

Arrival

Arrive at Montréal Pierre Elliott Trudeau Airport (Dorval) and travel to Montréal Downtown or Old Montréal (about 20 minutes). Recommended transportation: Limo Sedan (approximately \$20 more than cab fare).

What to do & Where to eat

Old Montréal (called "Vieux" or Montréal in French) is a trip back in time; with some of its buildings dating to the 1600s, it is one of the oldest urban areas in North America. Stroll or take a horse-drawn carriage through the narrow cobblestone streets of Montréal's famous Parisian-style historic district, filled with cultural landmarks, museums, boutiques, sidewalk cafes, and restaurants.

Sight Seeing

In the eastern part of the old city, near Place Jacques-Cartier, important buildings are found including Montréal City Hall, Bonsecours Market (great for shopping for local area items), and Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours Chapel (a.k.a. the sailor's church), as well as the preserved colonial mansion Château Ramezay.

Further west, Place d'Armes is dominated by Notre-Dame Basilica on its southern side, accompanied by the Saint-Sulpice Seminary, the oldest extant building in Montréal. The southwest of the old city contains important archeological remains of Montréal's first townsite, around Place d'Youville and Place Royale, and in the Pointe-à-Callière museum. Finally, the old town's riverbank is completely taken up by the Old Port (Vieux-Port), whose maritime facilities are surrounded with a vast recreational space with a variety of museums and attractions.

For lunch or after dinner relaxation, try Le Jardin Nelson. Near the foot of Place Jacques Cartier, the main plaza in Vieux-Montréal, a passage leads into a tree-shaded garden court in back of a stone building dating from 1812. A pleasant hour or two can be spent listening to jazz every day during lunch and dinner, and in the afternoons from Thursday to Sunday. Food takes second place, but the kitchen does well with its pizzas and crepes, the latter with both sweet and savory fillings (including lobster). There's a covered people-watching porch in front, and dining rooms and a bar inside. When the weather's nice, it's open until 2:00 am.

For dinner try Verses Restaurant (www.versesrestaurant.com). Nestled in the 19th century building housing the Nelligan Hotel since June 2002, Verses Restaurant has become one of Old Montréal's hippest and trendy restaurants. Large windows open onto Saint-Paul Street allowing the natural light to flow into the dining room, which is furnished with curved red banquettes and dark wood chairs. The stone and brick walls are complemented by long flowing curtains, dark wood paneling, large 10-foot mirrors, and an impressive glass wine cellar. With its Old Montréal charm and modern decor, Verses is the perfect setting to enjoy outstanding cuisine, morning, noon, and night. Specialties include beef, duck, lamb, foie gras, and seafood.

Old Montréal is accessible from the downtown core via the Underground City and is served by several STM bus routes and the Champ-de-Mars, Place-d'Armes, and Square-Victoria metro

stations. Ferries to south shore city of Longueuil are available during the summer as are a network of bicycle paths.

Head out to the Mile End District of Montréal:

The Mile End District is found on Laurier Avenue, between St Urbain and Cote Ste Catherine Streets and Park Avenue (avenue du Parc), between Laurier and Fairmount Streets. Mile End is an artistic neighborhood, home to artists, musicians, writers, and filmmakers. Many art galleries, designers' workshops, boutiques and cafés are found here.

Famous writer Mordecai Richler grew up on Saint-Urbain Street during the 1930s and 1940s, and wrote about the neighborhood in several of his novels. Wilensky's Light Lunch on Fairmount at Saint-Urbain features memorably in *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* and the film based on it. William Shatner (Captain Kirk from *Star Trek*) also grew up in Mile End.

In 2005, Mile End was described in several music magazines, notably *Spin* and *Pitchfork*, as the heart of the independent music scene in Montréal. The area is also home to the city's two most famous bagel bakeries, The Fairmount and St-Viateur Bagel. Make sure to stop in and pick up a dozen or two before heading back.

Shopping

Head out to explore Montréal's shopping scene on Ste Catherine. Start off at Place des Arts (across from the Hyatt) and make your way west down Ste Catherine Street taking time to also explore Montréal's world famous underground city along the way. I recommend you enter at the Promenades Cathédrale (built underneath Christ Church Cathedral) and then connect to the Complexe Les Ailes, le Centre Eaton, and Place Montréal Trust.

At Place Montréal Trust, exit from the underground city and resume your walk westward until you get to Ogilvy's, one of Montréal's premiere department stores still operating under its original name. Known as the *Grande dame of St. Catherine Street*, the store was founded in 1866 by James A. Ogilvy--a pioneer in Montréal retailing--and has been located in a Romanesque Revival stone building for almost a hundred years.

Sit, rest your feet, and enjoy a little people-watching on rue Crescent. Grab a seat on the balcony terrasse at Thursday's or at the Sir Winston Churchill Pub. Remember, this is Montréal so don't be shy to ask for wine with lunch if you are so inclined! After lunch, head north from Ste Catherine's by taking Mountain Street to Sherbrooke and begin your exploration of Montréal's Golden Square Mile.

The Golden Square Mile was the name of a luxurious neighborhood at the foot of Mount Royal in the west-central section of downtown Montréal. The Square Mile, as a neighborhood, is generally understood to have existed between 1875 and 1930 when it was home to approx 80% of Canada's wealthiest families. Walking along Sherbrooke Street (know as Montréal's 5th Avenue) from de la Montagne Street headed east toward McGill College, make sure to stop in at many of the fine shops and jewelry stores. If you have time, be sure to take in the collections at Montréal's Fine Arts Museum (Musée des Beaux-Arts).

Montréal's Fine Arts Museum (Musée des Beaux-Arts) is the city's most important fine arts museum. The original building opened in 1912, and was augmented by the addition of a modern

annex across the street in 1991. The ever-expanding permanent collection includes painting and sculpture from the Middle Ages to the 20th Century, supplemented by displays from Oceania, and Africa. An excellent art and gift shop is attached.

One of the trendiest, friendliest streets in town is Mont Royal Avenue, a bustling east-west artery that runs right through the heart of the Plateau. Enjoy a stroll from Park Avenue going east towards St Denis with Olympic Stadium towering high in the distance. As your tour of Mont Royal Avenue unfolds, you'll discover a street full of specialty gourmet shops, great dining for any time of day, and some really unique boutiques.

Notable stops include: La Fromagerie Hamel (2117 Mont Royal Ave E) which offers 250 varieties of cheeses from around the world as well as cold cuts. Oka cheese is a local specialty. Next, Boulangerie Les Co'pains d'abord (1965 Mont Royal Ave E) is a busy, cozy cafe/pastry shop. On the shopping list: fresh baked baguette and mouth-watering chocolate almond croissant. One last stop is Saum-Mom (1318 Mont Royal Ave E), for smoked salmon dip in a variety of flavors. You can always hop on the 97 Bus if your feet tire out before your tour ends.

Atwater Market (138 Atwater Ave) is a bustling food market and known landmark full of good taste located just southwest of downtown in the St. Henri neighborhood. It's a short walk from Atwater Metro station. The building has a decidedly Art Deco look. Here you can stroll along the vendors who sell everything from fruit and flowers, cheese to chocolate. The best pizza in town, by the slice or the pie, belongs to Pizz'ancora on the market's ground floor.

From Atwater Market, travel east along Notre Dame Street, home to Montréal's Antique Alley, where you'll find dozens of antiques shops as far as the eye can see. Stores of note include Retro-Ville (2652 Notre Dame St W) offering a nostalgic trip back through time full of toys, tins, and advertising collectibles. Deuxiement (1880 Notre Dame St W) is a curiosity shop that's packed to the rafters. You can't buy there but can rent or browse.

At the end of a long day of shopping, make your way back to the hotel and rest up--the night is just beginning...

Dining Out

Breakfast Options

- La Petite Ardoise, 222, ave. Laurier O, Tél. (514) 495-4961
French/Bistro/Breakfast/Cafe - Coffee Shop located in the Mile End neighborhood. La Petite Ardoise is a friendly and welcoming place. During the summer months, sliding doors open onto a spacious terrace. The decor is composed of bricks and light colored wood creating an atmosphere typical of a French bistro. The menu is written on a blackboard (hence the name *Ardoise*). And to complete the Parisian look, there are also empty window frames decorated with flowers throughout the restaurant. Breakfast is served until 11:30 am, while weekend brunch is available until mid-afternoon.
- La Croissanterie Figaro, 5200, rue Hutchison, Tél. (514) 278-6567
Located at the corner of Fairmount and Hutchison, La Croissanterie Figaro has been known for many years for its warm and enchanting decor, as well as for its exquisite service and menu. Whether it's for a good coffee or a drink, a delicious meal or simply to take a little break, le

Figaro is without a doubt the place of choice for a relaxing time that will give you the impression of being in a pretty little *coin perdu de Paris* (forgotten corner of Paris)!

Montréal's dinner scene is extensive; the city boasts over 5000 restaurants.

Boulevard St Laurent Restaurants (Old Montréal)

- Boulevard St Laurent (between Sherbrooke and Pine Avenue) is lined with trendy shops and restaurants, and is the site of many street fairs and festivals.
- Maestro S.V.P, 3615, boul. St - Laurent, Tél. 514.842.6447 Seafood/Market/Tapas
- B Med Grill, 3500, boul. St - Laurent, Tél. 514.844.0027, Mediterranean/Californian
- Primadonna, 3479, boul. St - Laurent, Tél. 514.282.6644, Italian/Japanese/Sushi
- Globe, 3455, boul. St - Laurent, Tél. 514.284.3823, Market/Seafood/Grill
- Buonanotte, 3518, boul. St - Laurent, Tél. 514.848.0644, Italian

Boulevard St Denis Restaurants

Saint-Denis (between Ste Catherine and Mont Royal streets) serves as one of the primary thoroughfares of both the Latin Quarter, where it plays host to a number of bars and restaurants, to the Plateau MontRoyal, where it is known as one of the best places to view Montréal's distinct style of architecture.

- L'Express, 3927 St - Denis, Tél.: 514-845-5333 Specialites: Tartare, Salmon, Duck
- Unpretentious: Great French bistro cooking. Steak and frites, fresh market vegetables (fiddleheads in a bacon, mushroom, and cheese sauce in season), lobster morels and scallops, a rich duck foie gras, a simple green salad with roasted pine nuts. This is not to say that L'Express offers the best French cooking in the city. That is not a function of bistros. This is satisfying, extremely well prepared French food, moderately priced. Reservations recommended.
- Bistro Cocagne, 3842, rue St - Denis, Tél. 514-286-0700: Another great French Bistro.
- Casa Tapas, 266, rue Rachel E (near Rue St - Denis), Tél. 514-848-1063: Spanish/Seafood/Tapas

Other Dinner Options

Aix Cuisine du Terroir: www.aixcuisine.com

Da Emma : 777, rue de la Commune O corner King

Gibby's : 298, Place d'Youville corner Du Port

Bonaparte : 443, rue St. François-Xavier corner De L'Hopital

Other Activities/Places of Interest

The Montréal Casino (1 Ave du Casino) promises excitement any time of the day or night (and is open 24/7). The casino features all the gambling staples: slots, gaming tables, keno, and blackjack. Don't miss an opportunity to dine at its Mobil Three-Star Nuances Restaurant, a stylish modern bistro located within the casino building. The upscale menu features exquisitely updated French cuisine assembled from nature's best seasonal products. You can try the popular salmon fume with potato galette and herbed cream or baked loin of lamb.

Theatre

At night take in an English-language play at the Centaur Theatre (453 Saint François-Xavier St) in Old Montréal. This innovative regional Canadian theater features six English-language

productions annually, with many original premieres of talented local playwrights and special performances and events.

One of the best-kept English theatre secrets in town is the Leanor and Alvin Segal Theatre in the Saidye Bronfman Center for the Arts (5170 Ch De La Cote Saint Catherine). It's an intimate theatre space with only about 400 seats, but the plays and performances consistently wow Montréal audiences. Before or after the performance or even during intermission, visit the adjoining Liane and Danny Taran Gallery (5170 Chemin de la Cote Saint Catherine) for a small, but unique contemporary art experience.

Adventure

First up is Saute Moutons (514-284-9607), the Saint Lawrence River's wet and wild jet boat ride. Saute Moutons is a flat-bottomed boat that travels through the shallow Lachine Rapids, 15 minutes from downtown. The result when passing through these rapids is a tidal wave that cascades over the entire boat. It's a full-bodied baptism accompanied by shrieks of laughter and giddy screams. Reservations are a must. Bring sunscreen and a change of clothes.

Jean Drapeau Park is a great place to get moving. You can explore the park by bike, in-line skate, or just take a hike. Water sports fun includes kayaking, sail boating, canoeing, windsurfing, and paddleboat rentals. You can also swim in the recently renovated public pool or the beach that filters water from the Saint Lawrence River.