

Chalet village near Mont Sainte Anne a lifelong project

BY ROCHELLE LASH, SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE FEBRUARY 18, 2011



Ricard House is one of 14 historic vacation houses at Chalets-Village Mont-Sainte-Anne, near the foot of Mont Sainte Anne.

Photograph by: Gilles Ethier, Gilles Ethier

Gilles Éthier is like a mayor of his own unique, private domain. And he has been growing into the job since he was 16 years old.

Éthier owns and operates Chalets-Village Mont-Sainte-Anne, a cluster of 14 unique country houses almost at the foot of Mont Sainte Anne. He started with a 1700s farmhouse he fell in love with when he was a teenager. He convinced his parents to buy it, and later bought it from them.

This was circa 1960, when the first lifts at Mont Sainte Anne started to draw skiers to one of the most picturesque mountains in Quebec. So many people wanted to rent Éthier's cottage that he bought and renovated another old farmhouse nearby.

Éthier's rue Royale domain has grown steadily over the past 25 years. A few houses were built from scratch. A few of his chalets have been part of the landscape for centuries. And Éthier kept falling for wonderful heritage houses in other regions that no one wanted. No problem. He simply moved the houses he wanted to add to his collection. Each wooden slat was numbered, dismantled, transported and rebuilt with the help of his partner, artisan-craftsman Yves St-Pierre.

The individual chalets can be a home-away-from-home for between eight and 80 people, and even the family pet. The various buildings have between four to 32 bedrooms – they are designed to accommodate ski clubs, family reunions, business conferences, university get-togethers and various group celebrations. Each chalet has its own character and story, so besides checking into a vacation

