

4 - Your Neighbourhood

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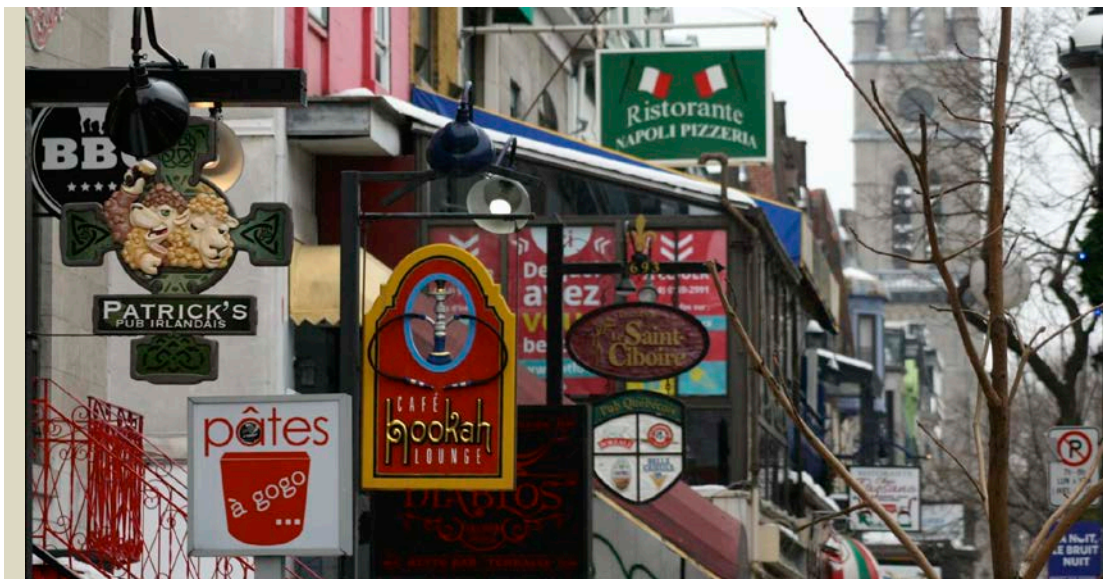
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Many criteria come into play when it comes to making a decision of where to live: the style of life that you wish to have, the proximity to work, public transport, the children and their schools, budget

Newcomers have heard of some of Montreal's more internationally famous neighbourhoods (The Plateau, Outremont and Westmount), but there are many more which are equally interesting as an option. Highly recommended would be to visit the city thoroughly before deciding.

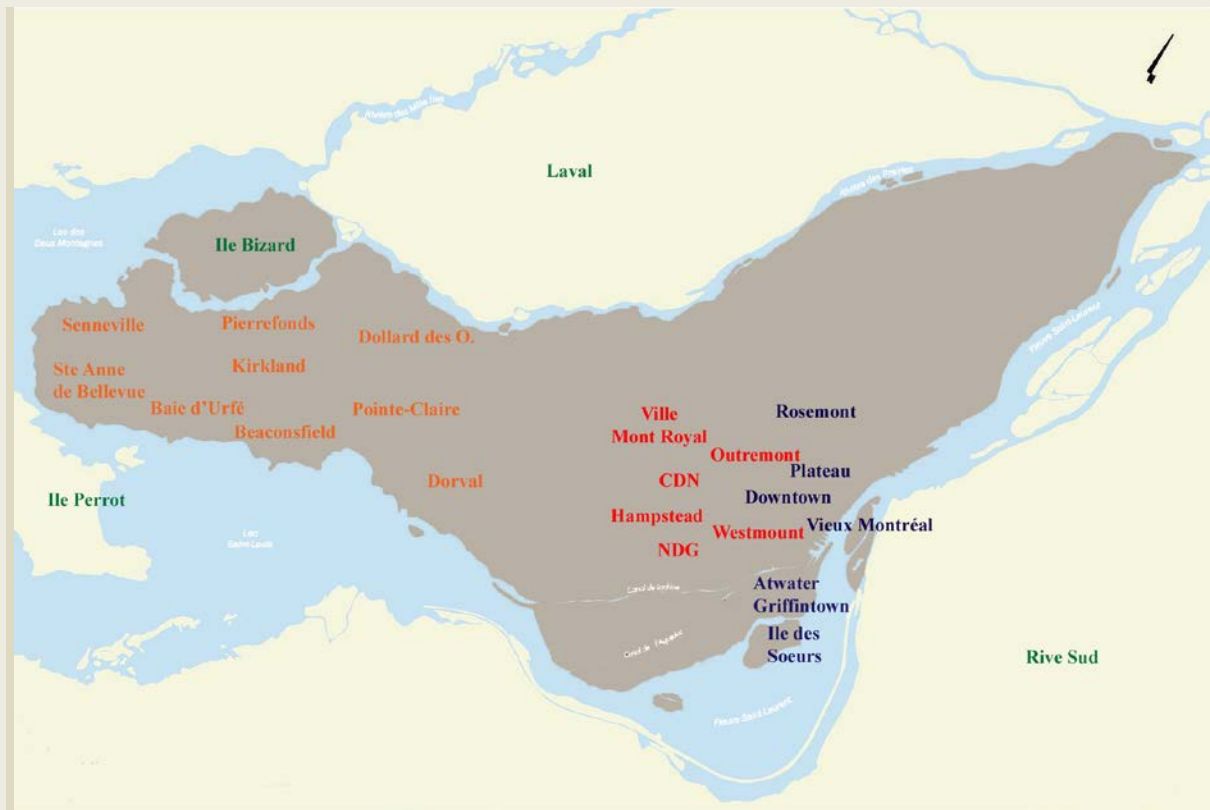
Ask yourself some questions –

- ✓ Do we want a **vibrant** neighbourhood with lots of restaurants and cultural options?
- ✓ Do we want a “**green**” neighbourhood with lots of parks?
- ✓ Do we want a **house** or an **apartment**? A house often comes with a yard for children to play in, a garden for those who enjoy gardening, can sometimes have a swimming pool. An apartment is an easier option in winter (snow-removal free, may have underground parking...)
- ✓ **Commute time**, by car or public transport
- ✓ Proximity to the **office**?
- ✓ Proximity to reputable **schools** (for a good public school you must live in the immediate neighbourhood, for private schools not an issue.)
- ✓ Does your **partner** work, have a driver's licence.....



Rue
Saint-Denis

4 lifestyles



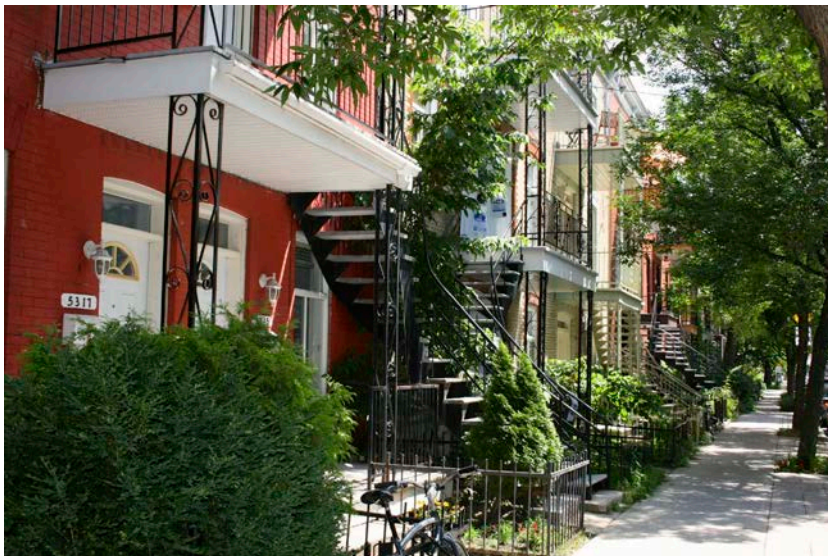
Single or Couples without children

Families with young children

Families with Teenagers

Countryside appeal

Single or Couples without children often choose *Old Montreal*, *Downtown* or the *Plateau* for a urban-type lifestyle.



Many expats decide to live in Le Plateau because of the cosmopolitan, creative and vibrant lifestyle.

Le Plateau (and also attached to it, the **Mile End** district): Definitely in style, the demand is high to live there and therefore.... pricey. Parking spaces are virtually non-existent. This was the former home to the wave of newly arrived immigrants in the early 20th century. The trend was to then build their homes further and further away from the port (in Old Montreal). This is why the quality of construction can be varied, sometimes quite mediocre.

The renovated lofts of **Old Montreal** attract people with a young urban profile with an active lifestyle, who don't feel the need of green space. A home with a view of the St. Lawrence River is a privilege which is often quite expensive.

Rosemont-Petite Patrie, an extension of Le Plateau, is the new trendy neighbourhood, especially around Promenade Masson. Close to the Marché Jean-Talon, Little Italy is vivid and pleasant.

Both **Atwater** and **Griffintown**, are areas in full renovation and are also attracting young professionals.

Nun's Island is a very green and lovely area. Most English private schools include Nun's Island on their school bus route, and is well connected to downtown (by car).

The **Gay Village**, found near the Beaudry Metro Station (Ste. Catherine Street East), is lively but also quite expensive.

Families with Teenagers The idea is to choose an area where teenagers can come and go (without relying on a car) using public transport. Areas such as **Outremont**, **Cote-des-Neiges**, **Westmount**, **Town of Mont-Royal (TMR)**, **Notre-Dame-de-Grace (NDG)** and **Hampstead** are ideal.



Francophone expat families tend to gravitate towards Outremont. Not only is it a beautiful area to live, but many of the major private French-speaking schools are found there including College Stanislas (one of the two Lycees Francais of Montreal).

A lovely home in Outremont

Some streets of *Cote des Neiges*, close to the Universite de Montreal and the College Marie-de-France (the other Lycee Francais school in Montreal) are also very nice. Rental prices tend to be more affordable than Outremont.

The more Anglophone areas are *Westmount* (high-end, very expensive), *NDG*, *Hampstead* and *TMR*.

Families with Young Children Many families with young children choose the more Anglophone *West Island* (the west portion of the Island of Montreal), which offers a more “American-type suburb” lifestyle of homes with large gardens, even if this supposes a 2-hour/day commute.

The southern boroughs closer to the river such as *Dorval*, *Pointe-Claire*, *Baie d’Urfe*, *Beaconsfield*, *Ste. Anne de Bellevue*, are perhaps more elegant than the newer areas further north such as *Pierrefonds*, *Kirkland* and *Dollard des Ormeaux*.



View of a typical West Island street.

Countryside Appeal For those willing to go even further away off-island, towards the north there is Laval, Boisbriand, Blainville (just voted the **top Canadian** city to raise children!) or further west there is Vaudreuil, Saint-Lazare, Ile Perrot, Ile Bizard...

Laval and the *South Shore*: Comprised of a patchwork of highways, shopping malls and residential areas. Rush hour commute time is a handicap should you work on-island as inevitably you will have to cross a bridge. For an expat family where the spouse is not working, life in the suburbs can be isolating during the week.

Further is *Ile Perrot* (well-known for its golf courses), *Saint-Lazare / Hudson* (for equestrian fans) or *Ile Bizard* (large, luxury homes): beautiful areas but one-hour drive to go Downtown...



A park in Ile Perrot

Other Areas

There are other middle-class areas which are very pleasant to live in such as ***Olympic Park area, Ahuntsic, Ville Saint Laurent, Montreal West, Lasalle*** (on the St-Lawrence riverfront.)... These neighbourhoods are further away from the downtown core.

Although they typically are not areas where expats choose to live, the rents are affordable. All are well connected by public transport, but again there is the isolation factor to consider.



The 1976 Olympic Village, now condominiums.

To Avoid



There are some areas which are not highly recommended such as *Park Extension*, *Saint-Leonard*, *Hochelaga*, *Saint-Henri*, *Montreal North* and the *east side of the island*.

True that some of these areas are being revitalized (*Saint-Henri* due to the soon-to-be-opened McGill University Hospital Centre), but in general they may not be ideal to everyone.

In the following pages, a brief description of some neighbourhoods, organized bay life style...

Single or Couples without children

Old Montreal



Population, language	Rather francophone, young professionals
Communications	Metro (orange line) and some buses
Shopping	Lots of small shops
Social life	Many restaurants, pubs and theatres
Schools, universities	Very few schools
Advantages	Central, many services and vibrant social life
Drawbacks	Sometimes noisy, hard to find parking, no parks except for waterfront
Typical dwelling	Beautiful refurbished old buildings, some new condos
Cost of housing	High

Downtown



Population, language	Mixed Anglophone / francophone young professionals
Communications	extensive metro and buses
Shopping	Many small shops, shopping centres, underground city
Social life	Many restaurants, pubs and theatres
Schools, universities	Public and Private schools, universities UQAM, Concordia, Mc Gill
Advantages	Central, many services and vibrant social life
Drawbacks	Often noisy, no parks for children
Typical dwelling	Modern condos with services (gym, parking...)
Cost of housing	High

Le Plateau Mile End



Population, language	More francophone, multi-ethnic, young professionals and students
Communications	Extensive metro and buses
Shopping	Many small shops
Social life	Trendy neighbourhood, lots of bars, restaurants and nightclubs
Schools, universities	Public schools, especially francophone
Advantages	Lively social life, parks Lafontaine et Wilfred-Laurier
Drawbacks	Main streets are noisy, private parking almost impossible
Typical dwelling	Duplex and triplexes built in the '30s
Cost of housing	Affordable but increasing fast. Mile End is cheaper.

Rosemont



Population, language	Authentically Quebecois, young professionals and students
Communications	Dense buses network, but few metro stations
Shopping	Jean-Talon Market, many shops on Masson
Social life	Rather calm, but developing fast
Schools, universities	Public schools, mainly francophone
Advantages	Very friendly, affordable
Drawbacks	No metro stations
Typical dwelling	Duplex and triplex built in the '30s
Cost of housing	Affordable, but increasing

Atwater Griffintown



Population, language	Franco- and anglophone, young couples, young professionals
Communications	Metro Lionel-Groulx, some buses
Shopping	Atwater market, shops on Notre-Dame Street
Social life	Rather quiet, some trendy restaurants
Schools, universities	Public schools, ETS
Advantages	Peaceful, the view over the Lachine Canal
Drawbacks	Car is often necessary
Typical dwelling	Recently built condos, good quality but small bedrooms
Cost of housing	Affordable, many housing projects, area in expansion

Nuns' Island



Population, language	Mixed francophone and anglophone, upper middle class
Communications	2 bus lines. Freeways.
Shopping	A shopping centre
Social life	Sporting Club, golf course
Schools, universities	Primary schools (French)
Advantages	Quiet, high-end and gorgeous view on the St-Laurent River
Drawbacks	Car is a must. Traffic congestions on the freeways.
Typical dwelling	Luxury condos and detached houses. Bedrooms are generally small.
Cost of housing	Average to high

Families with Teenagers

Outremont



Population, language	More francophone. Upper middle class.
Communications	Well connected by metro and buses
Shopping	Many shops on Bernard, Laurier and Van Horne streets
Social life	Many restaurants, lively in summer.
Schools, universities	Stanislas College, private and public schools, University of Montréal
Advantages	High quality environment, many parks, close to downtown
Drawbacks	Expensive...
Typical dwelling	Duplex with a small garden
Cost of housing	Average to high

Côte-des-Neiges



Population, language	Highly multi-ethnic. Some streets are very pleasant
Communications	Well-served by metro and buses
Shopping	Many shops and commercial centres
Social life	Close to Outremont and Downtown
Schools, universities	University of Montréal, College Marie-de-France
Advantages	Many parks, some pleasant streets
Drawbacks	Some areas are less attractive
Typical dwelling	Duplex with a small garden
Cost of housing	Affordable

Westmount



Population, language	More anglophone, affluent
Communications	1 metro station, bus lines on Sherbrooke St. and The Boulevard
Shopping	"Westmount Village" on Sherbrooke St.
Social life	Trendy, calm...
Schools, universities	Excellent private anglophone schools
Advantages	High-end, many parks, sports
Drawbacks	Car is a necessity
Typical dwelling	High-end detached house
Cost of housing	Expensive

Hampstead



Population, language	More anglophone, upper middle class
Communications	No Metro, few buses
Shopping	Scarce
Social life	Quiet
Schools, universities	No Universities
Advantages	Good quality peaceful environment
Drawbacks	Car is a necessity
Typical dwelling	Good quality detached housing
Cost of housing	High

Notre-Dame de Grâce (NDG)



Population, language	Middle class, more anglophone, families
Communications	Many buses, metro on Décarie
Shopping	Many shops on Monkland, Snowdon and Cavendish Blvd.
Social life	Monkland Village very trendy
Schools, universities	Public and private schools, Marie de France and Villa-Maria colleges
Advantages	Pleasant life, many parks, affordable
Drawbacks	In some areas, car is a must
Typical dwelling	Duplex. Quality of non-refurbished houses is poor.
Cost of housing	Affordable

Town Mont-Royal (TMR)



Population, language	More anglophone, affluent
Communications	Some buses and train in the centre of TMR
Shopping	4 shopping centres at the extreme points, some shops in the centre
Social life	Rather quiet...
Schools, universities	Good quality public schools
Advantages	High quality of living, peaceful
Drawbacks	Car is a must
Typical dwelling	Very good quality detached house
Cost of housing	Very expensive

Families with Young Children

West-Island South

Dorval

Pointe-Claire

Beaconsfield

Baie d'Urfé

Ste Anne de Bellevue



Population, language	More anglophone, suburb-style living
Communications	Commuter trains and buses
Shopping	Shopping centres on des Sources, St Jean, St Charles Blvd...
Social life	Few restaurants, entertainment is in Montreal
Schools, universities	Many good public schools, some private, both French and English
Advantages	Peaceful, ideal for young children
Drawbacks	2 cars is a necessity
Typical dwelling	Detached house with garden
Cost of housing	Affordable to expensive

West-Island North

Pierrefonds

Kirkland

Dollard des Ormeaux



Population, language	Mixed anglo / francophone, middle to upper class
Communications	Car is mandatory. Commuter train and some buses
Shopping	Shopping Centres on des Sources, St Jean, St Charles Blvds...
Social life	Few restaurants, entertainment is in Montreal
Schools, universities	Good public and private schools, both French and English
Advantages	Peaceful, ideal for young children, cheaper than West Island South
Drawbacks	2 cars is a must
Typical dwelling	Detached house with garden, some condos
Cost of housing	Affordable, high depending on areas.

Countryside Appeal

Laval Island



Population, language	Francophone
Communications	Metro in the centre, but car is compulsory
Shopping	Big Shopping Centres (Carrefour Laval...)
Social life	Scarce...
Schools, universities	Public Schools
Advantages	If you work in Laval
Drawbacks	1-hour drive to the centre of Montreal
Typical dwelling	Detached house with garden, some condos
Cost of housing	Affordable, but Ste Dorothée is a luxury neighbourhood

South Shore

*Boucherville, Longueuil, St-Lambert,
Brossard, Candiac, St-Bruno...*



Population, language	Rather francophone
Communications	Some buses and commuter train. Metro Longueuil
Shopping	Many Shopping Centres
Social life	Quiet...
Schools, universities	Public and private schools
Advantages	Ideal if you work on the South Shore !
Drawbacks	1- to 2-hour drive to go to downtown Montreal
Typical dwelling	Detached house
Cost of housing	Affordable

L'Ile Perrot, Vaudreuil, St-Lazare



Population, language	Francophone
Communications	Commuter train, but 2 cars are a must
Shopping	Downtown Vaudreuil
Social life	Quiet...
Schools, universities	Some French and English schools. Excellent private school in Rigaud
Advantages	Peaceful, nature, horse riding, big houses with garden
Drawbacks	2-hour drive to Montreal
Typical dwelling	big houses with garden
Cost of housing	Affordable



Montreal by night, view from Mont-Royal