

HOTEL INTEL



Quebec City's new Le Capitole Hôtel was built to five-star specifications, with luxurious rooms, fabulous views and a heated pool. PHOTOS: LE CAPITOLE

IF YOU GO

Le Capitole Hôtel: 800-363-4040, 418-694-4040; lecapitole.com; 972 St-Jean St., Quebec City. Clubby Bar from 4:30 p.m. daily.
Price: rooms start at \$249 (suites at \$1,118), including swimming pool, Wi-Fi, baby gear, fitness room. Valet parking, \$25.
Ristorante Il Teatro: 418-694-9996; breakfast, lunch, dinner daily; weekend breakfast is a buffet until 2 p.m.; free valet parking for meals.
Théâtre Capitole: 800-261-9903; lecapitole.com/en/shows.
Quebec City tourism: 877-783-1608; quebec-cite.com.

LE CAPITOLE TAKES CENTRE STAGE IN OLD QUEBEC

Hotel, theatre and restaurant complex blend luxury, history and star power



ROCHELLE LASH

Quebec City radiates history, warmth and charm to the max. Now, the new Le Capitole Hôtel adds flash, glamour and sex appeal.

Le Capitole is a unique leisure complex of three glittering enterprises that have taken centre stage on Old Quebec's venerable St-Jean St. After a \$44-million investment, all three have significant news:

- Théâtre Capitole, a 120-year-old beaux-arts performance venue, has been exquisitely restored.
- Ristorante Il Teatro recently reopened with dramatic interiors, Italian cuisine and showbiz memorabilia signed by a century of stars, including Céline Dion, Kenny Rogers and Paul Anka.
- Le Capitole Hôtel, a lavish, celebrity-worthy establishment, replaces an older lodging. The 2020 version is a newly built glass tower that is prized for its beautiful decor and its spectacular 270-degree views of Old Quebec, the St. Lawrence River, Ile d'Orléans and the Laurentians.

"We now have luxurious accommodations and party rooms for the five-star visitors, VIPs and entertainers who come to Quebec City," said entrepreneur Jean Pilote, who deserves all the applause. The showbiz producer, restaurateur and hotelier has owned and nurtured Le Capitole for nearly 30 years.

"The new hotel and its pool are ultramodern, but the design and interiors reflect our historic legacy.

"Plus, the structure is set back from the street, so we have respected Old Quebec's architecture and the spirit and character of rue St-Jean."

Le Capitole faces Place d'Youville, where skaters twirl and glide in front of Porte St-Jean, one of the gates to the only walled city in the U.S. or Canada. And the Carnaval de Québec will rock the town from Feb. 7 to 16.

The hotel: Le Capitole Hôtel is awaiting official classification, but it was crafted to be five stars, with a high-style design, noble materials like marble and wood, 24-hour room service, posh guest rooms and luxe bathrooms with heated floors.

The indoor pool — kept at a balmy 31 C — has a full bar and promises to be the party place of Old Quebec, especially when the summertime sun deck opens.



Ristorante Il Teatro recently reopened with dramatic interiors, new menus and showbiz memorabilia signed by a century of stars.

Le Capitole's plush penthouses have living rooms, fireplaces, kitchens and private terraces. The Ninth-Heaven Suite has a Roland electric piano, and I imagined Paul McCartney seated, silhouetted against a panorama of the city.

Some guest rooms have hypoallergenic floors (others have carpets) and soaking tubs, others have balconies, and they all have Illy coffee machines, 55-inch flatscreens, bathrobes, organic

toiletries, fine bedding and clothing steamers.

Le Capitole's look, by Camdi Design, is bold, theatrical and timeless, sparkling with a hint of Hollywood and a touch of Broadway. The bar and lobby are warmed by cascading blue velvet drapes and sensual curved love seats — a look that spans art deco, art nouveau and mid-century, right up to a whisper of industrial 2020.

The restaurant: Ristorante Il

Teatro closed for six months in 2019 and has been totally redesigned, featuring new menus and cocktail bars serving privately imported wine, drinks like the winter daiquiri and an official Champagne (Barons de Rothschild). With white tablecloths and fancy settings, it looks formal, but it's fun, and it's the No. 1 hangout for almost all performers in Quebec City.

Antipasti includes vitello tonnato, burrata with apple and ham, grilled octopus, fried calamari and Sicilian arancini. Tantalizing main courses include giant shrimp, beef filet with foie gras and veal chops. The fave pizza is the rapini and white fennel sausage, and one of the top pastas is sweetbread ravioli.

The theatre: The ornate Théâtre Capitole has been updated with top-drawer dressing rooms for performers, a fancy Green Room and an elevator that takes 18 seconds to swoosh directly from the hotel to backstage. This setup will surely get rave reviews from artists.

Le Capitole has presented megastars through the years, including Maurice Chevalier, Neil Sedaka and Sarah Bernhardt. This year's lineup includes Rock Story, featuring hits by U2, Tina Turner and Queen (Feb. 28 and 29); magician Alain Choquette (April 25 and 26); and the Cirque Éloïze show Serge Fiori: Seul ensemble (June 27 to Aug. 9).

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