

QUEBEC WINTER FUN

TRAVEL

EDITOR: EVANGELINE SADLER | esadler@montrealgazette.com

From festivals to adventures,  
there are plenty of cool ways to  
enjoy the year’s longest season

Quebec’s

Wonders

of WINTER



AU PETIT POUCKET  
Sonya Lefebvre delivers breakfast at the rustic restaurant Au Petit Poucet in Val- David, which has been serving traditional Québécois cuisine for nearly 70 years.



HÔTEL DE GLACE  
The lobby at the Hôtel de glace near Quebec City offers a warm welcome, even though the temper- ature is about -3 C. The hotel, with 44 guest rooms, includes thermal sleeping bags and four hot tubs.

ROCHELLE LASH  
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

W hen Gilles Vigneault, Que- bec singer and folk hero, wrote “mon pays ... c’est l’hiver,” he wasn’t kidding. It was the revolutionary 1960s, and Vigneault linked Quebecers’ identity, resilience and pride to the rugged, raw climate in which they live.

It is a profound image. But win- ter’s bracing air and heavy snow- fall also define our playtime. Festivals, sugaring off, après-ski and outdoor hot tubs—as long as there is a fireplace in our future, we are pumped.

Did Vigneault mention that the mercury often dips below -30 C? Pas de problème, we say. The cold- er it gets, the better it is for such thrilling escapades as dogsled- ing and kite-skiing on frozen lakes. Not to mention our glacial gourmandises, such as ice apple cider and maple taffy on snow.

Here are some of the most won- drous winter experiences chez nous. Regrets, Montreal, we’re hitting the road.

**Celebrate:** An enduring symbol of Quebec and one of the prov- ince’s most raucous parties, the Carnaval de Québec will shake the capital with a day-and-night extravaganza Jan. 31 to Feb. 16. The festivities will rock our pre- cious, 406-year-old capital from the cobblestone streets of the Old Port to the majestic Plains of Abraham. Don a red tuque and

enjoy dance parties in the Ice Pal- ace, concerts, ice sculpture, snow baths and the Ice Canoe Race, the famed and treacherous com- petition across the St. Lawrence River. Bonhomme Carnaval will be there, and for more girl power, the Carnaval duchesses are re- turning this year.

**Cuddle:** The coolest lodging in Quebec is the Hôtel de Glace, a mighty and innovative engin- eering feat entirely constructed of tons of ice and snow. Invite someone you love because you’ll be cuddling in frosty temps be- tween -3 C and -5 C throughout the 44 guest rooms, the Ice Bar, the Grand Hall and the Chapel. On the warm front, there are thermal sleeping bags, four hot tubs, a sauna and heated loos next door.

**Trek:** The spectacular Parc na- tional des Monts-Valin in the Sa- guenay region is a winter-white paradise of snowshoeing and back-country skiing that receives up to seven metres of powder an- nually. A shuttle runs from the Discovery and Visitors’ Centre to the base of an enchanting forest, the Vallée des fantômes, named for the ghostly shapes of snow sculpted by the wind on the boughs of trees. Then, outdoor lovers trek three snowy kilo- metres to the lofty mountain look- out, Pic-de-la-Hutte. Strenuous, but the workout is good training for the taxing Tour du Mont-Val- in, an international rally to be held March 15.

Please see ACTIVITIES, Page H4

Flights

VACATION PACKAGES

Hotels | Car rental | Cruises | Things to do | Insurance | Mobile

ESCAPE  
WINTER  
SALE

Shovel sand castles instead.  
Book your beach vacation now and save up to 50%\* on your stay,  
all backed by our Best Price Guarantee.†

Expedia.ca  
Your trip, your way.

\*Discount limited to hotel portion of bookings only (off Expedia.ca prices) purchased by Feb. 28/14 for travel between Dec. 10/13 and Mar. 31/14. Savings vary and start at 20%, depending on the hotel. Some conditions apply. Only valid on select "Escape Winter Sale" hotel properties. Offer subject to change or cancellation without notice. See www.expedia.ca for full details. †Claim must be made within 24 hours after qualifying Expedia.ca booking, must be submitted via the Expedia.ca website and is subject to review. Other conditions apply. Visit www.expedia.ca for full details. © 2013 Expedia, Inc. All rights reserved. Expedia, Expedia.ca and the Airplane logos are registered trademarks, or trademarks, of Expedia, Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. Ticket fulfillment services provided by Tour East Holidays (Canada) Inc., 15 Kern Road, Suite 9, Toronto, Ontario, M3B 1S9. TICO Registration No.: 50015827 and Tour East Holidays (Canada) Inc., 2000 Peel Street, Suite 735, Montreal, QC, H3A 2W5. Quebec Licence No.: 702246.



## QUEBEC WINTER FUN

## ACTIVITIES Celebrate with great dining, partying, skiing, dogsledding

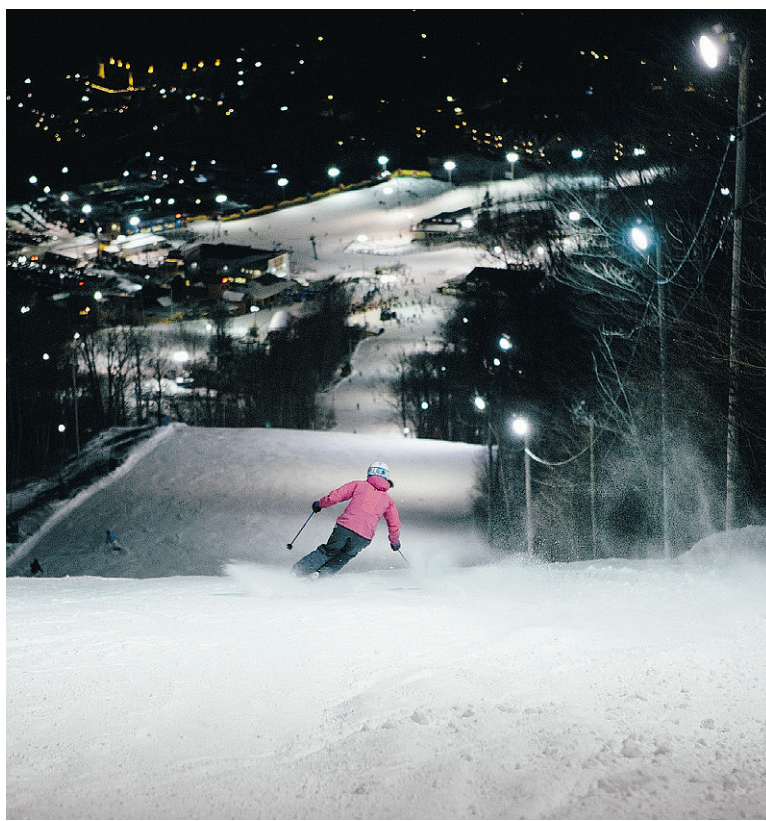
CONTINUED FROM H1

**Feast:** More gourmand than gourmet, and more rustic than refined, Au Petit Poucet in Val-David has been dishing out traditional Québécois cuisine for nearly 70 years. The wood-beamed restaurant sells thousands of tourtières a year, plus baked beans, pea soup, cretons, maple-smoked ham and the home-spun stew, ragoût de boulettes et pattes de cochon. Old-time skiers say the sinfully rich sugar pie is an antidote to cold climes. Lineups are common on weekends for the Ogre's Breakfast, which is served until closing at 4 p.m.

**Represent:** The Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau is showcasing 250 artifacts that portray how the drama of winter has shaped our nation's identity. Titled Snow, it's a cultural history that starts with survival techniques of aboriginal peoples and European pioneers, then progresses to depict snow as a forum for sports, an artistic muse and an economic driver. Snow, the show, runs until Sept. 28.

**Party:** Ski Bromont sparkles with the largest terrain in North America lit for night skiing and snowboarding when the snow is lighter and the air is warmer, or it feels that way. The ultimate after-dark experiences are Ski Bromont's Nuits Blanches, when the lifts run until 2 a.m. for skiing, riding, plus snow-cross competitions and freestyle coaching. The après-ski bar dances until 3 a.m., with prizes, live music and a heady coffee spiked with Coureur des Bois, a maple cream liqueur blended at nearby Domaine Pinnacle.

**Adventure:** You can channel your inner coureur des bois at Kinadapt near Rawdon. Kinesiologist Peter Boutin, psycho-educator Carole Turcotte and their 60 huskies have merged skills and passions to create an exceptional adventure playground with customized dogsledding for all. Nimble athletes rocket their dog teams through the woods at a breathtaking 35 or 45 km/h. Physically challenged sportsmen promenade leisurely with a guide. You can intensify the pioneering



FORWARD VISUALS/SKI BROMONT.

Ski Bromont has more night-lit terrain than any downhill area in North America for skiing and snowboarding.

New France spirit if you sleep overnight in a prospector's tent in the snowy woods, with a catered dinner of bison steaks, foie gras and Lanaudière wine and cheese. Just like the 1600s. But better.

**Chill:** With more than 40 exhilarating Nordic spas throughout the province, Quebecers are hooked on the therapy. We want to purify our bodies and stimulate our circulation, so we'll strip down to swimsuits in the middle of winter, frolic around snowbanks and pop in and out of hot chambers and cold baths. Station Blü-bains nordiques is a splendid spa in a vast near-wilderness of mountains and forests just north of Beaufort. You'll feel bouncy and brisk after a slow bake in a 100 C sauna, a fleeting dip in the frigid -5 C Rivière Lombrerie and a soak in the bubbling hot tub, where you'll poach at about 38 C, along with 60 of your new best friends.



STATION BLÜ

A guest takes a refreshing dip in winter at Station Blü- bains nordiques north of Beaufort.

## IF YOU GO

**For complete information on Quebec Tourism:** 877-bon-jour/877-266-5687, [www.bon-jourquebec.com](http://www.bon-jourquebec.com).

**Au Petit Poucet:** 888-334-2246, [www.aupetitpoucet.com](http://www.aupetitpoucet.com), Val-David. Laurentides Tourism: 800-561-NORD/6673, [www.laurentides.com](http://www.laurentides.com).

**Canadian Museum of Civilization:** 800-555-5621, [www.civilization.ca](http://www.civilization.ca); Gatineau. Outaouais Tourism: 800-265-7822, [www.tourisme-outaouais.com](http://www.tourisme-outaouais.com).

**Carnaval de Québec:** Carnaval de Québec: 418-626-3716, [www.carnaval.qc.ca](http://www.carnaval.qc.ca). Quebec City regional tourism: 877-783-1608, [www.quebecregion.com](http://www.quebecregion.com).

**Hôtel de Glace:** 877-505-0423, [www.hoteldeglace-canada.com](http://www.hoteldeglace-canada.com), Charlebourg/Quebec City.

**Kinadapt:** 450-834-4441, [www.kinadapt.com](http://www.kinadapt.com); Rawdon. Lanaudière Tourism: 800-363-2788, [www.lanaudiere.ca](http://www.lanaudiere.ca).

**Parc national des Monts-Valin, Saint-Fulgence:** 800-665-6527, 418-674-1200, [parksquebec.com/montsvalin](http://parksquebec.com/montsvalin); Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean Tourism: 877-253-8387, [www.saguenaylacsaintjean.ca](http://www.saguenaylacsaintjean.ca).

**Ski Bromont:** 866-276-6668, [skibromont.com](http://skibromont.com), Bromont; Eastern Townships Tourism: 800-355-5755, [www.easterntownships.org](http://www.easterntownships.org).

**Station Blü - nordic baths:** 855-261-0508, [www.stationblu.ca](http://www.stationblu.ca), St-Tite-des-Caps; Beaufort Coast: 877-611-6145, [www.cotedebeaupre.com](http://www.cotedebeaupre.com).

**CruisePlus is your agency for Holland America Line!**

**CruisePlus**  
Small Agency Feel... Big Agency Deals!

Book any 7 day or longer 2014 or 2015 (7 day or longer) cruise & receive **ONBOARD CREDITS ON EVERY SAILING!**  
PLUS - CruisePlus Rewards savings\*\*

Here is 1 of our extra value exclusive air, hotel & cruise bundles - please call us or visit our web site for many others!

**BUENOS AIRES TO VANCOUVER**  
35 nights - March 27, 2014 *ms Zaandam*  
air, transfer & 2 nights in Buenos Aires, 33 night cruise,  
\$100 per stateroom onboard credit & all taxes

INSIDE **\$4599** CAD OCEANVIEW **\$4849** CAD

**FANTASTIC LAST MINUTE PRICING & HIGH CATEGORY STATEROOMS**  
**PRICES INCLUDE MONTREAL AIR AND ALL TAXES!**

**1-800-854-9664**  
**www.cruiseplus.ca**

Holland America Line  
A Signature of Excellence

Call us first about any cruise - you will love us!

\*New bookings only. Prices listed are in Canadian dollars and are per person based on 2 sharing and subject to availability at the time of booking. Should the cruise line raise taxes or re-instate fuel surcharges, these would be additional. Ships Registry: Netherlands. CruisePlus Management Ltd. BPOCA #3325-0. \*\*CruisePlus Rewards savings vary depending on the value of the booking and number of bookings made with CruisePlus, and are not applicable to every sailing. All of our bundled packages include shipboard credits and CruisePlus Rewards savings and cannot be combined with any other booking incentives or promotions.

## 2014 EUROPE RIVER CRUISES



request a  
free brochure



## FLY FREE TO EUROPE\*

BOOK BY FEBRUARY 28, 2014. VALID ON E OR D CABIN CATEGORIES ONLY.

## 15 day Jewels of Europe River Cruise

## FLY FREE\*

just pay the taxes (valid on Cat. E or D only)

From \$6,455\* pp twin share STC

April 21, 2014 departure - Cat. D Outside Stateroom (no balcony)



## 15 day Romantic Rhine &amp; Moselle River Cruise

## FLY FREE\*

just pay the taxes (valid on Cat. E or D only)

From \$6,145\* pp twin share AMBA

August 11, 2014 departure - Cat. E Outside Stateroom (no balcony)



## SCENIC TOURS

The Ultimate Luxury Experience  
You Won't Find Anywhere Else

- ✓ Luxury staterooms and suites
- ✓ Private Outdoor Balcony Suites with Scenic 'Sun Lounges'†
- ✓ Personal butler for every guest
  - ✓ World class cuisine
- ✓ Unlimited complimentary beverages†
- ✓ Scenic Tailormade-personal GPS tour guide
  - ✓ Complimentary in-suite mini bar
  - ✓ Onboard entertainment and lectures
- ✓ All shore excursions and special events
  - ✓ Electric bicycles
- ✓ Complimentary Wi-Fi internet
- ✓ Personalised airport transfers†
- ✓ All tipping and gratuities



QUOTE CODE SCAPR008 TO RECEIVE THESE SPECIAL OFFERS



Call Scenic Tours 1 866 689 8611  
VISIT [scenictours.com](http://scenictours.com) or CONTACT your local travel professional



\*Conditions Apply. Prices based on per person twin share in CAD, are strictly limited & subject to availability on specific dates, until sold out. Offers for new bookings only and not in conjunction with any other offers and may be withdrawn at any time. Any maps or other route depictions are intended as an indication only and are subject to change. For "Fly Free", flights must be booked by Scenic Tours and an additional non-refundable deposit is required. Scenic Tours reserve the right to ticket the airfare upon receipt of deposit. Once issued, air tickets are subject to amendment and cancellation fees as established by the applicable airline. Fly Free: Available on selected departures. Airfares are in economy class on airlines of Scenic Tours' choice in specific classes and surcharges may apply if specific class is sold out. Strictly limited to E or D category staterooms on set departures and subject to availability. Airline/Airport taxes from \$700 per person are not included. Offer available until February 28, 2014 unless sold out prior. Deposit must be paid by February 28, 2014 to qualify. Port taxes from \$200-\$400 per person are not included. † Scenic 'Sun Lounges' not available on Scenic Emerald in France. Very small number of rare, fine & vintage wines, champagnes and spirits not included. Airport transfers are only available on the first and last day of your tour and at times we designate. Palais Liechtenstein will not be available for the private Viennese concert on April 21 - STC Budapest to Amsterdam. For full terms and conditions refer to Scenic Tours Europe Luxury River Cruises & Tours 2014/2015 brochure. BC consumer protection #40178. 900 West Georgia St, Vancouver, BC V6C 2W6.