

Chateau Mont-Sainte-Anne

BY ROCHELLE LASH, SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE SEPTEMBER 13, 2010



Skiing at Le Massif, with its magnificent river views, is scheduled to close April 11.

Photograph by: MARC ARCHAMBAULT COURTESY OF TOURISME CHARLEVOIX

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Editor's note: Some of the details might have changed since the original publication date. Please check with the establishment before heading out!

Original publication date: Mar 20 2010

Mont Ste. Anne ski-ride information: for activities, 888-8274579; for lodging, 800-463-1568.

Château Mont Sainte-Anne: 500 Beaupré Blvd. in Beaupré, 800-463-4467, 418-827-5211, www.chateaumsa.com, www.espacenordik.com. Espace Nordik units start at \$169 for two. Economy rooms with kitchenette start at \$119 in mid-week. After Monday, the Spring Madness Package with skiing costs about \$89 to \$97 per person, per day, for a three-night stay.

Looking at Montreal's snow-free streets, you wouldn't think there still is skiing and snowboarding in the mountains around the city. But there is good news for those who want to finish the season in style.

A wide choice of areas are currently in full or almost full operation and plan to stay open a few more

weeks. Some hills missed the recent rains. Others have powerful snow-making equipment that allows them to make snow when the night air is cold.

Mont Tremblant and Le Massif in Charlevoix are scheduled to close April 11. At Mont Sutton, all trails are open and the mountain expects to operate until the first or second week of April. Mont St. Sauveur is considering the end of April or early May.

In Vermont, Killington will be open until May 2, and Stowe until April 18. All the destinations plan springtime parties, rail jams and ski races for a last blast of spring skiing and riding.

Mont Ste. Anne has organized a particularly action-packed end of season, paired with rock-bottom prices for lifts. Like most ski areas within a few hours of Montreal, Mont Ste. Anne has had only a moderate year for snowfall, but it has not received rain since December. It has steadily been making and maintaining snow, so there still is more than one metre of packed snow on the ground and all trails are open.

Mont Ste. Anne's spring-time lift pass will range in price from \$199 for 18- to 64-year-olds to \$99 for 7- to 12-year olds and will be valid for unlimited skiing and riding from Monday to April 18 and April 24 to 25. The mountain will closed April 19 to 23 before reopening for one last blast of spring skiing.

To sweeten the pot for overnight visitors, Mont Ste. Anne is offering the Spring Madness Package after Monday - three nights with skiing for the price of two. A lodging-and-lift package starts at \$69 per person, per day, double occupancy, based on a three-night stay in an economy room in the four-star

Hôtel Val des Neiges, which has an indoor pool and a shuttle for the one-kilometre ride to the lifts. The price rises to \$84 per person, double occupancy, at the slopeside Hébergement Mont-Sainte-Anne, a condo-hotel hotel with studios. At Château Mont-Sainte-Anne, the Spring Madness Package runs around \$89 to \$97 per person, per day, for the dazzling new Espace Nordik section.

Mont Ste. Anne's Volkswagen Spring Madness event will span five weekends, until April 25. The kick-off Volkswagen Freestyle takes place next weekend, March 27 and 28, and features music and free learn-to-ride lessons, a rail jam and a new competition for cross-country skiers to climb to the summit.

Pace yourselves. The party is just starting, with the Charlie Price Trio and Le Comité among the performers on stage.

The season closes the weekend of April 24 and 25 with a mountain-top wine tasting and food fair of regional products, set to the soft sounds of the Gabrielle Shonk jazz trio.

There is action off the slopes, as well. The Château Mont-Sainte-Anne has overhauled two floors to create a \$4-million luxury section of modern apartment-style lodging.

The Château is a four-star, ski-in ski-out resort hotel with fine dining and a spa, all adjacent to Mont Ste. Anne's main lifts. Its new high-tech, energy-efficient Espace Nordik features 60 studios and multi-

bedroom apartments, the latest in contemporary resort interiors with blond wood furniture and fittings of glass and steel. Each unit has a balcony, Nespresso machine, breakfast table, flat-screen televisions and kitchenette.

A leader in the green movement in the hotel industry, the Château is the first lodging establishment in Quebec to apply for certification under the LEED-EB (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design - Existing Buildings), an independent organization. The Espace Nordik wing was rebuilt from its concrete shell and outfitted with energy-efficient central heating and ventilation systems.

Château Mont-Sainte-Anne, a member of the RéserVert environmental network, is operated by two father-and-son teams - Henri and Sébastien Roy and Charles and François-Charles Sirois.

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