



The luxurious two-bedroom EspaceNORDIK condo at Château Mont-Sainte-Anne rents for \$650 a night. CHÂTEAU MONT-SAINTE-ANNE

CHÂTEAU MONT-SAINTE-ANNE GETS AN URBAN-CHIC TRANSFORMATION



ROCHELLE LASH
Checking In

While Quebec’s beloved Mont-Sainte-Anne celebrates 50 years as a snow-sports leader, its most prominent lodging establishment announces a transformative new phase.

Château Mont-Sainte-Anne is the quintessential slopeside ski lodge with everything at hand, steps from the lifts: notably the Château Spa and Bistrø Nordik, but also a convenience store, children’s and teen playrooms, a pool and hot tubs, a ski rental shop and a micro-branch of the Brunelle sports store.

The condo-hotel is gradually getting a dramatically new look, and within a few years, it will be an entirely new resort.

Father-and-son owners Henri and Sébastien Roy have invested \$20 million over the past few years to create EspaceNORDIK, a series of striking urban-chic condominiums gradually replac-

ing the hotel’s traditional Studio Champêtre units.

About half of the Château’s accommodations have been transformed into these EspaceNORDIK condos, ranging in size from studios to one to four bedrooms with flashy contemporary interiors that use cool concrete, glass and slate decor warmed by nubby grey carpets and blond wood furniture.

EspaceNORDIK is decked out with stainless designer kitchens, flat-screen TVs and marble bathrooms. The standout designs include lavish two-level penthouse suites that families and couples enjoy for the extra space; the king-sized studios that are compact getaways for up to four people; and luxurious two-bedroom condos with open kitchens and fireplaces in the living rooms.

They all have balconies, with different views, and some sections of the hotel are only a few metres from Mont-Sainte-Anne’s gondola.

“We have completed, gutted and rebuilt our old suites, but we kept the soundproof concrete walls,” Sébastien Roy said. “Now, the new eco-systems for water,

heat and light, the in-room technology and operations will be solid for decades.

“Guests, especially families, use the kitchens or kitchenettes for breakfast or snacks,” Roy said. “But we are a full-service hotel, so there are options.”

EspaceNORDIK condos rent for \$189 to \$650 a night, depending on the size, but if you want to buy into this pastoral, sporty lifestyle, they cost \$165,000 to about \$1 million. Ownership comes with a private lounge, reserved parking and rebates at the restaurant and Château Spa. The lavish four-bedroom EspaceNORDIK condo, priced at \$1.2 million, is sold.

The Roys recently announced a second \$20-million overhaul that, over the next three years, will convert the other half of the accommodations, update the lobby and conference centre and create an aquatic complex encompassing a new indoor pool, outdoor hot tubs, firepits and a summertime sundeck.

Although there are other slope-side options, the Château is the only full-service condo-hotel at the base of Mont-Sainte-Anne. The hotel also packages ski visits to Le Massif du Charlevoix,

which is a 30-minute drive.

The Château’s Bistrø Nordik was among the first in the region to present cuisine boréale, the earthy trend of cooking contemporary dishes with native food. Specialties include cassoulet with venison sausage and dishes with Charlevoix cheese, Quebec lamb and smoked fish. Roy is vegan and his favourite dish is the crispy rice millefeuille with vegetables and tofu and shiitake sauce.

The mountain at 50: Mont-Sainte-Anne, both charming and challenging, is marking a half-century as a leader in snow sports. It is known for its exceptional snowfall and one of the longest ski seasons in Quebec, which makes it a training ground for international Alpine and Nordic teams as well as a beloved recreational area.

New ventures include three cardio-busters: Alpine touring and fat-biking, and, as of last season, La P.A. Rousseau, a mogul field in the expert area named for the Olympic freestyler.

The downhill mountain has long, languid trails, steep expert runs, glades, terrain parks, a summit chalet with gorgeous views of the St. Lawrence River and the highest night-skiing vertical drop

IF YOU GO

Château Mont-Sainte-Anne: 800-463-4467, chateausa.com, espacenordik.com.
Price: non-renovated rooms start at \$129 per night; EspaceNORDIK starts at \$189 for a king studio up to \$650 for a two-bedroom, all including Wi-Fi, hot tubs, pool, ski lockers, cinema room with DVDs, children’s playroom and teen room with Xbox. Packages available with all of Mont-Sainte-Anne activities, plus Le Massif de Charlevoix, ice canyoning, Montmorency Falls, zip-lining.
Mont-Sainte-Anne: 888-827-4579, mont-sainte-anne.com, Beauspré, St-Lawrence Summits (Le Massif, Stoneham and Mont-Sainte-Anne). Happy Parents Package, until Feb. 25, includes free lifts for children up to 17 with a purchase of a three-day adult ticket, plus lodging discounts of 15 per cent.

in Canada.

Mont-Sainte-Anne also runs one of the largest cross-country and snowshoe areas in North America, with the Pierre Harvey National Training Centre and more than 200 kilometres of trails, named for local Olympians Pierre Harvey and his son Alexandre.

Among special 50th-anniversary projects are:

- A limited edition of 50 pairs of signature Rossignol skis;
- Mont-Sainte-Anne logo clothing and accessories;
- A photo booth to record memories;
- Artwork, including a mural and a 50-year graphic timeline in the base lodge.

Mont-Sainte-Anne, owned by RCR, which also owns Stoneham near Quebec City, and Fernie Alpine Resort and Kicking Horse Mountain resort in B.C., recently announced a new housing development expected to be completed in 2018.

The Legs des Pionniers (Legacy of the Pioneers) will overlook a small lake and will be near the slopes, the Nordic centre and hiking and mountain biking trails. It will be a complex of 175 condos and houses linked by footpaths and landscaping, with an emphasis on preserving a lot of the natural environment.

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