

Understand Montréal & Québec City

MONTRÉAL TODAY212

As Montréal anticipates its 375th birthday, the city is coming into its own and building boldly towards the future.

HISTORY 214

Montréal's fascinating backstory stretches from early fur trading days to its modern incarnation as French Canada's most vibrant metropolis.

PEOPLE & CULTURE221

From language to fashion to hockey, Montréal exhibits a unique cultural flair that's unparalleled elsewhere in North America.

MUSIC & THE ARTS 224

Creative to its core, Montréal has a burgeoning film industry, world-class festivals and a solid public commitment to the arts.

ARCHITECTURE 229

Montréal has plenty of architectural icons to feast your eyes on, from the 19th-century Basilique Notre-Dame to its colorful Victorian mansions.

QUÉBEC CITY HISTORY & CULTURE 233

How did a decisive battle between the French and British shape the future of Canada?

Montréal Today

With the approach of its 375th anniversary in 2017, Montréal is preparing to strut its stuff for an international audience. Numerous urban redevelopment projects are underway, including new recreation and performing arts venues, pedestrian-friendly public spaces and revamped infrastructure. There's also a new energy in Montréal politics, as first-term mayor Denis Coderre strives to heal past scars from partisanship and corruption.

Best on Film

The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz

(1974) Mordecai Richler's timeless story of a Jewish upbringing.

Jesus of Montreal

(1989) A prizewinning take on Montréal and Catholicism.

Incendies (2010) Two siblings confront the mystery of their mother's past.

Funkytown (2011) Bilingual film set against the backdrop of Montréal's 1970s club scene and the burgeoning secession movement.

Best in Print

Two Solitudes

(Hugh MacLennan; 1945) One man's struggles with his English- and French-Canadian background.

The Tin Flute

(Gabrielle Roy; 1947) A waitress looks for love in the slums of St-Henri.

How to Make Love to a Negro Without Getting Tired

(Dany Laferrière; 1985) Provocative debut novel from this Haitian-Québécois author.

Barney's Version

(Mordecai Richler; 1997) Richler's acclaimed murder mystery, told by a pair of less-than-reliable narrators.

Gearing Up for a Birthday Bash

Get ready for a big party. Montréal has a triple whammy of anniversary celebrations coming up in 2017: the 375th anniversary of the city's founding, the 150th anniversary of the Canadian Confederation and the 50th anniversary of Expo '67, the World's Fair that focused major international attention on Montréal back in the sixties. Perhaps the biggest promoter of the 2017 festivities is Montréal's new mayor Denis Coderre, whose efforts have included a personal visit to the Vatican to invite Pope Francis to attend!

To mark the occasion, Montréal has unveiled an ambitious series of projects designed to spur economic growth, improve locals' quality of life and attract visitors by showcasing the city's rich history, cultural diversity and artistic creativity.

History takes center stage on the brand-new Promenade Urbaine Fleuve-Montagne, a pedestrian route connecting the St Lawrence River and the slopes of Mont-Royal. Plaques along the route will invite both locals and visitors to contemplate the impact of geography in shaping Montréal's history and culture.

Other initiatives invite visitors to get out and explore the city's outdoor spaces. A brand-new open-air rink at Esplanade Clark will welcome skaters in winter and double as a public square in summer. Across the river, Parc Jean-Drapeau is getting spruced up with a panoramic riverside promenade and a new amphitheatre on Île Ste-Hélène designed to host major shows and festivals year-round. A slew of other new construction is in the works.

As always, Montréal loves any excuse for a good party, so you can expect to see a full lineup of events emerging as the date draws near; see the official 375th anniversary website (www.375mtl.com) for details.