

THE TRIP

10 ways to live on the cutting edge in Montreal

Most people associate Montreal with its heritage – but beyond the cobblestoned streets of the Old Port, there’s a global city on the forefront of contemporary culture, discovers **Jessica Prupas**



1 Explore art deep underground

Let's get one thing out of the way: March in Montreal is still pretty cold. Luckily, the city's underground network of tunnels – nicknamed the 'Underground City' – allows walkers to get from A to B without breaking out their balaclavas. This month, the subterranean labyrinth is being spruced up by Art Souterrain, a long-running festival that showcases contemporary art from local and global talent below street level. artsouterrain.com



2 Grab a slice of the best pizza in town

Opened in 2018, Elena – nestled in the uber-trendy Saint-Henri neighbourhood – has quickly ascended to legendary status in Montreal's already-solid food scene. You'll struggle to find a better poster child for the city's innovative-yet-laid-back approach to dining, with Insta-worthy interiors and some serious slices. coffeepizzawine.com



3 Strike a pose

Canadians are a hardy bunch, so subzero temperatures don't faze them at all – in fact, some crazier Canucks gather every Sunday afternoon to downward dog in the dead of winter. Running until 22 March, Pop Yoga Neige is a free yoga class in the great, white outdoors. Bring your mat and bundle up.

popspirit.ca

4 Get high on sugar

Cabane Panache brings Quebec's sweetest tradition, the 'sugar shack', to the heart of the city. Street food stalls hawk dishes doused in maple syrup, while mini shacks offer the most Canadian snack of all: frozen syrup on a stick, a.k.a. maple taffy. promenadewellington.com

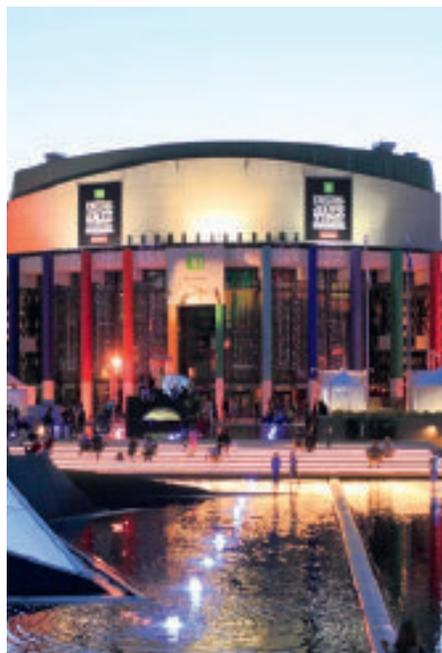


PHOTOS SATOSHI FUJIWARA, CODE UNKNOWN (1), NUIT BLANCHE 2019, MIKE PATTEN @ARCPXEL, OLIVIER DROUIN, MATT PERRIN

5 Get a hearty dose of culture

Montreal's popular Culture District (Quartier des Spectacles) is ground zero for the city's arts scene. It's home to Place des Arts – the city's biggest concert hall – and the adjacent Museum of Contemporary Art, plus dozens more cultural venues. The main square also hosts multimedia installations and illuminated artworks during public events.

quartierdesspectacles.com



6 Mingle with hipsters

Deep in the hipster-haven Plateau neighbourhood, café-bar Darling is quintessentially Montreal: shabby-chic vintage furniture, plant-lined walls, and a relaxed atmosphere that invites punters to chill out as the day turns to eve. [facebook.com/restobardarling](https://www.facebook.com/restobardarling)



8 Sample the city's best eats

Spread over a 3,700m² section of the Montreal Eaton Centre downtown, the recently opened Time Out Market brings together the city's best restaurants, each trading their star dishes at dedicated stalls. There's also a retail section selling wares by local makers, alongside three bars, a demo kitchen and a cooking school. timeout.com →

7 Sip natural wine at these hip bars

Le Vin Papillon

The OG of Montreal's natural wine scene, and still the best place for low-intervention grapes. vinpapillon.com

Mon Lapin

Le Vin Papillon's younger sister serves a killer menu of wine and small plates. vinmonlapin.com

Vinvinvin

This newcomer has the best selection of natural wines in the city, helpfully arranged by taste profile. vinvinvin.ca





9 Dive into VR and see art in a new way
The Phi Centre – housed in a historic building near the Old Port – constantly pushes boundaries with its forward-thinking programme of film, music and exhibitions. It’s also at the forefront of VR (virtual reality) art, so visitors can expect to see something trippy. phi-centre.com

10 Brunch like a local
The city is certainly not starved when it comes to delicious brunch spots, but one stands out above the rest: Larry’s, an all-day café with a midday menu of French-inflected small plates. You can’t go wrong here, so attack the entire menu with a few pals – just expect to queue for a table most days. lawrencemtl.com



Go old school

If you’re more into the classics, check out these tried-and-tested spots



Have a well-rounded diet

The ‘Montreal-style’ bagel is denser and sweeter than its New York cousin. Try one of these spherical icons at St. Viateur, made fresh every day. stviateurbagel.com



Eat a sweet burger

Fill up on meaty Quebecois fare at Au Pied de Cochon, where they serve rustic cuisine with a twist. Maple syrup on burgers, anyone? aupieddecochon.ca



Follow the smoke

Schwartz’s Deli is the place to go for ‘smoked meat’ – Montreal’s version of pastrami on rye. Gloriously overstuffed, its take on the classic sandwich is legendary. schwartzsdeli.com



Carbo load

You can’t leave without sampling the city’s favourite high-starch snack, poutine, at La Banquise. French fries are topped with gravy and cheese curds at the late-night diner. labanquise.com



Ask for the special

Untouched since the 1950s, Wilensky’s is famous for its ‘Wilensky special’, a grilled bologna sandwich. wilenskys.com