

HOTEL INTEL

Peaceful B&B celebrates Bromont’s leisurely pace

La Bohème an oasis of tranquillity with fine food, drink and recreation close by



ROCHELLE LASH

Sophie Leggett and Jacques De Carufel, owners of the new La Bohème B&B on the outskirts of Bromont, had no experience running a lodging establishment when they opened, and they didn’t need any. They’re naturals. Hospitable to the max, they bought and renovated a beautiful, bright cottage in the woods on Mount Gale. It came with an inviting wraparound veranda and a designer kitchen. They added a heated outdoor pool for summer, a year-round hot tub, a sun terrace and a massage space in a solarium. One floor of the house has been turned into four spacious guest rooms, each with a large private bathroom. A new-this-season suite has a fireplace, a sofa bed, a king bed and a soaking tub. Everything is pristine — show-ers, loos and wooden floors. And the living-dining room is just as well-planned. One entire wall is glass, so La Bohème always has a peaceful air. Apart from bricks and mortar, guests are in good hands. De Carufel served in the Canadian Armed Forces and Leggett has worked for the Ottawa Police Service. It’s a good thing that they are dauntless. Their first hurdle was COVID-19. They launched their business in February 2020, closed a month later and when

the time was right, reopened to a full house, non-stop. “We served 530 breakfasts in five months,” said Leggett. “When we started, we were wondering if anyone would come.” Leggett is an honours graduate of the Pacific Institute of Culinary Arts in Vancouver, so her breakfasts are dreamy. Daily dishes might be eggs Benedict with hollandaise from scratch; crêpes with brie, pecans and caramel; or croissants with Serrano ham; all served with barista coffee and fresh juice or smoothies. Vegan choices are available. Le Bohème is seven kilometres from the centre of Bromont. De Carufel offers a shuttle service to local attractions like BALNEA spa and réserve thermale, and Bromont, montagne d’expériences, for summertime mountain biking and wintertime downhill sports. The trailhead for the Mount Gale hiking network is nearby. **Bromont dining:** De Carufel’s excellent restaurant recommendations include Restaurant Le Gourmet, a charming hidden gem of French cuisine, with a bring-your-own-wine policy. Manager Louise Sylvestre and her husband, chef Stéphane Dostie, serve a changing menu that might be rack of lamb, pork cheek confit or filet mignon. There’s no website because so many clients have been regulars over Le Gourmet’s 30 years. They come for favourites like crème brûlée au fois gras and the appetizer tasting tray. Le Gourmet’s table d’hôte costs \$56 for four courses, Fri.-Sat. (with some supplements); and \$45, Sun., for three courses. Pianist Barbaro Pirez entertains on



La Bohème B&B, a refashioned cottage on the outskirts of Bromont, has added a pool and a massage space. LA BOHÈME B&B

IF YOU GO

LA BOHÈME B&B
Contacts: 450-525-2026, bnblaboheme.com; 142 rue des Mélézes, Bromont. Including bathrobes, breakfast, hot tub, pool, Wi-Fi, shuttle, \$154-\$239 for two, depending on room and season. July-Aug. require two-night minimum. Extra guest in two of the rooms, \$60, p.p., per night. **Dining:** Le Vignoble du Ruisseau: 450-538-3782, levi-gnobleduruisseau.com, 4500 Strobl St., Dunham. Bistro Le 633: 450-534-0633, bistrole633.com, 633 Shefford St., Bromont. Le Gourmet. 450-534-3000, 360 Pierre-Laporte Blvd., Bromont. **Bromont tourism:** 877-BROMONT (877-276-6667), tourismebromont.com; Eastern Townships: 800-355-5755, easterntownships.org.

Sunday evenings with an upbeat repertoire of French, Latin and Broadway tunes. At Bistro Le 633 on Bromont’s main street, owner Luc Viens loves to craft whisky-or-wine pairings with casual fare. He’s well equipped, with a wine cellar of private imports and a connoisseurs’ whisky bar with 200 choices. Le 633 presents standup



Luc Viens, owner of Bistro Le 633 in Bromont, loves to craft whisky-or-wine food pairings with tapas. MATHIEU LACHAPELLE

comedy on Thursdays and will restart live music on Fridays and Saturdays when health regulations permit. Evenings at Le 633 are built around 30 tapas-sized dishes (\$12-\$22), such as Quebec duck confit, Thai curry or short ribs. Lunch is two courses, \$18-\$20, and there is an afternoon après-sports bar menu.

Wine world: At La Bohème’s suggestion, I stopped in at Le Vignoble du Ruisseau, a 20-minute drive from Bromont. It’s a spectacular installation high atop a mountain outside Dunham at the heart of the Eastern Townships Wine Route. It is an epicurean experience as exciting as many vineyards in Burgundy, France, or Napa Valley, Calif. The Lamoureux-Gaston family, originally in construction, built an impressive stone and timber château that houses their wine world: a bistro, a tasting room, event spaces, the wine production area and a shop showcasing Ruisseau’s wines, spirits and maple and garden products. The Bistro sur Braise serves local delicacies cooked almost exclusively over the embers of a wood fire. Executive chef Samuel Boulanger creates mushroom tarts and Highland beef tartare, as well as inventive versions of sausages, poutine and pork tacos (lunch, Wed.-Sun. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Dinners on Saturday nights have culinary and oenological themes. The Bistro’s servers are sommeliers who can fashion pairings with Ruisseau’s six spirits and 12 wines, including its acclaimed sparkling rosé and Chardonnay. rochelle@rochellelash.com

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