

A festival of food and song comes to Ste. Adele

ROCHELLE LASH

Freelance

Friday, December 24, 2010

Your best Christmas gift just might be a Valentine's Day ticket to the first edition of J'aime Sainte-Adele. You'll love this new cultural festival in February that will combine culinary adventures, concerts, art exhibitions and a day of outdoor activities for the family.

J'aime Sainte-Adele will focus on fun for foodies from Feb. 1 to 10 when several super restaurants will cook up menus at 25-per-cent off their regular prices. This festival-within-a-festival is called Sainte-Adele est a vous, goutez-y! You can choose your favourite dining spot and whet your appetite by checking the tantalizing menus posted on www.jmstadele.com, starting Jan. 3.

"It's similar to the Gourmand Happening in Old Montreal or New York's Restaurant Week, but it's in the countryside," said Anne Desjardins, whose gastronomic temple, l'Eau a la Bouche is one of 16 dining rooms participating in J'aime Sainte-Adele.

"It's like a teaser, encouraging patrons to try new restaurants at very good value," said Desjardins, a member of the prestigious Grands Chefs of Relais & Chateaux.

The town has an abundance of haute cuisine. With the festival's 25-per-cent discount, you can sample steak and mussels at Chez Milot, scallops and sea bass at La Clef des Champs, or the artful delicacies at l'Eau a la Bouche. The town's dining spots are more than good. They are exceptionally varied. Cafe Viva prepares sushi du jour and beef tartare. And Braise Fute focuses on stew-style dishes like lamb in cassis, osso bucco of venison, veal braised in beer and bison ribs.

"In winter, many Montrealers think of taking a jet and going south, but it also is beautiful to enjoy winter, to ski and skate, and having a wonderful meal afterward is a big part of the pleasure," Desjardins said.

At l'Eau a la Bouche, you will feast on Quebec's finest produce prepared with French flair by one of Canada's most-decorated chefs. Even the reduced-price menus during J'aime Sainte-Adele will feature signature dishes of Desjardins like potage of wild mushrooms, braised rabbit from Stanstead served with foie gras, baby pork chops from Mirabel and Quebec quail with apples and artichokes.

Her husband, Pierre Audette, is the co-owner of l'Eau a la Bouche, a luxurious 21-room inn with an exquisite Nordic spa. Her son Emmanuel is her sous-chef and soulmate in the kitchen.

"With Emmanuel, it is like four hands playing the piano," Desjardins said. "We make beautiful music together. ... It's a real family business, like in

Europe."

Gourmet cuisine with a price cut is a powerful draw. But, Edith Provost, who is orchestrating J'aime Sainte-Adele, reports that there are tantalizing do-it-yourself options: workshops on the edible flowers of the Laurentians, wine pairings or the most seductive dishes for a romantic Valentine's dinner. That is happening Feb. 12-13 at l'Ecole Hoteliere des Laurentides, the renown culinary school.

J'aime Sainte-Adele is not only about food. Quebec chanteuse and actress France Castel, honorary president of the fest, will introduce a concert series at l'Eglise Sainte-Adele. The lineup includes the string quartet Rhapsodie performing hits from romantic movies; the vocal group Trois, Quebec's three tenors whose pop-opera renditions are a smash success; and the duet Jean-Francois Breau et Marie-Eve Janvier, who are partners in love and music.

Family day will close the fest on Feb. 13 with face painting for children, skating to music and free rides on dogsleds and horse-drawn sleighs.

rochelleink@aol.com

- - -

IF YOU GO

Ste. Adele is a one-hour, 10-minute drive from downtown Montreal. Take Highway 15 north to Exit 67 and Route 117 north.

J'aime Sainte-Adele: 450-745-3161, www.jmsteadele.com. The event, which runs from Feb. 1 to 13, will combine gourmet dining, cuisine workshops and stage shows. Special menus with 25-percent discounts at participating restaurants will be available online starting Jan. 3. Tickets for workshops and concerts cost \$30, available at locations in the Laurentians or via Admission, 514-790-1245, www.admission.com.

L'Eau a la Bouche, a Relais & Chateaux in Ste. Adele, is one of the inns participating in the first J'aime Sainte-Adele festival.

Hotel-Restaurant l'Eau a la Bouche: 888-828-2991, 450-229-2991, www.leaualabouche.com; 3003 Sainte-Adele Blvd. (Route 117), Ste. Adele. Food: festival prices (Feb. 1-10) are \$14.95 for lunch at Cafe-Bistro H2O; \$59.95 for dinner at Restaurant L'Eau a la Bouche. The Discovery Menu, which runs all year, is \$160 for six courses and wine pairings. Lodging: rooms from \$155 for two, per night, Sundays to Fridays, or from \$195 for two Saturdays or holidays. The Gourmet Package starts at \$170 (\$190 Saturdays) per person, double occupancy, with lodging, breakfast and dinner. The Culinary Discovery adds wine pairings and a more elaborate dinner, starts at \$265 (\$285 Saturdays) per person, double occupancy. Packages are available with Nordic spa and massages.

© Montreal Gazette 2010

[CLOSE WINDOW](#)

