

Trigonelle B&B in Tremblant is well located for cyclists

BY ROCHELLE LASH, SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE MAY 12, 2012



The Trigonelle B&B, across the street from the Linear Park of the P'tit Train du Nord in Tremblant, is homespun and down-to-earth, and offers superior breakfasts.

Photograph by: Trigonelle B&B

The Trigonelle B&B is a great example of what I call the “non-Tremblant Tremblant.”

It is situated on a quiet country road halfway between the Mont Tremblant mountain resort and what now is called downtown Mont Tremblant, a.k.a. St. Jovite. Here, there is no hustle or bustle, no rockin' après-ski bars or pop music fuelling activities like downhill tubing or lugging. Backed by woods and surrounded by mountains, Trigonelle faces a farmer's field and the Laurentians' famed cycling path, the Linear Park of the P'tit Train du Nord.

Owned by Suzanne Bernardin, Trigonelle is a traditional 1920s white clapboard cottage with a tin roof and a wraparound porch. You'll feel relaxed and at home right away in front of the fireplace, amid the plants and the collectibles that range from vintage snowshoes to stuffed animals. It's a very Canadian house, especially so for the antique furniture, some of which are family heirlooms. A set of Jacobean end tables came from her grandmother and a mahogany tea trolley was handed down from her mother, Gertrude (Dickie) Sullivan, who had been a gym teacher at Baron Byng High School. Bernardin still runs into people who knew her.

Bernardin, a former librarian and MBA marketing recruiter at Concordia University, started her B&B about 15 years ago and has been tending to guests steadily since. It's simple "three-sun living," meaning that Trigonelle rates three out of a possible five "suns" on Quebec Tourism's scale for B&Bs. The little inn draws a lot of cyclists who are simply looking for a place to bed down after a long ride. It's homespun and down-to-earth, and if you're willing to share a bathroom, you'll have everything you need. Trigonelle also is pet-friendly, so really, you never know who you're going to meet.

Bernardin's breakfasts are superior.

"Home-made just about everything," she says.

She bakes a breakfast clafouti with plums, pears, blueberries and cranberries, makes her own chutneys and jams from homegrown fruits, and also concocts "budwig," a muesli-style cereal with yogurt, bananas and grains. Now you're warmed up for the special of the day – buckwheat pancakes, French toast with homemade bread or eggs with the trimmings. Her garden and greenhouse produce tomatoes, squash, thyme and basil and she also procures organic vegetables from Runaway Creek Farm in the Laurentians.

Trigonelle is tiny and friendly and Bernardin even will pick up guests at the bus station or drive car-less cyclists to restaurants for dinner. She favours two local spots: L'Éscalope, a bring-your-own- wine restaurant known for veal with various toppings, a salad bar and a roast beef special on Sundays; and Cheval de Jade, a tiny temple of French cuisine, especially Marseilles-style bouillabaisse and Barbary duck.

Trigonelle's strength is that it is across the street from the Linear Park of the P'tit Train du Nord, a vital cycling and cross-country ski path. Certified by the Quebec travel organization Bienvenue cyclistes!, Bernardin's B&B provides secure storage for your ride. She even took a course in bike mechanics, so she has tools and can tackle repairs and flats.

Jo Korb, owner of Cycle and Sports Mont-Tremblant on St. Jovite's main street and also president of Club de Vélo des 2 Vallées, is another great resource for cyclists. The shop's slogan is "veni vidi, velo," and Korb will deliver bicycles – hybrid, junior or mountain – to Trigonelle.

It's mostly flat land around the B&B, but heading toward Mont Tremblant Resort (the ski mountain), the terrain gets hilly, so even the recreational Piste Multifonctionelle is a challenge.

It winds up and down for 12 kilometres between the Tremblant resort and Mont Tremblant (the village).

If you like company, Korb runs Sunday Rides at \$5 per person, open to intermediate and advanced road cyclists, with reservations. The group leaves from the Parc des Voyageurs about one kilometre north of the shop. Ramping up the cardio and strength levels considerably, you can also ride the gruelling 112-kilometre route that will be conquered by the elite athletes of the Iron Man Triathlon, Aug. 12.

Mountain bikers can join the Club de Vélo Mont-Tremblant for group rides that depart from the Information Centre on Montée Ryan on Sunday mornings. Trails climb up the ski mountain the South Side and snake back along the Devil's River and Montée Ryan past the region's golf courses.

Trigonelle is one of approximately 20 B&Bs in the Tremblant area that work together. The complete list is at bbtremblant.com. La Route des Soleils is a series of country drives that also incorporate food stops and other attractions: laroutedessoleils.com.

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IF YOU GO

Tremblant is a one-hour, 20-minute drive from Montreal via Highway 15 north.

Gîte Trigonelle B&B: 819-425-9575, trigonelle.com; 330 rue Coupal, Mont Tremblant (downtown/St. Jovite sector).

Price: \$90 for two or \$55 for one, including breakfast and transportation from the bus terminal or transport for cyclists. No charge for pets.

Cycle & Sports Mont Tremblant: 819-425-3133, cycletremblant.com, 745 rue de Saint-Jovite; rentals for half-day, full-day and one-week; rates include helmet. It's \$15 to rent a full-sized hybrid bike for three hours or \$13 for a junior. Club de Vélo des 2 Vallées (road biking); velomonttremblant.com (mountain biking).

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