

HOTEL INTEL

NEW ALT+ REFLECTS SUCCESS OF BROSSARD'S DIX30

Shopping, spa and more shopping prove winning combination for hotel



ROCHELLE LASH

I have read surveys that proclaim 70 per cent of travellers list shopping as their No. 1 pastime. Even if that number is off by half, it still means that browsing and buying are deeply meaningful to a lot of people — especially with the holidays approaching.

Group Germain Hotels has pounced on this and recently opened Alt+ Hotel Quartier DIX30, its second property at the heart of the sprawling DIX30 shopping centre in Brossard.

Alt+ is a new brand for the Quebec-based company, which operates nine affordable Alt hotels across Canada (the latest in Calgary's East Village) and seven stylish Le Germain boutique hotels. (Le Germain Montréal is closed for renovations until summer 2019.)

The neighbourhood: At first I was confounded by the Quartier DIX30 suburban location, but when I stayed overnight, I was hooked.

You can craft an amazing 24- or 48-hour getaway with a wellness escape at SkySpa, a full-fledged Nordic spa with body and beauty services. The SkySpa Signature Massage is a guaranteed stress reliever, and the Skin Care Synergy combines treatments for face, body, hands and feet. You'll feel relaxed and rejuvenated after the thermal experience: hot tubs, a cold plunge pool with a waterfall, plus a sauna and steam room. And Quartier DIX30 is home to more than 50 restaurants, many with gorgeous décor and terraces open in summer. There is a lot of gourmet fare, but no pretensions.

Siam is a contemporary restaurant that serves traditional, delectable Thai cuisine. Flavours

IF YOU GO

Alt+ Hotel: 833-743-9156, 450-500-9156; altplushotel.com, legermainhotels.com; Quartier DIX30, 9156 Leduc Blvd., Brossard. Bar Les Cousins opens at 4 p.m. daily.

Price: Starting at \$214 for two. Four room styles available, for two or four people, including kitchenettes with Nespresso pod coffee, Wi-Fi, TV with Chromecast, Nama-Stay videos/yoga mats, 24-hour fitness, computers, underground parking (free), late checkout on availability. Children under 12 stay free; pets, \$30 per visit; valet parking, \$15. Packages with continental breakfast and Boutique-Spa Caudalie.

Quartier Dix30: quartier-dix30.com

SkySpa: skyspa.ca. Reservations recommended; bring sandals/swimwear. Thermal experience, \$34-\$44.

Siam Restaurant Thai: 450-445-4141; siamdix30.com.

of coriander, lemon grass and chili create exciting dishes such as roast duck, panang beef, tamarind codfish and ginger chicken. Staples like pad Thai, curries, tom yum soup, papaya salads and satays are done with flair. (Siam also recently opened in Hôtel Le Crystal in downtown Montreal.)

Quartier DIX30 is like a small city (but is quiet at night), with about 250 shops, from an Apple Store to a Porsche dealership, as well as gourmand goodies like Boucherie Magnan Cuisine and Bilboquet ice cream, plus Marshalls, my fave retail therapy



The casual-chic Alt+ Hotel Quartier is Quebec-based Group Germain Hotels' second property in the DIX30 shopping centre in Brossard. PHOTOS: GROUP GERMAIN HOTELS



The décor is fresh and simple, and the desk-dining tables are popular.

stop. Families love the Spin Skate Park, Laser Game Evolution, the 20-screen Cineplex Odeon Brossard and especially Bfly, a captivating butterfly aviary.

Imagine a shopping spree for housewares, linens and décor items from mattresses to martini glasses. Or a sports day checking out a free Canadiens training session at DIX30's Complexe Sportif Bell.

Alt+ factors: Alt+ is an upgraded offshoot of the "no-frills chic" Alt banner. It has 168 spacious, loft-inspired studios, some for two people and some for four.

The décor is fresh and simple, with black and white panels, and natural touches like unbleached

wood and grass cloth walls. They all have kitchenettes and desk-dining tables, which are particularly popular with road warriors who are weary of resto food on frequent business trips.

Alt+ perks include heated underground parking (self-parking is free) and Chromecast, which streams Netflix via smartphone. And Group Germain's signature features include a 24-hour fitness room, Nama-Stay yoga videos with Lululemon mats (on request) and late checkouts, when available, if you book directly through the hotel.

Alt+ is a green venture and has partnered with two Montreal companies that create eco-con-

scious products. The exclusive perfume house Ruby Brown supplies vegan toiletries, and the fashion house Frank and Oak designed the staff's outfits.

Operations-wise, Alt+ is eco-conscious, with geothermal heating and cooling, LED lighting, efficient water and heat recovery systems, recycling and thermal windows.

Bar Les Cousins: This super-chic lounge, named for the children of the owners of Group Germain, has a rich Mad Men look designed by Atelier Zébulon Perron of Montreal. It's both vintage and contemporary, featuring lots of brass trim, seafoam green velour bar stools, royal blue booths and a long burgundy banquette, plus marble tables in colours of jade and ebony. Hanging plants add a fresh, inviting air.

Les Cousins stocks an extensive selection of 38 Canadian gins and a wildly creative cocktail list, including a create-your-own gin and tonic program in which you might add flavours of cucumber, rosemary, thyme, mint, red peppercorn or hibiscus. Head bar chef Adaina Smyth and her team shake and stir artisan-style, using in-house juices and syrups and local tonics and bitters.

A menu of light bites features excellent cheese, charcuterie and pâtés from regional suppliers, served with house-made chutneys and jams.

rochelle@rochellelash.com

WHERE TO STAY

TO ADVERTISE PLEASE CALL
514-987-2279



VERMONT



GREEN MOUNTAIN SUITES HOTEL

401 Dorset St, South Burlington, VT 05403, USA
www.greenmountainsuites.com

Escape to beautiful Burlington, Vermont and Experience all the Charm of a Boutique Vermont Country Inn. Luxurious One-Bedroom King Suite starting at \$119 weekdays and \$139 weekends. Includes Fireside Breakfast served each morning & Fireside Reception with Beer, Wine and Dinner (M-TR). Heated Indoor Pool/Jacuzzi & Exercise facility. Walking distance to University Mall and close to Lake Champlain and the Church Street Marketplace. Promotional rate may not be available during select periods. Inventory for this promotional rate is limited. Please contact hotel for more information. Toll-free reservations 866.337.1616



MAINE



VISIT FREEPORT

visitfreeport.com 207-865-1212
Visit us at the Freeport, Maine Train & Information Center
23 Depot St. Freeport, Maine 04032 USA

Experience why we're New England's favorite shopping destination. Located on the shores of Casco Bay, Freeport is world-famous for our hundreds of brand-name outlets and local boutiques housed in charming brick buildings, some dating back as far as the 18th century. In addition to world-class shopping, Freeport offers delectable local cuisine, four-star lodging and a diverse assortment of enjoyable activities for all ages and interests. Rich in history, nature and the arts, you'll come to shop and stay to play.



VERMONT



SMART SUITES

www.smartsuitesburlington.com
1700 Shelburne Rd., So. Burlington, Vt.
Toll free 877-862-6800

Come and enjoy our hospitality. FALL/WINTER SPECIAL: NEW RATES: Studio \$85.00US/night or a one bedroom suite at \$95.00US including a deluxe continental breakfast and free WIFI. Mention The Gazette special. Not valid with any other discounts and may not be available on certain week-ends. Rates effective November 1, 2018 - May 1, 2019. Take Exit 13 off I-89, left on Rt 7/Shelburne Rd. for 1.5 miles. Same entrance as Holiday Inn Express.