



The annual parade of the Richmond St. Patrick's Society in the Eastern Townships, to be held March 20, is Quebec's second largest and is renowned for its horses. The parade will feature 200 participants and is expected to draw 8,000 spectators. *RICHMOND ST. PATRICK'S SOCIETY*

CHECKING IN

FEELING IRISH? THESE PLACES WILL PUT YOU IN THE SPIRIT



ROCHELLE LASH

They say that everyone is Irish on March 17, so if you would like to get into the spirit, these places offer céad mile fáilte, a hundred thousand welcomes.

TREMBLANT B&B

The Plumes et Glisse B&B is a darling cottage tucked into the woods, one kilometre from Tremblant's north side and also less than 10 kilometres from the entrance to Parc National du Mont-Tremblant.

Woodsy on the outside, modern on the inside, Plumes et Glisse has such a peaceful setting that you'll never want to leave. Plump blue jays and chickadees flutter around the birdfeeders, among the snowy birches and maple trees.

Jenny Pearson and Craig Millar, both Irish-born, are warm and well-loved hosts. No. 1 on Trip

Advisor with all respondents giving it an "excellent, five-star" rating, the B&B has four guest books full of handwritten thank-you notes from guests hailing from Montreal to Madagascar, in English, French, Mandarin, Japanese, German, Russian and Italian.

Pearson is a chef trained at Le Cordon Bleu in London, England, so the cuisine is delish and you are invited to bring-your-own-bottle. Highlights here — one of the best breakfasts anywhere — include ricotta-lemon pancakes, baked clafoutis heaped with berries, apple scones, Irish steel-cut oats with a splash of Bailey's Irish Cream, or poufy omelettes with fresh eggs that Pearson gathers herself at a nearby farm.

She is originally from Donegal, so when she serves dinner, the gourmet repertoire includes contemporary Celtic accents such as maple-Guinness glazed salmon; herb-crusted rack of lamb with "champ" potatoes mashed with hot cream and scallions; and Irish brown bread ice cream.

On the French-Quebec side, Pearson is known for duck breast with blueberries and cassis from

Ste-Sophie, and Charlevoix veal, with desserts such as maple crème brûlée and a refreshing spiced granité infused with red wine from St-Eustache.

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS

Pearson referred me to her compatriot Eddie O'Gorman who, with his wife, Lynda Gauthier, from Baie Comeau, owns Gite McCallum in the picturesque village of Danville in the Eastern Townships.

Danville is popular in summer for family reunions, quiet country weekends, cycling along La Route Verte and heritage tours, especially anglo-Quebec and American Loyalist heritage. In autumn, the Symposium des Arts de Danville is the main cultural event, and L'Étang Burbank is a regular annual stop for 100,000 migrating snow geese.

Gite McCallum serves breakfast, but there is wonderful dining in Danville. Café de Village specializes in local ingredients in its restaurant and sells regional produce at a farmers' market (manteducarre.com). Many gourmets visit Danville simply

to dine at Le Temps des Cerises, which serves fine French-Quebec cuisine (cerises.com).

McCallum was the name of the Scottish immigrants who built the house more than 100 years ago. So, what's Irish here? I asked.

"There is me," said O'Gorman, a former BBC journalist who has lived in Belfast and Dublin, and whose parents were from Tipperary and Kilkenny. "I bake my own wheaten bread using my mother's recipe from Ireland, and I can give you a pint of Guinness."

In addition, Gite McCallum's three homespun guest rooms are named Connemara, Donegal, and Wicklow, and decorated with posters and photographs of the countryside of the Emerald Isle. But, the really dynamic Irish-inspired action is in Richmond, 18 kilometres away.

The venerable Richmond St. Patrick's Society, founded in 1877, will present Quebec's second-largest parade (after that of Montreal) on March 20, boasting about 8,000 spectators, 200 participants and lots of carriage and saddle horses.

IF YOU GO

Plumes et Glisse B&B: 819-688-3444, www.plumesetglisse.com, Lac-Supérieur (Tremblant North); \$149 for two, per night, including gourmet breakfast. One night with breakfast and dinner, \$259 for two. It's B.Y.O.B. Discounts for multiple nights. Saturday requires a two-night minimum. Packages available with Spa Scandinave, skiing or golf. **Gite McCallum:** 819-839-1118, gitemccallumdenville.com; Danville; \$110-\$125 for two, including breakfast. Richmond St. Patrick's Society, 819-826-2535, richmondstpats.org. Danville: danville.ca. **Ottawa Tourism:** 800-363-4465, ottawaturism.ca, lodging at 888-688-2928. St. Patrick's Party by Beau's, March 19: 866-585-2337, stpatriksparty.ca; \$29 includes one beer and Ottawa city bus transport, 9 a.m. to midnight. It's \$5 for partygoers under 19 and free for infants.

Julie O'Donnell, first vice-president of the Society, reports that a month of festivities will wind up March 27 with a bountiful breakfast at the Richmond Legion.

OTTAWA WEARS THE GREEN

The Irish Society of the National Capital Region will present its annual Irish Festival until March 18, which includes an Irish Night at the Ottawa Senators game on March 17.

Ottawa Tourism offers Hockey Night in the Capital packages with hotels in various ranges, such as the classic Fairmont Château Laurier, the child-friendly Novotel, the stylish and contemporary Delta and Arc hotels, and one of the closest to the Canadian Tire Centre in Kanata, the deluxe Brookstreet Hotel.

Ottawa's 34th annual St. Patrick's Parade will happen on March 19 and Beau's All Natural Brewing Company of Van Kleek Hill, Ont., will host an all-day, family-friendly party, noon to 9 p.m. About 2,000 revellers will rock the historic Aberdeen Pavilion in Lansdowne Park for hearty Irish food, organic craft beer on tap, Irish dance lessons and performances by Delhi 2 Dublin and the Celkils.

Beau's chef Bruce Wood will cook up lamb stew strudel in rosemary-spiked dough, shepherd's pie croquettes with beer-infused gravy, or the St. Pat's mufuletta, a sandwich of corned beef, cabbage and cheddar with scallion aioli, on soda bread. rochelle@rochellelash.com twitter.com/rochellelash

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