

# New and transformed in city's hotel scene



**ROCHELLE LASH**  
Hotel Intel

Montreal's hotel scene is spirited, in spite of a crushing 2020 and an uncertain 2021.

Back in December, Hotel Intel reported on what's coming across Canada, including a glimpse of Humaniti Hotel Montreal, Autograph Collection, facing the Palais des Congrès; and Hilton Garden Inn and Homewood Suites by Hilton, two concepts sharing space in the burgeoning neighbourhood of Westbury Montréal on Décarie Blvd. Both open in June.

With input from the Hotel Association of Greater Montreal, here is news of a 2021 opening in Chinatown, plus major metamorphoses throughout downtown.

**All new:** Another new-from-scratch dual brand, Hampton by Hilton Montreal Downtown and Homewood Suites by Hilton Montreal Downtown, will open around September adjacent to Chinatown, near the Palais des Congrès and Quartier des Spectacles.

On the site of a former parking lot, it will have a combined 253 rooms, with 97 Homewood Suites featuring full kitchens and balconies, plus shared meeting spaces with terraces and an outdoor pool and sundeck.

All guests will have free breakfast. Restaurant Tiramisu will dish up Italian-Japanese fusion cuisine, and the rooftop terrace will be home to Carla, which will blend French and Vietnamese flavours.

**Transformed:** The Montreal Marriott Château Champlain, which opened months before Expo 67, has aced its first big overhaul and relaunched this month.

"We did so much more than a renovation; we achieved a



Hampton and Homewood Suites by Hilton Montreal Downtown will open around September, adjacent to the arch in Chinatown, near the Palais des Congrès and Quartier des Spectacles. *HAMPTON AND HOMEWOOD SUITES*

transformation," says Jennifer Labrosse, director of sales and marketing.

A landmark 38-storey tower, the Château Champlain is recognizable for its large, curved bay windows, but the interiors are all new.

When conditions permit, the hospitality highlight will be Lloyd, a newly minted restaurant-bar experience that is sure to have one of the busiest happy hours in town.

Le Caf'Conc', once known for its sexy, plumed cancan dancers, now is a Gatsby-inspired reception hall with distinctive tiered theatre seating.

In another major modernization, Le Centre Sheraton Mon-

tréal Hotel is the first hotel in Canada to sport elements of the brand's updated look.

It's Montreal's second-largest establishment (after Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth), with extensive meeting and party space, and 825 now-swish rooms and suites, redone in warm wood tones with black metal accents.

The indoor pool is available for family bubbles and the Pressurat Studio, a longtime family spa business, operating since the hotel's opening in 1982, is offering massages.

The Sheraton's grab-and-go corner serves hot and cold bites for in-room dining, 24/7.

The refitted Sheraton Club for Marriott Bonvoy Elite members

(and also available for private receptions) is an inviting, upscale lounge richly dressed up in royal blue velvet and tawny leather, with burnished brass fixtures.

Vogue Hôtel Montreal, a Curio Collection by Hilton, is one of Montreal's go-to celebrity havens.

Back in the day, I met the debonair A-list trio of Matt Damon, Brad Pitt and George Clooney in the lobby, and the hotel also has played host to Julia Roberts, Justin Timberlake and Drew Barrymore.

The Vogue has a major makeover in the works — the 148 rooms and suites, the exterior façade and the lobby all will sport a luxe new design by October.

For now, a staycation starts at

## TRAVEL

\$319 per night, for two, including parking, flexible check-in and checkout, and breakfast served in-room by La Société, the hotel's French brasserie.

SageBlanc Investments, which operates the Vogue, also has taken over Hôtel Place Dupuis at St-Hubert and Ste-Catherine Sts., and it will be reincarnated as Hyatt Place Downtown Montreal, likely in September. Connected to Place Dupuis and Berri-UQAM métro, it will have meeting space, an indoor swimming pool, saunas and a restaurant.

The Four Seasons Hotel Montreal, the pre-eminent launch of 2019 and the city's only Forbes' five-star hotel and spa, reopened in May after a COVID closure.

The new staycation package, a Culinary Journey with MARCUS (available until Aug. 31), starts at \$715 for two and includes valet parking, the gorgeous indoor pool, a welcome gift and a credit for cuisine, crafted by celebrity chef Marcus Samuelsson and his team, and currently served in-room. There is a choice of à la carte dining or a 10-course tasting menu, and the credit is \$125 in a room or \$250 in a suite. Spa treatments are extra.

To maintain its renowned service, the brand has launched the Four Seasons App and Chat, so guests can connect with staff using contactless tech.

No news, bad news? The esteemed Hôtel Le St-James, the five-star boutique hotel in Old Montreal, is in limbo after a long COVID closure.

There is no official word about whether it will reopen, but the telephone is out of service and the online reservation system is down. It was one of Montreal's most exclusive stops, host to the likes of the Rolling Stones and Madonna.

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