



The Residence Inn Mont Tremblant Manoir Labelle recently was renovated with country chic decor.

CHECKING IN

Updated Marriott at heart of Tremblant resort



ROCHELLE LASH

The lifts at Eastern Canada's largest resort are rolling, but not for skiers or snowboarders.

During the summer, the Panoramic Gondola is a scenic ride to hiking trails and lunch at Le Manitou, atop the Laurentians' highest peak. And, as of mid-season, the Flying Mile chairlift will sweep visitors to Tremblant's newest adventure, Tonga Lumina. This is a nighttime walk through an interactive audiovisual experience in the woods, in search of a fantasy giant.

Sometimes I take Tremblant for granted because it has been a commanding presence for so long. It was first developed as a ski area nearly 80 years ago, and it was modernized and expanded into a year-round destination by Intrawest more than 25 years ago.

Today, Tremblant is the largest and most comprehensive resort in northeastern North America, consistently awarded top marks for its variety of lodging, with spa life, entertainment, shopping, the casino, family activities and food. The latest of about 30 eateries is Le Q.G. (Quartier Général).

Tremblant has become the go-to resort for eastern Canadians, thanks in part to direct flights from Toronto on Porter (summer and winter) and Air Canada



The Marriott, which features an outdoor heated pool and whirlpool, is at the centre of the resort's pedestrian village.

(winter), as well as the relatively new Highway 50 linking the Ottawa area to Laurentian Auto-route 15.

Above all, Tremblant stands out for its splendid boreal setting of mountains, forests and Lac Tremblant, as well as its singular calendar of entertainment and sporting events, many of which are free.

LODGING UPDATE

The Residence Inn Marriott Mont Tremblant Manoir Labelle is smack dab in the centre of the pedestrian village, directly under the Cabriolet lift, a connector ride that soars above the action.

The Marriott is a functional condo-hotel with one- and two-bedroom units, and the added attractions of an outdoor heated

pool and whirlpool.

It recently was renovated throughout and redesigned by Camdi of Montreal with modern lines and a country inspiration. The guest suites and lobby, decked out in honey-coloured woodwork, have carpets, furniture, kitchens and fabrics in such soothing tones of nature as cloud white, charcoal and bark.

NEW ACTIVITIES

Tonga Lumina, new for 2017, is a family-friendly adventure that is close to nature. The resort's innovative entertainment partner, Moment Factory, developed Tonga Lumina, which is a nighttime walk through an illuminated forest. Participants don an amulet and follow a mysterious path deep into the heart of this

enchanted mountain, to discover the secret of a fantasy giant.

Another newbie is Mission Laser, an indoor game in which competitors duel with laser guns.

CALENDAR

Among the free happenings for kids are water games near the Panoramic Gondola and street animation throughout the pedestrian village.

And the music is non-stop. More than 100 classical and pop shows, all at no charge, include the 24th Tremblant International Blues Festival, July 7-16; Rythmes Tremblant, July 21-30; and Fête de la Musique, Sept. 1-4. On the sporting front, it's free for spectators at the Subaru Ironman Triathlon 5i50, June 24; and two Subaru Ironman competitions, presented by Sportium, June 25 and Aug. 20.

Not everything is free: You can purchase an Activity Card for \$16.25-\$69.75 for three, five or 10 experiences, including the luge, kayaks/canoes on Lac Tremblant; Beach and Tennis Club; Birds of Prey show at the summit; AquaClub La Source; Captain's Harbour (a little electrical boat on Mirror Lake); Acropark obstacle challenge; Euro-bungy; Climbing Tower and minigolf. Mission Laser and Tonga Lumina are not included in the Activity Card.

BLUES NEWS

The Tremblant International Blues Fest, July 7-16, will feature more than 100 free shows, including Lulu Hughes singing Janis Joplin's classics, guitarist Coco Montoya, John Hammond,

IF YOU GO

- Tremblant activities and Residence Inn Marriott Mont Tremblant Manoir Labelle: 888-738-1777, tremblant.ca. Prices fluctuate. A studio with kitchenette, queen bed and sofa bed starts at about \$199 per night for two. Watch for multiple-day discounts. The Summer Getaway special is \$160.65, if booked by June 20, valid on two-night stays or more until Oct. 31, except for June 23-25 and Aug. 17-20. Rates include buffet breakfast, Wi-Fi, fitness room, outdoor heated pool/whirlpool. Triple or quadruple occupancy can be less expensive, per person. Indoor parking, \$13; free parking at P1 or with shuttles.
- Wanderlust, Aug. 24-27: 855-926-3375, wanderlust.com. Single-day tickets, \$90-\$150, depending on when you buy (the earlier, the better), including one activity, concerts, one lecture. Multiple-day tickets available. Some events have extra fees.
- Tremblant International Blues Festival, July 7-16: 819-681-3000, Local 46643, blues.tremblant.ca; all outdoor shows are free.

C.J. Chenier and the Red Hot Louisiana Band, Sugaray Rayford and The Commonheart.

The new attraction for 2017 is The Blues Square, a lounge that will be open morning till night, with DJ music, a gift shop and seminars like the Cigar-Box Guitar Workshop by Ghost Town Blues Band's Matt Isbell. Spectators will be in the spotlight, too. Hop on the new musical bikes, start pedalling and you will spin sounds — for free.

WANDERLUST

The fifth annual wellness extravaganza, Aug. 24-27, is expected to attract more than 7,500 people for exceptional experiences like mountaintop yoga, meditation on the shore of Lac Tremblant and an evening with Sylvie Fréchette, Olympic medalist in solo synchronized swimming.

Wanderlust will present more than 70 guests from North America, Asia and Europe. Musical performers include Bonobo, IN-Q and DJ Seriousblack. Among the yoga masters will be Seane Corn, Chelsey Korus, Elena Brower and Erik Giasson.

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