

TRAVEL FEATURES



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WEEKENDER

72 Hours in Montréal

Montréal may be an hour's flight from NYC, but it feels worlds away with its dreamy cobblestone streets and la langue française. Coming off a weekend at Osheaga Music Festival, Charlotte Steinway reveals the sights, shops and smoked meats that make this Canadian city so *superbe*

FRIDAY

Wake up from an effortlessly chic sleep at [Hotel St. Paul](#), Canada's first Design Hotel, in the city's Old Port neighborhood. Start the day off as most locals do: with an espresso from the country's premier roasting company, [Forty Ninth Parallel](#). Though specialty coffee shops have become *de rigueur* in Montréal, [Café Myriade](#) was the first and is arguably still the best. If you prefer your caffeine on ice, head a few blocks from the hotel to [Café Différance](#), for the best (and strongest) cold brews in town.

Once properly buzzed, set out to navigate the city via [BIXI](#), Montréal's excellent shared bike system (boasting the largest share station in North America). Renting one will set you back \$7 for a 24-hour pass, or \$15 for the whole weekend — with 30 minutes of biking included per trip. Cruise through the city's designated bike lanes and up Old Montreal's cobblestone, European-inspired streets. Stop for a photo op at [Basilique Notre-Dame](#), the city's beloved 19th-century church (where Céline Dion was married, of course).

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Where to Stay



[Hotel St Paul](#)
Montreal, Canada



[Le St-Martin Hotel & Suites](#)
Montreal, Canada



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Catch an early dinner or late lunch at [Schwartz's Deli](#), the city's prime purveyor of smoked meat sandwiches. Though the line snakes around its Boulevard Saint-Laurent storefront up until its 12:20 a.m. closing time, going at slightly off hours will minimize both wait times and hunger pangs. Vegetarians, beware: your options run the gamut solely from packaged coleslaw to rye bread and mustard: This is a carnivore's club through and through.

Once your stomach has settled, head out onto the many bars and clubs just beyond Schwartz's doorstep on Boulevard-Saint Laurent, which locals lovingly refer to as "The Main." When hunger strikes again, you're not too far from the city's 24-hour poutine joint, [La Banquise](#), a gravy-soaked after hours spot packed to the brim with hungry revelers (editor's note: don't be tempted by the guacamole variation. It's best to stick to the basics.).

SATURDAY

Get a change of scenery a few blocks north of the St. Paul at Le St. Martin Hotel Particulier, located just east of the McGill College campus. Less sleek than the St. Paul, the St. Martin is a better option for groups and families, with a small lap pool and ground floor outdoor restaurant with patio seating.

Once you've checked in, hop on a BIXI or take the Métro to the best (and first) breakfast spot in town: [Beauty's Luncheonette](#), a circa-1942 diner in the Plateau neighborhood made famous for its appearance on Anthony Bourdain's *The Layover*. Get the Beauty's Special — a Montréal-style sesame bagel lightly toasted with lox, cream cheese, tomato and onion — paired with one of their colorful smoothies.

After breakfast, head west on Rue Saint-Urbain toward Rue Saint Viateur Ouest or Rue Bernard Ouest, which are lined with the best vintage boutiques in town. Get your 90s fix at [Local 23](#) or one of its sister shops [Annex](#) and [Général 54](#), which all sling mini backpacks, floral dresses and denim jackets by the truckload.

Once you've worked up an appetite, there's no need to leave the Mile End district in search of some of the city's best eats. Home to both the historical Jewish quarter as well as Little Italy, the Mile End has since become the artistic (read: hipster) hub of Montréal. Grab a seat with the cool kids at [Lawrence](#), a British-inspired brunch spot with a surprisingly solid dinner menu. Share a healthy mix of starters — new garlic with goat's curd, corn soup with smoked sturgeon and gnocchi with chanterelles and sage — plus a glass of French wine from their expertly-curated list.

Continue the night around the corner at [Dieu du Ciel](#), the brewpub offshoot of the eponymous brewery located in Saint-Jérôme, Quebec. After a few saisons, head back downtown to dance the night away at [Société des Arts Technologiques \[SAT\]](#) on Boulevard Saint-Laurent, a nonprofit center for art and music that hosts DJed parties from the likes of Kygo, the Magician and Flying Lotus.

SUNDAY

On Sunday mornings, there's no better place to be than the Mile End's [Marché Jean-Talon](#), the year-round farmer's market housed in an open-air arcade and surrounded by brick and mortar food (and beer) purveyors. Stock up on picnic supplies — including



Le St-Martin Hotel & Suites
Montreal, Canada

the city's famously unpasteurized, raw milk cheese — and quell your appetite with a couple of Prince Edward Island oysters (with varieties including "the Phat Bastard") at [La Boîte aux Huîtres](#).

Before heading to *faire du-pique nique* at the Parc du Mont-Royal, it's time to stock up on the city's most beloved carb: the bagel. Montréal bagels are smaller and sweeter than the traditional New York style — which means it's totally PC to eat more than one. Local adoration is divided between [St. Viateur](#) and [Fairmount Bagel](#), which are conveniently located within a couple blocks of one another (for prime taste-comparing).

Once you've stocked up, it's on to the park. Join hundreds of other Montrealers on the grassy slopes overlooking Sir George-Etienne Cartier, where Tam Tams, a drum circle bringing music lovers of all backgrounds, beats from noon 'til sundown each week.

For dinner, it's off to the city's up-and-coming Little Burgundy neighborhood, popularized in recent years by the arrival of rustic-chic restaurant [Joe Beef](#). And even though the farm-to-table spot doesn't take itself too seriously (there's a Foie Gras Double Down on the menu after all), don't expect to just waltz right in: reservations are required weeks in advance. If you can't make it inside, try your luck at Liverpool House, its sister restaurant next door, or [Vin Papillon](#), the charming wine bar down the street.

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