

Canadian land and water area. It is big enough to encompass Spain, Portugal, France, Belgium, Switzerland and the two Germanies.

In reality, the Quebec capital is two cities rolled into one. It began with Upper Town, an older section on a promontory within the walls, once the centre of the community's religious and ruling establishment. Later came Lower Town, outside the fortifications, a place of historic churches and narrow winding streets. It is quaint, old world and cosy. Here there are no Big City Blues.

Given its blend of cultures, English and French, Quebec City has been called a "split-level city speaking with two voices". Most people get along in English, but the French language predominates. The city is in fact the spiritual heart of a French community itself unique in North America.

It abounds in trappings that beguile the tourist. Each year visitors climb happily into picturesque horse-drawn buggies, called calèches, for guided tours of an old-fashioned place that has known how to remain itself.

### Place Royale restored

For instance, there is the 17th-century market place of Place Royale, now being lovingly restored as part of an experiment in town planning. Here stands the church of Notre-Dame-des-Victoires on the site where Samuel de Champlain built his first dwelling in 1608. Now the provincial government has set about restoring the 80 run-down and decrepit buildings in the old merchants' quarter dating from the 17th century and later.

The aim of planners is to make the ancient Place Royale look as nearly as possible like it did two centuries ago. But most of all, they say, "it will be simply an inviting place to walk around in and casually enjoy." There will be permanent displays of vestiges of Quebec's past and special exhibitions of arts and handicrafts.

"We didn't want to set up any rigid pattern for Place Royale development to follow," said architect Georges Leonidoff recently. "We wanted it to grow organically in keeping with the needs and desires of the peoples living there." Place Royale's inhabitants now number about 500, formed into a citizens' committee to make known their views on planning.

One of Quebec City's landmarks is, of course, the Chateau Frontenac Hotel, a castle-like structure dominating the skyline. This was built in 1892 to replace Chateau Haldimand, a residence built in 1874 by the British Governor of that name. The Chateau Frontenac is now undergoing a \$10m restoration programme.

Quebec City has a wide range of cultural and sporting entertainments to offer. Theatre flourished early here and Corneille's *Le Cid* was played as early as 1646. Now the city boasts *Le Grand Théâtre*, inaugurated early in 1971 with a series of concerts and shows that drew artists from Europe as well as Quebec.

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Regarded as a remarkable achievement of modern theatre architecture, *Le Grand Théâtre* cost some £10m. It has an auditorium with a seating capacity of 1,800 for dramatic art and opera, ballet, cinema and orchestral concerts. A second auditorium, with 600 seats, can accommodate dramatic art, small groups, recitals, symposia and cinema. The theatre also contains the Quebec Conservatory, exhibition hall, restaurant, administrative offices and all the services associated with a theatre.

Quebec has always been noted as an intellectual and educational centre. As early as 1635, the Jesuits opened a college here established by the first bishop of Quebec, Francois de Montmorency Laval. It became the forerunner of Laval University, founded in 1852. For over a century Laval has supplied lawyers, doctors and other professional men to enrich the life of Quebec.

### Renowned winter sport

Quebec is renowned for winter sport. Celebrated ski centres are located east and north of the city within half an hour's drive. This and other facilities explain why the city was selected as the site of the first Canadian Winter Games, an all-Canadian "Olympics" held in 1967.

The length of the skiing season helps to make Quebec a mecca for the sport. Total snowfall in the province averages 120 inches

#### Above

A monument to the founder of Quebec City, Samuel de Champlain, stands in Dufferin Terrace, Quebec City, with the St Lawrence River in the background.

#### Right

The fate of British North America was settled on these Plains of Abraham in Quebec City in a one-day battle in 1759. Today horse-drawn caleches carry summer tourists across the peaceful lawns high above the St. Lawrence River. (National Film Board)

annually, and three feet of snow cover can usually be counted on from early December until late in March. Sometimes the season lasts five months.

One of the gayest annual events is the *Carnaval de Québec*, held in the capital. This starts with the arrival of *Bonhomme Carnaval*, described as the world's only talking snowman, a jovial giant who spurs on the general gaiety aided by a carnival queen and her court of seven duchesses, chosen from the city's most fetching young women. Bands, floats and parades add to the atmosphere as sounds of revelry reverberate through the ancient city. Sleigh bells tinkle, tourists wearing buffalo robes ride through the streets in horse-drawn vehicles, strangers lock arms and dance round elaborate ice monuments especially sculptured for the occasion – and for prizes. Competitions abound – skiing, ice skating, barrel-jumping contests by ice-skaters, dogsled



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derbies, motor-sled races, curling, pee-wee hockey tournaments, motorcycle races on ice, sports car rallies, snowshoe races and finally, as a crowning touch, the annual canoe race over the ice-choked St Lawrence River to the cheers of spectators massed on the city walls.

Quebec's Winter carnival began in 1954. It has grown nearly every year and now rivals the Mardi Gras of New Orleans. It is an unforgettable occasion.

## Visitors enjoy walking tours

Because the streets of the old city are often narrow and circuitous, walking tours are a popular way of sightseeing. A good starting place is Dufferin Terrace, near the spot where Champlain built his first real fort in 1620 and where he died on Christmas Day, 1635. Not far away is the Place d'Armes, or parade ground, and around this square is the Chateau Frontenac which in 1943 and 1944 served as headquarters for military personnel at two historic Quebec conferences. In these talks, President Franklin Roosevelt of the United States and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, joined as guests of Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King in working out allied war directives.

Other points of interest include the rue du Trésor, where artists display their skills, the museum on the rue du Fort which provides a realistic electronic re-enactment of notable scenes in the city's history, and the Chien d'Or, or Golden Dog House, known to thousands through a popular historical romance of that name depicting stages of the French regime in Quebec.

To the west of Dufferin Terrace is Cap Diamant, offering a commanding view of the city. And just behind the Chateau Frontenac is the Jardin des Gouverneurs where the monument to the two fallen soldiers of 1759, Wolfe and Montcalm, commemorates the fame of these two opposing generals. Visitors may read the elegant Latin inscription: "Mortem Virtus Communem, Famam Historia, Monumentum Posteritas Dedit." Which may be translated, "Valour gave them a common death, history a common fame, posterity a common monument."