

HOTEL INTEL

GREEN ECO LODGE OFFERS TRANQUIL TOWNSHIPS SETTING

Nature nurtures with eco-cabins, yurts natural beauty and gourmet food



ROCHELLE LASH

Do you need a break from orange street cones, jackhammers and construction cranes and snarly traffic? Les Côteaux Missisquoi, a pastoral hideaway of simple lodging in the Eastern Townships, is the antithesis of hectic city life, on all fronts.

It's green. It's handcrafted. And it's car-free.

Stéphane Adam operates Les Côteaux Missisquoi, a cluster of eco-lodging outside of St-Étienne-de-Bolton, a mere one-hour drive from Montreal, but a light-year away from urban bedlam.

It is tucked into a wild forest of diversity — hemlock, spruce, maple, pine, fir and birch trees, all virtually untouched. Located on the tip of Lake Trouser, the site has panoramic views of the water, the scenic Missisquoi Valley and the surrounding mountains.

“Les Côteaux Missisquoi is meant for anyone who loves the outdoors,” said Adam. “My guests swim in the Missisquoi River and get massaged by the current.

“We also walk in the woods, bird watch or forage for mushrooms — more than 80 varieties grow in the area.

“We have comforts, but it's really all about tranquillity.”

Adam would know. He worked for 30 years as a computer consultant, and now spends as much time as possible exploring the woods and streams.

One of his favourite outings is a hike along Les Sentiers d’Estrie, an exceptional circuit that meanders for about 200 kilometres up and down mountains and valleys, from the U.S. border near Sutton

IF YOU GO

Les Côteaux Missisquoi: 514-944-6139, coteauxmissisquoi.com; 573 Bolton Centre Rd., St-Étienne-de-Bolton. Exit 100 off Autoroute 10 East.

Price: yurts, \$110 for two; cabins, \$125-\$145; extra adult, \$20; teen, 13-17, \$15; under 13, free. Two-night minimum, Fri.-Sat. Three-night minimum on some holidays. Includes drinking water, firewood, propane, Les Sentiers de l’Estrie (a \$20 p.p. value, lessentiersdelestrie.qc.ca.)

Coop du Grand-Bois: 450-297-3787, coopdugrandbois.com; 12 Principale St., St-Étienne-de-Bolton. Thurs., 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Fri., 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Eastern Townships tourism: 800-355-5755, easterntownships.org.

to Richmond and Windsor, crossing several summits, including Mont Orford, Mont Echo and Mont Glen. Les Côteaux Missisquoi is a short walk from one of the trailheads. After the excursion, it's relaxation at the side of a firepit.

The scene: Adam learned about basic construction from his father, who was a mason. So far, Les Côteaux Missisquoi consists of a welcome pavilion, four eco-cabins and two yurts, which Adam built and assembled by hand using reclaimed wood and rock from his own forest.

Guests simply have to bring camping-style supplies: food, a



Les Côteaux Missisquoi is a woody domain of hand-built yurts and eco-cabins in the Eastern Townships that are solar powered and tucked in among a beautiful variety of trees. PHOTOS: LES CÔTEAUX MISSISQUOI



The eco-cabins at Les Côteaux Missisquoi, are fully equipped, offering a glamping-style respite with easy access to all nature has to offer.

are not far from the welcome pavilion — between 90 and 200 metres.

“We provide wheelbarrows for luggage and I can help with the ATV.”

There are showers in the welcome pavilion and several outhouses.

Food: The Coop du Grand-Bois is the hub of community life in St-Étienne-de-Bolton, with art expositions and get-togethers that attract locals and visitors.

At the Coop's bistro, chef Lyne Laliberté cooks up homespun lunchtime specials for approximately \$13, including soup, coffee, dessert and a main course such as moussaka or chili with tofu and mango. The Café serves all-day lunch Thursdays to Sundays, supper on Fridays and brunch on weekends.

The Coop stocks prepared meals to go, wine, jams, coffee, smoked fish, cheeses, maple products from l’Érablière Vincent in St-Étienne-de-Bolton, baked goods from La Mie Bretonne in Cowansville and terrines from Ducs de Montrichard in Orford.

Spa life: For a break from roughing it, several Nordic spas operate nearby, offering invigorating hot and cold baths and the hedonism of massages.

Spa Eastman is known for healthy cuisine, classes and rejuvenation. Balnea Spa in Bromont has a dramatic setting overlooking a lake, as well as a small gourmet bistro. Spa Bolton at Bolton East, has a eucalyptus steam room, saunas and the option of icy plunges in the Missisquoi River.

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