

Welcome Guide

Various generations of Art History and Communications students and staff have, over the years, assembled and refined this guide to help new students get acquainted with the city and to facilitate their transition to a new institution. We update this every few years to include things we have learned about negotiating this fair city of ours.

This “Welcome Guide” contains some of the things we wished someone had told us early on in our tenure. It was produced completely by Art History and Communications students and is totally biased to the tastes and travels of the individuals involved. We hope you find it useful and fun to read and consider what might be missing so you can add your own pearls of wisdom when the time comes around in another year or so.

Cheers!

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HOUSING IN MONTREAL

Over the past several years, housing availability has changed dramatically. Although rents have increased, Montreal still has some excellent apartments at rents far below what you might expect to pay in other cities. Thought should be given to the location of the accommodation in terms of its proximity to bus and metro routes, laundry facilities and grocery stores.

Contrary to some assumptions, it is more than possible to get by in English in Montreal. Unless you live east of St. Denis, you won't have any trouble speaking English here. Many people looking to learn French often complain that everyone speaks English. Of course, if you want to learn French there's more than enough opportunity to do so throughout the city. We've made some notes on the language makeup of most areas included below.

Apartment Sizes

In the province of Quebec, the total number of rooms contained in an apartment is used to indicate its size, rather than just the number of bedrooms. Each apartment has its own bathroom, which is considered as a "half" room.

1-½: Bachelor or studio apartment. Contains one large room with a kitchenette and bathroom facilities.

2-½: Usually there is one closed room, either a full kitchen with a living/bedroom or a bedroom with a living-room and kitchenette.

3-½: One-bedroom apartment: bedroom, living-room and full kitchen.

4-½: Two-bedroom apartment.

5-½ and up: Three bedrooms or more (or sometimes 2 bedrooms with a dining room)

Rooms

This is a room in someone's home or apartment and is often furnished. Meals are occasionally included, but more often kitchen privileges are offered. Usually the people placing the advertisements for these rooms are not students.

Shares

There are people who have rented an apartment and are looking for at least one roommate. The apartment is usually furnished except for the available room. Students usually place the ads about these rooms, and many can be found on craigslist and on the McGill off-campus housing board online at <http://www.mcgill.ca/offcampus//>. Many restaurants, laundromats and cafés also have a posting board for shared listings or sublets.

Search for Accommodation

Before you start your active search for accommodation it is important to give some thought to the following questions:

1. In which neighborhood do you want to live?
2. How much rent do you wish to pay?
3. Do you wish to live alone, or with others?
4. The average costs per month are \$500-650 for a studio apartment, \$650-800 for a one-bedroom apartment, \$825-1200 for a two-bedroom apartment, \$950 and up for a three or more bedroom apartment, and \$375-550 for a "share" or a "room."
5. The best time to look for accommodation for September is from the beginning of July onwards - the busiest period is during the last 2 weeks of August.
6. Keeping in mind time constraints, a good idea is to walk around certain neighbourhoods first, look for sublet/for rent signs. As you will soon discover Montreal is a very walkable city (although a bike is more than handy for when you finally move here). Ultimately, this can give you a better sense of the neighbourhood you might want to live in.

Neighbourhoods in Montreal

Milton Park, a.k.a McGill Ghetto:

Neighborhood around the campus (N.B. this is not a ghetto, but a quite wealthy neighbourhood of Montreal)

Transportation: a short walk

Rents: quite high, renovated places are nice but expensive

Housing types: A limited number of large apartments are available. Lots of 1-½, 2-½ and 3-½.

Mainly students (undergraduates), easy access to shopping (La Cité, St. Laurent). Predominantly anglophone. Many graduate students also find this area a little undergraddy, which is to say loud and drunk at night.

West of campus

Transportation: 10 to 15 minutes by foot

Rents: often quite high; however, some good deals can be found

Housing types: Mostly high-rises with 1-½ to 4-½ apartments.

Mainly anglophone. Near Concordia and restaurant/bar scene on Crescent St. Fairly quiet.

The Plateau

Transportation: 15 to 20 minutes by foot or 10 to 15 minutes by bus or metro.

Rents: often less expensive than the ghetto.

Housing types: mostly duplexes and triplexes.

Probably the best known student area outside of Milton Park. This is a large area so it's hard to give a full picture of it. Mix of francophone and anglophone, but Italian, Greek and Portuguese are spoken as well. Nice neighbourhood feel with many shops around and very close to all amenities.

The Village

Transportation: 30 minutes by foot or 10 to 15 minutes by bus or metro.

Rents: not bad, same as Plateau.

Housing types: mostly duplexes etc.

Known also as the Gay Village, this area is one of Montreal's poorer neighbourhoods.

Lots of amenities. Good nightlife, fairly secure. Mainly francophone.

Edouard-Montpetit, Decelles, Queen Mary and Cote Ste-Catherine

Transportation: a bus and metro ride will take approximately 40 minutes

Rents: less expensive apartments can be found in this area.

Housing types: mostly low-rise apartment buildings along streets such as Queen Mary and Cote Ste-Catherine (not to be confused with Rue Ste-Catherine).

Mainly francophone, near Universite de Montréal.

Notre-Dame-de-Grace, a.k.k NDG

Transportation: a metro or bus ride will take 30 to 40 minutes

Rents: less expensive than the downtown area

Housing types: mostly duplexes, triplexes, small apartment buildings and houses.

Mainly anglophone, but many allophones (non-English/French speakers).

Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, a.k.a HoMa

Transportation: over an hour by foot and 40 minutes by metro or bus

Rents: below average

Housing types: mostly triplexes, duplexes (built between 1880 and 1920) and small apartment buildings

Comments: up-and-coming area where many young professionals, artists and students are beginning to gather

Rosemont-Petite Patrie

Transportation: 40 minutes by metro, 30 minutes by bike and over an hour by foot

Rents: much less expensive than the downtown area

Housing types: duplexes, triplexes and small apartment buildings; a lot of greenery and small flower gardens on the sidewalks; a quiet neighbourhood that is very close to Little Italy and the Jean-Talon Market; many cafes and excellent restaurants; sympathetic francophone families abound

Little Italy

Transportation: 30 minutes by metro, 20 minutes by bike and about an hour by foot

Rents: slightly more expensive than Rosemont-Petite Patrie, but still less expensive than Plateau and Mile End

Housing types: duplexes, triplexes and small apartment buildings; many restaurants and bars, especially near St. Laurent street; dynamic and therefore louder area

Outremont and Mile End

Transportation: 20 minutes by bus or metro, or 30-40 minute by foot

Rents: average to above-average

Housing types: mostly triplexes, duplexes, small apartment buildings and houses.

Older neighborhood, secure and well-treed. Francophone and anglophone mix. Easy access to amenities (and some fine ice cream at Bilboquet on Bernard Ouest.)

Old Montreal/Vieux Montréal

Transportation: 20 minutes by foot

Rents: high

Housing types: mostly lofts; there are not a lot of apartments in this area.

Mix of anglophone and francophone.

Parc Lafontaine area

Transportation: 40 minutes by foot or 20 minutes by bus or metro

Rents: noticeably cheaper towards the eastern border of this zone.

Housing types: triplexes to the north, old duplexes and row houses to the south; some renovated places and high-rises along major streets. Quality varies greatly. Mainly francophone. Easy access to amenities and good skating in the winter, plays in the summer.

Verdun, Pointe St-Charles and St. Henri

Transportation: 15 to 20 minutes by bus or metro and 30-40 minutes by foot from St. Henri

Rents: inexpensive

Housing types: mostly duplexes, triplexes, and small apartment buildings.

Francophone, but many allophones. St. Henri is historically a working class neighbourhood that has seen a drastic gentrification in the past few years. There are many bars, restaurants and cafés in the area. Point St-Charles and Verdun are less dynamic but some beautiful and spacious apartments can be found in these areas for much cheaper.

Westmount

Transportation: 20 minutes by bus or metro and 30 minutes by foot

Rents: very expensive, although the apartments that lie at the border of St. Henri (on St-Antoine street) are more reasonably-priced.

Housing types: triplexes, duplexes.

Mainly anglophone. Formerly the wealthiest neighbourhood in Canada. Beautiful parks can be found, but very few bars. Still nice to bike through, though.

The Accommodation

It is recommended that several apartments be looked at before deciding on one, as the price does not always correspond to the quality of an accommodation. Be certain of your choice before signing a lease or filling out an application because, once signed, these are both legally binding contracts. Note that a credit check is not unusual.

The Lease

In Quebec, apartments are usually leased for a fixed period of one year. The normal lease period starts on July 1st of each year and ends on June 30 of the following year. In the past, however, landlords have agreed to one-year leases that start in August or September, as

well as eight or ten-month leases. July 1st is THE moving day in Montreal so keep that in mind if you're planning to transport your belongings then. Streets can be crazy. Of course, it is also a time when you find all those goodies you need to furnish your apartment.

Slumlords

As in any city, there is a profusion of slumlords, particularly in the Plateau areas. There are a few famous ones, but they rarely list availabilities under their own names. A sure sign is if you call a number from an ad and they list off a litany of different apartments that they also own. Try to talk to the people currently living there whenever possible.

Lease Law

The Regie du Logement (Rental Board) is the body, which is empowered by the Government of Quebec to oversee the laws that govern landlord-tenant relationships. Check out: <http://www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca> for more info. The following are some aspects of lease law, which may affect the signing of a lease:

It is legal to:

- ask for references for the purposes of a credit check;
 - require a co-signer for students without a steady income;
 - limit the occupancy of the apartment to a certain number of people;
 - refuse to terminate a lease at the tenant's request;
- ask tenants to leave for a short period of time to make major repairs.

It is illegal to:

- ask for a deposit (other than the first month's rent);
- ask for the last month's rent at the beginning of a lease;
- ask for post-dated cheques;
- ask for payments of more than one month's rent;
- ask for credit card numbers, passport numbers, bank account numbers, social insurance numbers or information about nationality or citizenship. However, there is a growing number of landlords who request this type of information and insist that the application to lease will not be processed unless it is supplied.

The lease itself

A lease is a contract which, once signed, is binding, so make sure that you understand what it is that you are signing. An oral lease is also fully binding, as is an approved application to lease. There is space on the lease for additional clauses to be added, and if the landlord offers to paint the dwelling, make repairs or do anything else before you move in, make sure that these promises are written in the additional space on the lease. Be sure that you and the landlord both initial all additional clauses; problems sometimes occur when tenants accept these promises verbally.

For the most part the landlord/tenant relationship in the eyes of the Regie and courts is one in which the tenant is favoured. This advantage has been slightly eroded over the last few years, so make sure you know your rights.

Subletting

Subletting your apartment can sometimes be tricky. Due to the high vacancy rates here in the city, you might want to get a jump start on the competition by posting signs as early as March/April. Make sure you notify your landlord/lady of your intentions and that they're ok with it. Also make sure that if you're intending to either stay or leave, you are aware that there is a time limit on how many months' notice you must give. Read the lease carefully. Sublet leases can also be printed off from the Régie du Logement Website.

Safety

Problems with the building or with the apartment that reduce your safety should be reported to the City of Montreal at 514-872-3181 if your landlord cannot be reached, or fails to take action within a reasonable period of time. Unsafe circumstances include fire hazards (loose electrical wires), vermin (cockroaches or rodents), and damage to the apartment (e.g. collapsed bathroom ceiling, broken windows).

Resources for Apartment Hunting

Off Campus Housing Office

University Hall at 3473 University Street, just south of Milton Street. Hours are 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday.

Phone: (514)398-6010 Fax: (514)398-2305 8

Email: offcampus.housing@mcgill.ca

<http://www.mcgill.ca/offcampus/>

Off Campus Housing Service of McGill University maintains listings of housing suitable for students in the vicinity of the downtown campus and close to major bus and metro lines. It offers a suitable alternative to living in Residences from June to the end of August of each year. The accommodations on the lists have not been inspected so it is important to meet with the owner and inspect the premises yourself before signing a lease. They provide lists of studios, one-bedroom, two-bedrooms, three and more bedroom apartments, as well as shares and rooms. The lists are divided by zones, which correspond to the geographical zones of Montreal.

McGill Legal Information Clinic:

<http://mlic.mcgill.ca/MLIC.html>

3480 McTavish St. 514-398-6792, fax: 514-398-4236 Hours: Mon-Fri 9-5.

Tenants' Rights: 514-488-0412 514-990-0190

Regie du Logement: <http://www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca>

There are 6 offices in the greater Montreal area. Call 514-873-2245 to obtain more information about the one nearest you.

Tourism Montreal: <http://www.tourism-montreal.org>

Sublet sites: <http://www.sublet.com>

Informative page full of links that are useful to Montreal visitors and inhabitants alike. Websites such as Craigslist and Kijiji are probably the handiest way to search for an apartment in Montreal these days. The papers listed below only provide partial ads listing what's available. These are ads that have to be paid for and the services listed above do the listings for free. If you are looking for an apartment using one of the free weeklies (ie the Mirror, The Voir or The Hour), you may find that many of the apartments are taken before the paper comes out on Thursday! To avoid this, you can register with the papers to receive the classified ads 24 hours before the paper comes out... that is certainly what whoever stole your apartment did.

There are also private facebook groups specifically designed to help with sublets and lease transfers that cater to specific areas or social groups.

chez queer montreal <https://www.facebook.com/groups/641712229179289/>
please be respectful of the politics of this group as a queer space.

McGill Ghetto Housing <https://www.facebook.com/mcgillhousing/>

McGill Off-Campus Housing
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Mcgill.offcamus.housing/>

Visitnet <http://www.visitnet.com>

Online listings of available apartments.

Go Montreal! Real Estate: <http://www.gomtl.com/english/Immobilier.html>

List of real estate related links for Montreal and surrounding areas.

Montreal Gazette: <http://www.gazette.qc.ca>

English language newspaper with online classifieds section.

The Mirror: <http://www.montrealmirror.com>

Free anglophone weekly paper with online classifieds.

Voir en ligne: <http://www.voir.ca>

French language weekly with classifieds online.

Hour Magazine: <http://www.hour.qc.ca>

English language weekly with online classifieds section.

UTILITIES

Telephone and Internet Service Providers

Call Bell at 310-2355 to connect your telephone. Bell requires that you provide them with two pieces of personal identification such as your driver's license, passport, medicare or student visa number. You have the option of renting a phone from Bell for a monthly charge or of buying your own. If you choose to rent a telephone, it can be picked up at any of the Bell Telephone offices in Montreal. There is an installation fee of \$50 (plus tax) for the telephone line, which usually takes a few days to connect. In addition, Bell can also charge a refundable deposit against possible unpaid long distance calls, the amount of which depends on the type of personal identification you provide and your phoning habits. Deposit requirements can range from \$100 to \$500 and are refunded after eight to twelve months of living in the dwelling.

Rogers (1-800-617-6678) and Videotron also offer home and long distance telephone service. Depending on promotions and your needs, all of these companies often offer package deals for telephone, cable, and high-speed services ranging anywhere from \$60-\$100 depending on what sort of package bundle you choose.

For a substantially cheaper option than the obvious giants like Bell and Rogers, Acanac for both internet and phone service, comes highly recommended. Check out their deals at <http://www.acanac.ca/>.

Cell Phone Companies

Try: Bell, Rogers, Fido, Virgin Mobile, Videotron.

Electricity

If you are responsible for the electrical bills call Hydro Quebec at 514-385-7252 to inform them of the date you moved in. This is important in order to avoid having to pay any outstanding bills left by the previous tenant. If you want to subscribe to an apportioned payment plan, you can visit <http://www.hydroquebec.com/residential/index.shtml>.

Gas

If your apartment is heated by gas or has a gas stove, call GazMetro at 514-598-3222 to transfer the account to your name. If you ever detect the smell of gas (there could be a leak), call GazMetro's twenty-four hour emergency service line at 514-598-3111. To get more info, visit <http://www.gazmetro.com/>.

TRANSPORTATION

Public Transport

This site: <http://www.stm.info/English/a-somm.htm> produced by the STM (Société de Transport de Montréal) is great for maps and timetables. You can get anywhere on Montreal's public transport network for \$3.25 (don't expect a bus driver to give you change and if you only have a \$5 bill, take a cab...). It's less (if you get 10 tickets for \$28.00 it ends up being \$2.80 a trip) and much simpler if you get an Opus card and recharge it as needed. An Opus card is \$6 and should last you for a very long time unless you destroy it somehow (Opus cards are available at any metro station and at some pharmacies and you can recharge it at some Depanneurs, some pharmacies and the metro stations from either the ticket booth or a self serve ticket machine which is quite simple to use and takes cash, debit and credit cards). If you don't have an Opus card you can still get on the bus or metro with exact change, on the bus you will receive a card once you put your money in and this will serve as your ticket and transfer which you must insert into the slot next to the bus driver when transferring. For the metro you will have to first get a ticket from the ticket booth and then insert it into the entrance machines in order to get in.

OPUS reduced fare - Students

Full time students can register for a special OPUS card offering reduced fares for monthly passes. You can enroll through Minerva (Click on Student Menu and then scroll down to OPUS reduced fare order form). You do need to have a Montreal address and McGill Student Photo on file in the system before completing your order. You can find more information [at http://www.stm.info/en/info/fares/opus-cards-and-other-fare-media/opus-reduced-fare-students](http://www.stm.info/en/info/fares/opus-cards-and-other-fare-media/opus-reduced-fare-students).

How the Opus works (as stated on the STM website):

Your OPUS card is part of your daily bus and métro travel across the island of Montréal. You can charge various transit fares onto your OPUS card, according to your needs. For example, you can load it with a monthly fare, a weekly fare or even a series of single trips for the STM network as well as with single trips on RTL or STL buses. To load your fares, go to one of the 500 points of sale, use one of the 200 fare vending machines or recharging terminals or have the fare collector in the métro load it for you.

A durable card

Handle your card with care and it will last for up to four years. Use a plastic case to protect your card's electronic chip. You can obtain a case at the customer service centre located at the Berri-UQAM station.

Use it correctly!

Once your transit fares are loaded onto the card, simply hold your OPUS card above the reader on the fare box in the bus or on the turnstile in the métro. To validate your fare, place your card against the card reader and hold for a second. You must keep your valid transit fare for the duration of your trip, as it is your proof of payment. The smart card also contains your transfer.

Transfers

When you charge tickets onto your OPUS card and use them to pay your transit fare, you have 120 minutes from the time you initially board a transit vehicle to use your transfer. If you have to use more than one STM vehicle (métro or bus) to complete a trip, you simply have to hold your OPUS card above the card reader on the bus fare box or the métro turnstile to validate your transfer. If you use an STM vehicle after the 120 minutes allowed for your transfer, another ticket will be deducted from your OPUS card.

Notice

A transfer does not allow transit users to carry out a return trip or to interrupt their trip and later continue the trip on the same bus route. You cannot take the métro again with a transfer if you used the métro to begin your trip. (NOTE: This is what they write on the STM website but they have no way of knowing since it's all automated and quite frankly the way that the Opus card works is that it will automatically use your transfer if it's been under 120min since the beginning of your trip, whether or not this happens to be your return or if you're continuing the same route). For fare information visit <http://www.stm.info/English/tarification/a-index.htm>.

Private Transport

Montrealers have a not unwarranted reputation for being terrible drivers. They are, however, cyclist and pedestrian savvy. Bikes are very popular in Montreal and the city is amenable to recreational cycling or for pure function. There are bike stores all over the city especially on the plateau.

Communauto is a business borne out of the idea of responsible car use. For people who like the idea of access to a car but don't want to fork up the cash and bear the maintenance costs, Communauto might be of interest. The cars are generally compact cars (primarily Toyota Echos) so for moving furniture it's not much use – think more along the lines of trips to Ikea or big grocery shops (it ends up being cheaper than delivery). You pay \$500 in a one-time membership fee and book a car on an hourly or daily basis for around \$1.50 an hour (this includes gas and insurance costs). The cars can be picked up in locations all around the city. Also, the membership fee is refundable if you discontinue anytime after one year. Using their service does require some advance planning as the cars are booked at a first-come-first-served basis.

Check out their website: http://www.communauto.com/index_ENG.html if you think this suits you. Note that you will need a Quebec driver's license to sign up with them.

Biking

A lot of people seem to like the convenience of BIXI, the automated bike-rental stands that can be found all over the city. A one-year membership costs \$91, and on top of that you pay by the ½ hour for use, and it's great if you bike a couple times a week or less or just want to go on the occasional pleasure jaunt. More info here: <http://montreal.bixi.com>

Personally though I don't think BIXI can compare to having your own personal Proletariat Chariot to ride around on, especially since it's a quick, clean and scenic ride to McGill from almost every neighbourhood; there are enough side streets and bike paths that you can get anywhere without feeling like you're risking your life. You can find a used bike on Craigslist or the McGill Classifieds for anywhere from \$30 - \$600; if you get a cheapie make sure to take it to a bike shop to get it tuned up and ensure it's safe.

It may seem attractive to buy a cheap used bike on craigslist, however they often require a considerable amount of work and replacements. Often you need to spend just as much, if not more, on repairs than you would have spent if you purchased a more expensive used bike. A good solution is purchasing a used bike from a bike shop. They are typically on the more expensive side, but you can be sure that it's safe and sturdy, and the shop will often throw in discounted accessories. And it also helps to support independent bike shops in the area.

Expect to pay around \$40 for a standard tune-up, plus extra for parts if your bike needs them. Bike shops also sell some second-hand bikes and many will build you a custom one if you're willing to spend 12the money. Make sure to invest in a good lock, since bike thefts are very common in Montreal.

Bike Shops

Allo Vélo 141 rue du Shannon 514-937-8356

ABC Bicycles 5584 av. du Parc

Cycle C Rachel 978 Rachel E. 514-523-0330

Cycle C Villeneuve 75 Villeneuve O. 514-284-4932

Bicycles Beaubien 206 Beaubien East. They're really nice and won't give you hassle for riding an old beat-up cruiser.

Bikurious Montreal 1757 Amherst. Specializes in fixed-gear and custom bikes; they do most other things as well.

La bicycletterie JR 201 Rachel East at Rachel E/Hotel de Ville: they are very good, very cheap, and quite fast, though because they are highly in demand things can take a few days. In that area, I wouldn't go anywhere else.

Monkland Cycle 5805 Monkland. Specializes in old bikes; half this place is like an art gallery of gorgeous old models from as far back as the 30s. The owner is crotchety as all get-out and loves bikes even more.

EATING AND DRINKING

It's possible to eat better for less in Montreal than pretty much anywhere else in North America. This list is but a tiny fraction of the great places to eat in town. There are stretches of good restaurants along several streets in Montreal. Check out Duluth east of St-Laurent and St-Viateur between Parc and St-Laurent; Côte des Neiges around the Snowdon metro is home to an ever-increasing array of small, family-run places offering every imaginable type of food.

Restaurants divided by price range

Inexpensive restaurants (\$): less than \$15

Moderately priced restaurants (\$\$): between \$15 and \$25

Expensive (\$\$\$): \$25 per person on up into \$100+

Inexpensive Restaurants/Cafés

Amelio's Milton and Ste-Famille (Pizza). Possibly the best pizza in town. Definitely the best pizza in the McGill Ghetto. Good lasagna and other pasta dishes. Veggie friendly. BYOW/B.

L'Anecdote 801 Rue Rachel Est, casual yet gourmet eatery serves a wide array of hamburgers - everything from the classic cheeseburger to chicken, veal, lamb and even deer burgers.

Arahova 256 St. Viateur West (Greek-Souvlaki). Arguably the best souvlaki in town. Veggie friendly.

Arts Café Jeanne-Mance and Fairmount, better lighting than most places to work, good food, hot drinks, not expensive - a little small and tendency to get crowded.

Aux Vivres St. Laurent, north of Mount-Royal, vegan restaurant, great, affordable, clean, fast, tasty food, the portobello mushroom burger is quite something!

Batory St.Viateur just west of St.Urbain - has delicious, really cheap Polish food. It's a must.

Beijing 92 Rue De La Gauchetiere O - very cheap and to me the best place in Chinatown (not all dishes are good, but usually, the simpler the better - no fried stuff, no sauces, just stick to the sauted veggies, shrimp is great, young crab is amazing in season)

Blanc de Blanc Villeneuve and Jeanne Mance, lovely, very chill, great chai tea, cheap, comfy seats, greenhouse, warm, doubles as launderette, wireless internet, usually reggae or African music, only downside: BAD lighting for reading after it gets dark, and many wasps indoors in the summertime.

Bombay Mahal Jean Talon and Birnam, relatively cheap Indian

Boulangerie Guillaume On St. Laurent, just north of Laurier. One of the best.

Coop Le Cagibi on St. Laurent, between St-Zotique and Beaubien. Cheap vegetarian food (excellent chilli, among other things), coffee and tea, very laptop-friendly with free WIFI. It used to be the Study Capital of Mile End, but has now moved a few blocks north. It is also the home of Montreal's zine library, *Bibliograph/e*.

Cafe Melbourne 4615 St. Laurent (Between Villeneuve and Mont-Royal). Australian coffee with a fun back terrasse.

Cafe Neve Rachel and Bullion. Hip cafe with a couple long tables. Computer-free space on weekends.

Café Olympico St. Viateur & Waverly (cafe). Some of the best coffee in the city. Soccer on TV.

Café Santropol 3990 St. Urbain (Diner/Cafe). Great sandwiches with the best backyard terrasse. Veggie friendly.

Café Union Jean Talon and Waverly, great coffee, good place to buy your coffee

Casa del Popolo St. Laurent and St. Joseph - Vegetarian sandwiches with nachos & salsa for \$7 and \$2.00 fair-trade lattes and espresso? Damn!

Depanneur Le Pick Up Waverly and Alexandra. Delicious vegetarian sandwiches. Unassuming aesthetic with small tables on the sidewalk. Attended mostly by locals.

Dispatch St. Laurent and Duluth. Hipster aesthetic, minimalist, artisanal coffee
Else's roy and bullion. Eclectic space with a funny history. Work for a few hours in the afternoon and then enjoy the 5 a 7.
Fairmount Bagel 74 Fairmount West (Deli-24hrs). Bagel bakery (could be city's best).
Gamba Parc avenue and Fairmount, best latté, first one's free .
Greenspot Notre Dame and Atwater, come for the poutine, stay for the booth jukeboxes.
La Cabane 3872 St. Laurent (Bar food). Good prices, good beer. Veggie friendly.
La Chilénita Marianne and Clark (Chilean). Empañadas and burritos. Delicious, filling lunch for \$6 or so. Veggie friendly.
La Croissanterie St. Catherine and St. Marc, great croissant – also one at Fairmount and Hutchison, great patio.
La Nouille Parc and Bernard, cheap Szechuan
La Paryse 302 Ontario St. East (Burgers). Excellent hamburgers, veggie burgers and fries.
Le Depanneur Café Bernard and Jeanne-Mance - Delicious brunch for \$10 - \$13.
Lili and Oli Notre Dame and Vinet, decent espresso, super cute barista boys who love the Habs.
Lola Rosa Milton (International vegetarian). Lots of good all-veggie eats just off campus.
Malhi Sweets Jarry and Acadie, cheap Indian, super good.
Maria Bonita Casgrain and Maguire, best Mexican.
Myriad Saint Denis and Bienville. Industrial chic cafe, good but expensive coffee.
Pizzedelic 3509 St. Laurent, other locations (Pizza). Chain known for their designer pizzas. Veggie friendly.
Pucapuca 5400 St. Laurent (Peruvian). Inexpensive dinner specials. Veggie friendly.
Pushap Near Namur Metro station (Indian). All vegetarian, eat well for under \$8.00. Best Indian desserts.
Rotisserie Panama 789 Jean-Talon O - BEST Greek restaurant in Montreal, the meat is incredible (don't bother if you're not going there for the meat), compared to the upscale Greek places it's inexpensive, usually there's huge Greek parties there so it gets very loud and fun! good to book in advance: 514-276-5223.
Saint Viateur Bagel 263 St. Viateur West (24 hours). Famous bagel bakery.
Schwartz's 3895 St. Laurent (Deli). Famous smoked meat.
Soupesoup A few locations in the Plateau and downtown, great soups and sandwiches.
The Main 3864 St. Laurent (Deli-24hrs), Smoked meat.
Terrasse Lafayette 250 Villeneuve West (Greek). Excellent souvlaki. City's best kept secret. Veggie friendly.
Toi, Moi et Café Laurier and de l'Esplanade - Great coffee and teas – yummy affordable brunch served everyday, lovely patio in the summer.
Tommy's Notre Dame and St. Francois-Xavier. Historic architecture and lively plant aesthetic, cafe and bar, great place to camp out for an afternoon. Very popular on the weekends.
Vegano Mont-Royal and Bordeaux. Excellent vegan Italian restaurant known for its brunch menu.

Moderately Priced Restaurants

Beauty's 93 Mont Royal West (Breakfast/Brunch), very popular brunch place. Veggie friendly.

Byblos Laurier, east of Brebeuf (Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner), excellent Iranian food. Breakfasts are something else - try the jams and juices.

Chu Chai 4088 St. Denis (All vegetarian Thai, famous for mock meats) - excellent food at reasonable prices (good brunch specials). BYOW/B.

Chao Phraya Corner of Laurier and Clark. (Thai). Run by the same folks who do Chu Chai, this place serves meat and fish along with veggie-friendly Thai dishes.

Chez Doval 150 rue Marie-Anne Est - Since 1982, Chez Doval has been offering their customers a unique place with 2 dining areas. One is a more classy dining room and the other is a tavern style room. As for the food, the home-style grilled chicken, pork and clam stew, seafood and grilled fish are amongst the most famous at Chez Doval.

Café Melies St. Laurent, south of Prince Arthur. Great for brunches that go beyond eggs and bacon.

Café Souvenir Great little place in Outremont, on Bernard Ouest, great brunch, lunch and dinner, must try the steak frites.

Fondumentale 4325 St. Denis (Fondue). Veggie friendly.

L'Avenue du Plateau Mont-Royal E. (Breakfast/Brunch). Stylish setting, excellent breakfast potatoes. Worth the line-ups.

Le Passe Composé 1310 de Maisonneuve E - Breakfast Bistro, always a line outside

Nouveau Palais Parc and Bernard, restaurant/bar with DJs, serving classic dishes with a modern twist and great cocktails, situated in an old diner.

Ouzeri 4690 St. Denis (Greek). Affordable nouveau-Greek cuisine. Veggie friendly.

Philinos Parc and Villeneuve (Greek). Pleasant bistro atmosphere, great Greek food. Veggie friendly.

Pizzeria Napoletana Little Italy - according to some, this is the best pizza in town; BYOW/B.

Robin des Bois St-Laurent and Villeneuve, gourmet, your tips go to charity.

Sala Rossa One of the best places to eat, also the Spanish Cultural Centre, the tapas are seriously great and on Thursdays there's live flamenco music and dancing at 8 (need to book in advance for that, absolutely!).

Sparrow St. Laurent, between Fairmount and St. Viateur, delicious brunch on the weekends, nice place to drink and have fancy bar food in the evenings.

Stash Café Rue St.Paul in Montreal. To get a taste of a real Polish home cooked meal this is the place.

Tehran De Maisonneuve, near Vendome Metro. Good value, neighbourhood atmosphere, only one veggie dish, vegans should stay away.

Expensive (Eats on Someone Else's Dime)

Bistro L'Express St. Denis and Roy. French bistro style, ooh-la-la - dessert ile au caramel flottante is to die for.

Maestro S.V.P St. Laurent and Prince Arthur - impeccable seafood.

Milos Parc, north of Fairmount. Greek seafood flown in fresh daily from Europe and beyond, Sold by the fish.

Toqué! 900, Place Jean-Paul-Riopelle. (Nouveau French cuisine) Definitely one of the most expensive places in town.

Bars

Bar Dakota Rosemont metro station (on Rosemont) – great karaoke on Wednesday nights (\$1 drinks start at 10pm for ladies that same night).

Bily Kun Mont Royal – always packed.

Cheval Blanc Ontario near St. Denis. Microbrewery with good local beers, occasionally stands in as an art gallery, with commix shows.

Dieu du Ciel 29 avenue Laurier Ouest – great brewpub.

Drugstore St. Catherine and de la Visitation, full floor of pool tables and lesbians.

Else's Roy. Good atmosphere, older, grad. student/intellectual/artist crowd, have to order food because of their licensing.

Le Petit Idée Fixe Parc and Villeneuve - best dive in the city.

L'Ile Noire Ontario. Whisky bar, as well as beer.

Le Quincaillerie Rachel and Parc Lafontaine.

North Star 3908 St. Laurent - fun cocktails and vintage pinball machines

Reservoir Duluth and St Laurent – a microbrewery with tasty food, rooftop terrasse and windows opening out into the street. Prime people watching.

St. Elizabeth St. Elizabeth St. East of St. Laurent. Very good beer and beautiful terrasse.

Vices Versa St-Laurent and St-Zotique, great, unassuming Petite Italie hangout with a huge patio.

Verre Bouteille Mont Royal and de Lorimier, nice beer place.

Yer'mad Bistro Bar 901 de Maisonneuve E -Hole-in-the-Wall Bar near Berri-UQAM, great little hang-out

LGBTQ+ Bars

The diversity of Montreal's LGBTQ+ scene leaves much to be desired as many bars in Le Village cater only to men. Below are a couple of spots that are more inclusive, but as you will see for yourself, you will discover more parties by word of mouth once you have settled in. Please respect the kinds of space these bars provide as well as the communities they exist for.

Bar Le Ritz (Jean Talon and Waverly). Club and music venue. It's a bit isolated (not near other bars), but they throw fun queer parties once a month called "Glitter Bombs" (although I've seen no glitter). Events can be found through their facebook page. Very diverse clientele.

Bar Renard (St. Catherine and de la Visitation) Cool art deco space with iconic floral wallpaper in the washroom. Cheap pints and unique cocktails. One of the few bars in the village where you'll find all genders represented.

Mado (St. Catherine and Wolfe) Historic cabaret and bar. Weekly drag shows and hosts RuPaul viewing when in season.

NDQ (Notre Dame des Quilles) (Beaubien and St. Dominique) a dive bar with a 2-lane bowling alley and late night pizza. Known for hosting a wide range of specialized events: “LSD” (Lesbian Speed Dating), QPOC Shakur, VIVA DISCO, and tribute nights to the usual suspects (Whitney, Madonna, Kylie, Cher, Janet).

GROCERY STORES/BAKERIES/PATISSERIES/FROMAGERIES/ALCOHOL:

This might vary depending on the neighbourhood you live in but here are some suggestions:

Main grocery stores are:

Provigo Pretty much everywhere.

PA Main location on Parc just North of Fairmount.

Marché Adonis Middle Eastern, Lebanese and Mediterranean, main location in Shaughnessy Village

You can get wine and beer at any grocery store or depanneur in Montreal, although you'll get a better deal on wines at the SAQ (where you can also get other kinds of alcohol). There are SAQ depots everywhere but take note that they close relatively early during the week (around 6 or 7pm), are open until 9pm on Thursday and Fridays, and close at 5pm on Saturday and Sundays. Except for the SAQ Express which are in some locations and are open until 10pm everyday.

Other:

If you live in Outremont, you should do your groceries on Parc avenue at the Fruiterie Mile End, or the other similar shops, or at grocery stores in Mile End. You'll save at least \$30 per trip by shopping on the other side of Parc.

For fresh fresh vegetables in Montreal, you'll want to go to:

1. Jean Talon or Atwater markets
2. Eden supermarket in Galleries du Parc (no meat)
3. The Fruiteries on Parc.

Cocoa Locale on Parc and Villeneuve: best cupcakes in town, also excellent larger cakes to bring to parties etc (not expensive! but make sure to get there early as she usually sells out way before closing time).

Cheskie Bakery on Bernard and Parc will change your life (mostly by making you eat chocolate and cookies and delicious pastry stuff all the time).

Premiere Moisson a bakery chain that has not only delicious bread and pastries but also amazing gourmet sandwiches and meats – the best baguettes, and good coffee.

Fromagerie Yannick On Bernard Ouest in Outremont, the most amazing selection of French and Quebec cheeses.

Fromagerie Hamel at Jean Talon market, equally amazing selection!

THRIFT STORES/FLEA MARKETS:

St. Michel Flea Market is the best of course - has EVERYTHING you can think of, from jewelry to records to vintage furniture at affordable prices.

The **Antique Shop On St Laurent** between mount royal and villeneuve on the east side of the street has a lot of great stuff and often gets overlooked

BOOKSTORES

Whoever said Montreal doesn't have much in the way of bookstores is, frankly, not looking all that hard. The city boasts a solid mixture of English and French-language bookstores, many of which offer a wide variety of books and magazines. Consider the following as a starting point, a "rough guide" to some of the city's finer offerings:

Two smaller bookstores that are absolutely amazing, offer a minutely chosen selection of books and deserve to be supported: **Drawn and Quarterly** on Bernard and **Le Port de Tête** (books in French) on Mont-Royal.

The McGill University Bookstore (McTavish/Sherbrooke) has a decent selection of books. However, the bookstore is prone to some glaring absences—perhaps this is due to its proximity to the books-deficient library. Close to the bookstore is **Librarie Paragraphe** (McGill College/Sherbrooke), another primarily English-language bookstore which often stages literary events and readings featuring authors working their way through town on book promotions. **Paragraphe** often stocks titles for courses, and also offers a book ordering service, if you're interested. One of the store's original owners, Richard King, has recently published a mystery novel involving, of course, some independent bookstores. But don't be fooled, the store was recently bought and is now part of the Archambeault mega chain.

Also located in the downtown core are **Indigo** (Ste-Catherine/McGill College) and **Chapters** (Ste-Catherine/Stanley). Both are owned by the same company and offer the big-box bookstore experience. Finally, **Nicholas Hoare** (Ste-Catherine/de la Montagne) operates a small bookstore in the basement of the historic Ogilvy department store.

In Westmount **The Double Hook Bookstore** (Greene Avenue/De Maisonneuve)proudly boasts a specialization in Canadian literature. 'Nuff said. Another small, but solid, English-language bookstore is **Bibliophile** (Queen Mary/Decarie), located in the Snowdon/Cote-des-Neiges area. **L'Androgyne** (Amherst Street) is one of Canada's oldest

gay and lesbian bookstores. F/52 is on St Denis just below St. Joseph, and carries underground art books and comics.

The selections for used books are, for the most part, pretty decent. Montreal's collection of four universities results in a bounty of used literature and scholarly works. **Le Mot/The Word** (Milton/Durocher) is an institution of the McGill ghetto. They buy and sell used books, and specialize in literature and literary criticism. **Cheap Thrills** (Metcalfe/Sherbrooke) has a decent supply of used books as well as albums and CDs. **Footnotes** (Mackay/De Maisonneuve) located near Concordia, has a nice selection of academic titles. They also offer a large sale, held twice a year in the student centre at Concordia. When you're in the store, ask the people behind the counter to put you on their e-mail list. Just down the street, **S.W. Welch** (St.Laurent/Duluth), provides a decent sanctuary for those looking to kill some time while waiting in line at Schwartz, located across the street. Other used bookstores in and around downtown include **Ex Libris** (Sherbrooke/St.Mathieu) and **Odysee** (Stanley/De Maisonneuve).

As for the French-language bookstores, there are many places for you to choose from. The major French-language bookstore chain is **Renaud Bray** (Two of the larger locations can be found at St. Denis/Marie Anne and Parc/Fairmount) which also operate stores under the Champigny and Libraries Garneau names. They stock a healthy collection of French-language titles from all disciplines—a great opportunity to read scholarly publications from people like Bourdieu, Debray, and Québécois authors that may have not been translated en anglais. These stores also offer sizable music sections, with a large collection of French and international genres. Finally, Renaud Bray also offers a large selection of French magazines. Libraries **Gallimard** (St. Laurent/Avenue des Pins) focuses in the literary and intellectual. **Librarie Boule de Neige** (St. Denis/Mount Royal) specializes in new age and the occult.

Those looking for French-language used bookstores (known as Bouquineries) can find a healthy supply on Avenue Mont Royal, west of St. Denis Street. During the summer, a number of booksellers set up stands down in the Old Port areas of the city and sell their wares. Most of those books are French-language titles, although some English language titles are there as well.

NOTES ON THE MCGILL LIBRARY

A common complaint about McGill is its library. The interiors are dour and the collection leaves much to be desired. If you are interested in **getting a carrel or study space**, go to the help desk on the first floor McLennan Library. Study spaces don't amount to much more than a 2.5m x 2.5m room with a desk and 2 chairs shared by 2 people. They do have the distinct advantage of being able to be locked. The waiting list for study spaces is enormous, and limited to doctoral students. If you put your name down in the September of your first year, you may get one in your fourth year.

Advice on getting a carrel: they are assigned on a first come, first served basis for the year, and may be renewed for summers/subsequent years. If you are interested, you should reserve one before the term starts as they go quickly. The library is divided by noise-level, with floor levels getting quieter as you move higher up. Try to get one on either the 5th or 6th floor, as the 3rd floor is a zoo.

Library Fines

Be careful: the fine per day is 50 cents per book and \$2 per day if someone has put a recall on the book. You know your tendencies, you do the math. Use MUSE (the library's catalogue) wisely because you can renew books online and avoid having to sell your first born.

MONTREAL FILM CULTURE

First run Cinemas

AMC Forum, 2313 Ste. Catherine W., 904-1274

The cinema as super-spectacle: huge and pretty comfortable, but the prices keep going up and up...

Eaton, 705 Ste. Catherine W., 866-0111

Some cut-rate, first-run films.

Imperial, 1430 Bleury, 848-0300

The last of Montreal's great cinema palaces.

Paramount now called the **Scotia Bank Cinema** Montreal, 977 Ste. Catherine W., 866-0111

The cinema as super-spectacle: massive, dizzying and expensive.

Parisien, 480 Ste. Catherine W., 866-0111

First-run French language films in a cineplex that was once a cinema palace.

Quartier Latin, 350 Emery, 849-3456

First-run French language films.

Cinema Dollar, Namur metro stop, 6900 boulevard Decarie, Cote-St-Luc, QC H3X 2T8, (514) 739-0536

Shows blockbusters at reduced prices (1 or 2\$ and snacks are at the same price), as well as older films if you're lucky. The guy who runs it is great, completely nuts but great: very chatty, film-buff, makes his own samosas.

Cinéma Beaubien

Occasional/seasonal screenings

Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1920 Baile, 939-7000

Great film series, elegant surroundings, low prices.

Casa del Popolo, 4873 St. Laurent, 284-3804

Silent and experimental films set to live music.

Goethe Institut, 418 Sherbrooke E., 499-0159

A tiny, but lively screening space with occasional films.

NFB, 1564 St. Denis, 496-6887 (www.nfb.ca)

NFB premieres and some other occasional screenings.

Outremont Theatre, 1248 Bernard W.

Sumptuous, newly-renovated surroundings with occasional film series.

Bar Le Ritz PBD on Jean-Talon

Art house/repertory

Cinema du Parc, 3575 Parc Ave., 281-1900

Now owned by the people at Ex-centris, the Parc has been fully revamped—art house, indie,

cult at reasonable prices.

Cinemathèque Québécoise 335 de Maisonneuve E., 842-9763 (www.cinematheque.qc.ca).

Art house and repertory fare at very affordable prices—excellent series— 2 for 1 with an Access Montreal card!

NFB CinéRobothèque: 1564 St. Denis, 496-6887 (www.nfb.ca)

One of a kind—the student price of \$2/hour (with student id) allows you access the entire NFB back catalogue on your very own high-tech video console (with the help of the friendly NFB robot, of course).

Film Festivals

Montreal hosts three large film festivals and a number of smaller film festivals during the course of the year. The major film festivals are:

Le Festival des Films du Monde (www.ffm-montreal.org)

Montreal's big, splashy international film festival—the 2005 festival runs from August 26nd to September 5th

Le Festival International du Nouveaux Cinéma et des Nouveaux Médias (www.fcmm.com)

Montreal's 'upstart' film festival—hosted by Ex-centris—runs in mid-October.

Festival Vues d'Afrique (<http://www.vuesdafrique.org>)

Features African and Caribbean films - runs at the end of April.

Fantasia (<http://www.fantasiafestival.com>)

Usually takes place in July, features fantasy, sci-fi and generally weird film.

Other festivals include everything from the **Image and Nation Gay and Lesbian Film Festival** (www.image-nation.org), to the Iranian Diaspora Film Festival, to the **Montreal Jewish Film Festival** (www.mjff.qc.ca). There are also numerous film screenings at the **Fringe Theatre Festival**.

MONTREAL ON FILM

Interested in watching some films set in or about Montreal? The following is a very brief and far from definitive list of 'Montreal films.'

Feature films:

The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz, Ted Kotcheff, 1974

The Richler classic starring Richard Dreyfus and Montreal's own Micheline Lanctot.

Cosmos, Allyn/Briand/Dallaire/Paragamian/Turpin/Villeneuve, 1996

A philosopher/taxi driver on the loose in Montreal

Le Déclin de l'Empire Américain, Denys Arcand, 1986

The first of Arcand's 'scandalous' international hits—set in the Laurentians and in Montreal

Eldorado, Charles Binamé, 1994

Mid-1990s take on youth culture in the new Montreal

Comment Faire l'Amour Avec un Nègre Sans se Fatiguer, Jacques Benoit, 1989

Along with Arcand's *Le Déclin* and *Jesus*, this film helped establish Quebecois cinema's risqué reputation during the late 80s.

Les Invasions Barbares, Denys Arcand, 2003

The sequel to *Le Déclin de L'Empire Américain* rejoins the characters from the first movie.

This movie was hugely successful.

Jésus de Montréal, Denys Arcand, 1989

Arcand's second big international hit is a modern-day passion play set in Montreal

Joshua Then and Now, Ted Kotcheff, 1985

More Richler, more Kotcheff, more Montreal

Léolo, Jean-Claude Lauzon, 1992

Lauzon's disturbing and fantastic coming-of-age tale

Montréal Vu Par. . ., Arcand/Brault/Egoyan/Leduc/Pool/Rozema, 1991

6 shorts set in Montreal by some of Canada's finest

Rabid, David Cronenberg, 1977

Marilyn Chambers + David Cronenberg + Christmas + Montreal = ?

The Score, Frank Oz, 2001

A recent U.S. film not only shot in Montreal but set in Montreal (!)—starring DeNiro, Brando, Edward Norton, and Angela Bassett in a heist/thriller

Set Me Free, Lea Pool, 1999

A girl's coming-of-age story set in Montreal in 1963, featuring an Anna Karina obsessed adolescent.

Un Zoo la Nuit, Jean-Claude Lauzon, 1987

Lauzon's first big hit is a Quebecois crime thriller set on the streets of Montreal

Documentary Films:

Action: the October Crisis of 1970, Robin Spry, 1973

The definitive film on the FLQ crisis.

Le Confort et l'Indifférence, Denys Arcand, 1981

Arcand's ruthless (and very funny) take on the 1980 referendum

The Devil's Toy, Claude Jutra, 1966

Montreal's teenage skateboard subculture in all its glory, presented in a brilliant satirical voice.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen, Brittain/Owen, 1965

Leonard, pre-L.A.

Montreal by Night/Métropole, Burrows/Palardy, 1947

Montreal's history, its culture, and its incredible nightlife, all in under 12 minutes. Note: the French version is longer and better.

À Saint-Henri le Cinq Septembre, Aquin, 1962

One day in the life of the Saint-Henri district.

Music

Particularly considering the attention it's been getting lately, it would be criminal not to mention Montreal's bustling music scene. There are shows most nights of the week, and an exhaustive list of the venues would be ridiculous, but the listings for each week's shows are announced in the back sections of the *Voir*, the *Mirror* and the *Hour*. If you're looking for a sampling of as-yet undiscovered local acts, definitely check out the next Mandatory Moustache nights, and all the music festivals are strongly recommended. These really just a few of the music festivals in town:

Festival International de Jazz de Montréal – <http://www.montrealjazzfest.com/>

This is a massive, internationally known festival that has a surprising range of acts every July. Even if you're not a jazz fan per se, it's worth checking out because some of the stages are dedicated blues, hip hop, electronic, what have you. The ticketed shows are impressive but often astonishingly expensive; the free shows are, well, free, but packed.

Suoni Per El Popolo - <http://www.casadelpopolo.com/suoni/about.htm>

A much smaller jazz festival run by the Casa del Popolo peeps that is sort of a counterpoint to that other jazz festival and features a lot more experimental and undiscovered acts. In June or July.

Mutek - <http://www.mutek.ca/>

A newer but already hugely popular electronic music festival, every year at the beginning of June.

Pop Montreal - <http://www.popmontreal.com/festival/index.php>

Another huge festival, mostly pop, rock and indie acts dispersed through different local bars. The 2005 festival runs from September 28th through October 2nd. You can either pay-per-show or get a festival wristband for \$125.

Francofolies – www.francofolies.com

A mid-summer festival celebrating all things francophone. A great way to check out some francophone musical acts.

International Festival Musique Actuelle Victoriaville - <http://www.fimav.qc.ca/>

This festival, held slightly outside Montreal proper in Victoriaville, celebrates weird and experimental music.

Montreal International Reggae Festival - www.montrealreggaefestival.com

Held in mid-July annually with events at local bars.

Under the Snow - <http://www.underthesnow.ca>

Experimental music, held in March.

Opera/Dance/Art

Montreal is great for contemporary dance, check out the danse-danse series (<http://www.dansedanse.net/>) which has affordable seats starting at around \$35 though you probably won't see all that well which for dance is... kinda crucial. the best seats are usually first rows in first level balconies, at about \$70. But considering the international companies featured, it's totally worth it.

The MET live in HD series of opera premieres broadcast live from the MET in NYC which you can catch at Scotia Bank cinema on Saturday afternoons is a great way to see high quality opera productions at affordable prices (about \$25, but book early to get a good seat!).

DHC gallery, old montreal = awesome contemporary art shows (Sophie Calle, Christian Marclay solo shows e.g.) FREE entry

ART

Musée d'art contemporain

185, Sainte-Catherine Ouest (corner Jeanne-Mance) On the Place des Arts site opposite Complexe Desjardins

Place-des-Arts metro

(514) 847-6226

<http://www.macm.org/en/index.html>

*Free admission every Wednesday evening from 5 to 9 p.m.; 'WIRED to the MAC' card costs \$10.00/year and gets you free admission as well as entry to events like the "Nocturnes" they hold.

Belgo Building

372 St-Catherine

(514) 861-2953

*Holds a huge amount of commercial galleries, artist-run centres, cultural organizations, and studios all in one building! Some esteemed galleries that are located in the building include Optica, un centre d'art contemporain; Pierre-Francois Ouellette art contemporain; Projex-Mtl Galerie; Galerie René Blouin; Skol; and SBC Gallery of Contemporary Art. Most, if not all, have FREE admission.

DHC/ART Foundation for Contemporary Art

451 rue St-Jean (Old Montreal) Closest to Square Victoria and Place d'Armes metros
(514) 849-3742

<http://www.dhc-art.org/>

*Free admission, ground-breaking international and nationally recognized artists

Parisian Laundry

3550 Rue Saint-Antoine (St-Henri) - Close to Lionel-Groulx metro
(514) 989-1056

*Free admission, contemporary art (emerging artists)

Les Ateliers Jean Brillant

3550 St-Jacques St. West (St-Henri) - Close to Lionel-Groulx metro
(514) 390-0383

*Free admission, contemporary art (local, national and international artists)

Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal, International biennale of contemporary photography

Set for the 5th of September to the 5th of October 2013, and is held every two years (so watch for it again in 2015). The festival consists of numerous exhibitions at gallery venues across the city, and draws in international, national and locally established mid to late career artists. The exhibitions are almost always free, and organized around a theme chosen by a guest curator. The artists chosen usually engage photography in an interesting, challenging way far from more 'traditional' approaches.

WORKING IN MONTREAL:

Finding work on or off campus can be tricky, but is doable. Many people have found work at the Library, the McGill Bookstore, the Alma Mater Fund, the graduate student hang-out Thompson House (which often needs bar and wait staff), and through the work-study program. In the case of work study there are deadlines for applications which are strictly adhered to. Make sure you sign up early in the term (in some cases there is research work available) and, as other students can tell, being a little aggressive can sometimes help the bureaucracy along. The work-study program is administered by the Office of Student Aid [<https://www.mcgill.ca/studentaid/work-study>].

Also look for invigilation notices. Many departments need grad students to supervise exams at the end of term. Wages and work conditions are around the \$10 mark but can vary in each faculty. <https://www.mcgill.ca/students/exams/invigilation>

Off campus options can be had as well. French is often an asset, but not necessarily required. There are schools which offer positions teaching English as a second language. Some of course are fly by night operations, others are more legitimate. Some require extensive training, others very little.

Teaching at McGill

To be blunt, the first thing you should know about teaching at McGill is that teaching opportunities for ahcs students are somewhat limited. There are several reasons for this state of affairs. Firstly, McGill has long neglected the humanities and social sciences in favour of other disciplines (the physical sciences, for example, where teaching assistantships apparently grow on trees), with the result that comparatively fewer courses are on offer in the Faculty of Arts. Secondly, McGill relies less heavily on graduate students and part-time faculty for teaching than do other Canadian universities, which means that a greater percentage of courses are taught by full-time faculty members.

On a happier note, much has changed in the ahcs department in the past several years, most noteworthy is that a minor in Communication Studies for undergraduate students has been created meaning that the amount of courses that graduate students are eligible to teach has grown substantially, both on the AH and CS side. There are also a limited number of teaching assistantships (usually about 8 per academic year for COMS and about the same for AH). For the most part, course lecturer and T.A. positions are reserved for PhD-level ahcs students, this however does not mean that Masters level students are not eligible to apply (they definitely should, especially for TAships). There are also numerous RA-ships, or assistant research positions, around the department. The professors, of course, choose their help, but it's always worth mentioning to those with similar research interests that you're looking for work. Otherwise, these are usually posted beside the AHCS office in the hallway.

So, how do you actually get one of these gigs? The first step is, quite simply, to apply for them: calls for applications are usually posted late in the Fall and Winter terms, and they are also circulated on the department listserv. Before you apply, take some time to acquaint yourself with the courses, which vary somewhat from year to year. An information binder containing previous course syllabi, reading lists, and other material is available for perusal in the main office. As for the application itself, it helps to have previous teaching experience, and, if possible, to provide references and student evaluations. Regardless of your level of experience, you should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the subject area, which you may have acquired through coursework, thesis research, or other scholarly activities. Finally, be sure to let your advisor(s) know that you are interested in teaching, and don't be afraid to solicit their advice.

If you don't manage to land a teaching gig in the department, all is by no means lost. Many ahcs students have found positions elsewhere, including in other McGill departments, at CEGEP's (the Quebec pre-college system), and at other universities. If you are fluent in French, then Universite de Montreal and UQAM are possible options; if not, Concordia is your best bet. Remember as well that Ottawa is within commuting distance, and is the home of Carleton and the University of Ottawa. Finally, have an updated curriculum vitae at the ready, and keep applying!

WELCOME DIVERSIONS

Places to Parc

Something you may not know is that the Ville de Montreal is actually just a plethora of parks, bike paths and recreational areas intersected by the city around them. They signed over most of the top of Mont-Royal for the development of **Parc Mont-Royal**, designed by world-renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead (co-designer of New York's Central Park), who did well to take advantage of Montreal's most widely visible space for both the summer and winter recreational months.

The park is easily accessed at many points, (for maps go to www.lemontroyal.qc.ca), but is probably most easily entered from Ave. du Parc, which offers the choice of many different directions for hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, jogging or just trucking around, whatever your speed. One of the many delights of this park's space is its unending ability to provide a different walk, different scenery, and different opportunities for activities depending on the season or even just your mood. The western side of the mountain hides a chalet for lacing up your ice skates, as well as a sizeable hill for you tobagoners out there. As well, there are numerous points from which to gaze upon the sublimity of late capitalism in action, and the city itself, from both a southern and northern perspective, can provide sensible solace for even the most diligent researcher. One of Parc Mont-Royal's most popular activities lies right on its eastern tip, directly adjacent to avenue du Parc and the Cartier monument (huge statue aka "the angel"). Known alternatively as the "tam-tams" or "bongos" depending on the ethnic background of who you ask, huge gatherings of drum and other percussion players happen almost like clockwork every Sunday morning/afternoon from May to September, weather permitting. If it all sounds a little too pretentious for you, it probably is. Another highlight of the tam-tams is the "medieval" battlefield. Every Sunday, a group of kids dress up in duct-taped battle gear and fight it out at the base of the mountain. Seriously. Parc Lafontaine is slightly further east than rue St. Denis, but not by much. The easiest way to access it from the west would be either to walk due east on Roy St. from St. Laurent, which will land you right on the western tip of the park, or via Rachel St. east, which runs along the northern border of the park. You can also get there simply by walking east on Sherbrooke St. from McGill. It takes about a half hour. In addition to bike and inline skating pathways, this park includes several large ponds (they freeze over in the winter for ice skating), and large swaths of rolling greenways for whatever your heart desires. There are baseball diamonds, tennis courts and soccer pitches (reservations are often necessary, check the city of Montreal website www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca). It is especially a great place for outdoor ice-skating, as the rink is serviced by a zamboni, there are spaces for pick-up hockey, and the chalet that borders the pond provides skate rentals/sharpening as well as hot chocolate.

Parc Jean-Drapeau comprises the human-made islands of Ile-Ste-Helene and Ile-Notre-Dame. The park, recently renamed for Montreal's ignoramus mayor of the 1960's, was the site of Expo 67, and still bears the art-marks of that historic gathering. In addition, here you will find Montreal's only permanent theme-park, La Ronde (kinda pricey at \$32+), and circuit Gilles Villeneuve, Montreal's F-1 race track, which doubles as a bike and inline skating path the rest of the year. The park is accessible on the yellow line of the Metro, (via Berri-UQAM station) or via a foot-bike-skate path that diverts from the main Lachine canal

bike and skate path which is not the most hospitable place in winter, but it makes up for it in summer. Riding your bike to the island (about 45 minutes away) provides the added enjoyment of cool splash pads to reward your trek (they are near the Metro station Jean-Drapeau). Also hidden away on Ile-Notre-Dame is a beach, although I haven't been there, since I know there's a McDonald's on-site and a charge to get in. That said, there are also paddle-boats, the Casino (yech) and various other museums and diversions to see.

To wrap-up I'll talk briefly about a park which, more than others, seems to typify a Montrealer's sense of how to use a park. The park at Carre St. Louis and St. Denis (just walk east on Prince Arthur from St. Laurent) is a park where one does just about whatever they want to recreate. Whether you're there to splash in the fountain that centers the park, enjoy some ice-cream, eat your lunch, or just passing through looking for some respite from a trying day, this park literally seems alive (at least from May-October). At night, it's worth noting to be a bit more careful, but that said, no ever seems to get harassed for enjoying a bit of busking and a joint or two. All in all, it's a pretty loose space.

But that's just the tip of the iceberg. To check out more types of parks and locations of indoor and outdoor pools, check either the city of Montreal site listed above or www.montrealplus.ca. Nature lovers and bird-watchers? 514.280.PARC provides detailed information on Montreal's best spots for those activities. Keep in mind that although the city website leaves something to be desired, many boroughs still maintain their own sites and often you will be able to find websites for specific parks by searching them on Google.

Museums and Exhibits

Canadian Centre for Architecture – <http://www.cca.qc.ca>

Museum and study centre devoted to the art of architecture, past and present.

MAC de Montreal - <https://macm.org>

Musee d'art contemporain de Montreal – Montreal's contemporary art museum

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts - <https://www.mbam.qc.ca>

Collection of paintings, sculptures, design and decorative art, representing all movements and periods. 26,000 works in its Permanent Collection. The contemporary art center is just across the street.

Planétarium de Montréal - <http://espacepurlavie.ca/en/planetarium>

Features online gift shop, astronomical information, and the Société d'astronomie du Planétarium de Montréal.

Shopping Centers

Rockland Centre Mall - <http://www.centrerockland.com>

Decarie Square - <http://www.decariesquare.ca>

Place Alexis Nihon - <http://www.placealexisnihon.com>

Markets

Both sell cheap produce in season and a great deal of produce is organic. There are also good cheese and bread shops at each. Both are easy to get to by Metro.

Jean Talon Market - in the northern end of Montreal, Metro Jean-Talon.

Atwater Market - down at the bottom of Atwater St., near St. Henri.

Sports and Gym Facilities

The McGill gym <http://www.mcgill.ca/athletics/> is located at the top of Aylmer Street, on Dr. Penfield (McGill Athletics, 475 Pine West, Ph. Tel: 514.398.7000). It's a short athletic uphill walk and free to use once you are a full time student, although there is a small fee to use the fancy work-out room (\$15/semester). You can rent a locker for the year, where you can store your stuff. You need to provide your own lock, although the gym provides towels. At the end of the year, you have to remove your gym stuff or pay a fine, so be alert as to the dates for stuff-removal. The facilities are okay, a bit grim and packed with undergraduates. However, there are also lots of alumni around and grad students too and some of the facilities, like the track and the squash courts are excellent.

They offer a range of classes for a small fee, check out their website or stop by the gym. Classes range from yoga to horse-back riding. I recommend squash lessons, which ran for about 6 weeks and was a great way to learn the game although the class was comprised mostly of first year students. There is a small racquet renting fee and you need to have goggles. This is probably more information than you need to know. There are also a bunch of intramural games. Take advantage of the gym – it's a perk that seems to go underused by grad students. There are also pay as you go classes and you can sign up for any classes online.

For those unwilling to run the chance of running into people they know while working up a sweat, there are other sports facilities in the city such as the YMCA, <http://www.ymcaquebec.org/en/>. They also offer a variety of classes. There are two main locations in Montreal, one on Parc just north of St. Viateur, and the other close to the McGill Campus downtown on Stanley St. Please see the website for membership fees, I believe they give you access to any YMCA in the city.

There is also the posh La Cite gym with the heated outdoor pool in the same building as Cinema du Parc. The pool is heated throughout the winter and swimming in it during a snowfall is a trip. Yearly memberships cost around \$350 but there are discounts offered occasionally especially if you sign up with a friend.

As for departmental sports stuff, there has been a softball team in the past that we are hoping to bring back next summer that have weekly games during the summer to play other McGill teams at the field near Thompson house, the grad student pub you will get very familiar with. It is informal and open to all, even if you have never played in your life. Look for information coming from the coaches in your email box.

Also, if you like **hockey** our department has its very own D Division hockey team (meaning you barely have to know how to skate to join!) called The Ten Left Wingers. If you're interested in joining the team email the captain, Prof. Darin Barney: darin.barney@mcgill.ca

For winter things, there are lots of free skating rinks around, such as at the Parc LaFontaine or at the Old Port (where they may charge a fee). You can rent skates. There is cross-country skiing at Mont Royal and lots of places beyond the city limits such as in the Laurentians where you can ski along old railway lines, such as in St. Agathe.

If you're a hiker, a jogger, a cross-country skier, or snow-shoer and you like to exercise outdoors then nothing beats Mont Royal, the beautiful mountain in the middle of the city. As a runner, definitely one of my favourite places in Montreal.

LEARNING FRENCH

Many people come to the city for their education and stay for Montreal. Still others come and realize they are missing the best of the city if they leave for the summer, only to return for the descent toward deepest, darkest winter. If you think you might be a candidate in either category, a strategic move would be to brush up on your French, particularly since it is a degree requirement in our department. You can certainly get by in the city exclusively speaking English but a great many jobs require you to be *au fait* with spoken, if not written, French. The degree of competency depends on the demands of the industry and the job itself. There are a few different options for learning French below:

Centre St. Louis (4285, rue Drolet) <http://centre-st-louis.csdm.ca/english/>

This center is run by the Quebec Government and at a cost of \$75 registration fee per term, it would probably qualify as the best value language instruction by far. The true price is better assessed in terms of the commitment required – 9 hours a week (Mon – Wed session, 7-10pm) is considered part-time. Attending full-time requires 16 hours per week (Mon – Thurs, 6-10pm). The catch is that you must be a Canadian Citizen or landed immigrant to qualify for the program. Thankfully, there is no homework given the time commitment but by the same token, it can be a little unstructured for some people's tastes. Courses run in 2 month semesters, and registration is best arranged at the start of the semester before which you want to apply. Call 514-486-5800 for info.

McGill University and **Concordia** both have French as a Second Language programs which are a bit more expensive. These are more structured and have a lesser face-to-face time commitment. A word of caution: ALL of the courses you do at McGill show up on your academic record. If you are at all sensitive about showing a less-than-stellar mark, you should bypass McGill altogether on this score.

There are also a plethora of private colleges and tutors offering French language tuition and their ads can be found in the newspapers and weeklies. These are of variable quality.

On-campus Resources

McGill Mental Health Hub <http://mcgillmentalhealthhub.ca/>

PGSS <https://pgss.mcgill.ca/en/home>

Thompson House <http://thomsonhouse.ca/home>

McGill International Student Services <https://www.mcgill.ca/internationalstudents/>