



Québec

Includes ➔

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Montréal | 229 |
| The Laurentians.... | 259 |
| Québec City | 271 |
| Charlevoix..... | 291 |
| Saguenay | 297 |
| Tadoussac..... | 297 |
| South Shore | 302 |
| Gaspé Peninsula ... | 307 |
| North Shore | 317 |
| Îles de la Madeleine | 321 |
| Far North..... | 324 |

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ L'Express (p250)
- ➔ Le Lapin Sauté (p283)
- ➔ Manoir Hovey (p268)
- ➔ Vices Versa (p295)
- ➔ sEb (p262)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Auberge Saint-Antoine (p282)
- ➔ Hôtel Gault (p247)
- ➔ Maison Historique James Thompson (p280)
- ➔ Hôtel Le Germain (p247)

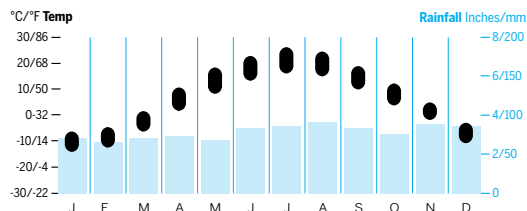
Why Go?

Once an outpost of Catholic conservatism, an isolated island of *francophonie* languishing in a sea of anglo culture, Québec has finally come into its own and has crafted a rich, spirited culture independent of its European motherland. The people of Québec are vibrant and inviting and the province is strewn with colorful Victorian facades, lush rolling hills and romantic bistros.

Montréal and Québec City are bustling metropolises with a perfect mixture of sophistication and playfulness, and history-soaked preserved quarters tucked away around town. The rustic allurements of old Québec are scattered among the Eastern Townships, and produce from bucolic Charlevoix graces the tables of the region's stellar restaurants. The Laurentians abound with ski resorts and peaks, while the jagged coasts of the unblemished Gaspé Peninsula and the cliffs soaring high above the Saguenay River are equally as breathtaking.

When to Go

Montréal



Dec & Jan
Head to Mont-Tremblant – one of North America's best ski hills.

Feb Bundle up and join in the frigid festivities in Québec City's fete of the year, Carnaval.

Jul Montréal's summer-long party gets under way with the Festival International de Jazz.

QUÉBEC À PIED

If you're visiting either Montréal or Québec City, consider leaving the car at home. Unlike other North American cities, Québec's metropolises are European in design – easily navigated on foot, with bustling sidewalks lined with outdoor cafes.

Fast Facts

- Population: 7,870,000
- Area: 1,540,687 sq km
- Capital: Québec City
- Quirky fact: the Château Frontenac in Québec City is the most photographed hotel in the world

Québec Creations

- Birthplace of: Trivial Pursuit, AM radio, Ski-Doo snowmobile, Plexiglas
- Home of: Leonard Cohen, Norm MacDonald, William Shatner, Jacques Villeneuve, Rufus Wainwright
- Kitschiest souvenir: cow-shaped maple syrup lollipops

Resources

- Montréal Lifestyle: www.cultmontreal.com
- Tourism Montréal: www.tourisme-montreal.org
- Tourism Québec: www.bonjourquebec.com
- Tourism Québec City: www.quebecregion.com

Local Culture

Quebecers are passionate folks; just bring up the subject of separatism if you're keen to test the theory. Life here is sipped slowly, like the strong, rich coffee, which is often accompanied by a *chocolatine* (chocolate croissant) and engaging conversation with friends or family.

The Québécois drink more alcohol than the average Canadian, and predominantly liberal views contribute to a laid-back atmosphere that feeds an effervescent nightlife in Montréal and Québec City. On weekend evenings, city streets are often packed with pedestrians well into the early hours of the morning.

QUÉBEC ITINERARIES

One Day

Start with brunch in Montréal at **L'Express** and work the calories off on a hike up **Parc du Mont Royal**. Descend through **Mile End** or the **Plateau Mont-Royal**, where you'll be spoiled for choice for dinner and drinks.

Three Days

Limit your time savoring **Montréal's** chilled-out vibe to one day, and then drive through the Laurentians to **Mont-Tremblant**. Leave a day to stroll within **Québec City's** walls in the **Old Upper Town**, before searching for the ultimate table d'hôte in the **Old Lower Town**.

Seven Days

Follow the three-day itinerary, then ramble through **Charlevoix** en route to the **Saguenay River** for two days. Stop for lunch in **Baie St-Paul** or **La Malbaie**. Spend the last two nights in welcoming **Tadoussac**, whale-watching or cruising the fjord.

Québec's Comfort Foods

- **Poutine** French fries, gravy and squeaky cheese curds – what's not to like?
- **Café au lait** Dark French-roast coffee served with steamed milk, usually in a bowl-shaped mug. A perfect accompaniment to a flaky, buttery croissant.
- **Bagel** The quintessential Montréal bagel is smaller, denser and sweeter than its New York counterpart. The secret is that it's hand-rolled and boiled in honey water before being baked in a wood-fired oven.
- **Maple syrup** Hit a sugar shack in February or March and try this staple slathered over sausages or drizzled on pancakes.
- **Tourtière** This hearty meat pie makes an appearance at Christmas time; at other times of the year it's called *pâté à la viande*.