

Oh, Canada!

QUEBEC

THIS YEAR, we're celebrating Canada's 150th birthday by highlighting the best of each province. Here's what we love about Quebec.



One of the largest rivers in North America, the 1,197-kilometre-long **St. Lawrence River** was discovered in 1535 by Jacques Cartier and played an important role in Canada's early history: It was the favoured route for explorers settling our fledgling country and traders plying their goods, and it's how French settlers established their colonial empire. Flowing northeast from Lake Ontario through Quebec and out to the Atlantic Ocean, it's still our most important waterway today, transporting everything from timber to wheat to flour—plus, no small number of cruise ships.



SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

With more than 400 years of history and a bustling contemporary cultural scene, Quebec City offers a trove of things to uncover—for repeat visitors and newcomers alike.

BY JES WATSON



STAY

History Lesson

Auberge Saint-Antoine boasts gorgeously modern rooms in a historic wharf and cannon battery. Each room features a display of an artifact found on the site, such as 18th-century china plates or a charming pair of centuries-old dominoes. Some rooms include a private terrace, where you can take in the city sights (or a glass of wine) after a day of trekking through town.

Off the Beaten Path

Spend a night in a former nun's cell at **Le Monastère des Augustines**. This freshly restored site features wellness packages (think massages, yoga classes and meditation) and pared-back-but-comfy suites in a 377-year-old building.



EAT

Classic Eats

Stop in at **Le Chic Shack** for an updated take on Quebec's most-beloved regional dish: poutine. With toppings such as smoked meat, mushrooms and even masala-curry sauce, this isn't your average potatoes and gravy.

Cocktails and Bites

The Grande Allée is home to some of Quebec City's most luxurious estates—and **L'Atelier**, a swish restaurant that's a veritable hot spot come sundown. Don't miss the twist on surf and turf, lobster and beef tartare served with a side of deliciously crispy frites.

Local Hero

Nordic ingredients drive the menu at **Chez Boulay bistro boréal**, where chefs Arnaud Marchand and Jean-Luc Boulay excel at inventive takes on culinary traditions that showcase regional flavours. A beet tarte tatin, for example, is drizzled with citrus, semisweet birch syrup, whereas a velvety sea buckthorn meringue tart is a clever take on classic lemon meringue pie.



DO

State of the Art

The **Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec** sits adjacent to the historic Plains of Abraham, but its new Pierre Lassonde Pavilion has a distinctly modern edge. Take in works by Québécois artists such as Riopelle and David Altmejd, and don't miss the impressive Inuit art collection.

Shop Talk
Venture beyond the city's fortified walls to explore the charming **St-Roch district**, which is dotted with art galleries, boutiques and coffee shops (a latte at Saint-Henri micro-roaster is a must).

Old School

The **Petit-Champlain neighbourhood** is one of the oldest commercial districts in North America, so shops abound, but don't miss Musée de la civilisation for an afternoon immersion course in the Québécois and First Nations cultures.



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What's Close By?

If you have the time to range farther afield, here are three other cool spots to see in Quebec.



ONE HOUR AWAY

MONT-SAINTE-ANNE is a ski lover's paradise, but it's also home to a range of summer alpine activities (try mountain biking, hiking and golf).



TWO HOURS AWAY

CHARLEVOIX
The Flavour Trail is the ultimate foodie road trip, offering a bounty of artisanal cheeses, tart ciders and fresh produce.



THREE HOURS AWAY

MONTREAL
Venture up the St. Lawrence to visit Montreal's famous arts and culture scene—and its myriad must-try restaurants.





ONE ON ONE

“THERE’S A VAST LANDSCAPE FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE THAT REALLY COULD USE IMPROVEMENT. I’M JUST ONE TINY LITTLE SPECK.”

A STAR IS BORN

Astrophysicist and Montreal native Victoria Kaspi heads up McGill University’s Space Institute and is one of the luminaries in her field. Even more awesome: Last year, she became the first woman to win the most prestigious science award in Canada.

BY GRACE TOBY

AT JUST SEVEN YEARS OLD, Victoria Kaspi was already trying to solve the puzzles of the universe—or, at least, the elementary school versions of those great mysteries. Now director of the McGill Space Institute and a professor of physics, she remembers hanging out in her bedroom at home in the Montreal suburb of Côte Saint-Luc, tackling jigsaw puzzles and math riddles—she’d even create her own logic problems.

Today, that proclivity for solving mysteries takes place on a much grander stage. In fact, it’s literally out of this world: Kaspi spends her workdays scanning the Milky Way for neutron stars (tiny but powerful remnants of larger stars).

Her career has been on a meteoric rise; last year, at 48, she became one of the youngest people, and the first woman, to win the biggest prize in Canadian science, the \$1 million Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering. “I’m honoured, thrilled and delighted about this award, but I also think it’s been a long time coming. There are so many brilliant women, and I hope I’m the first of many,” says Kaspi.

She plans to use the grant to study a new phenomenon known as fast-radio bursts. These short, bright surges of radio waves are happening out in the cosmos, but their source is unclear. Kaspi, of course, is on the case to further understand this whodunit.

That’s because, whether it’s reconfiguring a Rubik’s Cube, completing a Sudoku square or being the only person on the planet to understand a discovery, she finds relief in knowing that the universe makes sense. “I don’t look at things as irrational; it’s a puzzle that needs to be solved,” she says. “That’s what I live for, especially in these turbulent times. It’s nice to have my place on campus where I can do my work. Maybe things don’t make sense initially, but you have faith they will. It’s all about seeing the final picture come together.”

When Kaspi isn’t staring at a computer or at stars, she’s at home with her family in Montreal’s Snowdon neighbourhood, where Saturday nights are ceremoniously booked for her beloved Montreal Canadiens. “I still fondly remember the Stanley Cup parades during the 1970s. I’m definitely a hockey fan. I find it relaxing—especially if it’s been a stressful week. If I have work to do, I’ll settle in with the game on, and everyone starts to congregate.”

“Everyone” includes her three teens, two of them girls. She’s thinking of her own experiences and wondering what her daughters might face when she admits being a woman in a male-dominated field hasn’t been easy. “There’s a vast landscape for women in science that really could use improvement; I’m just one tiny little speck,” she says.

But with her unique understanding of how something can be both small and mighty, Kaspi’s work hasn’t just cracked the glass ceiling; it’s also cleared a brighter path to the stars. ●

WHY DON'T YOU LET YOUR CAR HIBERNATE?

WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THE TRAIN?