

SHERIDAN ROAD

NORTH SHORE STYLE
& SUBSTANCE
FEBRUARY 2018

**“Till I loved I never
lived—Enough.”
—EMILY DICKINSON**

**MODERN
LIVING WITH
A NORTH
SHORE
ARCHITECT**

**CAMP KESEM:
JOY FOR KIDS
AFFECTED
BY CANCER**

**CLAYOVEN'S
TASTE
OF INDIA**

**REGINA SISKE
DRAWS INSPIRATION
FROM A 14TH
CENTURY EAST
ASIAN TECHNIQUE**

**CHANGE
MAKERS
IN NORTH
CHICAGO**

ROYALLY ENGAGED

**MEGHAN MARKLE'S
JOURNEY FROM
NORTHWESTERN
UNIVERSITY TO
BUCKINGHAM PALACE**

FIRST CLASS

FRANCO FILES



Aerial view of Québec City

Québec City's luxurious Auberge Saint-Antoine is the ultimate site to explore the 410-year history of the only walled city north of Mexico.

WORDS BY SHERRY THOMAS

The French call it *je ne sais quoi*—that certain thing or experience that eludes description. And that characterizes how you might feel when you step into the breathtakingly beautiful Québec City—a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

At times, it's almost otherworldly—to be able to walk in the path of early French explorers who made the treacherous ocean journey to found Québec City. From the stories of brave 17th century teen girls who joined the Monastère des Augustines sisterhood to fearful early settlers who walled the capitol of New France to protect it from invasion, it's no wonder many historians consider this city to be the

cradle of French civilization in North America. (And yes, French speakers still comprise more than 95 percent of its population.)

With that in mind, our *First Class* winter sojourn starts at the Auberge Saint-Antoine hotel—a game-changing archaeological site and an award-winning Relais & Châteaux boutique hotel with spa. Located in the heart of Québec City's Old Port, the luxurious hotel has an antiquity all its own.

Chief amongst the Auberge Saint-Antoine's treasures is Bruno Page, one of Auberge Saint-Antoine's resident history enthusiasts and your tour guide for the afternoon. A visit with him will inform everything you do after this tour has ended, whether it be shopping the boutiques of Quartier

FIRST CLASS



Bar Artefact at Auberge Saint-Antoine in Québec City

were pioneering women, many who left families in France as teenagers to sail across the ocean to help settle the new world. Today, the monastery operates as a hotel, health spa, organic restaurant, and nonprofit heritage and cultural center. Guests can stay in humble rooms accoutered just the way they were for the sisters for hundreds of years. This is often attractive for groups who seek meditation or yoga retreats with no distractions (*monastere.ca*).

2. MIND THE FUNICULAIRE

Walk five minutes from the Auberge Saint-Antoine to the maison Louis-Joliet (near Place Royale on the rue du Petit-Champlain) and you will be at the bottom of the Funiculaire du Vieux-Québec. For about three Canadian dollars, this funicular railway lifts pedestrians from the lower town to the upper town via a tram car. The



Petit Champlain or enjoying steak frites at one of the cafes (we loved Bistro Sous Le Fort, *bistrosouslefort.com*) by the Chateau. The true beauty of this oh-so-French city is how everything fits together like a lost treasure map—where old meets new, and past meets present.

Ca va? Merci. The charming Monsieur Page meets you at the hotel's newly renovated Artéfact bar, a posh spot for mingling and small bites that has quickly become a trendy destination even for locals. Situated just opposite the St. Lawrence River on what was known in 1687 as the Îlot Hunt property, he will explain that the site where the Auberge was built was once used as a wharf, then a cannon battery, and then as a British merchant warehouse. More than 5,000 artifacts excavated during the construction of the hotel are on display throughout the property.

Historical records show that two prosperous fur merchants who built wharves on the site in 1704 went on to build the Dauphine Battery to protect those assets in 1709. Once thought lost, that old cannon battery was uncovered during one of the digs and was incorporated into the hotel's design. In fact, if you look down at the floor of the Artéfact bar, you will find you are literally standing on top of the battery ruins (and see the rest of what remains underground through museum-style glass windows).

When the Auberge first opened on Rue Saint-Antoine in 1992, it was a small local inn. As several archaeological digs of the site continued, the hotel grew and evolved, completing the final round of renovations by 2003.

Today, the Price family—working along with Ville de Québec, Ministère de la Culture

et des Communications du Québec, Conseil des monuments et sites du Québec, and Université Laval—is dedicated to preserving local history while offering a contemporary 21st century luxury hotel experience.

In addition to the Artéfact lounge, Auberge Saint-Antoine offers its Chez Muffy restaurant. Affectionately named after one of the owners, Martha Bate Price, the menu features dishes sourced locally in the community with an emphasis on re-imagined classical French and Canadian cuisine (the foie gras is fantastic). When you book your suite be sure to include a breakfast at Chez Muffy, which is a culinary treat and the perfect way to start your day.

While no one humble travel missive can tell you everything, we selected a few of our favorites to get you started on the ultimate Québec City winter voyage (or spring break getaway).

Just remember, this is a French-speaking city so French first, always, even it's just *bon jour* or *merci*.

1. TOUR THE MONASTÈRE DES AUGUSTINES

Every Québec City itinerary is different but one common thread you'll quickly notice is that no matter which city tour you take, almost everything comes back to the Augustine convent. It all started in August 1639 when three sisters from the Augustinian Order arrived in Québec, ultimately creating the first hospital north of Mexico. Before the sisterhood disbanded in the 1960s, it was responsible for founding 12 hospitals and building what became the cornerstone of modern day health care in the region. A tour of the museum shows the founding sisters

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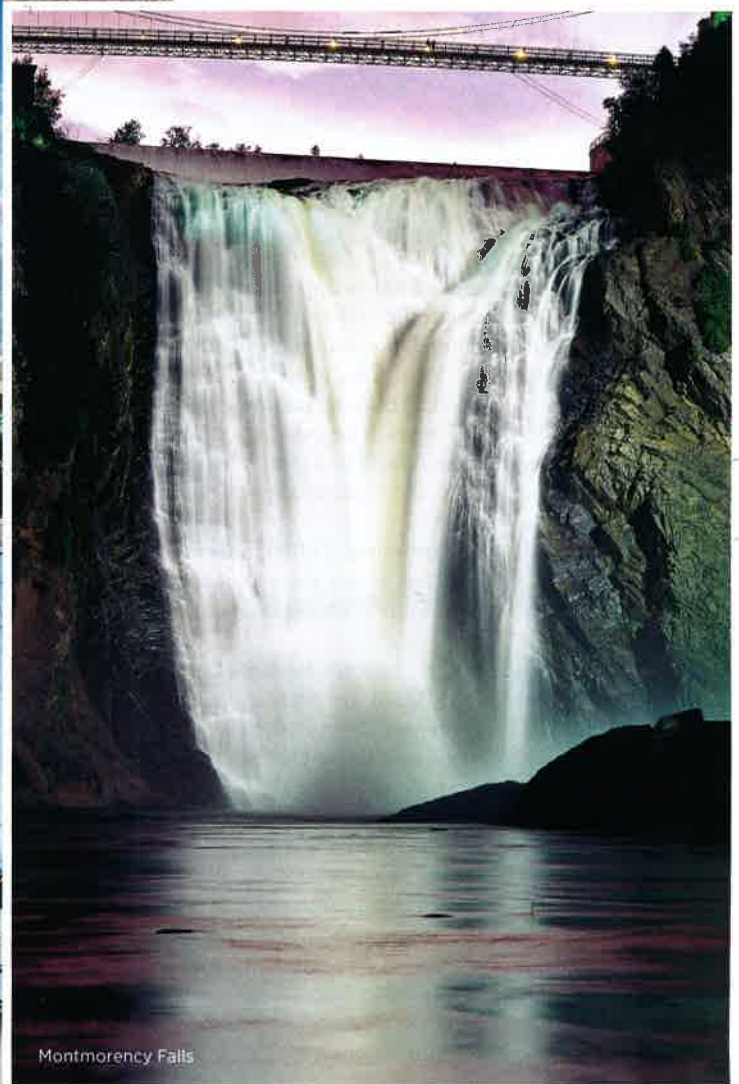


-Auberge Saint-Antoine facade

ride itself is quick but well worth it to avoid walking the 45-degree incline up the hill where you can see the iconic Le Château Frontenac (one of a series of “castle hotels” built by Canadian Pacific Railway tycoons in the 1920s), the Musée du Fort military museum (museedufort.com), and enjoy panoramic views of the St. Lawrence River. While there is a similar funicular system in the Montmartre region of Paris, there is said to be nothing else like it in North America (funiculaire-quebec.com).

3. FIND YOUR WAY TO MONTMORENCY FALLS

As much as we loved the Musée de la Civilisation (mcq.org), Musée des Ursulines (museedesursulines.com), and the stunning new Musée national beaux-arts due Québec museum complex in the heart of the arts district (mmbaq.com), a visit to the Parc de la Chute-Montmorency is well worth the trip. Our tour guide took us on the short drive out to this natural historic wonder. Cable cars, suspended bridges, and even a zip line offer spectacular views of a waterfall that’s 98.5 feet higher than the famous Niagara Falls (parcdelachutemontmorency.com).



Montmorency Falls