

Overview of Quebec

The huge province of Quebec occupies the eastern part of Canada. It is fringed by coasts on the North Atlantic, Hudson and James Bays, as well as the Lawrence Seaway, the major shipping channel of the east coast that cuts through the south of the province. The main cities of Montreal and Quebec City are both situated in the more populated south on the banks of the St Lawrence River.

The province has a wide variety of landscapes, climatic regions and vegetation, and therefore a vast variety of tourist attractions, scenic routes and holiday getaways to offer travellers. The wilderness prevails in the most northerly reaches, with thick forests and clear lakes dominating the landscape.

This in turn gives way to the snowy mountains of the Laurentians, which is popular resort country, while down south lies the urban sprawl of Canada's French-speaking cities and the rolling pastures of the farmlands. Quebec has 22 national parks and a variety of stunningly beautiful natural landmarks, including Montmorency Falls outside of Quebec City and the Gaspé Peninsula on the St Lawrence River.

Quebec has a uniquely French flavour, remaining the only North American region to preserve its Francophone identity. In Quebec, French is the official language and is spoken by more than 80 percent of the population.

For decades the province has been dogged by political battles regarding secession, but moves to turn Quebec into a sovereign state have been put on the back burner in favour of concentrating on economic development.

Key Facts

Language:

The official languages are English and French (spoken predominantly in Quebec).

Passport/Visa:

All visitors must hold a valid passport, and it's recommended that passports always be valid for six months after the intended period of travel. Visitors are required to hold onward or return tickets, all documents needed for the next destination and sufficient funds to cover the period of intended stay. Travellers from most visa-exempt countries arriving in Canada by air need to fill in an Electronic Travel Authorisation (eTA) form online prior to visiting Canada. This requirement is applicable to all but U.S citizens and travellers with a valid Canadian visa. Canadian citizens, including dual citizens, and Canadian permanent residents cannot apply for an eTA. As part of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), all travellers travelling between the United States and Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, and the Caribbean region are required to present a passport or other valid travel documents to enter or re-enter the United States. If departing from the USA a valid passport will be required by immigration authorities.

Currency:

The currency used is the Canadian dollar (CAD). Banks and bureaux de change will change cash, as will some hotels. Major credit cards are widely accepted and ATMs are widespread. US dollars are widely accepted.

Electricity:

Electrical current is 120 volts, 60Hz. American-style flat two-pin plugs and a plug with a third round grounding pin are standard.

Travel to Quebec

Climate for Quebec

Covering such a huge area, the climate of Quebec has wide temperature variations. In the south, where most of the population lives, the weather is continental, with four seasons varying from hot summers (June to August) to cold, snowy winters and lots of rain.

The central region has longer, colder winters and shorter, cooler summers, while the far north experiences a severe Arctic climate with a freezing winter and permafrost. Winter can vary from five months in the south to eight months in the north, averaging between 14°F (-10°C) and -13°F (-25°C).

Health Notes when travelling to Canada

Travellers should be up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines before traveling to Canada, and should consider taking routine vaccines as a standard precaution. Medical care is excellent but expensive, so medical insurance is advised.

Safety Notes when travelling to Canada

While most visits to Canada are trouble-free, the country does share the common international risk of terrorism. The crime rate is low but travellers are advised to take sensible precautions to safeguard their belongings, as they would anywhere. Parts of Canada are prone to tornadoes between May and September.

Customs in Canada

Rowdiness and loud speech are inappropriate except under special circumstances or in places such as bars, as Canadians tend to be soft spoken, patient and almost apologetic in their public behaviour. They are generally tolerant of the complex network of cultural differences in public behaviour, particularly in cities where such diversity is more common place. Recreational cannabis is legally available throughout Canada, though local laws can vary depending on the province or territory travellers are visiting.

Duty Free in Canada

Travellers to Canada are allowed to enter the country with the following items without incurring custom duties: gifts to the value of C\$60 per recipient (excluding advertising material, tobacco and alcoholic beverages); 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars or cigarillos and 200g of tobacco or 200 tobacco sticks; 1.14 litres of liquor or wine or 24 x 355ml bottles or cans of beer or ale. There are strict regulations governing the import of the following: explosives, endangered animal and plant species, items of heritage, fresh foodstuffs and weapons.

Doing Business in Canada

Vancouver, Toronto, Calgary, and Montreal are the main business centres, and English is the language of business except in French-speaking Quebec, where all written material and business cards should be in French. Business cards are not traditionally exchanged during an initial meeting, but at some appropriate time thereafter; it is best to wait for the host to offer theirs first.

A firm handshake is used by way of greeting and punctuality should be taken seriously for meetings. Canadians dress conservatively and smartly for business and suits are the norm. Gifts can be given in conclusion to celebrate a deal, but should be understated; taking someone out for a meal is a popular way to conclude business dealings.

Canadians are reserved and frown on emotional outbursts. Business is based on facts and figures rather than relationships, so it is best to be as prepared as possible for meetings. Hours of business are usually 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Communication in Canada

The international access code for Canada is +1. The outgoing code is 011 followed by the relevant country code. The outgoing code is not necessary for calls to the US and the Caribbean. Hotels, cafes and restaurants offering free WiFi are widely available. As international roaming costs can be high, purchasing a local prepaid SIM card can be a cheaper option.

Tipping in Canada

A tip of around 15 percent is standard in restaurants, and hairdressers and taxi drivers are usually tipped at the same rate. Bellhops, doormen, porters, and similar service providers at hotels, airports, and stations are generally paid at the customer's discretion.

Passport/Visa Note

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Airports in Quebec

Montréal-Trudeau Airport (YUL)

Montreal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport

www.admtl.com

Location: The airport is located 12 miles (20km) west of Montreal.

Time: GMT -5 (GMT -4 from the second Sunday in March to the first Sunday in November).

Contacts: Tel: +1 514 633 3333

Getting to the city: The 747 Express is an airport bus service, taking passengers into the centre of Montreal and to the major downtown hotels. A shuttle takes people from the airport to the train station, while there are also hotels shuttles and regional shuttles. Uber and taxi services are available as well.

Car rental: Alamo, Avis, Budget, Dollar, Enterprise, Hertz, National, and Thrifty are represented on site.

Airport Taxis: Metered taxis are readily available and can be found waiting outside the baggage reclaim area on the ground level. There are also Uber services available.

Facilities: The Departures Level offers ATMs and bureaux de change, as well as duty-free and other shops. A variety of restaurants, bars, and cafes are available on both levels and WiFi access is available from anywhere in the terminal. Business facilities are available in the VIP lounges. Disabled travellers are well catered for and passengers with special needs should contact their airline in advance.

Parking: The airport offers several parking options, which include short-term, long-term, and indoor.

Quebec City Airport (YQB)

Quebec City Jean Lesage International Airport

www.aeroportdequebec.com

Location: Quebec City The airport is located seven miles (11km) southwest of Quebec City.

Time: GMT -5 (GMT -4 from the second Sunday in March to the first Sunday in November).

Getting to the city: The Réseau du Transport de la Capitale (RTC) offers bus service along Route 80 from the airport to Les Saules bus terminal, operating Monday to Friday. Uber is also available.

Car rental: Car rental companies are located on the main floor of the administrative building, and include Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Hertz, and National.

Airport Taxis: Taxis are available at the information desk inside the terminal, or by prior booking. Uber is also available.

Facilities: Airport facilities include souvenir and duty-free shops, bars and restaurants, coat check and storage lockers, a VIP lounge, an information booth, a children's play area, a nursing room, currency exchange and ATMs.

Parking: The parking area is located directly in front of the terminal. A number of parking spaces near the entrance are reserved for people with reduced mobility.

Montreal

French-speaking Montreal is romantic and elegant, and those who choose to holiday in the city generally come for its music, art and joie de vivre. This charming metro has plenty to see and do with regards to culture, and those who plan to travel to Montreal can check out a full calendar of events and enjoy the many plays, ballets and concerts that spice up the entertainment scene year round. Montreal has also earned its reputation as a great destination for foodies, and boasts an extremely energetic nightlife.

Montreal was founded as a missionary village in 1642, a century after Jacques Cartier became the first European to discover the area. Despite some undeniably English architectural and cultural influences, Montreal is today one of the world's largest French-speaking cities on an overwhelmingly English-speaking continent. A metropolis of international repute, this large inland port is framed between Mont Royal and the St Lawrence River.

It's located in the south of Canada's Quebec province, only 37 miles (60km) from the United States border, and is an important hub of North American trade. It is a spacious and captivating city, characterised by a series of underground shopping and recreation complexes linked by walkways, and the metro. It contains more than 18.5 miles (30km) of office and apartment complexes, major stores, hotels, restaurants, metro stations, parking garages, movie theatres, concert halls and more, all snugly accessible during the snowy winters.

Its population is a multicultural mix that has fostered a vibrant cultural life, showcased in a number of world-class art galleries and museums. Like most Canadian cities, Montreal has interspersed urban development with green areas, the most celebrated of which is the spacious Parc du Mont-Royal, designed by Frederic Olmsted, the American landscape artist who also designed Central Park in New York. The city boasts countless other attractions to visitors all year round, but tourists do tend to avoid the freezing winter months.

Getting around in Montreal

Montreal's sensible layout combined with an extensive and super-efficient public transport system (metro, bus and commuter rail services) make getting around the city easy. In fair weather, hundreds of kilometres of bike paths spanning the island offer a healthier, pleasant option.

Public transport is run by the Montreal Transport Society, or STM. The pristine metro has dozens of stations along four different lines with numerous stops in the city's famous subterranean mall. The metro stops are all integrated with a comprehensive network of city bus routes. Most metro services and buses run between 5.30am and 1am, with a limited night bus service filling in. The inner city services in turn connect to a commuter rail network that serves the suburbs.

Fares are standard on both the bus and metro and transfers are free; a tourist pass is available for bus and metro. Metered taxis can be hailed in the streets downtown or ordered in advance. There are numerous car rental firms in the city, but roads are often heavily congested and traffic jams are common.

Nightlife in Montreal

Ever since it earned its nickname of 'Sin City' during the country's era of prohibition, Montreal's nightlife gained a wild reputation throughout the 20th century. Even today, it's arguably home to the hottest nightlife in Canada.

One of the best areas for a night out is Saint-Laurent, with fashionable clubs and bars that are constantly being reinvented. Crescent is a popular area with those who prefer a chilled evening and is a regular choice for couples and diners.

The Latin Quarter also has a lively party scene, attracting students and tourists in substantial numbers during the summer months when the good times spill into the streets. The Gay Village is a lively cocktail of charming cafes and vibrant nightclubs, boasting some of the most raucous nightlife among both gay and straight crowds.

Bars in Montreal close around 3am. Clubs tend to open late and close around dawn. Entrance fees are usually charged but these can be avoided by calling ahead and talking your way onto the guest lists, which is not nearly as hard as it sounds.

Be aware that Montreal has some fairly advanced public health regulations that mean smoking cigarettes in bars or even near them is strictly forbidden. Do so at the risk of a fine. A drawcard for visiting young Americans is the legal drinking age of 18, as opposed to 21 across the border.

Montreal also offers loads of culture, boasting its own symphony orchestra, dozens of theatres and countless venues for live music concerts, ranging from intimate clubs to international arena tours.

Dining in Montreal

Montreal is predictably and deservedly famous for its French cuisine and is home to a number of glorious French restaurants and bistros. While Quebec's signature dish is a pile of fries, gravy and cheese curds called poutine, classics such as bagels and croissants remain ever popular in the city.

Old Montreal is naturally the main tourist district and many quality restaurants can be found along its narrow streets, but downtown also boasts a bustling culinary scene. Boulevard Saint-Laurent (La Main to locals) splits the city into eastern and western sections and is one of the best streets for eating out in Montreal.

Another good stomping ground for grazing travellers is Plateau Mont-Royal, a gourmet paradise of restaurants, bakeries and snack stalls. For a break from French-style cuisine, and good budget options, take a stroll through Montreal's Chinatown, of which Rue de la Gauchetiere is the main pedestrianised strip.

Foodies who want to explore the fresh produce scene in Montreal should visit either the celebrated Marche Jean Talon or the smaller Marche Atwater to browse the stalls; both markets are sure to delight serious gourmands.

Le Club Chasse et Peche — \$\$\$\$

French

One of the most highly rated restaurants in Montreal and a multi-award winner with the local press, Le Club Chasse et Peche is a great option for a special occasion. Known as CCP, this eatery has reinvented 'surf 'n turf' with mouth-watering Kobe beef and lobster tail.

The décor enhances the dining experience with low ceilings fostering an intimate atmosphere while the chic décor further suggests that this is a truly special dining experience. The restaurant is open for lunch, Monday to Friday from 11:30 to 2:30pm, and for dinner Tuesday to Saturday from 6pm to 10.30pm.

423 St-Claude
Montreal, Canada

www.leclubchasseetpeche.com

La Chronique — \$\$\$

French

For a taste of Montreal's rural surrounds, La Chronique is a highly regarded eatery that exclusively uses fresh local ingredients in its modern French cuisine with interesting Mediterranean and Southwestern touches. The décor is centred on dark wood and red hues framed with black and white photographs, and the wine list, exceeding 250 titles, can be ordered by the glass or bottle.

99 Laurier West
Montreal, Canada

www.lachronique.qc.ca

Reservoir — \$\$

International

Although a microbrewery, Réservoir is developing a name as the best value restaurant in the city, combining perfectly fresh ingredients with inventive recipes from the fertile imagination of founding Chef Samuel Pinard.

The brunch has been described by one critic as 'the most interesting (and for my money, the best) brunch experience in town'. The evenings are naturally a bit lively but this in no way detracts from the dining experience.

9 Duluth E.
Montreal, Canada

www.brasserieservoir.ca

L'Express — \$\$

French

It would be remiss to list Montreal eateries without mentioning the one best known in cinema and literature: L'Express, Montreal's beloved brasserie. The eatery has handwritten menus in the style of Parisian sidewalk cafes with similar décor and serving staff attitude.

The noise reaches epic proportions when the premises is full but the food, decent prices, and all-you-can-eat pickles and baguettes makes this an essential experience for visitors to Montreal. Open weekdays 8am-2am; Saturdays 10am-2am; and Sundays 10am-1am.

3927 Rue St. Denis
Montreal, Canada

restaurantlexpress.com/en/

Jun I — \$\$\$

Japanese

Montreal does not have a great reputation for sushi, a sore point for maki-addicted and sashimi-fixated locals. Thank goodness then for Jun I, which flies the flag high for high-quality authentic Japanese sushi. Chef Junichi Ikematsu has developed an interesting menu based on fresh local fish, exotic rolls, and flawless nigiri, all complemented by a fine range of sake.

156 Laurier W.
Montreal, Canada

www.restomontreal.ca/en/1473/Jun-I-Restaurant

Shopping in Montreal

Montreal is one of those rare international cities where shopping actually enhances one's experience of the destination. Rather than kitsch souvenirs from plastic chain stores, the shopping in Montreal is as cultured and glamorous as any other aspect of the city.

Not only does Montreal have boutiques and organic markets in equal measure, but it is the world's only underground city in which to shop. For those who pay Montreal a visit during winter, this subterranean retail experience will be a welcome refuge from the icy gloom above and a highlight of their trip. The Underground City has more than 20 miles (30km) of passageways connecting all the Montreal Metros with around 1,600 little boutiques, 200 restaurants and 34 cinemas. Over 500,000 local people use the underground city every day, so we'd recommend visitors plan their shopping excursion during office hours when it is much quieter.

Montreal's two best markets are at opposite ends of the city. Marché Jean-Talon is an enormous open-air market selling high-quality goods, including fresh and organic maple syrup which one can buy by the litre, perfect as an authentic Quebec gift for sweet-toothed friends back home. Marché Atwater is another good option, with wonderful baked goods, artisanal breads and other fresh produce on offer.

The best Montreal shopping districts are Avenue Laurier Ouest, a centre of designer boutiques and foodie stores; Cours Mont-Royal for its haute couture and fashion accessories; and Ste-Catherine Street, which boasts an array of trendy stores. The iconic shopping centre Faubourg Ste-Catherine is also nearby.

For unique Montreal gifts, don't miss the Canadian Guild of Crafts Québec, which sells aboriginal art and local artisan works. This is a good place to pick up classic Canadian souvenirs such as furs and Native American crafts like dream weavers, polished stone jewellery, leather goods and musical instruments. Another must is Marché Bonsecours in Old Montreal, which has an eclectic and interesting range of shops well worth visiting.

Climate in Montreal

With predominantly wet, warm summers and cold, snowy winters, the humid continental climate of Montreal is varied and seasonal. In winter (December to February), snowfall is abundant and common both in spring and autumn. Temperatures well below freezing are experienced in winter, with average low temperatures dropping to 7°F (-14°C) in January, and the bitter weather exacerbated by wind chill.

Summer (June to August) brings sunshine and pleasant days, with high humidity on occasion, although highs seldom exceed 86°F (30°C). Rain can be expected any time of year in Montreal, but summer tends to be the wettest season. A feature of the climate of Montreal is the possibility of late autumn heatwaves, enjoyed as 'Indian summers', which frequently occur.

Sightseeing in Montreal

Despite its harsh winters, Montreal is in fact a year-round destination and travellers will be able to enjoy the bustling city's attractions and festivities no matter the season. Whether visitors enjoy outdoor sports or a trip to the opera, there are plenty of things to see and do in Montreal.

Check out Olympic Park, which hosts baseball games and concerts, or visit Old Montreal which contains beautiful historical buildings dating from the 17th to 19th centuries, as well as a few museums. The nearby old port (Vieux Port de Montréal) is a popular place for tourists as it features a huge open-air skating rink, IMAX cinema, plenty of restaurants and cafes, and a Science and Technology Center. Many tourists also take boat tours from here and a good option is to take a ferry ride across to the Parc des Îles, where the 1967 World's Fair site offers facilities for picnicking, swimming, skating or skiing in winter.

The dome of St Joseph's Oratory, visible on the flank of Mont Royal from miles away, is a famous pilgrimage site attracting more than two million visitors each year. In downtown Montreal, several blocks are connected by 18 miles (30km) of underground arcades and malls, where shoppers will be able to enjoy enclosed walking areas and great shopping opportunities, even during inclement weather. Visitors should purchase the STM Tourist Card which allows unlimited access to the bus and metro service for either one or three consecutive days.

Montreal Attractions

Olympic Park

Built for the 1976 Olympics, the futuristic Olympic Park is now a district in Montreal. It was designed by French architect Roger Tallibert, and is impressive in both size and shape, able to accommodate up to 80,000 spectators for concerts and baseball games. Standing at 575 feet (175m), its landmark tower is the world's tallest inclined tower, providing spectacular views over Montreal from its observation floors. Visitors may even be tempted to visit the lush Botanical Gardens across the street, one of the largest of its kind in the world and boasting a wide, celebrated collection.

Address: 4141 Pierre-De Coubertin Avenue

Website: www.rio.gouv.qc.ca

St Joseph's Oratory

St Joseph's Oratory is a regal Montreal landmark, its imposing dome on the flank of Mount Royal visible for miles. Attracting over two million visitors each year, the chapel is a famous pilgrimage site, despite only being built in 1967. Work began on the basilica in 1937 after the death of a beloved monk renowned for his miraculous healing abilities, with the dome eventually reaching an impressive 318 feet (97m) high. Its carillon is made up of 46 bells that were originally cast for the Eiffel Tower, but were acquired by the Oratory in 1956. Visitors can climb the 283 steps from street level to the basilica's portico for beautiful vistas of Montreal.

Address: 3800 Queen Mary Road

Website: www.saint-joseph.org

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

During the past 140 years, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts has assembled one of North America's finest encyclopaedic collections, totalling more than 30,000 objects. The collections include Canadian art, contemporary art, Inuit and Amerindian Art, European Masters, prints, drawings and decorative arts. The museum also regularly features special exhibitions and activity programmes for adults, students and children. Indeed, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts is one of the best of its kind in Canada and a treat for lovers of arts and culture.

Address: 1379-1380 Sherbrooke Street West

Website: www.mmfa.qc.ca

Montreal Botanical Garden

In close proximity to the Olympic Park, the Montreal Botanical Garden is one of the largest of its kind. Home to more than 22,000 plant species and roughly 30 exquisitely mapped out gardens, it's well worth a visit at any time of year. Begun in 1931 during a financial crisis, it provided jobs for thousands of unemployed workers and has since developed into a popular Montreal tourist attraction, with an astounding array of plants and trees. A slew of interesting sights and sounds await visitors, such as the Tree House, a Chinese Garden, the Quebec Butterfly House, a Medicinal Plant Garden, Planetarium and a First Nations Garden illustrating the interaction of Inuits and Amerindians with nature.

Address: 4101 Sherbrooke East Street

Website: www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/jardin

Events in Montreal

International Jazz Festival

Thursday June 25, 2020 to Saturday July 04, 2020 (25 June to 4 July 2020)

Where: Various

Montreal's annual jazz festival (Festival International de Jazz de Montreal) is one of the best and biggest in the world. Superstars of jazz, like Oscar Peterson, Ray Charles, Dave Brubeck, and Chuck Berry have featured on the annual programme.

Today, the jazz festival features 3,000 artists and hosts more than 650 concerts (the majority of which are free outdoor events) every year. The celebrated event attracts more than two million visitors, over 30 percent of which are tourists.

<http://www.montrealjazzfest.com>

Montreal High Lights Festival

Thursday February 20, 2020 to Sunday March 01, 2020 (20 February - 1 March 2020)

Where: Various

Montreal's lively 11-day midwinter festival is designed to bring some light and warmth into local lives and is said to be one of the largest winter festivals in the world. It is billed as three festivals in one, having gastronomic, musical, and artistic components.

There are more than 100 concerts scheduled, more than 200 culinary and wine events, and various shows and exhibitions, many of them free of charge. Fun outdoor winter activities are also organised for the whole family. The festival attracts nearly a million spectators and foodies in particular await the event eagerly.

<http://www.montrealhighlights.com>

Canadian F1 Grand Prix

Friday June 08, 2018 to Sunday June 10, 2018 (TBC 2020)

Where: Gilles Villeneuve Circuit

For more than a quarter of a century, the world's top racing drivers have been meeting at the demanding Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal to battle out an important race in the Formula One World Championship.

The circuit lies on Ile Notre-Dame, a man-made island in the St Lawrence River. It includes the notorious Bienvenue au Quebec wall, which is wryly known as the 'Wall of Champions' because of all the F1 superstars who have crashed into it. Locals support the event enthusiastically and many people travel to attend it.

<http://www.formula1.com>

Quebec City

Perched atop Cap Diamant (Cape Diamond) and overlooking the Saint Lawrence River, Quebec City was first settled by the French in 1608 and named for a native Algonquin word meaning 'where the river narrows'. The ambience, lively spirit, high safety rating and comfortable blend of past and present make Quebec's provincial capital worthy of its place among the world's top cultural destinations.

The cradle of French civilisation in North America and still notably European in spirit, the historic Old Quebec neighbourhood has an unmistakable charm. Small cafes, cosy restaurants, classy boutiques, lively terraces, elegant squares, theatres, museums and street performers all come together in a fascinating weave of old-world allure.

Millions of visitors are drawn to Quebec City every year, savouring the famed Quebec gourmet scene and the beauty of the historic old district's winding cobbled streets, where 17th and 18th-century stone houses, churches, parks and a number of monuments still stand. The city is included on UNESCO's World Heritage List and is one of the only fortified cities in the Americas.

Despite having been ceded to the British in 1759, the city's population remains 95 percent French-speaking, lending a definite joie de vivre and French elegance to the atmosphere.

Getting around in Quebec City

Walking is the easiest way to explore the compact Old City of Quebec, where most sightseeing opportunities are. Many visitors also enjoy hiring a bicycle and enjoying the city's system of cycle paths.

Public buses are run by the Réseau de Transport de la Capitale (RTC), operating throughout the week (there are a limited number of night buses at weekends). Tickets are bought upon boarding with exact change or in advance from newsagents, which is cheaper. Transfers are free within 90 minutes of a single journey. One-day passes can also be bought.

Taxis can be hired at the airport, ordered by telephone, or hailed in the street in the centre of the city. Various ride-sharing apps are also an option in Quebec City.

Climate in Quebec City

Summer is undoubtedly the most popular time to visit Quebec City. June, July, August, September, and October are the only months of the year when the city is sure to be free of snow, with the annual average snowfall measuring 14 feet (4m).

It has been known to snow right up to early May. Temperatures drop well below freezing from late November to early April (Autumn/Winter), averaging between 0°F (-18°C) and 17°F (-8°C) in January.

Summer days (June to August), by contrast, are usually pleasantly warm and sunny, ideal for outdoor activities, with average highs around 77°F (25°C). Summer nights can be cool though. The city usually revels in an 'Indian Summer' for a few weeks in early October, making autumn another popular season for visiting.

Sightseeing in Quebec City

Many interesting sights and tourist attractions are located in the Old Quebec district, including dozens of small shops, boutiques and attractive historical buildings. The more modern Upper Town and Lower Town also have interesting neighbourhoods.

Quebec City is compact and easily walkable. Visitors who get tired or can't navigate the steep stairs between Upper Town and Lower Town can take a scenic ride in the Funicular, or hire one of many horse-drawn carriages for a quaint mode of sightseeing.

Attractions include the National Museum of the Arts, the Franco-American Museum and the Capital Observatory, which is in one of the tallest buildings in Quebec. Visitors could also ferry across the St. Lawrence River to Lévis and enjoy memorable views of the Chateau Frontenac and the Old City. Sunset cruises on the Saint Lawrence River are a must.

Children may relish a trip to the Chocolate Museum or a spin around the Old City's ice rink, while Villages Vacances Valcartier has waterslides and go-karting in the summer. Just a few kilometres from downtown, the unspoilt wilderness areas surrounding Quebec City present plenty of opportunities for outdoor activities and recreation, such as horseback riding, canoeing, hiking and skiing.

Quebec City Attractions

Parliament Buildings

Just outside the old city walls stands the imposing 19th-century Parliament Building, inspired by the Louvre in Paris and designed by the architect, Eugène Étienne Taché. Although it is the working home of the 125-strong National Assembly, the buildings are open to visitors for free guided tours, which are offered in English or French, and highlight the historic value of the unique building as well as inform visitors about the organisation and proceedings of the Québec National Assembly. Tours should be booked in advance for groups of 10 or more. There is a restaurant and a gift shop at the Parliament Building.

Address: 1045 Parlementaires Road (visitor's entrance: Door 3 on the corner of Grande-Allée and Honoré-Mercier Avenue)

Website: www.assnat.qc.ca

Place Royale

The Place Royale is part of the Pointe-à-Callière Museum complex, along with Pointe-à-Callière and 214 Place d'Youville. Used for trading in ancient times by the First Nations, the site of the historical Place Royale became a fortified trading post in 1608 under French colonist Samuel de Champlain. Known as the market square, the site thrived until the end of the 19th century when its importance began to decline. But it was given a new lease on life under a government restoration programme, ensuring the site known as the 'birthplace of French America' turned into one of the city's main attractions.

Address: Interpretation Centre of Place-Royale, 27 Rue Notre-Dame

Website: www.mcq.org

Funicular

The funicular which travels from the heart of the Old City to Dufferin Terrace provides a panoramic bird's eye view of historic Quebec City. Leaving from Louis Jolliet House, the funicular has been an attraction since the original steam version was built in 1879. Claustrophobic visitors may not enjoy the trip up in the little compartments, but most will relish the views and novel mode of transport. The walk down from the Old City is pleasant and easy, but the hike up can be rather difficult. Many visitors choose to take the funicular up and walk back down.

Address: 16 Rue du Petit Champlain

Website: <https://www.quebecregion.com/en/businesses/attractions/tourist-sites/funiculaire-du-vieux-quebec/>

Fortifications

Guided walking tours of the three mile (5km) wall surrounding the Old City of Quebec trace the evolution of the city's defence system across three centuries. The walls were built between 1608 and 1871 as part of the fortifications in the area, which was the region's main colonial stronghold. The walls are set with interpretation panels and can be explored independently. Following the walls is a wonderful way to explore the old city and visitors will pass many interesting sights in the historic centre along the way, including the Esplanade Powder Magazine. Quebec is the only surviving fortified city in North America and has been designated a World Heritage City.

Address: 100 Rue Saint-Louis (tours depart from the Frontenac kiosk, Dufferin Terrace)

Website: www.pc.gc.ca/fortifications

Old Port of Montreal

The Old Port of Montreal along the Saint Lawrence River is actually fairly new, having undergone a big facelift to make it the most popular tourist spot in the city. A major 19th-century trade port, its wharves now mostly consist of tour boats, ferries and amphibious buses handling its roughly five million visitors each year. Ferries cross to the Parc Jean-Drapeau, site of the Expo 67 World's Fair, which lies on the Saint Lawrence and offers facilities for picnicking, swimming, and skating and skiing in winter.

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Address: 333 Rue de la Commune Ouest

Website: www.vieux.montreal.qc.ca

Battlefields Park (Plains of Abraham)

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Address: Discovery Pavilion, 835 Wilfrid-Laurier Avenue

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Montmorency Falls Park

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Address: Avenue Royale, Beauport

Website: www.sepaq.com/chutemontmorency

L'Île d'Orléans

The little island in the Saint Lawrence River, just 15 minutes from downtown Quebec City, is a historical treasure trove containing 600 heritage buildings. Algonquin natives called the island Windigo, meaning 'bewitched corner', before French colonists arrived in 1535 and named it for the Duke of Orleans. The island is the ancestral home of more than 300 Quebecois families and still has more than 7,000 inhabitants. A perimeter road called the Royal Way connects all the six villages on the island, extending across the Taschereau Bridge to the mainland. Visitors enjoy cycling or driving around the island to marvel at panoramic views of the river and explore sites such as the oldest church in New France.

Address: 9 miles (15 km) from Quebec City

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Lower Town (Basse-Ville)

Basse-Ville is Quebec City's charming old quarter, full of narrow winding streets, historical stone buildings and a dizzying array of trendy cafes, bars and boutiques. Also called Lower Town, it's the oldest urban district in Canada and exudes a distinctly European atmosphere. Recent gentrification of more dilapidated areas has resulted in postcard-perfect photo opportunities waiting on every corner. Lower Town is also home to many of the city's most celebrated sights and attractions, including the Place Royale, Petit Champlain and the must-see Funicular. The heart and soul of Old Quebec, Lower Town is a beguiling and enchanting neighbourhood, and visitors should anticipate spending a lot of time walking its streets and soaking up its unique atmosphere.

Address: On the banks of the St Lawrence River

Airports in Quebec City

Quebec City Airport (YQB)

Quebec City Jean Lesage International Airport

<http://www.aeroportdequebec.com>

Location: Quebec City The airport is located seven miles (11km) southwest of Quebec City.

Time: GMT -5 (GMT -4 from the second Sunday in March to the first Sunday in November).

Getting to the city: The Réseau du Transport de la Capitale (RTC) offers bus service along Route 80 from the airport to Les Saules bus terminal, operating Monday to Friday. Uber is also available.

Car rental: Car rental companies are located on the main floor of the administrative building, and include Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Hertz, and National.

Airport Taxis: Taxis are available at the information desk inside the terminal, or by prior booking. Uber is also available.

Facilities: Airport facilities include souvenir and duty-free shops, bars and restaurants, coat check and storage lockers, a VIP lounge, an information booth, a children's play area, a nursing room, currency exchange and ATMs.

Parking: The parking area is located directly in front of the terminal. A number of parking spaces near the entrance are reserved for people with reduced mobility.

Quebec Attractions

Overview

Exploring the historic fortifications and cobbled streets of Quebec City and the Vieux Port de Montreal will be a delight for history buffs. Keen travellers will be entranced by the rich, European feel of the province of Quebec and its distinctly French flavour.

Top urban attractions in Quebec's prime cities of Montreal and Quebec City include the Basilique Notre-Dame, a favourite landmark of Old Montreal; Quebec City's La Citadelle, the star-shaped fort looming above the St Lawrence River; Montreal's controversial Parc Olympique, which looks like a spaceship; and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

Quebec also lures travellers with a lovely variety of wilderness areas. There are four Canadian national parks in Quebec: Forillon National Park, La Mauricie National Park, Mingan Archipelago National Park Reserve and Saguenay-St Lawrence Marine Park.

There are even more protected areas outside of these conservation hubs. Known simply as provincial parks, they include such drawcards as the Laurentian Mountains in southern Quebec, which are a particularly popular playground for those in search of natural beauty and outdoor recreation.

Olympic Park

Built for the 1976 Olympics, the futuristic Olympic Park is now a district in Montreal. It was designed by French architect Roger Tallibert, and is impressive in both size and shape, able to accommodate up to 80,000 spectators for concerts and baseball games. Standing at 575 feet (175m), its landmark tower is the world's tallest inclined tower, providing spectacular views over Montreal from its observation floors. Visitors may even be tempted to visit the lush Botanical Gardens across the street, one of the largest of its kind in the world and boasting a wide, celebrated collection.

Address: 4141 Pierre-De Coubertin Avenue

Website: www.rio.gouv.qc.ca

St Joseph's Oratory

St Joseph's Oratory is a regal Montreal landmark, its imposing dome on the flank of Mount Royal visible for miles. Attracting over two million visitors each year, the chapel is a famous pilgrimage site, despite only being built in 1967. Work began on the basilica in 1937 after the death of a beloved monk renowned for his miraculous healing abilities, with the dome eventually reaching an impressive 318 feet (97m) high. Its carillon is made up of 46 bells that were originally cast for the Eiffel Tower, but were acquired by the Oratory in 1956. Visitors can climb the 283 steps from street level to the basilica's portico for beautiful vistas of Montreal.

Address: 3800 Queen Mary Road

Website: www.saint-joseph.org

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

During the past 140 years, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts has assembled one of North America's finest encyclopaedic collections, totalling more than 30,000 objects. The collections include Canadian art, contemporary art, Inuit and Amerindian Art, European Masters, prints, drawings and decorative arts. The museum also regularly features special exhibitions and activity programmes for adults, students and children. Indeed, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts is one of the best of its kind in Canada and a treat for lovers of arts and culture.

Address: 1379-1380 Sherbrooke Street West

Website: www.mmfa.qc.ca

Parliament Buildings

Just outside the old city walls stands the imposing 19th-century Parliament Building, inspired by the Louvre in Paris and designed by the architect, Eugène Étienne Taché. Although it is the working home of the 125-strong National Assembly, the buildings are open to visitors for free guided tours, which are offered in English or French, and highlight the historic value of the unique building as well as inform visitors about the organisation and proceedings of the Québec National Assembly. Tours should be booked in advance for groups of 10 or more. There is a restaurant and a gift shop at the Parliament Building.

Address: 1045 Parlementaires Road (visitor's entrance: Door 3 on the corner of Grande-Allée and Honoré-Mercier Avenue)

Website: www.assnat.qc.ca

Place Royale

The Place Royale is part of the Pointe-à-Callière Museum complex, along with Pointe-à-Callière and 214 Place d'Youville. Used for trading in ancient times by the First Nations, the site of the historical Place Royale became a fortified trading post in 1608 under French colonist Samuel de Champlain. Known as the market square, the site thrived until the end of the 19th century when its importance began to decline. But it was given a new lease on life under a government restoration programme, ensuring the site known as the 'birthplace of French America' turned into one of the city's main attractions.

Address: Interpretation Centre of Place-Royale, 27 Rue Notre-Dame

Website: www.mcq.org

Funicular

The funicular which travels from the heart of the Old City to Dufferin Terrace provides a panoramic bird's eye view of historic Quebec City. Leaving from Louis Jolliet House, the funicular has been an attraction since the original steam version was built in 1879. Claustrophobic visitors may not enjoy the trip up in the little compartments, but most will relish the views and novel mode of transport. The walk down from the Old City is pleasant and easy, but the hike up can be rather difficult. Many visitors choose to take the funicular up and walk back down.

Address: 16 Rue du Petit Champlain

Website: <https://www.quebecregion.com/en/businesses/attractions/tourist-sites/funiculaire-du-vieux-quebec/>

Fortifications

Guided walking tours of the three mile (5km) wall surrounding the Old City of Quebec trace the evolution of the city's defence system across three centuries. The walls were built between 1608 and 1871 as part of the fortifications in the area, which was the region's main colonial stronghold. The walls are set with interpretation panels and can be explored independently. Following the walls is a wonderful way to explore the old city and visitors will pass many interesting sights in the historic centre along the way, including the Esplanade Powder Magazine. Quebec is the only surviving fortified city in North America and has been designated a World Heritage City.

Address: 100 Rue Saint-Louis (tours depart from the Frontenac kiosk, Dufferin Terrace)

Website: www.pc.gc.ca/fortifications

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Website: <http://tourisme.iledorleans.com/en/>

Montreal Botanical Garden

In close proximity to the Olympic Park, the Montreal Botanical Garden is one of the largest of its kind. Home to more than 22,000 plant species and roughly 30 exquisitely mapped out gardens, it's well worth a visit at any time of year. Begun in 1931 during a financial crisis, it provided jobs for thousands of unemployed workers and has since developed into a popular Montreal tourist attraction, with an astounding array of plants and trees. A slew of interesting sights and sounds await visitors, such as the Tree House, a Chinese Garden, the Quebec Butterfly House, a Medicinal Plant Garden, Planetarium and a First Nations Garden illustrating the interaction of Inuits and Amerindians with nature.

Address: 4101 Sherbrooke East Street

Website: www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/jardin

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Currency

The currency used is the Canadian dollar (CAD). Banks and bureaux de change will change cash, as will some hotels. Major credit cards are widely accepted and ATMs are widespread. US dollars are widely accepted.

Exchange rate for 1 CAD - Canadian Dollar

0.00 BMD Bermudan Dollar	0.68 EUR Euro	0.73 USD U.S. Dollar	0.58 GBP U.K. Pound Sterling	111.95 JPY Japanese Yen	0.66 CHF Swiss Franc
1.11 AUD Australian Dollar	28.83 UAH Ukrainian Hryvnia	324.82 KZT Kazakhstani Tenge	68,104.49 LBP Lebanese Pound	3.55 LYD Libyan Dinar	5.02 BOB Bolivian Boliviano
0.00 NPR Nepalese Rupee	0.00 OMR Omani Rial	0.00 QAR Qatari Rial	0.99 SGD Singapore Dollar	7.92 SEK Swedish Krona	0.00 TTD Trinidad Tobago Dollar
0.00 VEF Venezuelan Bolivar	42.52 DOP Dominican Peso	0.00 HRK Croatian Kuna	12.41 MXN Mexican Peso	446.74 XOF West African CFA Franc	0.00 PGK Papua New Guinean kina
0.00 BSD Bahamian Dollar	0.00 FJD Fiji Dollar	0.00 HNL Honduran Lempira	97.95 DZD Algerian Dinar	0.00 MMK Myanma Kyat	0.00 BWP Botswana Pula
2.72 PEN Peruvian Nuevo Sol	686.67 CLP Chilean Peso	283.06 AMD Armenia Dram	17.04 CZK Czech Koruna	12.90 MDL Moldova Lei	102.36 ISK Icelandic Krona
9,206.75 UZS Uzbekistan Sum	2.72 ILS Israeli New Sheqel	0.52 JOD Jordanian Dinar	0.00 KWD Kuwaiti Dinar	27.92 UYU Uruguayan Peso	0.00 MUR Mauritian Rupee
0.00 NIO Nicaraguan Córdoba	7.96 NOK Norwegian Krone	2.95 PLN Polish Zloty	2.74 SAR Saudi Riyal	0.00 LKR Sri Lanka Rupee	26.92 THB Thai Baht
2.68 AED U.A.E Dirham	3.73 BRL Brazilian Real	3.39 RON Romanian New Leu	5.72 HKD Hong Kong Dollar	446.74 XAF Central African CFA Franc	18,589.76 VND Vietnamese Dong
642.71 ARS Argentine Peso	0.00 XCD East Caribbean Dollar	0.00 GTQ Guatemalan Quetzal	7.36 MAD Moroccan Dirham	0.00 BHD Bahrain Dinar	0.73 PAB Panamanian Balboa
1.24 AZN Azerbaijan Manat	2,868.33 COP Colombian Peso	64.70 KGS Kyrgyzstan Som	264.88 HUF Hungarian Forint	7.97 TJS Tajikistan Ruble	11,761.39 IDR Indonesian Rupiah
35.09 EGP Egyptian Pound	994.29 KRW South Korean Won	5,456.06 PYG Paraguayan Guaraní	3.47 MYR Malaysian Ringgit	371.94 CRC Costa Rican Colón	1.22 NZD New Zealand Dollar
203.32 PKR Pakistani Rupee	66.87 RUB Russian Rouble	13.54 ZAR South African Rand	2.29 TND Tunisian Dinar	0.00 BBD Barbadian Dollar	1.33 BGN Bulgarian Lev
23.66 TRY Turkish Lira	41.92 PHP Philippine Peso	23.64 TWD New Taiwan Dollar	852.33 NGN Nigerian Naira	0.00 XPF CFP Franc	0.00 GHS Ghanaian Cedi
0.00 JMD Jamaican Dollar	0.00 ANG Neth. Antillean Guilder	0.00 BND Brunei Dollar	79.69 RSD Serbian Dinar	5.30 CNY Chinese Yuan	5.08 DKK Danish Krone
2.55 TMT New Turkmenistan Manat	61.04 INR Indian Rupee				