

Côté Nord Tremblant's Suites-sur-Lac is 'nature chic'

BY ROCHELLE LASH, SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE JULY 19, 2012



Suites-sur-Lac, overlooking Lac Supérieur, is on the site of a former monastery. Developer Michel Beaulieu was careful to preserve the idyllic setting.

Photograph by: Côté Nord Tremblant

In certain places around the world, the ultimate getaway is a princely palace. In Quebec, some of the finest countryside locales belong to the clergy.

Developer Michel Beaulieu recognized this a few years ago when he bought a splendid chunk of lakefront land, the site of a former monastery on the so-called North Side of Tremblant facing Lac Supérieur. This is the quiet side of Tremblant, still mostly discreet cottage country and undeveloped wilds, five kilometres from the “other face” of Mont Tremblant Resort and eight kilometres from Parc National du Mont Tremblant.

The monastery’s idyllic grounds have been turned into an upscale resort, Suites-sur-Lac, the newest part of a community of deluxe mountain chalets and townhouses called Côté Nord Tremblant. With recreational facilities built out onto a landscaped point on the lake, and with a scenic backdrop of mountains and forests, the 69 Suites-sur-Lac spell ultra-modern vacation life in a magnificent pastoral setting, and a quintessentially Laurentian setting, at that. I saw this lakeshore wilderness before the Suites-sur-Lac were built. Beaulieu has preserved the environmental beauty and also some of the monastery’s heritage.

“We call it nature chic,” said Anick Beaulieu, who is Michel’s daughter and Côté Nord’s director of development. “We kept a lot of the original landscape, the mature trees and the lakeshore foliage. We

have one area that is designed for sport and action, especially for families with children, and other hidden corners and quiet docks that are perfect for reading or relaxing or romance. I think of them as nature lounges.”

Guests of Côté Nord can use the Club de la Pointe, a laid-back private playground with a heated swimming pool, two clay tennis courts, a tiny marina and lakefront lawns with lounge chairs and firepits, all shaded by towering pines and birches. Your day might be filled with a 10-kilometre bike ride around Lac Supérieur, then a kayak jaunt to a remote beach, swimming, sunbathing on a dock or reading on a chaise longue in the garden where the lake waters lap at the shore. The club opened last week and already it has history and charm. The monastery’s original 1940s lakefront pavilions have been restored and now house a gym, an outdoor yoga deck and a youth centre. It’s geared toward choices: family fun, wellness, sports or romance.

The lifestyle and gorgeous surroundings are easy to get used to. If you “like” the Suites-sur-Lac on Facebook, you can sign up for a contest to win a two-night visit. If you like them well enough to buy one, they are sold by the Côté Nord division Fraternité-sur-Lac, and range from \$198,000 for a studio to \$388,000 for a two-bedroom (fraternitesurlac.com).

There are three pavilions of apartments, all with modern minimalist furnishings and rustic wood trim against clean white walls. They’re loaded with the works: large windows and private decks with wonderful lake views, gas fireplaces, flat-screen televisions, and designer kitchens and bathrooms.

“We made the exteriors darkened pine,” said Michel Beaulieu. “We wanted the lowest visual impact on the lakeshore, to be harmonious with the surroundings.”

Beaulieu’s original property was a simple country lodge, Auberge Caribou, also on the shore of Lac Supérieur. If you don’t want to haul groceries to your Côté Nord suite or chalet, the Bistro de l’Auberge Caribou, adjacent to Côté Nord Tremblant, is a good bet with an exciting new team. Chef Benoît Hiriart Durruthy, who is from Biarritz, France, has worked at Hôtel Intercontinental in Montreal and Le Westin Tremblant. Maitre d’ Simon Léonard sports a pedigreed background from two haute dining spots in Tremblant, Aux Truffes and Le Cheval de Jade.

Together, Durruthy and Léonard are presenting French bistro cuisine with such appetizers as panko shrimp with spicy mayo, seared scallops, salad with duck, and beef, fish and lamb, with occasional treasures of Quebec game such as wapiti, venison, wild boar or caribou.

Guests at Côté-Nord will have almost front-row seats to the new sporting event, the Mont Tremblant Ironman, on Aug. 19. Part of the cycling and running routes will zoom along Chemin du Lac Supérieur.

While Tremblant’s North Side is prized for its tranquility, the action on the busy South Side never stops. Every weekend until Aug. 26, Les Rythmes Tremblant, a free series of concerts at the bandshell near the ski lifts, will present such Quebec musical artists as Andrée Watters, David Usher, the Pascale Picard Band and Brigitte Boisjoli. And the 14th Fête de la Musique, Sept. 1-3, will be an end-of-summer jamboree of more than 60 free shows of classical, pop, jazz and world beat.

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IF YOU GO

Lac Supérieur is a one-hour, 20-minute drive from Montreal via Highway 15 north and Route 117 to the exit for Lac Carré/Lac Supérieur.

Suites-sur-Lac at Côté Nord Tremblant: 888-268-3667, 819-688-5201; cotenordtremblant.com, 141 Chemin du Tour du Lac, Lac Supérieur

Price: Includes use of heated pool, lakefront beach, tennis courts, kayaks, outdoor firepits, walking trails, lawn games. Economy season (until July 26, Sept. 3 - Oct. 14 and Jan. 6 - Feb. 14): \$165 per night, for two, in a studio with a kitchenette and barbecue on the patio/balcony; \$186-\$206 for a one-bedroom for two; \$232-\$258-\$284 for a two-bedroom apartment for four; \$339-\$445 for a three-bedroom apartment for six; A two-night minimum usually is required on weekends. Add approximately \$10 per bedroom during regular season (July 27-Sept. 2 and Feb. 15-March 21). Extras: daily housekeeping, breakfast delivery, Caribou Chez Vous private chef.

Bistro de l'Auberge Caribou: 819-713-0533, cotenordtremblant.com; 141 chemin du Tour du Lac, Lac Supérieur; open for dinner Wed.-Sun.

Mont Tremblant Resort: 1-88-Tremblant / 888-736-2526, tremblant.ca.

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