



Auberge-Spa Le Madrigal is a cosy inn and restaurant in Bromont with special culinary events once a month. LE MADRIGAL

TRADITIONAL BROMONT INN OOZES WARMTH



ROCHELLE LASH

The core of Auberge-Spa Le Madrigal in Bromont is nearly 140 years old, but it still has lots of life.

Sylvie Bédard and her husband, Alain Simard, operate this warm and traditional inn with help from their daughters, Roxanne, 20, and Audrey, 25, and in summer, Charlotte, 17.

Bédard has extensive hotel administration experience and Simard is a plumber who discovered that his true passion is cooking, specifically what he calls “back to roots” cuisine.

Le Madrigal is a modest getaway with 12 guest rooms, an intimate bar, an attractive dining room and a four-room spa with treatments and a hot tub. The original farmhouse look continued throughout various expansions, with wide-planked floors, lots of woodwork and pine panelling, and colourful cotton fabrics. The guest rooms have been updated, the bathrooms are fresh, and Bédard currently is overseeing an update in the dining room.

Le Madrigal looks and feels cosy, but it is a good-sized operation that connects with local attractions, including the car-free cycling path that connects

with other Eastern Townships routes, Bromont Montagne d’Experiences and the Brome Missisquoi Wine Route. Bromont’s Vieux Village is home to artisanal shops such as La Maison Oléa Savonnerie, which supplies the dreamy bath soap at Le Madrigal, and Bibop & Lula, a gift shop with vintage accents and kids’ stuff.

Special events: Le Madrigal is popping with parties. Roxanne Simard, the couple’s 20-year-old daughter, is helping to organize Le Club des Gourmands once each month on Thursdays. The evenings will include welcome cocktails and convivial dinners at long communal tables.

The calendar will feature a surf-and-turf night for Earth Day, April 19; a girlie Mother’s Day with gin spritzers and a sale of vintage clothes, May 17; Gentlemen’s Night for Father’s Day, with short-rib nachos, tomahawk steak, cigars and Scotch, June 21; an International Supper, July 19; a Quebec local fest, Aug. 16; Wine and beer pairings, Sept. 20; The Harvest, Oct. 18; Hunters’ Game Feast, Nov. 15; and Holiday Comfort Food, Dec. 20.

Dining in: Le Madrigal’s regular dinner menu showcases products of the local food circuit, Terroir et Saveurs de Québec, with such starters as raclette of pears topped with Griffon cheese from the town of Noyan, escargots au gratin prepared with 1608 cheese from Charlevoix and duck foie gras crème brûlée.



Duck magret is a specialty at the gastronomic restaurant Le Cellier du Roi in Bromont. LE CELLIER DU ROI

Main courses — mostly upscale comfort food — include wild mushroom risotto, cod with chorizo, lamb osso bucco, cassoulet of Brome Lake duck and Highland beef with truffle mayo.

Simard is also on the job for breakfast. His standouts are seasonal, so watch for grilled cheese with caramelized apples, a casserole of eggs and sausages, and tiny crêpes with apples and chocolate from Le Musée du chocolat, also in Bromont.

Le Madrigal’s bar is a good stop for après-sports or TV events and privately imported wines, local microbrews from Le Bilboquet and cocktails blended with Quebec spirits such as Chic Choc spiced rum, Romeo’s gin, Sortilège maple whisky and Piger Henricus gin.

Dining out: Just down the road, but a totally different scene, is

Restaurant Le Cellier du Roi par Jérôme Ferrer, the distinguished chef who runs the Relais & Châteaux Europea in downtown Montreal.

Part of Ferrer’s culinary mini-empire, Le Cellier has an unusual location in the clubhouse of the Royal Bromont golf course. Operated by Ferrer’s restaurant director, François Guérin, it’s sleek, modern and sophisticated, with gastronomic cuisine and a wine list to match. Patrons have pastoral views for lunch, dinner, weddings and indulgent meals, not to mention a most delectable 19th hole for a golf refuelling.

Chef Emmanuel Godin presents delicacies, mainly from the Eastern Townships, such as foie gras with gingerbread crumble, wild mushrooms, venison tartare, guinea fowl, lobster risotto, cod and duck. Among luscious

IF YOU GO

Bromont is a 50-minute drive from Montreal via Highway 10 east to Exit 78.

Auberge-Spa Le Madrigal: 877-534-3588, 450-534-3588, lemadrigal.ca; 46 Bromont Blvd., Bromont.

Price: Rates fluctuate. Three categories of rooms, including breakfast, exterior hot tub, Wi-Fi, in-room pod coffee: The Classic, two double beds, \$109-\$159 for two; The Harmony, king bed and fireplace, \$129-\$179; The Melody, king bed, fireplace, double whirlpool, \$149-\$199.

Packages available with dinner, spa treatments, snowshoeing, Kava Tours for ice wine/ice cider, cycling, Bromont Montagne d’Experiences (skiing, mountain biking, Parc Aquatique (skibromont.com)).

Madrigal Spa: Mon.-Sun.; 60-minute treatments, \$75; 30-minute treatments, \$35-\$40. Half-day package, \$180; full-day, \$320.

Madrigal dinner: dinner, Tues.-Sat.; gratuities included; four-course table d’hôte \$44; à la carte appetizers, \$8-\$12, and mains, \$24-\$27, or \$40 for filet mignon. Four-course breakfast, for non-guests, \$15.

Le Cellier du Roi par Jérôme Ferrer: 888-281-0017, 450-534-4653, royalbromont.com; 400 chemin Compton, Bromont. Approximate prices/current schedule: Lunch, Wed.-Fri., three courses from \$24.50; dinner, Wed.-Sat., three courses from \$42.50; à la carte available, main courses, \$29-\$60; tasting menu, \$65. Golf-dinner package (in season), \$90 p.p., or \$75 on Sundays after 1 p.m. Starting Mother’s Day, May 13, lunch, Mon-Fri.; dinner, Mon.-Sun.

Eastern Townships info: 800-355-5755, easterntownships.org.

desserts are tarte Tatin, maple crème brûlée or molten chocolate cake.

Spa life: Le Madrigal has a four-room spa on the lower level where you can have treatments, including body exfoliation, massage, back relaxation therapy, water therapy, a facial or a parafin bath for hands or feet.

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