

[Montreal] Top Five Places

Montreal, known as the gateway to Europe, is an intoxicating mosaic of cultures, people and languages. The result is a whirlpool of international festivals, gastronomic adventures, remarkable architecture and killer nightlife. Neil Swain, a Montreal native who has recently returned to the city to work as a trade commissioner in the Montreal Regional Office, one of 17 TCS offices across Canada, shows us some of the top spots to check out.



photo: MTOO/Benoit Cecile

MONT ROYAL

The mountain in the middle is the jewel of the island; a 101-hectare oasis of forests, trails and tremendous views of the city, all surrounding a giant duck pond. Mont Royal caters to everything you may need, be it drumming circles on Sunday afternoons, running trails in the morning or sledding and snowshoeing in winter.



photo: MTOO/Linda Turgeon

BIODÔME

The Biodôme is a former Olympic velodrome remade into a mix of five distinct ecosystems (the North Pole, Antarctica and three in between), with live animals and indigenous plants. As a family outing, it's a blast. Kids love to see the action and learn about the natural world (and dad gets to walk slowly behind, getting some adult time with mom). On cold winter weekends or rainy summer days, hop on the Métro and see the world.

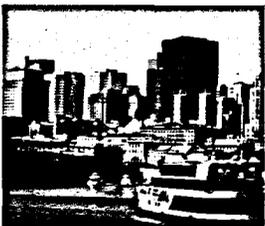


photo: MTOO/Linda Turgeon

OLD PORT

Redevelopment of the industrial area of the Old Port along the St. Lawrence River was completed in 1992. Since then, this area of Old Montreal has been taking on flavours of great Canadian icons—like Cirque du Soleil, the Pointe-à-Callière museum and an IMAX cinema—and mixing them with European-influenced boutiques and roadside cafés, a science centre and picturesque parks. It all overlooks the port's millionaires' yachts, cruise liners and cargo ships.



photo: MTOO/Robin Edgar

FESTIVALS

Running a comedy festival is hard work. Running a successful comedy festival that's known worldwide is next to impossible. Montreal's Just for Laughs comedy festival is one of the most famous and best in the business. Not to be outdone, the Montreal International Jazz Festival makes the city bop for two weeks each summer. These are just two of the magnificent festivals hosted by the city that are world class and cater to everyone.



photo: MTOO/Stéphane Poulin

RESTAURANTS

There is not enough room to talk about the best restos on the island. At the convergence of history, past empires and cultures, you will find the best of everything, old and fusion. A favourite? A rare steak with Belgian-style fries at Steak Frites St-Paul in Old Montreal, where you can bring your own wine and enjoy the ambiance of a European bistro here at home.

Photos: Ministère du Tourisme du Québec