

1 - Discover Montreal

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12 reasons to love Montreal

Montreal is very **safe**, everywhere, even at night, even in the metro.

Montreal is multi ethnic but **peaceful**.

Quebecers are **dynamic** but always **cool and very friendly**.

Montreal is **bilingual**, almost everyone speaks English.

Montreal is **green** : many parks, trees in the streets, most of the houses have a private garden, Mount Royal is a big park (designed by Olmsted, like Central Park !), many "nature parks" around the City.

Montreal is a young City : 150,000 students in 5 Universities.

Montreal is **not a dense City** : the majority of homes has only 1 or 2 floors.

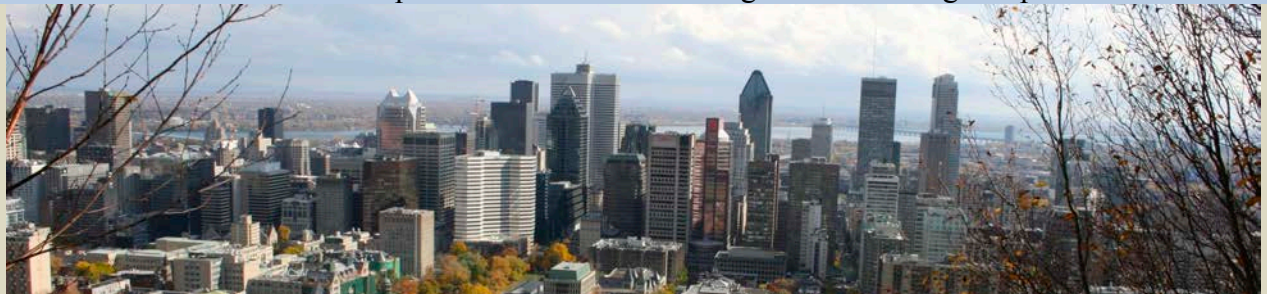
Montreal is **easy to drive, easy to park**. The metro and **buses** network is extensive and reliable. **2 car sharing** systems - *Car2go* and *Communauto* - are available.

Montreal is ideal for **sports** : in summer, cycling (BiXi), tennis, jogging, sailing, even surfing... In winter skating and cross-country skiing, arenas (hockey on ice) in the parks...

A city for vivid **arts and culture** : le Vieux Montreal district and its XVIIIth century houses, fine arts museum, modern art museum, galleries, symphonic orchestra, dozens of festivals : jazz, cinema, wall art...

A City with a very active **entertainment industry** : film shootings, sound studios, video games...

Montreal is the City of **gastronomy** : French cuisine, countless restaurants from everywhere, 2 excellent markets where local producers and farmers bring natural and organic products.



A Federal State

Canada is a **Constitutional Monarchy**. The Chief of State is HM the Queen Elisabeth II, represented in Ottawa by the Governor-General and in the Provinces by Lieutenant-Governors.

Canada is also a **Federal State**, which means the powers are distributed between, on one hand, the Federal Government and, on the other hand, the 10 Provinces and 3 territories.

Quebec, where you are going to live, is a Province like others – the Capital is the City of Quebec, which Quebecers call "The National Capital" - but with some extra prerogatives.

Therefore, when you deal with Authorities, ask yourself : "Is this matter of Federal level, Provincial level, or both ?"

To make things clearer...

| | | |
|--|------------------------|---|
| Government | Federal and Provincial | Federal Parliament, Senate and Prime Minister in Ottawa + Parliament and PM in Quebec There are <i>federal</i> laws and <i>provincial</i> laws. |
| Immigration, Work Permit, Study Permit | Federal and Provincial | Quebec issues CSQ and CAQ but the last word is always federal : Work Permits and Study Permits are issued by Federal Authorities. Visas (for the citizens of countries for whom a visa is required) are issued by Federal. Citizenship (to become Canadian) is a Federal matter. |
| Diplomacy, Mint Army, Posts | Federal | Diplomacy is a Federal matter, but Quebec has its own Delegations in several countries. |
| Police | Multiple | The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (now rarely riding horses...) is in charge of all matters concerning more than one Province (like the FBI). The provincial police in Quebec is the Sûreté du Québec . The city police corps are very important and active in the important towns, like the SPVM in Montreal. |
| Taxes | Federal and Provincial | There are 2 sales taxes (federal and provincial called TPS and TVQ in Quebec) and 2 income taxes, both collected by Revenu Quebec. |
| Education System | Provincial | Quebec organizes and manages its education system. |
| Health System | Provincial | Quebec organizes and manages its health system. |
| Driver Licence and licence plate | Provincial | ...but you may drive everywhere in Canada (and <i>almost</i> everywhere in the USA) with a Quebec Driver licence. |
| Infrastructures | Federal and Provincial | Freeways are under provincial authority, but some major infrastructure (such as the Champlain Bridge in Montreal) are managed by the Federal Government. |

Montreal, an Island in the South...



France and Quebec, at same scale and real latitude.

With 10 million km², Canada is the **second largest country in the world** (after Russia). In fact, it is larger than all of Europe put together! The Province of Quebec is 3 times larger than France with only 8 million inhabitants, of which 4 million live in Montreal and surroundings.

Nature is everywhere, including wildlife. Life in Quebec is a haven for fishermen and hunters.

Distances are very large: there are 1,200 km between Montreal and where the St. Lawrence River meets the Atlantic Ocean. However, the border with the United States is only 60 km from Montreal.



Montreal is considered as a city of never-ending winter. Totally untrue! During seven months of the year, its climate is varied and pleasant.

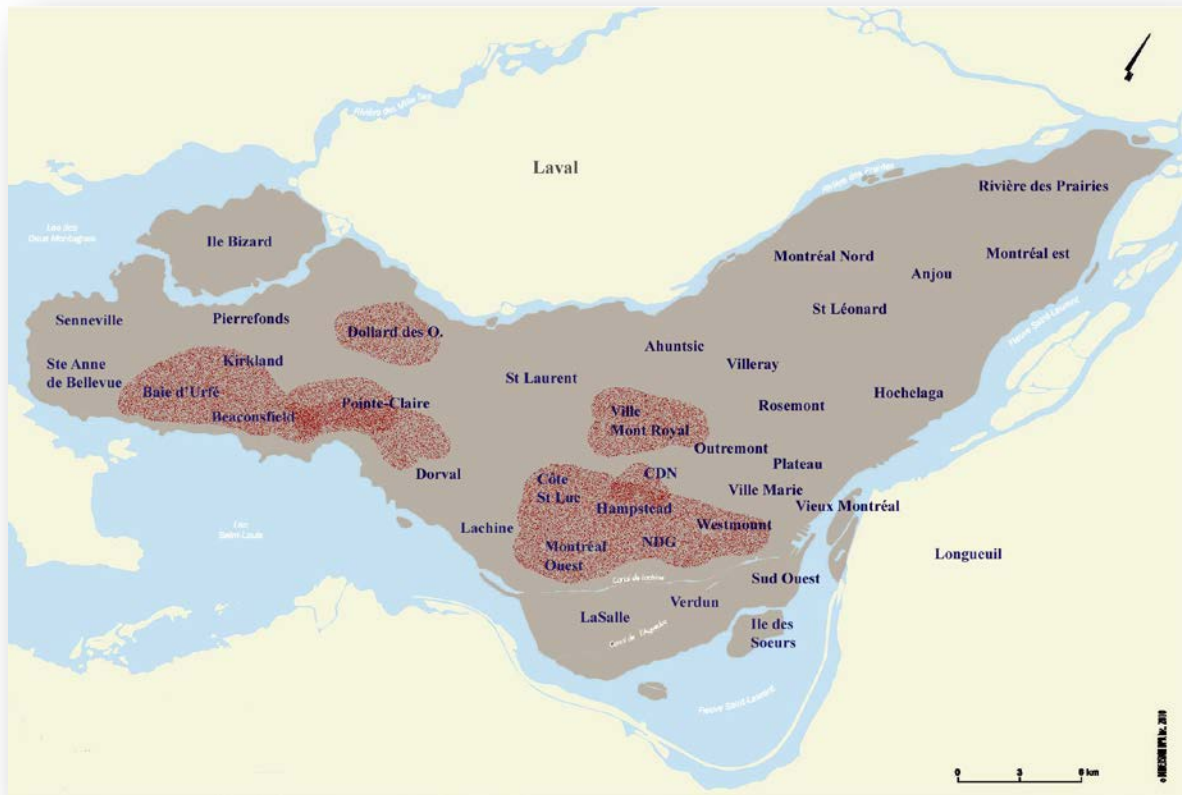
Montreal is situated at the latitude together with Bordeaux and Venice: **summer is hot**, sometimes unbearable. An **air conditioner** is not a luxury, if not a necessity. Parks turn into ideal picnic havens.

| | June | July | August | September |
|-------------------------------|------|------|--------|-----------|
| Max. Record Temperatures (°C) | 35,0 | 35,6 | 37,6 | 33,5 |



Autumn as well is an extraordinary season. *Indian Summer* is a week of fabulous weather usually appearing after the first frost. The changing of the leaves becomes an event not to be missed for its outstanding beauty of colours: fierce reds and brilliant yellows. Magical!

Anglophone or Francophone ?



The majority of people living in the Montreal area is bilingual. Nevertheless, the English speaking population lives preferably in some neighbourhoods of Montreal and towns in the Island (in red on the map above).

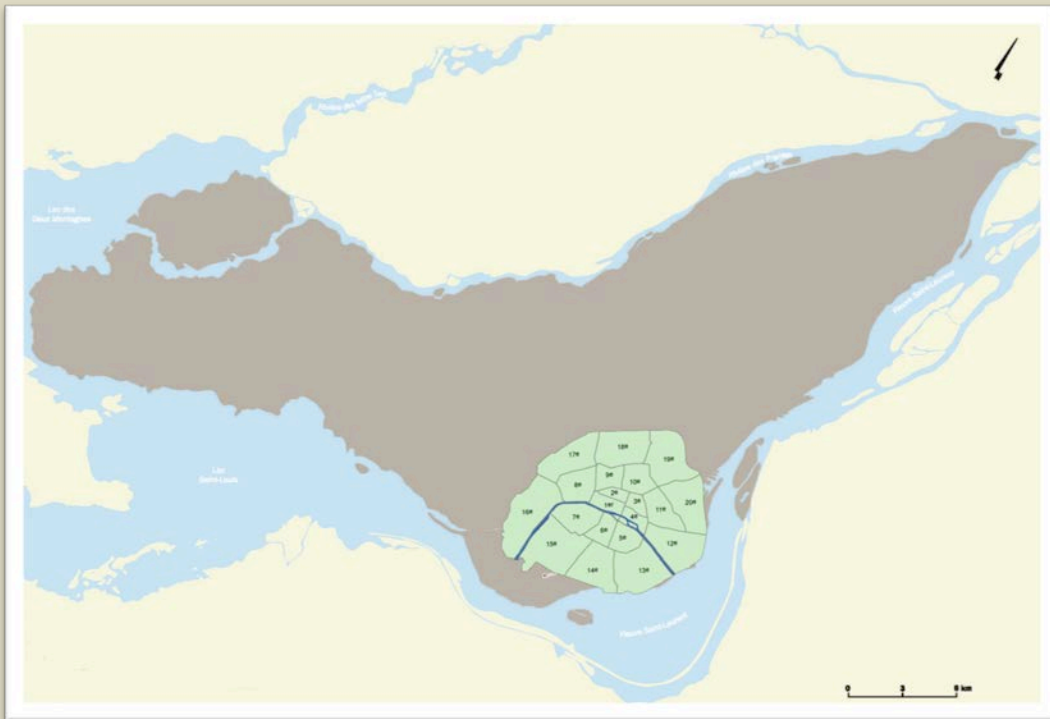
Well-off Anglophone families live in Westmount, TMR (Town Mount-Royal) and in West of the Island.

Montreal neighbourhoods are very **heterogeneous**. From one street to another you may go from high-end housing to lower middle-class dwellings. For example, Université de Montreal is surrounded by two boroughs: one very residential and another very vibrant, multi-ethnic and (luckily for students) more affordable. In Outremont, for example, you have luxurious mansions, and you also have triplexes (3-family units) of average quality.

Landmarks

Approximately four million inhabitants call the Greater Montreal Area home. This island-city is **extremely widespread** measuring 50 km long. However, the population density is very low. In general traffic is quite good. You need only 20 minutes to go from Outremont to the Old Port; equal distance of crossing Paris from North to South.

Maps of Paris and Montreal superimposed at same scale...



Since Montreal is an island, you will need to cross **bridges** in order to leave it... Yet most of these bridges - notably Champlain Bridge, the bridge with the most traffic in Canada- are in the process of being rebuilt. These major construction sites are expected to last several years and do disturb heavily the traffic-flow.



Certain boroughs (Westmount, Outremont, Town of Mont-Royal,...) are **independent** with respect to governance and their by-laws (taxes, speed limits, parking permits, wood-burning fire-place regulations...etc). The map on next page shows the 19 *arrondissements* (boroughs) of Montreal (dark brown) and the linked independent townships (light brown).



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Street signs indicate if you have "crossed the border"...



In Outremont...



... and in Montreal

An imaginary line cuts Montreal in two, separating it into **East and West**. This line is in fact St. Laurent Boulevard, or “the Main”. Thus there is a 625 Sherbrooke Street **West** and a 625 Sherbrooke Street **East**. As the house numbers correspond approximately to the distance from St. Laurent Boulevard (calculated in metres), these two addresses are separated approximately by more than one kilometre!

As for the streets that run **north-south**, the house numbers generally correspond to the distance in metres from the river, even if the street begins far from the St. Laurent River.

Montreal Postulate : St-Laurent Boulevard is oriented South-North (if you check your compass, it will tell you this is absolutely untrue...)



Most streets are formed by linear blocks and many are one-way streets.

Inner-city streets often have a **narrow lane** reserved for local traffic, deliveries, garbage collection.

In the heart of the city, some “green” lanes make you feel like you are in the countryside!

The **postal code** in Canada is very important. The format may appear strange, but it does have its logic. Best to memorize it as you will be asked to give it often.

The postal code **HOH OHO** which appears on this mail box belongs to none other than Santa Claus!

