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### Quebec Province – Wine, Dine and Sunshine

BY ADMIN – JANUARY 23, 2014

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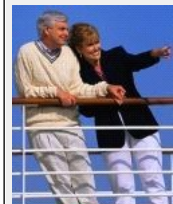
#### A Warm and Welcome Surprise



View of Montreal from Mount Royal Park ©Pierre-Philippe Brunet



Chapelle Ste.Agnès Vineyard Eastern Townships ©Jean-François Hamelin



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Quebec City ©Jean-François Hamelin



Montmorency Falls ©Paul Hurteau Claude Parent

Say Canada as a holiday destination and most people immediately think of snow and skiing. They would be right, but there is another entirely different face to Canada – warm sunny days, a long history, fine wines and a gourmet's paradise.

So if you would like to take a look at the warmer side of Canada, why not consider the Province of Quebec as a holiday destination? Boasting two of Canada's most atmospheric cities, Montreal and Quebec, the Province offers a whole range of interests from artisan food to vineyards.

### Montreal

With direct flights from London, Montreal is the gateway for any Quebec visitor and a very welcoming host it is too. You will find plenty of art and culture in this chic, buzzy and cosmopolitan city. Head down to the historic area of Old Montreal, located southeast of the downtown area which is home to a wide range of attractions. These include Montreal City Hall, the Bonsecours Market and the Basilica of Notre Dame. The architecture and cobbled streets have been the subject of extensive renovation and you can sightsee from the comfort of a 'Calèche', a horse-drawn carriage. Foodies should look out for the Restaurant Delmo Bar, Le Local and Restaurant Loranger.

Go to the lookout at the top of Mount Royal, the three head hill that the city is named after, for breathtaking views across the river, or take a stroll in the urban park, that was laid out by the same designer as New York's Central Park. At the foot of Mount Royal is Downtown, with shops, offices and skyscrapers (but none higher than Mount Royal). Also take the time to peek at what's underneath Downtown. The Underground City, or La Ville Souterraine, is an impressive complex of more than 20 miles of tunnels that connect shopping mall, offices and transport. Gourmets in Downtown should seek out the Citizens Grill and La Coupole, or any deli in the city that sells the world renowned Montreal Smoked Meat Sandwich, a piled-high confection of meat, pickle and coleslaw.

### The Eastern Townships

A short drive to the east of Montreal is the area known as the Eastern Townships. Here you will find a veritable country paradise of mountains and valleys that are home to the most picturesque villages. Accommodation comes in many shapes and sizes from hotels and country inns to cosy little B & Bs. There are gourmet experiences to discover by visiting restaurants and cafés de village or on board the Grand Cru cruise boat and the Orford Express tourist train.

Quebec also produces some really great wines, so the wine buff should follow the Quebec Wine Route. And when you are on your travels try to seek out ice wine. This intensely flavoured wine is made from grapes that have been left on the vine until the temperature is at least -8 degrees centigrade. This process freezes the water in the grape and allows the essence of the flavour to be extracted. And since 1990, starting in a small town called Dunham, the same process has been applied to apples to produce the most delicious ice cider, it's absolute nectar.

**Quebec City**

About 145 miles north east of Montreal is the historic Quebec City, capital of the Province. With its 400th birthday in 2008 it is one of the oldest cities in North America and Old Quebec (Vieux-Québec) and its ramparts were declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1985. There's a very European feel to this part of the city and, again, you are spoilt for choice in terms of bars and restaurants.

Other places of interest near the city are the Montmorency Falls (nearly 100ft taller than Niagara) and the Basilica in the town of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré.

Quebec has some great accommodation including Relais Chateau hotel, Auberge Saint-Antoine and the famous landmark hotel in castle style atop the city – the Chateau Frontenac. There are also numerous restaurants to suit every taste and pocket.

**Food and Drink**

For the really dedicated foodie there is, in the greater Quebec City area, the Gourmet Route. This will take you on an 'earth to the plate' culinary journey, from small homestead producers making everything from cheese and chocolate to traditional farming, through to restaurants using the local ingredients in their dishes. This route also travels through an area of outstanding beauty that is a biosphere site for its rare flora and fauna. Nearby, in the St. Lawrence, you can also see over thirteen species of whales, giving you the opportunity to combine an outdoor wildlife and activity break with an amazing food experience.

**When to Go**

Despite its chilly reputation southern Quebec is on the same latitude as Northern Spain, and some parts of the Mediterranean, so enjoys temperate summers. Pay a visit in June, July and August when the average temperatures are over 22 degrees centigrade or even in September when a comfortable average of 18 degrees will give you the chance of seeing the 'Fall', the spectacular colours of the Autumn leaves.

**Getting There**

Getting there is easy. British Airways and Air Canada make daily, direct flights to Montreal. Flight time is 'mid haul' at about seven hours.

**Summary**

To sum up, Quebec offers the more sophisticated traveller a whole range of experiences, from culture to cuisine and from wine to world heritage sites.

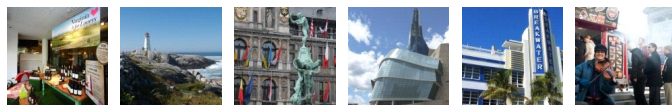
**Useful links**

Government of Quebec Official Tourist Web Site  
[www.quebecoriginal.com](http://www.quebecoriginal.com)

British Airways  
[www.britishairways.com](http://www.britishairways.com)

Air Canada  
[www.aircanada.com](http://www.aircanada.com)

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