



The renovated lobby at Le Westin Resort & Spa is a stylish space for fireside mingling. There are 122 suites in the all-suite condo hotel. **TREMBLANT**

Tree house adventures and more in Tremblant

Gourmet dishes and renovated comfort also await visitors



ROCHELLE LASH
Checking in

Tremblant is booming with lodging news. Here are three new or evolving experiences: glamping in the tree houses of Les Refuges Perchés, gastronomy at Plumes et Glisse B & B, and major renovos at Le Westin Tremblant Resort & Spa.

All this is just in time for major events at the Tremblant resort such as: Washington Week, Feb. 14-22; and School Break, Feb. 28-March 8, which will feature Crazy Games for kids and Saturday Night Fever, an outdoor dance club.

TREE HOUSE GLAMPING
Les Refuges Perchés is nestled among the lakes and woods of Parc Eco des Laurentides, a little-known retreat about seven kilometres south of Mont Blanc. It is a secluded domain of 10

tree houses built for glamping, also known as camping in comfort. The extra attraction is that these rustic getaways welcome dogs, so you can bring your partner, you kids and best doggie pal — if he stays on a leash.

Luxury at Les Refuges is the freedom to revel in the great outdoors. Instead of checking into a modern hotel or a cozy inn, the adventurous guests at Les Refuges Perchés climb stairs into their own tree houses.

There are no bellmen, of course. You load up a luge with your food and gear and trek between 200 and 800 metres to your lofty perch. And there are no indoor loos, either, only outhouses placed in central locations. You can borrow a 12-volt battery to power LED lights — but as yet, there is Wi-Fi only in the reception pavilion.

“We could install Wi-Fi in the tree houses, but we want to maintain the wilderness experience,” said Chris Winlo of the Tremblant Activity Centre, which co-owns Les Refuges with the tree house builder Vivre Perché. “And parents love that they can hike, ski and cook with their kids



Les Refuges Perchés is a new domain of treehouses in a Laurentian park southeast of Mont Blanc. Glamp with your loved ones as you experience the wilderness in comfort. **LES REFUGES PERCHES**

without the distraction of digital devices. ... The kids learn to love it, too.”

You can choose bunk beds, doubles or singles, all with high-quality foam mattresses. The tree houses are insulated, sturdily built of hemlock, cedar and white pine and heated with high-efficiency wood stoves. Each tree house has lots of windows, a terrace with southern exposure and a fire pit. It's strictly BYO food and DIY cooking, although kitchen utensils are supplied. Coffee makers and wine openers, too. Let's be civilized about the wilderness, after all.

B & B GASTRONOMY

There is more to love in Lac Supérieur, Tremblant's north side. The teeny Plumes et Glisse B & B has opened a third guest room and introduced new gourmet dishes.

Hosts-with-the-most Jenny Pearson-Millar and Craig Millar, both originally from Ireland, have cultivated this intimate getaway into TripAdvisor's No. 1 B & B in the region. Plumes's decor is minimalist and the food is maximally rich and delish.

Pearson-Millar trained at Cordon-Bleu, and her cuisine is both experimental and classical, with Celtic, French and Quebec accents. She is a passionate devotee of the local terroir, using ingredients from local farms, plus foraged herbs, mushrooms and fruits.

Breakfast changes daily, but it's always delectable and creative. You might luck into a gossamer-light puff crepe with blueberries, lemon and maple syrup; or poached egg St. Brendan, a Celtic twist on Benedict that features a potato pancake.

Dinner is a gourmet affair of seasonal dishes such as a wild garlic and chèvre soufflé, asparagus ravioli with walnut butter and lemon, Laurentian trout with Matane shrimp, buffalo with red wine and thyme jus, boar ragoût or roasted duck with berries.

LUXURY UPDATED

Le Westin Resort and Spa has completed a two-year, \$5-million renovation that includes the opening of the Gypsy tapas bar and an all-new contemporary lobby.

The Westin's 122's suites — it's

IF YOU GO

Les Refuges Perchés/Tremblant Activity Centre: 819-681-4848, refugesperches.com; St-Faustin-Lac-Carré; \$139-\$150 for up to two adults and two children (five to 16 years), incl. pavilion with showers, laundry, Wi-Fi, kitchen, a nature centre and a 75-seat auditorium. Two-night minimum on weekends, and at certain times, third or fourth night free. Prices are lower April 6-May 15. Access to Parc Eco des Laurentides is extra (ctel.ca), but includes snowshoe and cross-country ski trails, summer fishing and lake activities.

Plumes et Glisse B&B: 819-688-3444, plumesetglisse.com, 17 chemin des Pentes Nord, Lac Supérieur (Tremblant's North Side). One night with breakfast and Wi-Fi, \$149 for two, or \$259 for two with breakfast and dinner. For singles, that's \$125/\$179. Discounts for multiple-night stays.

Le Westin Resort & Spa Tremblant: 888-738-1777, 819-681-8000, www.tremblant.ca; pet-friendly; approximately \$239-\$609 per night, Fri.-Sat., for two to four people; or \$199-\$499, Sun.-Thurs., incl. Wi-Fi, heated pool, hot tub, game arcade, fitness room, snow tubing, bonfires, skating, First Tracks skiing and mountain tours.

an all-suite condo-hotel — were redone last year with a soothing, neutral decor of whites, linen and canvas. If you add an invigorating dip in the outdoor heated salt water pool and a rejuvenating sojourn at the in-house Amerispa, Le Westin adds up to five-star après-ski at the heart of the snow-sports action of the Tremblant resort.

I'm sorry to say that the Yamada Japanese restaurant has closed, but Le Westin has a new dining centrepiece — the tapas bar Gypsy. Off the lobby, it's an informal combo bar and restaurant with lamb burgers, salads and small-portion dishes such as hangar steak, seafood-chorizo risotto and short ribs braised in stout. That's hearty, post-outdoor cuisine.

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