But you can still buy lollipops with scorpions inside at the gift shop. © Frommer's



contact:

tel: +1 514 252 4141
fax: +1 514 252 0372
<http://www.rio.gouv.qc.ca/>

location:

4141 Pierre-De Coubertin
Avenue
Montreal QC H1V 3N7

5 Olympic Park

DESCRIPTION: The Olympic Park was the pride and joy of Montrealers when it was built for the 1976 summer Olympics. They nicknamed it the "Big O". Now the Olympic Park has been re-named the "Big Uh-Oh!" because of the money it has cost the city to maintain the structure. That said, it does not take away from the spectacular architecture- or the thrill of riding up the elevator tower and watching the city fall away from you through the glass walls in front of you. Also making the trip in that direction of town worth it are the Biodome, Botanical Gardens and the Insectarium, all clearly indicated and none further than a five minute walk from the Olympic Stadium. © NileGuide



Photo courtesy of Olympic Park.

contact:

tel: 514 397 0737
fax: +1 514 397 0058
<http://www.altitude737.com/>

location:

1 Place Ville-Marie
Montreal QC H3B 5EA

hours:

Lunch: 11:30a-2p M-F,
Dinner: 5:30p-10p M-Sa

6 Altitude 737

DESCRIPTION: Like most skyscraper restaurants, 737's kitchen has at times had difficulty living up to the view; but what a view! Perched atop Place Ville-Marie, chef François Da Ponte takes diners through a solid menu of world cuisine in lavish décor. Dishes include Eggplant Caviar with tomato and tarragon, Calamari Cake with warm goat cheese, and the 737 Steak Tartare. Desserts are presented with flair, and might include the Banana Flambée for Two. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of (insert name of point of interest)

contact:

tel: 1 800 567 1110
fax: +1 514 844 7808
<http://www.hotelcantile.com/>

location:

1110 Rue Sherbrooke Ouest
Montreal PQ H3A 1G9

7 Hotel Le Cantile Suites

DESCRIPTION: This luxury hotel on Sherbrooke Street West features a wide variety of well-appointed suites, some extravagantly decorated. Though there is a swimming pool, fitness club and restaurant (Bistro Dell'Arte) on the property, most guests take full advantage of the dozens of area restaurants and attractions: the Musée des Beaux-Arts is just a few blocks to the west. Ideally suited for business travelers, each suite features a fax machine and large working desk in addition to the usual amenities. © wcities.com



Day 3 - Montreal

QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Day three has a Canadian and historical theme, from the - slightly out of the way - fur trading museum in Lachine to the Inuit Art gallery and Bonsecours Ceramic Centre in Old Montréal. The suggested breakfast spot is Movenpick, downtown, where you can either sit down to eat or pick up something to munch on “to go”. This is the last day of a hectic three day museum fest, and so dinner is scheduled at one of my favourite restaurants in Old Montréal, Bonaparte. Sit back, relax, and enjoy the service.

contact:
tel: 514 861 8181

location:
1 Place Ville Marie
Montreal QC H3B 4R7

hours:
7a-2a

1 **Marché Movenpick**

DESCRIPTION: This restaurant and market covers 30,000 square feet on the lower level of Place Ville Marie. Food is prepared to order at various stations, and it is the perfect spot for children as the choice is all but unlimited. Though the concept is originally Swiss, the foods of the world are literally at your feet: seafood, grilled meats, pasta, pizza, Indonesian and Chinese specialties and sushi, to name but a few. The Caveau offers an extensive selection of wines from around the world by the glass. © wcities.com

contact:
tel: +1 514 873 2015(Tourist Information)
<http://www.cum.qc.ca/LACHINE/fr/musee.htm>

location:
110 LaSalle Road
Montreal QC H8S 2X1

2 **Musée de la Ville de Lachine**

DESCRIPTION: This museum is both a look at Lachine's fascinating history and a contemporary art gallery. The Maison LeBer-LeMoynes permanent exhibit focuses on the history of the building itself, which dates from 1669. Temporary exhibits, held in the Pavillon Benoît-Verdickt and the Pavillon de l'Entrepôt (2901 St-Joseph Boulevard, near 28th), run the gamut of modern art, while the Outdoor Sculpture Museum in René-Lévesque Park is a wonderful way to spend an afternoon. Admission is free. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Musée de la Ville de Lachine

contact:
tel: +1 514 369 3073
fax: +1 514 369 3702
www.lalouisiane.ca/

location:
5850 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal QC H4A 1X5

hours:
Lunch: 11:30a-2:30p Th-F, Dinner: 5:30p-9:30p Su, Tu-W, 5:30p-10:30p Th-F, 5:30p-11p Sa

3 **Louisiane (La)**

DESCRIPTION: If the spirit of Cajun and Creole cuisine suits you, rather than a badge of authenticity, then this comfortable little space on busy Sherbrooke Street West is the spot for you. Décor is simple and tables are tight together, making for a warm, friendly place that buzzes right along. Main dishes include deliciously-textured crab cakes and grilled Shrimp Étouffé. The desserts, including an addictive bread pudding, are massive. © wcities.com



contact:

tel: +1 514 866 6581
fax: +1 514 866 5989
<http://www.centreceramiquebonsecours.net/>

location:

444 Rue Saint Gabriel
Montreal QC H2Y 2Z9

4 Bonsecours Ceramic Centre

DESCRIPTION: As the name implies, this gallery, located in the beautiful and historic Bonsecours area of Old Montreal, presents ceramic art both from recognized artists from around the world and recent graduates of the center's own school. The pieces are for sale at reasonable prices; watch for group exhibitions from Quebec ceramists, rotated on a semi-annual basis, and year-round student exhibits. This is a great place to find that unique ceramic gift for that special person. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: +1 514 282 1173
fax: +1 514 282 1229
<http://www.elcalondon.com/>

location:

224 St. Paul Ouest
Montreal QC H2Y 1Z9

hours:

Tu-F 10a-5:30p, Sa 10a-5p

5 Galerie Elca London

DESCRIPTION: One of the most well established private galleries in Montreal, this prestigious space specializes in contemporary Canadian art, especially that from Inuit communities across the north. Pieces range from traditional soapstone carvings to surprisingly complex and occasionally harrowing depictions of animals and other figures. Elca caters to a very upscale clientele. © wcities.com



contact:

tel: 514/844-4368
fax: +1 514 844 0272
www.bonaparte.ca

location:

447 rue St-François-Xavier
Montreal QC H2Y 2T1

hours:

Mon-Fri noon-2:30pm; daily
5:30-10:30pm

6 Bonaparte

DESCRIPTION: In a city brimming with accomplished French restaurants, this is a personal favorite. The dining rooms run through the ground floors of two old row houses, and with rich maroon wallpaper and white tablecloths and china, the decorative details are suggestive of namesake Bonaparte's era. Adroit service is provided by schooled pros who manage to be knowledgeable without being stuffy. Recent highlights included salmon in a phyllo crust stuffed with leaks and a dash of vanilla, Dover sole filet with fresh herbs, and beef tartare with capers. Lunches cater to the upscale business crowd, and the restaurant offers an additional theater menu in the early evening. © Frommer's



Photo courtesy of Bonaparte

contact:

tel: 1 800 567 1110
fax: +1 514 844 7808
<http://www.hotelcantile.com/>

location:

1110 Rue Sherbrooke Ouest
Montreal PQ H3A 1G9

7 Hotel Le Cantile Suites

DESCRIPTION: This luxury hotel on Sherbrooke Street West features a wide variety of well-appointed suites, some extravagantly decorated. Though there is a swimming pool, fitness club and restaurant (Bistro Dell'Arte) on the property, most guests take full advantage of the dozens of area restaurants and attractions: the Musée des Beaux-Arts is just a few blocks to the west. Ideally suited for business travelers, each suite features a fax machine and large working desk in addition to the usual amenities. © wcities.com



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.

©

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.

©

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

Montreal Snapshot continued

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.

©

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.

©

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/>)

©

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 through 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.

©

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.

© NileGuide

© NileGuide