

WHAT'S DOING IN: Quebec

By ROCHELLE LASH; ROCHELLE LASH is a writer who lives in Quebec
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Quebec City's French heritage and 400-year history create a Continental air, never more apparent than during the brief coveted summer.

As the temperature warms to 80 degrees in July, umbrellas bloom over crowded sidewalk cafes. Artists sketch instant portraits in the sunshine and horse-drawn carriages ferry tourists along cobblestone streets. Wine and gasoline are measured in liters, the distance from New York is 800 kilometers, not 500 miles, and the United States dollar is worth nearly \$1.20 across the border. And although 97 percent of Quebec City's residents are French-speaking, American tourists will find English spoken in hotels, restaurants, museums and shops. Two Cities

Quebec really is two cities, one old and one new. Old Quebec, the only remaining walled city in Canada or the United States, is a well-preserved enclave of historic buildings and churches. The first permanent settlement of New France dates from July 3, 1608, when Samuel de Champlain built along Quebec's waterfront area. Today, the Quartier Petit Champlain's winding streets are lined with cafes and artisan shops, most in the original buildings. A funicular climbs 200 feet atop steep cliffs to hotels, theaters and monuments. There, too, is the 250-acre parkland called the Plains of Abraham where a battle fought in 1759 between New England and New France left the colonies under British rule and Quebec an isolated French province.

The arched gates of Old Quebec's stone wall open onto a second city, a modern metropolis of nearly half a million people, with a growing skyline. The settlers' wooden row houses of the 1600's have been converted to brightly painted condominiums and windsurfers race where tall ships once sailed on the mighty St. Lawrence River, the vital water highway and gateway to the city, then and now.

The Royal 22d Regiment, known as the Van Doos for the French vingt-deux, was the first French-speaking regiment of the Canadian Armed Forces 75 years ago. It maintains tradition with a changing of the guard daily at 10 A.M. at its headquarters, the Citadelle (1 Cote de la Citadelle; 418-648-3563), a hilltop fortress with a military museum of firearms, uniforms and decorations. Tours daily, 9 A.M. to 7 P.M.; adults \$2.40, children 80 cents (prices given in United States dollars).

The ornate chambers of the National Assembly, the Parliament buildings of the province of Quebec, are richly decorated with gilded woodwork, coats-of-arms and portraits of past legislators. Parliament is not in session during summer, but free tours are conducted Monday through Saturday starting at 10 A.M. (Assemblée Nationale; 418-643-7239).

In the town of Ste.-Anne-de-Beaupre, 15 miles east of Quebec, is a grand basilica of the same name (10018 Royale Avenue; 418-827-3781). Shipwreck survivors during the 1600's believed that Ste.-Anne had saved them, and in recent decades the physically disabled have cast off their crutches at the chapel.

Under the atrium of the nearly year-old Musee de la Civilisation (85 Dalhousie Street; 418-643-2158) are fascinating exhibits of everyday life such as "Electricity and the Family." A special look at Quebec, "Memories" portrays the lives of the 17th-century fur-trappers the hardy, pioneers and the dedicated clergy in the primarily Roman Catholic region. (Daily 10 A.M. to 8 P.M. until Sept. 15; then the museum is closed Mondays and at 5 P.M. except Wednesdays when it closes at 9 P.M. Admission is \$3.20, people over 65, \$2.40 and students, \$1.60).

The tiny Musee du Fort (10 Ste.-Anne Street; 418-692-2175) re-enacts the battles between the warring colonists of New France and New England on a room-size model of Old Quebec. (Daily 10 A.M. to 6 P.M.; admission \$2.80, students and people over 65, \$1.60.) French Cuisine

A la Table de Serge Bruyere (1202 St.-Jean Street; 418-694-0618), one of the finest French restaurants in Canada, has added a salon de the, a bistro and a shop for food that may be taken out to eat. In the main dining room, pink damask tablecloths, heavy silverware and well-spaced tables create a formal atmosphere and the menu uses local produce imaginatively. Look for two-pepper rabbit, calf's liver with cider and apples, Quebec lamb and shallots, scallops from the Iles-de-la-Madeleine with chives, and smoked duck from Gaspé. An extensive wine list offers selections from Chile and Argentina (\$15 to \$30) up to a bottle of Burgundy, Romanee Conti Le Roy, 1979, at \$700. (Dinner, without wine, service or 10 percent meal tax, about \$40 a person.) Aux Anciens Canadiens (34 St.-Louis Street; 418-692-1627) specializes in old-fashioned Quebec cuisine, once the best insulation against long winters. Waitresses in white ruffled caps and dresses serve traditional dishes such as pork and beans, tourtiere (meat pie), salt cod, pea soup, stew of pig's feet and meatballs, and maple syrup pie. (Lunch or dinner \$12 to \$25.) At Le Marie-Clarisse (12 Petit Champlain Street; 418-692-0857), in a 350-year-old stone house at the base of the funicular, seasonal seafood includes lobster and salmon from Gaspé, striped bass from the St. Lawrence and dore (pike) from Quebec's lakes. (Lunch, \$10; dinner, \$20.) Quebec does fast food with a French twist. At Bel-Gaufre (1121 St.-Jean Street; 418-694-1172) in the bustling Quartier Latin, hot waffles are topped with everything from ham and eggs to blueberries from nearby Lac St.-Jean (\$3 to \$6) and cafe au lait is served in big bowls, European-style. Le Petit Chateau (5 St.-Louis Street; 418-694-1616 or 418-522-0181), beside the Chateau Frontenac Hotel, serves 40 kinds of crepes, including ones stuffed with chocolate and lobster (\$3 to \$8). The chocolatier Enrico (83 St.-Jean Street; 418-524-2122) sells handmade truffles by the piece (40 cents), but also will sculpture your house or favorite car in chocolate for about \$100.

Along the Grande-Allee, a strip of outdoor cafes and bistros crowded from midday to midnight, people-watching is as important as food. At

the sidewalk tables of the popular Le Saint O (570 Grande-Allee; 418-529-0211), Parisian-style steak-frites and a Canadian beer costs about \$10.

There are a few country kitchens on the Ile of Orleans, well worth the 15-minute drive across the St. Lawrence from downtown Quebec. At L'Atre, or The Hearth (418-829-2474), a horse and buggy delivers from the parking lot to the restaurant in an old farmhouse where hearty food is warmed in iron pots over an open fire. Produce of Ile of Orleans, such as asparagus, strawberries and rhubarb, is featured along with Quebec dishes like creton (a pork pate), game hen, tourtiere and three-finger-thick sugar pie with fresh cream. Lunch or dinner costs about \$20. Lodging

The stately Chateau Frontenac (1 des Carrieres Street; 418-692-3861) opened almost 100 years ago and its turreted silhouette still is a landmark atop Old Quebec. The past is preserved through handcrafted wooden staircases and tapestries, but a major renovation is under way to update rooms and add a health club. A wide variety of rooms and suites costs \$135 to \$400 a night, double occupancy.

Several small tourist hotels line an historic square, Jardins des Gouverneurs, behind the chateau where the United States consulate is situated. The Chateau Bellevue, in a series of attached row houses, has free parking and 57 rooms, some with river views at \$55 to \$65 for two (16 Laporte Street; 418-692-2573). The tidy nine rooms of Manoir Ste.-Genevieve, in a white Victorian-style house, cost \$65 to \$100 a night, for two (13 Ste.-Genevieve Avenue; 418-694-1666).

Le Concorde (1225 Place Montcalm; 418-647-2222), just outside the walls of Old Quebec on the Grande-Allee, has striking views of the river and many historic sites from most of its 400 rooms and its revolving rooftop restaurant, L'Astral. Rates are \$100 to \$155, double occupancy, and include use of an outdoor pool and health club.

Two other large modern hotels, Hotel des Gouverneurs (690 St.-Cyrille Boulevard East; 418-647-1717 or 800-463-2820) and the Hilton International Quebec (3 Place Quebec; 418-647-2411 or 800-268-9275) also are conveniently situated, just outside the wall and offer the same services at about the same price.

On the Ile of Orleans, La Geoliche (22 Quai Avenue, of Orleans; 418-828-2248), a comfortable white clapboard lodge sits on a windy point in the St. Lawrence near the summer cottages of the island's toney parish of St.-Petronille. There is an outdoor pool, boating and about 20 rooms from \$55 to \$75 for two a night. Information

Quebec Government House (17 West 50th Street, New York, N.Y. 10020; 212-397-0220) offers maps, brochures and lodging guides to Quebec and the province of Quebec. The Quebec City Office of Tourism (60 d'Auteuil Street, Quebec G1R 4C4; 418-692-2471) also supplies comprehensive regional guides upon request.

Baillairge Cultural Tours (418-658-4799) organizes short-distance walking tours of Old Quebec with well-informed guides. Walkers leave Place d'Armes in front of the Chateau Frontenac daily at 9:30 A.M. and 2 P.M. (admission \$8, children under 12 free).

Visitors can also visit sights by horse-drawn caleche, which costs \$35 for a standard 45-minute tour. Carriages can be hailed on D'Auteuil Street at the St.-Louis Gate of the city's wall. Side Trips

The St. Lawrence River near Tadoussac, a two-and-a-half-hour drive or 150 miles east of Quebec, is the summer home for many varieties of whales from the 100-foot blue whale to the 10-foot beluga, an endangered species. It is possible to make a day trip from Quebec, but the resort-style Hotel Tadoussac (165 Bord de l'Eau; 418-235-4421), with a pool and a golf course, has a etwo-night package including lodging, breakfast, dinner and a three-hour whale-watching cruise for about \$350 for two people. The number for tourism information for the region is 418-589-5319.

Route 368, or Chemin Royal, circles the tranquil, 42-mile long Ile of Orleans, a mostly agricultural community a 15-minute drive from Quebec and once a strategic point during Quebec's naval battles. The tourist bureau of the Ile of Orleans (490 Cote du Point, at the end of the bridge from the mainland; 418-828-9411) rents a 90-minute audio cassette for \$5 that highlights the island's historic manor houses and churches. Cars are permitted throughout the island's six parishes, but bicycles also can be rented (\$10 a half day) at the Petro-Canada gasoline station across the street from the tourist bureau.

In August raspberries are ripe on the Ile of Orleans. You can pick your own at La Ferme du Coteau (249 Chemin Royal, St.-Laurent Parish); four quarts cost about \$2.50.

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