

HOTEL INTEL

Eastern Townships, Montérégie combine cycling with fine cuisine



ROCHELLE LASH

The new Vélouroute Gourmande is a tourism trail that syncs cycling with fine cuisine and other attractions throughout the Eastern Townships and Montérégie.

Loaded with charm, history and agri-delights, the wheel-friendly pathway touches on a whopping 120 eateries, cultural attractions and 80 lodgings of different styles, sizes and price points. You can choose from microbreweries, wineries, cideries, bakeries, ice cream parlours and eateries from homespun to epicurean. And you can bed down in a B&B, chalet or hotel.

The Vélouroute starts in Montreal, circles Jean-Drapeau Park and heads to the South Shore, passing through Chambly and St-Jean-sur-Richelieu in the region of Montérégie. It winds up in Sherbrooke, in the Eastern Townships, for a total of 235 kilometres.

That's a lot to take in, but you can plan to do only segments of the circuit and outline an itinerary of a few days at veloroutegourmande.com.

Many hardy travellers carry all their gear in backpacks, but if that's too rough, you can call the cycling gurus at Voyager à vélo.

IF YOU GO

Vélouroute Gourmande: veloroutegourmande.com, easterntownships.org; tourisme-monteregie.qc.ca.
Transportation/equipment: 418-571-1011, voyageravelo.com; shuttle, bike rentals, itinerary.

They can customize trips and also transport people and luggage from inn to inn. They'll even drive your car to your last stop.

Here are some lodging and dining highlights of the new Vélouroute Gourmande.

Montérégie: If your first segment is Montreal to Chambly (about 30 km), you can cruise along the Chambly Canal and make a sightseeing stop at the Fort Chambly National Historic Site (reopening in May). You'll be rewarded at Café MJ with a pick-me-up lunch of smoothies, sandwiches, brownies and fancy coffees. Nearby, the Garde-Manger de François has an express counter with the fixings for the perfect picnic.

It's another 20 km to a first sleepover in St-Jean-sur-Richelieu. A top recommendation is the fairly new Quality Hotel Centre de Congrès. It doesn't have a lot of country charm, but it does have conveniences and an indoor pool.

Nearby attractions include Galerie d'art du Vieux St-Jean; Musée du Haut Richelieu, which



The new Vélouroute Gourmande winds through Montérégie and the Eastern Townships from Montreal to Sherbrooke with stops at inns, dining spots and local attractions. DAPHNÉ CARON

looks at 300 years of settlement; Tite Frette, a boutique selling microbrews and local food products, and Autour de la table, a café-boutique with gifts and home decor items.

For food and drink in St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, two appealing spots are Glen Morgan's Irish Pub or the affiliated Bistro La Morgane, which has wide-ranging choices, including exotic Asian octopus dumplings and homegrown Quebec duck confit.

Eastern Townships: If your destination is the Townships, you can tackle the 87 kilometres from Montreal to Bromont or drive to Bromont and set off from there to Farnham, Granby and Waterloo.

Auberge Nuits de St-Georges, a pleasant B&B on Bromont's main street, is so bike friendly that the owners will permit guests to leave their cars for few days so they can explore the Vélouroute. The inn has a new annex with a fireplace lounge and sauna, and the garden will bloom soon. Breakfast is organic.

Bromont is a town with everything — sports, art, shops,

wellness and lots of food and drink. Confiserie Bromont is a must-stop for sweets and for lunch or dinner. Other favourites include Restaurant Le Gourmet, Bistro Le 633 and Restaurant les 4 Canards.

In North Hatley, the darling Auberge La Chocolatière has 12 air-conditioned rooms, some with views of Lake Massawippi. A counter displays all the chocolates you can imagine, which are great energy boosters for cycling or beautiful gifts to take home.

The Bistro de l'auberge la chocolatière has a huge beverage menu of smoothies, coffee, tea, beer, cider wine and cocktails and a very generous happy hour that runs from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Breakfast might be chocolate-banana crepes or eggs Benedict with a fruit bowl topped with ganache, and lunch does updates on grilled cheese, burgers and fish 'n' chips.

North Hatley's attractions are almost all within walking or cycling distance of the centre of town — boutiques, golf, beach, canoeing/kayaking, the public market and outdoor concerts.

You surely have worked up an appetite and you might consider a splurge at the ne plus ultra of Townships gastronomy. The Relais & Châteaux, Manoir Hovey, is arguably Quebec's top country hotel.

The historic Tap Room has such signature dishes as beef bourguignon and Abenaki pou-tine and the more formal Le Hatley serves delicacies like truffle risotto, shellfish velouté as well as duck, lamb, fish and beef.

Manoir Hovey's guest rooms and suites are divine, and for extra pampering, a new spa pavilion will open in June with massages, hot tubs, a sauna, a steam bath and a passageway connecting to the refurbished outdoor pool.

In Sherbrooke, at the top of my list are a sleepover at the Grand Times Hotel, a visit to the Marché de la Gare and a meal at the very refined, very French-Quebec restaurant Auguste. Les Vraies Richesses, a bakery and café, can pack a feast-to-go of salads, charcuterie and pastries.

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TV TIMES TONIGHT - SUNDAY, APRIL 2											MOVIES	SPORTS	TALK	
	B	W	E	V	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30		
2	SRC	10	4	4	2	6:30 Découverte (N)	Les aventures du (N)	Tout le monde en parle (N)			:20 Le téléjournal (N)	:50 Sports express		
3	CBS	282	21	21	87	60 Minutes (N)		2023 CMT Music Awards (N)						
5	NBC	280	23	18	84	Dateline NBC			Magnum P.I. (N)		The Blacklist (N)			
6	CBC	206	13	13	6	Best In Miniature (N)		A Year on Planet Earth Summer (N)		Essex County (N)		The National (N)		
8	CJOH	229	-	-	10	Sullivan's Crossing (N)		Celebrity Jeopardy!		Magnum P.I. (N)		The Company You Keep (N)		
9	MATV	-	9	9	9	6:30 Ma premiere	Transcestral	Cap sur 2030		Regard psy	Figures marquantes de la liberté			
10	TVA	115	7	7	4	6:30 Sortez-moi d'ici	La voix (N)				La vraie nature (N)	TVA Nouvelles (N)		
12	CTV	70	11	11	7	Sullivan's Crossing (N)		Celebrity Jeopardy!		Magnum P.I. (N)	The Company You Keep (N)			
17	TQc	138	8	8	3	Deux hommes en or		Robert en CharleboisScope		c L'enfant prodige ('10, Dra) Lothaire Bluteau, Marc Beland.				
22	ABC	281	22	22	86	America's Funniest Home Videos (N)		American Idol (N)		The Company You Keep (N)				
33	PBS	-	57	-	88	Midsomer Murders		Call the Midwife (N)		Sanditon on Masterpiece (N)		Marie-Antoinette (N)		
35	Noovo	114	5	5	5	6:30 Big Brother Célébrités (N)		Survivor Québec (N) (P)		Survivor Québec (N)	c ** G.I. Joe: les représailles ('13)			
44	FOX	283	46	36	85	Next Level Chef		The Simpsons	Ice Age	Bob's Burgers	HouseBroken (N)	FOX44 News at 10	What Matters	
48	GBL	234	3	3	8	60 Minutes (N)		FBI		CSI: Vegas		The Blacklist (N)		
57	PBS	-	24	40	89	Death in Paradise		Call the Midwife (N)		Sanditon on Masterpiece (N)		Marie-Antoinette (N)		
62	CITY	207	14	14	14	Canada's Got Talent		American Idol (N)		Mom		Mom		
A&E	615	39	-	90	5:30 c ** Jack Reacher: Never Go Back		c ** The Accountant ('16, Thril) Anna Kendrick, Ben Affleck.							
AMC	293	-	-	209	6:45 c ** Uncle Buck ('89, Com) Amy Madigan, John Candy.				Lucky Hank (N)		Lucky Hank			
APTn	23	10	58	16	Polar Bear Town		Life Below Zero Canada Out In The Cold		c Red Snow ('19, Dra) Samuel Marty, Tantoo Cardinal.					
CBCNN	502	48	48	18	The Fifth Estate		CBC News Network (N)		The National		The National			
CD	129	20	20	36	Premier contact Les chemins de la guérison		Douanes sous haute	En quête de preuves	Le dernier vol De la CIA à Pablo Escobar		Guerre-enchèr	Syndics		
CNN	500	36	27	81	CNN Newsroom With Jim Acosta (N)		Eva Longoria Mexico City		Eva Longoria Yucatan (N)		Heaven's Gate The Awakening (N)			
CRVM1	300	-	-	211	6:45 c * Playmobil: The Movie ('19, Child)			The Circus: Inside		Yellowjackets (N)		Dexter: New Blood		
CTVDR	30	34	-	92	Chicago Fire		Chicago Fire		Ride (N)		Chicago Fire			
CTVSc	90	32	-	101	5:45 c *** The LEGO Movie 2 ('19, Ani)		c ** Battleship ('12, Sci-Fi) Alexander Skarsgård, Taylor Kitsch.							
CV	135	44	35	44	Grossesses XXL		Dre Boutons		Infirmiers en Australie		Vendre ou rénover au Québec			
DISC	636	37	37	102	Naked and Afraid: Solo		Naked and Afraid (N)				Naked and Afraid: Solo (N)			
FAM	556	-	-	64	c ** Speed Racer ('08, Act) Christina Ricci, Emile Hirsch.							Crime Scene Kitchen		
HBO1	306	-	-	215	:55 c The Scheme ('20)				Succession (N)		Somebody		Somebody	
HGTV	83	29	-	97	Renovation Resort		Home Town (N)		Home Town (N)		Renovation Resort (N)			
HIST	84	47	-	107	Forged in Fire		Greatest of All Perfect Pairs		Greatest Heists The Gardner Museum Heist		The Curse of Oak Island (N)			
MAX	142	48	32	32	6:00 c Ce qu'il faut savoir sur l'amour ('22)		c *** Course Express ('12, Act) Michael Shannon, Joseph Gordon-Levitt.					c *** Duel ('71) Dennis Weaver.		
MUCH	570	35	-	112	American Dad!	American Dad!	American Dad!	American Dad!	The Simpsons	The Simpsons	American Dad!	American Dad!		
OWN	526	-	-	94	The Oprah Winfrey Show		The Oprah Winfrey Show		Love & Marriage: Huntsville (N)		Ready to Love (N)			
PEACH	294	-	-	218	Young Sheldon	Young Sheldon	One-on-One With Monica Pearson		Atlanta News First Sunday at 9pm (N)		Atlanta News First Sunday at 10pm (N)			
RDI	126	19	19	19	6:30 Zone économie	Le national (N)	La semaine verte (N)		Le téléjournal (N)		Les coulisses du pouvoir		Le national (N)	
RDS	123	33	33	25	6:00 Hockey LNH Sénateurs d'Ottawa c. Blue Jackets de Columbus (N)		Sur la ligne / :50 Formule 1 Grand Prix d'Australie							
SC	73	205	205	205	Canadian Film Fest (P)				The Pact		Hidden Assets			
SE	180	-	-	201	6:00 c ** Gigi & Nate ('22) Charlie Rowe.		c Manipulations en prison ('23) Tricia Black, Celina Sinden.		c *** Le grand pari ('20) Damian Lewis, Toni Collette.					
SHOW	616	40	-	105	6:00 c ** The Fate of the Furious ('17, Act) Dwayne Johnson, Vin Diesel.				c ** Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw ('19) Jason Statham, Dwayne Johnson.					
SLICE	27	-	-	99	6:00 c ** Collateral Beauty ('16) Will Smith.		SWV & Xscape: The Queens of R&B (N)		The Neighborhood	The Neighborhood	Man With a Plan	Man With a Plan		
SN1	418	-	-	184	6:00 NHL Hockey Philadelphia Flyers at Pittsburgh Penguins (N)		NHL's Best		Blue Jays in 30	Raptors in 30	Blue Jays in 30	Raptors in 30		
SNE	406	38	38	179	6:00 NHL Hockey Philadelphia Flyers at Pittsburgh Penguins (N)		NHL's Best		Plays of the Month	Blue Jays in 30	Sportsnet Central	Sportsnet Central		
STARZ1	304	55	-	216	6:40 c ** Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets ('17) Dane DeHaan.		Power Book II: Ghost			Party Down			:35 c ** Red 2 ('13)	
TCM	292	-	-	219	6:00 c ** Larceny, Inc. ('42)		c *** The Public Enemy ('31) Jean Harlow, James Cagney.			:45 Jack L. Warner: The Last Mogul				
TLC	521	27	39	91	6:00 90 Day Fiancé: The Other Way		90 Day Fiancé: The Other Way (N)					Seeking Brother Husband (N)		
TLN	700	-	-	250	Cook Like an Italian	Gino's Italian	Ottolenghi's Mediterranean Feast		c Forever Young ('16, Com) Luisa Ranieri, Sabrina Ferilli.					
TOONE	85	49	-	57	c LEGO DC Super Heroes: Justice League: Attack of the Leg...		:45 Cupcake	Batman: Animated	Superman: The	Justice League	Young Justice			
TOONF	87	45	34	53	Teen/ :15 Teen	Teen/ :45 Teen	American Dad!	Family Guy	Les Simpson	La Ligue des	c Suicide squad: le prix de l'enfer ('18)			
TSN2	401	-	-	187	MLB Baseball Philadelphia Phillies at Texas Rangers (N)				MLS Soccer Charlotte FC at Toronto FC					
TSN5	404	28	28	190	6:00 NHL Hockey Ottawa Senators at Columbus Blue Jackets (N)		2023 World Men's Curling Championship Norway vs. Canada (N)							
TV5	145	15	15	29	La vie secrète des chansons		Les petits meurtres d'Agatha Christie							
TVAS	193	-	-	23	5:00 Dans le ring	c ** Bobby Jones: coup de génie ('04, Dra) Claire Forlani, Jim Caviezel. (P)								
TVO	22	-	-	71	Lady Sapiens	:55 Ontario	Bettany Hughes'	Ontario/ Indigenous	The Divided Brain		Grey Roads			
VISN	65	-	-	159	Jim Cantelon Today	Ankerberg	David Jeremiah	Amazing Facts	Prop. Conn	Word for Today (N)	Joel Osteen	Peter Youngren		
WGN	295	-	-	222	Open the Bible		Young Sheldon	Young Sheldon	Last Man Standing	Last Man Standing	WGN Weekend News at Nine (N)			
WSBK	296	-	-	223	The Rookie		SEAL Team		SEAL Team		CBS News Boston Now on TV38 (N)			
YTV	25	-	-	65	6:00 c ** Hotel Transylvania ('12, Ani)		c ** Hotel Transylvania ('12, Ani)					The Hardy Boys		

B – Bell TV; W – Vidéotron West Montréal; E – Vidéotron East Montréal; V – Vidéotron Illico