



GUIDE

Quebec City

By Caroline Gladstone

Caroline Gladstone was a guest of Quebec Tourism. See quebecregion.com.

WHY

Quebec City brims with charm and history at every corner. The only walled city in the Americas north of Mexico, its four kilometres of ramparts enclose a UNESCO World Heritage centre accessed through four stone gates. Built on a lofty escarpment above the St Lawrence River, it is topped by the fairytale Le Chateau Frontenac, said to be the most photographed hotel in the world. And this city of just half a

million is French – but without the arrogance, as the Quebecois love to say!

VISIT

Begin inside the walls of Old Quebec where you'll not only find horse-drawn carriages (caleches) clip-clopping along cobblestone streets but also discover there's an Upper and a Lower town.

Connected by 30 separate staircases and a funicular, each has a distinct personality. The imposing buildings, flower-filled squares and Dufferin Terrace – a boardwalk with sensational river views – are in the upper town, while the lower town has boutique hotels, galleries and restaurants in historic cottages and warehouses.

MUST



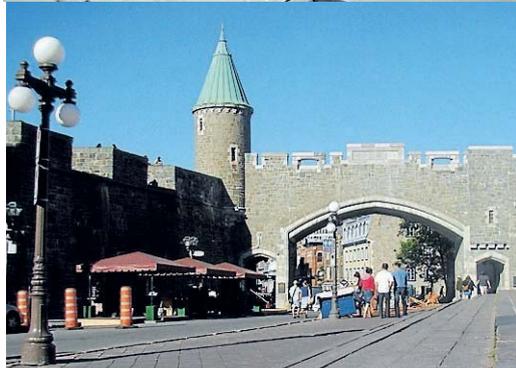
Climb aboard the Hop-On Hop-Off bus to orientate yourself with this city, which wraps itself around a promontory that rises steeply from the river. Ride the funicular for great views but for the best photo of the city, take the ferry across to Levis on the other side. Seek out the city's 14 outdoor murals (the best one is near Place Royal, Lower Town) and get active with a cycle ride along Boulevard Champlain on the river's edge.

LOOK

It's easy to imagine yourself in some European medieval town, albeit one with immaculate streets lined with fashionable boutiques. History-lovers, especially those with a military leaning, will love the old fortifications, the Citadelle, parks lined with cannons and the Plains of Abraham where decisive battles were fought. It's hard to believe that this city founded by the French, whose residents speak that mother tongue, ultimately succumbed to the British in 1759. Beyond the statues and forts, there are micro-breweries and cafes in the hip Rue St Jean and St Roch districts.



Photo: Caroline Gladstone



EAT

For tableside flambe and a night of theatrics head to Le Continental (restaurantlecontinental.com). Order the flaming steak au poivre and the crepe suzette. A prix fixe meal at Aux Anciens Canadiens (auxancienscanadiens.qc.ca) is a steal at \$20. Waiters in period costume serve comfort food in this 1675-built house. Casual dining on Le Petit Champlain doesn't get any better than at Le Lapin Saute (lapinsaute.com). There's plenty of rabbit on the menu, along with French onion soup and foie gras.

SLEEP

Who doesn't want to stay in a hotel that looks like a castle? The Chateau Frontenac (fairmont.com/frontenac-quebec) is the grandest in town, dominating the skyline since 1893. The 611-room edifice has recently undergone a \$75.5 million renovation. The Le Monastere des Augustines (monastere.ca/en) is a hotel and wellness centre that occupies the site of the Augustine convent and hospital, established by French nuns in 1639. Guests can stay in "authentic" or "contemporary" rooms where healthy food, massage and therapies are offered at reasonable prices.



TIP

This is an infinitely walkable city, but don't wear high heels on any of those staircases. For a little glamour at a low price enjoy the weekday \$20 lunch at the Chateau Frontenac's Le Sam bar.

