

Bienvenue à *Montréal*

Canada's most European city. Bilingual, vibrant, and genuinely unlike anywhere else. Here's everything worth exploring before, after, or in between convention sessions.

2nd largest

French-speaking city on Earth, after Paris

33 km

of underground tunnels, the world's largest indoor city

100+

festivals a year including the world's largest jazz festival

350 km

of bike paths through one of North America's most cycle-friendly cities

● MUST SEE

Mont Royal Park

October is peak foliage season and the views from the top are stunning. A 20 minute walk from the hotel and worth every step.

Notre-Dame Basilica

The interior stops people in their tracks. Teal vaulted ceilings, deep blue woodwork, gold everywhere. Book tickets in advance.

Old Montréal

Cobblestone streets, the Old Port waterfront, great restaurants and some of the best people-watching in the city.

OCTOBER SPECIAL

Gardens of Light

The Botanical Garden transforms after dark with Chinese lanterns and Indigenous light installations. One of the city's most magical evenings out.

RÉSO, The Underground City

33 km of tunnels connecting shops, restaurants and the metro. Peel station is right outside the hotel.

Atwater Market

The closest market to the hotel and spectacular in harvest season. Local cheese, apple cider and fresh produce.

● MUST EAT

Bagels, St-Viateur and Fairmount

Montreal's great bagel rivalry. Both wood-fired, chewy and nothing like what you get back home. St-Viateur since 1957, Fairmount since 1919. Try both and pick a side.

Smoked meat, Schwartz's and Dunn's

Schwartz's on St-Laurent is the original pilgrimage since 1928. Expect a line and order it medium. Dunn's Famous at 1249 Rue Metcalfe is a short walk from the hotel with no lineup.

Poutine, La Banquise and Frite Alors!

La Banquise is open 24 hours with over 30 varieties. Frite Alors! does Belgian-style fries with rich gravy and squeaky fresh curds. Both are the real thing.

BeaverTail

A Canadian classic. Closest spot at 136 Rue St-Paul Est in Old Montreal. Get it with cinnamon sugar.

Ice cider, cidre de glace

Quebec's signature drink and one of those things you can't really get anywhere else. Richer and sweeter than regular cider. Ask for it at any good restaurant.

● BEST BRUNCH

Arthur's Nosh Bar

The pancakes alone are worth the trip. The bagel tower with smoked salmon is another reason to stay. Book ahead because it fills up every weekend.

Foiegwa

A French diner with a New York soul. Eggs benedict with jambon, cheddar and truffle hollandaise. Warm, unpretentious and genuinely delicious.

Olive et Gourmando

In Old Montreal right near Notre-Dame. European bakery-café feel with serious food. Perfect before or after the Basilica.

L'Avenue

Wild décor, big portions, serious lineups. A Plateau institution that earns every wait.

Shay

A neighbourhood favourite that locals love and tourists don't always find. Relaxed vibe, great food.

Hof Kelsten

At 4524 St-Laurent in Mile End. The chef trained at The French Laundry. Come for the croissants and babka, stay for the weekend brunch.

● DESTINATION RESTAURANTS

BOOK TWO MONTHS AHEAD

Joe Beef

The chalkboard changes daily but the lobster spaghetti and smoked meat croquettes are almost always there. They brew their own beer and do everything in-house. One of Canada's most celebrated restaurants.

Garde Manger

Chef Chuck Hughes' place in Old Montreal. Start with the sharing platter of oysters, shrimp, scallops and crab. The lobster poutine is the one dish everyone talks about.

Au Pied de Cochon

Anthony Bourdain called it his favourite restaurant in the world. Rich, indulgent and completely over the top in the best way. The foie gras poutine is the dish.

Toqué!

The grande dame of Quebec cuisine. Seasonal, refined and deeply local. If you want one proper fine dining meal in Montréal, this is it.

● COCKTAIL BARS

CANADA'S BEST BAR 2026

Cloakroom

Hidden behind a menswear shop on Rue de la Montagne, a few minutes from the hotel. No menu, 25 seats, walk-in only. You tell the bartender what you feel like and something extraordinary appears.

Atwater Cocktail Club

Bold cocktails and a loyal local crowd. Been one of the city's best for over a decade and shows no sign of slowing down. Good for groups.

The Coldroom

A proper speakeasy in Old Montreal. Atmospheric, well-crafted drinks and the kind of room that makes a night feel like an occasion.

Bar Bisou Bisou

A basement bar in Old Montreal with a Mediterranean aperitivo feel. Sherry, vermouth and amari done properly. Great before dinner near Garde Manger.

● JAZZ AND LIVE MUSIC

Upstairs Jazz Bar and Grill

Live jazz most nights of the week in an intimate room. One of the best in the city and always reliable.

House of Jazz

A Montréal institution. Welcoming, accessible and a great first stop if you're new to the jazz scene.

Le Balcon

Rooftop bar with live jazz nights and a skyline view that's genuinely beautiful in October.

● BARS AND NIGHTLIFE

Crescent Street

The classic English bar strip, steps from the hotel. Lively, easy and great for a big group on a first night out.

St-Laurent, The Main

Follow it north from downtown and you end up in the Plateau. Buzzy, eclectic and very much the soul of the city after dark.

St-Denis

More French, more local and quieter than St-Laurent. Great neighbourhood bars and terrasse culture.

Comedy Nest

Montréal's longest-running English comedy club, right downtown. A fun evening out for the whole group.

● HOCKEY

CHECK OCTOBER SCHEDULE

Montréal Canadiens at the Bell Centre

The Bell Centre is a short walk from the Marriott and a Habs home game is about as Montréal an experience as it gets. Schedule drops in summer 2026. Get tickets the moment they go on sale.

Worth knowing

The first ice hockey game ever played was in Montréal on March 3, 1875. The Canadiens have won the Stanley Cup 24 times, more than any other team in history.

FUN FACTS ABOUT MONTRÉAL

- Built on an island in the St. Lawrence River that is five times the size of Manhattan
- Cirque du Soleil started here in 1984 and became the largest theatrical production company in the world
- UNESCO City of Design since 2006, alongside Mexico City, Seoul and Istanbul
- There are musical swings in the city centre. When all three sync perfectly they play a harmonious song together
- The city hosts the world's largest jazz festival every summer with over 3,000 performers from 30 countries
- Over 59% of Montréalers speak both French and English fluently. Second-largest French-speaking city on Earth after Paris
- Montréal hosted the 1976 Summer Olympics and remains the only Canadian city ever to have done so
- Mount Royal Park was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, who also designed Central Park in New York
- The Montréal Protocol of 1987 is widely regarded as the most successful international environmental agreement ever implemented
- Montréalers disliked Napoleon so much they erected a statue of the admiral who defeated him

Say "Bonjour/Hi" and you'll be fine anywhere Metro with an Opus card is the easiest way around

October runs 5 to 15°C so pack a layer or two Uber and taxis are everywhere and the city is very walkable