



48 hours *in* MONTREAL

ISABELLE CLARK'S GUIDE TO CANADA'S CULTURAL CAPITAL

CHECK IN

Hotel Uville, located in Old Montréal, is an ode to the people and events that shaped the city during the 1960s and 1970s – a period defined by the cultural legacy of Expo 67. Each of its 33 rooms tells a chapter of that story through photos and films from the National Film Board of Canada. With the addition of mid-century design elements including a bedside turntable and vinyl, it's a nostalgic and retro-cool place to stay. *(Rooms from £100.)*

Close by, behind the striking neoclassical façade of the Hôtel Place d'Armes, rooms and suites are characterised by original architectural details that create a feel of old-world sophistication. There are Le Labo bath products, coffee makers in every room, plus a rooftop terrace and lower-ground spa. The hotel is well located for exploring Old Montréal on foot. *(Rooms from £120.)*

Clockwise from left: A cyclist admires Murale de Nikki Kuntzle in Plateau Mont-Royal neighbourhood; a woman relaxes in Bota Bota spa; browsing the Jean-Talon Market

DAY ONE

Morning

Start the day with coffee at vintage-inspired Caffè Ferlucci on Rue de Castelnau East, surrounded by Montréal's historic "shoebox houses". From there, stroll through Little Italy, artsy Plateau Mont-Royal, boutique-lined Avenue Laurier Ouest, and the Jean-Talon Market, one of the largest open-air markets in North America. When you've finished sampling maple syrup and people-watching from any of the numerous pavement cafes, swing back for something sweet at Pasticceria Alati-Caserta.

Afternoon

While sampling staples such as poutine is a must, the city's culinary scene reaches far beyond. For a casual lunch, Améa offers Mediterranean-inspired dishes served in the fashionable Maison Alcan building. Just blocks away, the "Indigenous Voices of Today" exhibition at the McCord Stewart Museum – curated by Wendat scholar Elisabeth Kaine in consultation with 800 people from Quebec's 11 Indigenous nations – offers an important insight into the heritage of the province.

Evening

Back in Old Montréal, *Aura* at Notre-Dame Basilica fuses light and music with spectacular architecture. For dinner, the menu at the low-lit, industrial-chic Jellyfish is divided between crudo and charcoal-grilled dishes – the scallop carpaccio and octopus tempura are particularly delicious. End the day with a drink at Bisou Bisou, an intimate cocktail bar tucked behind the exposed stonework of Rue Saint-Vincent.



IMAGES: (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) © SYLVIE LI @ SHOOT STUDIO; © L DAPH & NICO; © ANNE-MARIE PELLERIN. ALL IMAGES - TOURISME MONTREAL



DAY TWO

Morning

Spend the morning in Mile End, just beyond Montréal's former northern boundary, now home to vintage shops, small boutiques and cafés. Stop at Café Olimpico or Café Alphabet for coffee, and browse Clark Street Mercantile's accessories and outdoor gear. Other neighbourhood highlights include the Théâtre Rialto and the Mordecai-Richler Library.

Afternoon

Climbing to the emblematic Mount Royal Cross – perhaps with a smoked meat sandwich from Schwartz's in hand – offers panoramic views across the city. For something a little less strenuous, head to the top of the Port of Montréal Tower on the banks of the St Lawrence River – no hiking required. If you opt for the latter, take a moment to visit Indigenous-owned Wachiya, selling authentic Cree arts and crafts, from handmade clothing and accessories to delicate jewellery.

Evening

For edible souvenirs, visit Le Petit Dep (*dépanneur* is Canadian French for a corner shop), where local maple syrup, nut butters, jams, local honey and fair-trade chocolate make perfect gifts. Close by, Bota Bota is a floating spa on a former river ferry docked in the Old Port, with hot tubs, a cold plunge, steam rooms and saunas, alongside massages, sound baths and other treatments. Afterwards, head to Papito, a laid-back bistro known for its charcoal-grilled meats. **A**