



Fairmont Le Château Frontenac will hold dozens of anniversary celebrations through 2018, from the cutting of a giant birthday cake to themed dinners.

# MAJESTIC CHÂTEAU FRONTENAC CELEBRATES ITS 125TH IN STYLE

*Year of events showcases fascinating past of beautiful Quebec City landmark*



ROCHELLE LASH

Fairmont Le Château Frontenac is throwing an extraordinary 125th birthday bash, and you're all invited to this year-long extravaganza of culture, cuisine, history and celebrity.

The queen of Quebec City hotels, Le Château Frontenac boasts landmark status and deep roots. Opened in 1893, it was named for a 17th-century governor of New France and is a National Historic Site of Canada.

Its majestic setting and castle-inspired architecture define the city's skyline, and guests enjoy singular views of the Saint Lawrence River and the treasured UNESCO heritage site of Old Quebec.

Le Château Frontenac also has a broad international reach.

According to Instagram, it is Quebec City's most geotagged location. Its website operates in nine languages, including Japanese and Arabic, and its virtually unparalleled guest register features a century of VIPs, including Queen Elizabeth, Winston Churchill, Chiang Kai-

shek, Charles Lindbergh, Steven Spielberg, Paul McCartney and Céline Dion.

To celebrate its anniversary, the Château is organizing dozens of events throughout 2018, many of them free.

"We're showcasing the best of Quebec City along with the hotel's fascinating past," said general manager Robert Mercure. "Throughout 2018 we'll present cultural happenings with Université Laval and l'Orchestre symphonique de Québec, as well as outdoor excitement such as a cabane à sucre, skating and tubing with Village Nordik and Carnaval de Québec."

**Events:** Here are some highlights from the celebrations.

See [chateaufrentenac125.com](http://chateaufrentenac125.com) for a complete calendar.

Jumping into the spirit of the Carnaval de Québec, which starts Jan. 26, the Château will host a tea party with the duchesses and queen of the winter carnival (Jan. 27). There will also be a special brunch and a toasty warm view of the carnival's thrilling ice-canoe race in the Saint Lawrence River, which will be screened indoors in real time (Feb. 4).

In March, culture kicks in when Université Laval's music faculty presents L'Étoile, a satiric light opera by Emmanuel Chabrier offered in a convivial music-

and-dessert format (March 17).

The hotel's Great Spring Festival will have an Easter theme, and will feature chocolate and maple treats and family entertainment (April).

In May, the Château will display artworks by students from elementary schools, Université Laval and the Société artistique et culturelle de Québec (May 11 to 16).

Throughout July and August, lectures, historical exhibits and other events will focus on the birth of the Château. Here's one for everyone: a giant birthday cake, cut into thousands of pieces, will be served outdoors on Terrasse Dufferin (July 1 and 3).

Le Château Frontenac's ultimate historic moment came during the Second World War's Quebec Conferences.

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt hunkered down here to plan the Allied invasion of German-occupied France in 1943 and the demilitarization of Germany in 1944.

Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King acted as host. To commemorate the conferences, the Château will present themed dinners with costumed characters of the era (Aug. 17 to 24).

The Great Chefs Gathering will bring together 11 chefs from First Nations and 11 from Quebec City to explore the province's traditional cuisine (Aug. 25 and 26).

Autumn will buzz with social action. In September, a Harvest Festival will feature local foods,

workshops and wine tastings.

In November, the Château will celebrate the 50th anniversary of Princess Grace's visit.

The year of festivities will wind up with a gala 125th-anniversary party in the ballroom (Dec. 18).

**Hotel:** The Château is still aglow from a \$75-million overhaul that was completed in 2014. All 611 rooms and suites are bedecked with new décor — and no two are the same — and the Moment Spa Le Château Frontenac moved to splendid new quarters.

The sweeping cuisine scene was totally reimagined and now is orchestrated by culinary director Frédéric Cyr, who has global experience as well as deep Quebec roots. He's the son of distinguished chef Renaud Cyr, who was a pioneer during the 1980s in the development of local gourmet ingredients at his Manoir des Érables, a Relais & Châteaux property in Montmagny.

Le Château Frontenac's chef of restaurants Stéphane Modat creates contemporary gastronomy at Champlain ([restaurantchamplain.com](http://restaurantchamplain.com)) with lamb, beef and venison from Quebec, as well as snow crab and scallops from Gaspé, foie gras from Marieville and trout from the Eastern Townships. At Bistro Le Sam ([bistrolesam.com](http://bistrolesam.com)), Modat goes casually gourmet with bison tartare, oysters, crab cakes, lobster, cod, milk-fed piglet, steaks and venison stew.

Tourists and locals alike meet at the 1608 Wine and Cheese Bar

## IF YOU GO

**Fairmont Le Château Frontenac:** 800-441-1414, 418-692-3861, [fairmont.com/frontenac](http://fairmont.com/frontenac); 1 des Carrières St., Quebec City. Pet-friendly, \$35 per day.

**Prices:** Rates fluctuate and promotions are based on availability. Anniversary special starts at \$239 per night until April 30 (minimum two nights, including a \$125 food/beverage credit). After May 1, approximately \$219-\$459 per night, double occupancy; suites, \$699-\$2,279, including indoor pool, whirlpool, steam room, fitness centre. Children under 18 stay for free. Discounts for multiple nights. Extra: parking, Moment Spa. Fairmont President's Club includes Wi-Fi; Fairmont Gold adds private lounge.

**Quebec City Tourism:** 877-783-1608, [quebecregion.com](http://quebecregion.com)

**Carnaval de Québec:** Jan. 26 to Feb. 11; 866-422-7628, [carnaval.qc.ca](http://carnaval.qc.ca)

(1608baravin.com) for goodies such as goat cheese pancakes, smoked salmon and, of course, cheese platters.

In spring the hotel will open eight new suites dedicated to distinguished guests, including the Queen, French President Charles de Gaulle, Pierre and Justin Trudeau, Alfred Hitchcock and William Cornelius Van Horne, who was president of Canadian Pacific Railway when the company built Le Château Frontenac.

The saga continues.

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