

5 Reasons to Visit Québec City, Canada

By Karen Jones

Bonjour! Steeped in French Canadian history and loaded with Old World charm, Canada's Québec City is a delight any time of year. To truly experience its magic, however, plan to visit during the winter months. You'll find plenty of fine dining, galleries and boutiques as you explore the winding streets of Old Quebec and world-class skiing is just minutes away. The popular Winter Carnival is a good place to make merry or you might dare to spend a night in "Le Hôtel de Glace"—the famous Ice Hotel.

Historic Old Québec City—A Winter Wonderland



The magnificent Château Frontenac Hotel overlooks historic Québec City; The charming streets of Quebec City

Founded in 1608, Old Québec is known as the cradle of French civilization in America—and it shows. The magnificent Château Frontenac Hotel, which commands the view from the main square overlooking the St. Lawrence River, is a constant reminder of how European elegance and New World sensibilities thrive in this timeless locale. Historic Québec is a walking city with plenty to see and do -and a blanket of snow improves the ambiance. Its quaint streets and charming town squares are filled with restaurants, cafés, boutiques, galleries and museums. The city also supports a vibrant cultural scene and nightlife. For more information on Québec City and the region visit [Bonjour Quebec](#).

Le Hôtel de Glace-The Ice Hotel



The Ice Hotel is a must for all adventure travelers

If you are an adventure traveler, consider spending a night in Québec City's "Le Hotel du Glace". A new hotel is carved out of the ice each year and the 2013 version features 44 specially-themed rooms and suites. Similar to an igloo, the rooms, halls, ceilings and furniture are all solid ice—though the decor is designer and the beds, surprisingly cozy. There is Nordic Area with spas and saunas, an Ice Bar for refreshments and even an Ice Chapel if you decide to tie the knot. Since room temperatures do not get above freezing, that might be a good idea. For information visit [Hotel de Glace, Canada](#).

Le Carnaval de Québec (Winter Carnival)



Mascot Bonhomme Carnaval greets friends

Billed as the biggest winter carnival in the world, “Le Carnaval de Québec” celebrates family-style “joie de vivre” in grand fashion. Bubbly mascot “Bonhomme Carnaval” presides over a bevy of activities including authentic dog sled races, horse-drawn sleigh rides, winter sports and games for all ages, concerts, parades, a canoe race over the St. Lawrence River and much more. There is also plenty of traditional food and beverages including a potent cocktail called Caribou (vodka, brandy, sherry and port) guaranteed to shake off the chill. For information visit Le Carnaval de Québec .

Ice Climbing at Montmorency Falls & the Charlevoix Train.



Ice climbers take on the Montmorency Falls credit: Tourisme Québec; The Charlevoix Train

A short drive from downtown Québec City stands the majestic Parc de la Chute-Montmorency (Montmorency Falls Park). Higher than Niagara Falls, Montmorency offers breathtaking views, dining at an English-style manor house and, for the hale and hearty, ice climbing up the frozen rock faces that hug each side of the cascading Falls. The Park is also where you can board Le Train du Massif de Charlevoix, which offers scenic rail cruises 85 miles along the St. Lawrence River to La Malbaie in picturesque Charlevoix . For information on Montmorency visit Sepaq ; for Charlevoix visit Le Massif De Charlevoix.

Winter Sports & The Red Bull Crashed Ice Race



Extreme sport Ice Cross Downhill

It is hard to beat the Québec City region for winter sports and games. Two world-class ski resorts, Mont-Sainte-Anne and Stoneham Mountain, have the largest night skiing network in Canada, 105 runs and a combined vertical drop of 3,400 ft. There are plenty of cross country skiing opportunities and thousands of miles of snowmobile trails to transverse. Fans of extreme sport Ice Cross Downhill can look forward to the Red Bull Crashed Ice World Championship Race where skaters dressed like hockey players run a punishing downhill course through the city streets. The first to make it down in one piece wins.

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