



Like a Hotel rents vacation properties in several areas, including lakefront cottages on Lac Walfred in Ste-Marguerite-du-Lac-Masson in the Laurentians. *LIKE A HOTEL*

# CHALETS ARE LIKE A HOTEL, BUT ALSO FEEL LIKE HOME



**ROCHELLE LASH**  
*Checking In*

Like a Hotel is a company that tailors vacation lodging to your specific needs. It is a little like a hotel, and yet it isn't.

It has a central reservations office in Montreal open 24/7 for bookings. And it has a portfolio of about 65 accommodations in all sizes, shapes and styles in different locations.

"We are a hotel, but a hotel with several addresses," says Like a Hotel founder Jeff Letendre, who was a musician and a waiter before he got into the business of vacation rentals. "We have 100 bedrooms scattered across Montreal, for example, instead of having a 100-room building."

"Each property has a hotel permit and we have security patrols at all the properties."

It is like a hotel, but also like home, because guests can cook in — with their own groceries — and spread out with children and friends in large multi-bedroom spaces.

Guests can book online, on the telephone or in person at the downtown office, which acts as a front desk for all the properties. They get confirmations and details by email, proceed to their lodging and do a "self-check-in." That means when they arrive at the "hotel" entrance, they call the central office and the staff walks them through the smart technology that unlocks the door.

Like a Hotel accommodates clients from around the world, particularly during the frantic summer season. Letendre rents accommodations in the Plateau

and Quartier des Spectacles for visitors to the Jazz Festival and Just for Laughs. Lofts in the Old Port are popular with young music fans heading for Osheaga. And families coming to Montreal for weddings and reunions are renting these homes-away-from-home so they can stay for a week of celebrations and enjoy the city.

The countryside option is a domaine of deluxe chalets on Club Lac Walfred in Ste-Marguerite-du-Lac-Masson, near Ste-Adèle in the Laurentians. It's a favourite with companies who organize getaways for team-building and strategy sessions.

**Chalet life:** Club Lac Walfred is an estate of 11 deluxe chalets, about half situated on the lakeshore and half tucked into the forest.

These are airy two-storey log houses with cathedral ceilings, pine interiors and lots of windows opening onto the Laurentian landscape. The lodges are so close to nature, it's like bringing the outdoors in.

Each chalet has a hot tub, a barbecue, a spacious living room with either a wood-burning or a gas fireplace, three bathrooms, and a fully equipped kitchen. Guests can bed down in comfort in three or four bedrooms, plus an open mezzanine and a sofa bed, adding up to accommodations for about eight or 10 people.

The lower-level playroom has a pool table and one of the two smart TVs (there also is one in the living room). It comes with cable channels, but if you have a Netflix account, you can stream your favourite show.

The lake is motor-free, so it's beautiful for swimming, and Like a Hotel supplies kayaks and pedal boats.

The domaine is about two kilometres from the village of Ste-Marguerite-du-Lac-Masson and four from Estérel, which has lots of activities, including larger

IF YOU GO

**Club Lac Walfred/Like a Hotel:** 800-890-7155, 514-796-5453; clublacwalfred.com or likeahotel.com. Reservation office: 54 Prince Arthur St. E. Laurentian chalets at 173 Lac Walfred St., Ste-Marguerite-du-Lac-Masson.

**Price:** Rates fluctuate. Three- or four-bedroom chalets cost approximately \$400-\$550 for six or eight people (\$30 for each extra person), including a \$100 housekeeping fee, watercraft, Wi-Fi, hot tub, equipped kitchen and bed and bed linens. Extra: daily housekeeping.

**Digital Detox by U.N.I. Training:** 438-386-6010, 514-653-7283, unitraining.ca; Sept. 22-25; Club Lac Walfred, Ste-Marguerite-du-Lac-Masson; \$700 p.p., double occ., or \$820 single, including meals, activities. Extra: massage or acupuncture, \$85.

**Tourism:** Ville d'Estérel: 450-228-3232, villedesterel.com.

boat rentals, golf, fishing, and in winter, cross-country skiing, skating, snowmobiling and snowshoeing.

**Wellness retreat:** U.N.I. Training, a workout studio with branches in Griffintown and Old Montreal, is heading to the chalets of Club Lac Walfred for a wellness and workout retreat called Digital Detox, Sept. 22-25.

Digital Detox participants will ditch their cellphones and other



Like a Hotel's lakefront chalets in the Laurentians have three or four bedrooms. *LIKE A HOTEL*

mobile devices and will go full immersion into exercise, nature and meditation. A highlight will be health-centric cuisine by Emma Cardarelli, a chef and co-owner of Nora Gray, the stylish gourmet restaurant on St. Jacques St. in Montreal.

With a limit of about 20 participants, Digital Detox will be intimate enough to be personal and big enough to be sociable.

On opening night, guests will gather around a bonfire and will set out their digital goals — limiting usage and reducing stress — and learn about the tools available to help control their habits.

U.N.I. trainer David MacLeod has planned full days of activities, starting at 8 a.m. with yoga or qi gong (also a breathing and energy flow art), followed by a guided trail run or a nature

walk, canoeing lessons, swimming in Lac Walfred and outdoor workouts.

On the less strenuous side, MacLeod has mapped out down time for massages and acupuncture, plus pre-sleep meditation, a sweat lodge session and mindfulness workshops by mental performance coach Camille Charbonneau.

Energetic days start with great breakfasts, so chef Cardarelli will serve smoothies, avocado-egg-and-tomato sandwiches and eggs and kale (one choice per day).

Lunches will be salads with quinoa and nuts, BBQ kebabs and shrimp and avocado salads; and dinners will be BBQ chicken, flank steak with broccoli salad and grilled salmon with potato and watercress.

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