

THE CITY

Embrace Montreal's magical winter

Outdoor festivals, winter winery tours and shorter lines at Schwartz's deli help take your mind off the cold

NATALIE TAYLOR MONTREAL

Montreal might seem like the last place you would want to visit this winter, given the frigid temperatures across the country. But this city stubbornly refuses to go into hibernation and transforms into a magical winter wonderland, embracing the season with music, arts and food festivals. If you bundle up, Montreal is just as special in winter as it is in summer. And you likely won't have to wait as long in line for a Schwartz's deli sandwich.

Here are seven ways to enjoy Montreal this winter:

IGLOOFEST

Every weekend until Feb. 8, fans of electronic music dance under the night sky and in the Old Port of Montreal at Igloofest. As the festival grows, so does the architectural, interactive outdoor stage and the DJ roster including Sharam, Scuba and RL Grime. Sport your best one piece in a costume contest featuring a different theme each week. Ice slides, fires to roast marshmallows and, of course, drink stations are available in the Igloo Village. igloofest.ca

MONTRÉAL EN LUMIÈRE

Now in its 15th season, this popular festival lights up the city from Feb. 20 to March 2. It features a free outdoor playground centring around Place des Arts, and ends with the all-night culture party, Nuit Blanche. This year's food theme focuses on Montreal gastronomy and its inventive chefs, with more than 50 restaurants offering more than 280 culinary experiences. Renowned chef Normand Laprise hosts a \$75 Veterans' Lunch at Toqué! on March 1; or you can enjoy a \$25 Laurentians-inspired lunch at Le Margaux on Feb. 20 and 21. The musical lineup includes shows by Blue Rodeo, Chicago and Catherine Major to help you shake off the cold. montrealenlumiere.com

EXPLORE THE MOUNTAIN

Fitz & Follwell Co.'s Winter on



Electronic music fans can dance under the night sky at Igloofest in the Old Port of Montreal. TOURISME MONTRÉAL



At the serene Scandinave spa in Old Montreal, you can rejuvenate yourself in a three-step bath process.

the Mountain tours will bring out your inner Canadian. Snowshoe through the woods of Mount Royal for look-out views, skate on Beaver Lake and finish the day with a toboggan ride down the mountain. You can even rent snow gear. fitzandfollwell.co

WINTER WINE

Food tour company VDM offers a new winter wineries excursion through the Eastern Townships, giving new meaning to ice wine. Available every Saturday from mid-February to mid-April, the tours go beyond wine. You'll also learn how to mix ice-wine cocktails and be treated to apple ice wine around a wood fire. montrealfoodtours.com

SCANDINAVIAN SPA

At the serene Scandinave spa in Old Montreal, you can rejuvenate yourself in a three-step bath process. It starts with a eucalyptus steam bath, Finnish sauna, or a hot bath to eliminate toxins and cleanse the skin. Then comes a brisk Nordic shower or a cold plunge, followed by a soothing relaxation period. A winter "cocooning" promotion features the baths at \$38 and a massage-and-bath experience starting from \$98 until April 30. scandinave.com/en/montreal

ART MEETS SCIENCE

The Phi Centre, on Saint-Pierre Street, is offering a free exhibition that merges science and the multimedia works of four artists.

Hybrid Bodies explores the emotional journey and cultural views of people who have had heart transplants. The exhibition ends on March 15. phi-centre.com/en/events/id/hybridbodiesexpo

NORTHERN EXPOSURE

The Foodlab at the Société des Arts Technologiques takes the winter rooftop experience to a new level with its Nordic Terrace. The centrepiece is a yurt in which you can replicate nomadic traditions, seating yourself on low benches and fur. Continue the fuzzy feeling over Nordic-inspired platters of smoked fish, cheese and dried meat while sipping mulled wine, whisky and grog. sat.qc.ca/en/terrassenordique

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