



La Galerie B&B has a tranquil setting on the shore of the Richelieu River. *TOURISME MONTRÉGIE*

IF YOU GO

St-Antoine-sur-Richelieu is about a 45-minute drive from Montreal via South Shore Route 20 east and Route 223 north.

**La Galerie B&B:** 450-787-9752, [galeriebb.ca](http://galeriebb.ca); 1009 rue du Rivage, St-Antoine-sur-Richelieu.

**Price:** including breakfast, \$120-\$140 for two; adding dinner, it's \$215 for two. Biking Tour Package: \$125 for two, includes breakfast, bike map, take-away lunch.

**La Galerie art classes:** one-day workshops, \$85 p.p. in a class of six, includes some materials, light lunch. Private classes also available.

**Tourisme Montérégie:** 866-469-0069, 450-466-4666.

# Tranquillity rules at Richelieu B&B



ROCHELLE LASH  
*Checking In*

La Galerie B&B is a quick and easy country escape from a hot summer in the city. The water of the Richelieu River laps up against the lawn, crickets chirp and birds sing.

La Galerie is an ivy-draped red brick manor house built circa 1850, with a fancy wraparound latticework porch shaded by weeping willows, tall oaks and leafy red maples. Owners Roger Paquette and Gaëtane Dion are passionate gardeners, so La Galerie is surrounded by pretty landscaping and a water garden, complete with gurgling fountains and a tiny footbridge over a pond. They nurture perennials and grow their own herbs, tomatoes and vegetables.

La Galerie is a popular stop for cyclists and artists, or people who simply want to get away. You can explore the quaint villages, crossing the Richelieu by ferry or driving the riverfront roads. La Galerie is cyclist certified by Vélo Québec, which means that it has bike route maps, basic repair kits

and safe storage.

Before becoming an innkeeper, Paquette was a mechanical technologist for the Research Institute of Hydro-Québec. Dion was an editor of community newspapers and now works as an artist and art teacher.

A big part of the B&B is Dion's atelier, where she paints and gives classes. Her works and those of other painters brighten the walls throughout the inn. She calls her style figurative-fantasy and she creates a lot of portraits of women, often inspired by Modigliani, as well as impressionistic landscapes.

**To sleep:** La Galerie has four guest rooms, all on the second floor. Two have private bathrooms and two share. The rooms are done in natural pastels of sand, ochre and moss, with country-style beds covered in white eyelet or quilts and iron bedsteads. There is lots of history here: original pine floors, a refurbished claw-foot tub in one of the bathrooms; some antique furniture from Paquette's family; and a skylight in an angled ceiling.

**To eat:** Paquette and Dion have created an appealing evening table d'hôte they call the Charbonnade. It's simple and different, and it's a convenience because it is the only game in town.

Supper starts with a home-harvested potage — maybe rutabaga

or asparagus — followed by a leafy salad, a grill-your-own main course of vegetables, meat and fish, and berry pie or sugar pie.

In fine weather, it's served on the new deck overlooking the Richelieu. And it's bring-your-own-wine, so it's good value. Each guest gets a platter of meat, vegetables and fish, as well as a tiny personal barbecue fuelled with eco-conscious sugar cane. Everyone gets tongs for searing and three sauces — dill, garlic and maple-mustard — for dipping.

"People take their time, often as much as two hours, to grill and eat, with wine and wonderful views," Paquette said.

It's truly a local repast, featuring fresh bread and luscious pies from Pâtisserie de la Maison de Pierre; sausages and poultry supplied by La Ferme les Produits d'Antoine; and beef and lamb from Boucherie/Ferme Michel Phaneuf & Colette Pellerin, who raise their livestock without hormones or chemical feed.

Breakfast always is three courses, perhaps fruit salad, omelettes and a dessert of waffles or crêpes, with maple syrup from Dion's family sugar shack in Marieville.

**The neighbourhood:** St-Antoine-sur-Richelieu is one of six picturesque villages linked by the river and by history. The local attractions include orchards, marinas, vintage architecture, historic sites

and ferries traversing the river linking St-Antoine, St-Marc-sur-Richelieu, St-Denis-sur-Richelieu and St-Charles-sur-Richelieu. The agricultural towns of Calixa-Lavallée and Verchères also are part of the tourism collective called Regroupement entre fleuve et rivière (Le REFER, [entrefleuveetriviere.com](http://entrefleuveetriviere.com)).

St-Antoine, founded in 1750, is known for its unusual architecture, including an old convent, churches and the fantastical Châteaueau St-Antoine (1897), which is used for weddings.

La Maison de la Culture Eulalie-Durocher ([maisonculture@sasr.ca](mailto:maisonculture@sasr.ca)), in a former rectory, will exhibit the landscapes of artist Réal Sabourin (until Aug. 28) and Lumières 13e édition, a collective of works by photographers of the Richelieu Valley (Sept. 17-Oct. 30).

These Richelieu communities were hotbeds of nationalism during the Patriotes Rebellion of 1837-38, a grassroots movement, with civilians fighting the British military occupiers to keep Lower Canada separate from Upper Canada.

La Galerie is adjacent to a park dedicated to Les Patriotes. And across the river in St-Denis, La Maison nationale des Patriotes tells the story of the peoples' rebellion led by Louis-Joseph Papineau. This tiny museum showcases the primitive weapons of ordinary citizens who fought — farmers with pitchforks and blacksmiths wielding hammers.

The 1800s will come alive Aug. 11-14 during the Fête du Vieux Marché in St-Denis, which will feature costumed animators, musical shows, family fun and kiosks recreating the métiers of old — weaving, horseshoeing, knitting and stained glass ([vieux-marchestdenis.com](http://vieux-marchestdenis.com)).

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