



TRIP DOSSIER

# CANADA



*'Québec in Style'*

*From £1,975 per person*

*Premium Economy supplement £500  
return*

*Departure Dates:  
Daily departures May to September*

*Tour Grade: A/B*

Walks Worldwide, 12 The Square, Ingleton, Carnforth, LA6 3EG.  
Tel: 01524 242000 fax: 01524 242657  
Email: [sales@walksworldwide.com](mailto:sales@walksworldwide.com) website: [walksworldwide.com](http://walksworldwide.com)

## Introduction

Travel to the most beautiful regions of this little visited part of Québec province and enjoy the wilderness and peaceful trails in your own time on a relaxed self-drive itinerary staying at some of the most charming accommodation and in the best locations this magical province can offer. Hike through the dense forests emerging onto high plateau for breathtaking views of the entire Charlevoix region. Discover the charm and hospitality of the quiet townships in the Lac Saint Jean area. Visit the dramatic Saguenay Fjord and choose from a myriad of optional activities such as sea kayaking or fishing, or simply continue walking through the remote valleys. Head out on a zodiac powerboat for the truly memorable and inspiring experience of watching the Saint Lawrence whales. This is a land of wonderful wildlife spotting opportunities – the land of the bear and moose, bird sanctuaries and endless nature reserves. It is also a land of quaint, salubrious and very welcoming inns, where fresh fish and local produce fill the menus. You will stay in some charming establishments, some with gourmet restaurants attached, some in the hearts of national park forests, an artists' village or Old Québec City and all offering wonderfully stylish and unique accommodation in which to relax and unwind. You will also visit unique sites of cultural and historical interest - vibrant Montreal, beautiful and charming Québec City, bustling Tadoussac and the famous artists' colony at Baie Saint Paul. Here you will see why people come to this little known region to be inspired by the unique clarity of light and the beauty of nature surrounding them. All the while enjoying the unique Québécois culture and hospitality. Truly a trip into the heart of Québec, whose provincial slogan is 'je me souviens' – 'remember me'.....

## About the Country

**History** 'Kébec' is a native word from the Algonquin tribe meaning 'where the river narrows'. First explored by Samuel de Champlain and Jacques Cartier (whose names you will see everywhere) in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it became a province of France in 1663. Before long however conflicts with the neighbouring British colonies brought on what became known as the Seven Years' War; the most famous battle of which occurred on the Plains of Abraham outside Québec City in 1759 where the leader of both armies were killed. The French lost this battle and in 1763 handed Canada over to the British. The American Revolution saw most of the population shift alliance from France to Britain and the slow growth of English settlers soon began to outnumber the French. Conflicts between the two sides broke out again in the call for independence and eventually in 1867 the Dominion of Canada was established. By mid-nineteenth century the rest of the Canadian provinces had joined but the repercussions of all these historical differences between the English and French continue to rumble on. With the birth of the Parti Québécois and its strong advocacy of separatism the province regularly goes through votes to decide its future, often with nail-biting results. The issue refuses to go away although most people seem to be resigned to the fact that splitting from the rest of Canada would be an economic nightmare.

**Geography** Canada is the world's second largest country after Russia and is divided into ten provinces. The ocean obviously plays a large role in forming the topography of Québec's rugged coastline and further to the north the Canadian shield covers a vast ancient, rocky glacial region filled with lakes and rivers and few settlements. From Québec City down towards Toronto and the Niagara escarpment lies most of Canada's large industrial cities and farmland - and the majority of the population.

**Climate** We operate this itinerary when the temperature is predominantly pleasant. Summer is usually warm during the day, although nights by the water or at higher altitudes are cooler. In May and September it is cooler during the day and fresh at night. Temperatures are normally in the mid 20°C's and sometimes reach the 30°C's. You will often hear talk of the 'humidex' factor and the humidity can indeed be surprisingly high in the summer although the river and coastal breezes should temper this to a certain extent.

**Language** Canada is an extremely multi-cultural society. French and English are the official languages although in Québec the former is definitely the predominant one. Québécois French is a little harder to understand than European French – perhaps more like the provincial language of southern France. With the separatist movement extremely strong any efforts to speak their language as opposed to English will be greatly welcomed!

**The area we visit** The Charlevoix region in the east with its magnificent hilltops and breathtaking vistas is one of the most overlooked areas of the continent. Easily accessible wilderness combined with dense forests offer fantastic walking opportunities in an array of national parks. Further a-field the back country of the Lac

Saint Jean area is known for its welcoming charm and quiet villages. The Saguenay Fjord offers dramatic landscapes and water-based activities and your route follows the shoreline onto the fur trading post at Tadoussac, now the whale watching capital of Eastern Canada. With this fabulous scenery as a backdrop it is a real pleasure to observe the huge variety of native sea birds swooping and crying overhead. The cities convey a very European atmosphere totally different to other North American cities – the party goes on all night in Montreal and you will have no problem ordering a citron pressé or a kir in one of Québec City's many brasseries. These, combined with the unique artists' centre of Baie St Paul, give you a lovely cross section of the townships here and with your own four wheels time is yours to spend as you like – the opportunities are endless...

**Trekking conditions** Our departures are scheduled for the best times of the year for trekking. We rate this itinerary as gently moderate and it is entirely up to participants as to how much trekking they do. Age does not matter. There are no precipitous ascents and none of the hill top climbs or valley walks are over-taxing. No previous experience is necessary for the optional kayaking. This itinerary has been compiled from the personal experiences of our local agents well versed in the flora, fauna and culture of the region.

**Accommodation** Gorgeous inns and boutique hotels are used throughout. In Montreal an exquisite and charming downtown hotel will greet you for your first night in Canada, situated near the fashionable Prince Arthur, Saint Denis and Saint Laurent streets and a 15 minute walk from Old Montreal. In Québec City your 18<sup>th</sup> century hotel is set in three magnificent adjoining refined family houses where each room is individually personalised whether it is traditionally French, English or Dutch. The décor features architectural treasures from Québec's rich heritage and the sunlit terrace overlooks the Ursuline convent buildings. Your wonderful country auberge at Baie Saint Paul offers 4\* gourmet dining, a fabulous wine cellar, a café-terrace, garden and indoor pool and sauna. All the rooms are tastefully decorated and laid out on three floors in two pavilions. It is captivating and cosy in style with the comfort of a large hotel with semi-European décor full of charm, simplicity and authenticity. Attached to the inn is a health spa where you can soothe any aches and pains away. At Saguenay your traditional wooden chalets lie deep in the heart of the national park at Cap au Leste. Each comfortable chalet is uniquely decorated and consists of 3-10 rooms under one roof (all ensuite) with a spacious social area and lounge. The Tadoussac Hotel, with its whitewashed walls, maritime colours, red roof, dormer windows and cupola marking the centre of the building, calls to mind an enormous lighthouse standing not quite a cable's length from the magnificent sandy beach nearby. The hotel's silhouette is like a beacon; for generations, navigators have been using it as a landmark when piloting their vessels in the St. Lawrence. The building's architecture testifies to the close bond between Tadoussac and the sea. As you look out from the hotel terrace, you will see an ocean of green, marsh hay, sails, boats, sea foam and, in the distance, whales. It is of huge historic significance to this area, intrinsically connected to the sea and the perfect place to end your time in Québec.

The owners of the local establishments used will be aware of the itinerary and be able to advise on optional activities, recommend restaurants etc....

Please note if the above establishments are not available then accommodation of similar quality will be substituted.

**Food** Canadian cuisine suffers from a proximity to its southern neighbour and fast food outlets are to be found everywhere. However, the standard and assortment of dishes in the proper restaurants are on a par with any to be found in the major European cities. Obviously French cuisine is the predominant influence – tasty savoury and sweet crepes are to be found everywhere. Fresh fish is particularly good with varieties unknown in England. Salmon from the Atlantic Provinces and sea bass feature prominently as do venison and other game meats. Squash and root vegetables are popular legumes and the Asian influence from the Pacific coast appears on many menus. A popular method of dining is the all-inclusive buffet – an economic way of eating out although establishments still peculiarly add a service charge to the bill. Canadian wine, although derided for decades, has improved astonishingly and British Columbia's Okanagan Valley and Ontario's Niagara Peninsula are now producing some very palatable whites and reds at very reasonable prices. Try some local Icewine with your dessert – the grapes are picked on the lees whilst still frozen and this produces some wonderfully sweet yet not too syrupy wine – albeit with a high alcoholic content! The sizes of the meals are often unbelievable although this might be much appreciated after a day on the trails. Your main meals are not included and this gives you the flexibility and freedom to choose what you like and enjoy it much more.

**Local transport** Your hire car will be based on a compact automatic, fully air-conditioned car. This will be collected from Montreal airport on arrival and returned there on your departure.

**What you need to provide** Your personal equipment is detailed in the clothing and equipment list later in this Trip Dossier.

**Ecological considerations** *We believe that we are one of the most ecologically aware tour operators. We ask for your full consideration and co-operation concerning all ecological matters, especially in the disposal of rubbish. Our local staff will outline for you the procedures we use in Québec. If you have any suggestions for improvements, please let our local staff know and inform us at Walks Worldwide on your return. It is with the tourists, the locals and the tour operators' co-operation that we can ensure that our tours are as eco-friendly as possible. Our local operator has the utmost respect for the environment they live in and hope to communicate their passion for the outdoors to their clients. Their team is made up of die-hard nature lovers who take an active part in the design of their expeditions based on their own outdoors experiences.*

**Please be aware that although we will do our best to adhere to this itinerary occasionally events out of our control may prevent us from following the exact schedule. Please be assured that the clients' best interests will be foremost in any changes that may occur. A degree of flexibility is essential in travelling on such holidays!**

## Itinerary

Your accommodation and meal plan is indicated in *bold italics* at the end of each day.

***B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner***

**Day 1** Depart London mid-afternoon arriving later that day into Montreal. Collect your vehicle and drive to your downtown hotel in Montreal, a century old manor house in the heart of the city's thriving bistro and boutique quarter. A trip journal with all the day to day information, hotel bookings, vouchers for accommodation, activities, route maps, suggested stops, time frame, restaurants and contact numbers will be handed to you upon arrival. ***Hotel, Montreal***

**Day 2** After a hearty breakfast you drive to beautiful Québec City, a monument to North American history, perched high above Cap Diamant and overlooking the Saint Lawrence River. Having prospered as a fur trade outpost in the early 1600's, Québec City now has a dynamic port, a thriving research and technology sector and is home to the Provincial Parliament, which is well worth a visit. The Old Town has been designated as a UNESCO heritage site since 1985 and is the only fortified city in North America. From your 18<sup>th</sup> Century bijou hotel in the very heart of the historic quarter you can visit the old town with its narrow, cobbled streets and hidden boutiques, the Chateau Frontenac and the historic Plains of Abraham. Choose from one of the many little bistros and brasseries filling the squares and terraces and enjoy the street entertainment. ***Boutique Hotel, Québec City. B***

**Day 3** Enjoy breakfast in the quaint breakfast nook. As you drive to Charlevoix you will understand why it has attracted so many artists. The landscape of this region is overwhelming. You can stop at picturesque Monmorency Falls for a refreshing walk beneath the cliff (entry included) before continuing on to Sentiers des Caps de Charlevoix for a great hike overlooking the Saint Lawrence River. In May and September wild geese stop here while migrating. You can actually observe more than 20,000 of them! Even in summer, when the geese are not around, the views and beauty of this landscape will astonish you. Continue on to Baie Saint Paul, a quiet village full of boutiques and art galleries. The artists of the region are all inspired by the unique mountain, valley and river panoramas and the extreme clarity of the air found here. Visit the artist-owned studios lining the narrow main street. Attached to your inn is Café des Artistes where you can enjoy a delicious pizza in the surroundings of the latest artist's exhibition. The restaurants and terraces are all very welcoming. Your cosy country auberge is full of charm and simplicity and offers gourmet dining and a great wine cellar! ***Country Inn, Baie Saint Paul. B***

**Day 4** Drive from Baie Saint Paul onto the Grands Jardins de Charlevoix regional park. Upon arrival the beauty of this park shows the real backcountry of Charlevoix. The region was formed millions of years ago by meteoric collision and has a unique topography and micro-climate. Ascend Mont du Lac des Cygnes (Swan Lake Mountain) and spend a good part of the day on its summit, which overlooks the Charlevoix region in its entirety. Upon your return later in the day, take some time off to relax, swim on the lake or try your luck trout fishing! Other hikes of different levels are available. There is also the option of visiting the Parc des Hautes Gorges for some canoeing and hiking. Take a swim in the inn's indoor pool or enjoy a massage at the adjacent health spa

before splashing out in the 4\* restaurant (two course meal for £21 per person) and relaxing in the fire-side bar **Country Inn, Baie Saint Paul. B**

**Day 5** From Baie Saint Paul you head north through Québec's wilderness to meet up with the Lac Saint Jean Region. People in this region are known for their great charm and hospitality. Visit Chicoutimi, a quiet town on the banks of the Saguenay fjord. Then head to Saint Fulgence for a visit to its bird sanctuary. Relax in the magical surroundings of your traditional Québécois accommodation, deep in the heart of the forest, overlooking the Marine Park and magical Saguenay fjord. Here you can choose from some exciting optional activities such as sea kayaking, zodiac rides, canoeing, trout fishing - or just hiking straight from your door! **Saguenay Fjord. B**

**Day 6** From the accommodation, it is a short drive into the Parc des Monts Valins. Discover the remoteness by going on the Fantom valley hike. Another option is to stay around the fjord and visit Cap Jaseux Park. The Saguenay fjord opens into a wonderful picture of dramatic landscapes and pure beauty. Return to the chalets in the afternoon. How about a dinner in Sainte Rose du Nord, a beautiful, quiet little village in the middle of the fjord? Or the magic of your surroundings at Cap au Leste may just entice you to stay on site and enjoy wonderful Québécois food at its own restaurant. **Saguenay Fjord. B**

**Day 7** From Saguenay Fjord head south along the fjord towards Tadoussac. Along the way stop at Sainte Rose du Nord, Sainte Marguerite – to observe Beluga (when possible), stop in Sacré Coeur before finally arriving in Tadoussac located on the edge of the boreal forest at the picturesque junction of the St Lawrence and the Saguenay River flowing from its fjord. This was the first fur trading post in North America. The highlight of Tadoussac is really the whales. We suggest you head to Cap Bon Desir Interpretation centre where biologists will be pleased to talk to you about the St Lawrence marine wildlife. A visit to the picturesque local sand dunes is also worthwhile. Your hotel here has been a landmark for generations, with its beacon-like silhouette, white-washed walls, cupola and proximity to the sandy beach. Long considered the jewel in the crown of Canada Steamship Lines (a company specializing in deluxe cruises and hotels), the Tadoussac Hotel showcased a fabulous collection of Canadian furniture and traditional Montagnais objects. Under the leadership of William Hugh Coverdale, president of Canadian Steamship Lines and an avid ethnographer, the Tadoussac Hotel became what was undoubtedly the first hotel/museum in Québec. Acquired by the Québec Government, this sizable collection doubled the number of heritage artefacts owned by the province. Fortunately, the Tadoussac has kept certain pieces of the original china used at the hotel, in addition to a collection of illustrations and photographs taken over the past hundred years. These items, presently exhibited in the Great Hall, testify to the hotel's prestigious past. The historical cachet of the Tadoussac Hotel inexorably draws history buffs fascinated by the site of the first French settlement in the Americas. Other artefacts recognized as part of Québec's cultural heritage are preserved and, if required, carefully restored by the Groupe Dufour. The Hall is the nerve centre of the hotel, whose lifeblood ebbs and flows with the tides. The 19th century décor in the Great Hall creates an inviting, relaxing atmosphere conducive to making conversation. Our pianist who plays well-known melodies provides enjoyable and discreet mood music. Beautiful grounds and an outdoor pool top off this setting. The best spot from which to experience this superb, natural setting. **Hotel, Tadoussac. B**

**Day 8** Whale watching at its best. Hop on a zodiac or bigger boat and proceed to the feeding grounds for an incredible observation of the Saint Lawrence whales. Here you will get a close-up meeting with the massive yet serene fin back whales, the smaller minkies, the playful belugas and perhaps a lone blue whale as well as porpoises and a variety of seals. Watching these magnificent creatures is truly a humbling experience. The afternoon is free to explore this area further. **Hotel, Tadoussac. B**

**Day 9** Your last day in Québec— you have a choice of either returning to Québec City or driving on to visit Old Montreal with its 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century streets and buildings, its fine restaurants and boutiques, Saint Joseph's oratory, Mont-Royal mountain park, Notre-Dame cathedral and other sights. In the late afternoon you will drive to the airport to return your hire car and catch your flight home. Depart Montreal – Au Revoir! **Flight B**

**Day 10** Arrive back in UK in the early morning.

## Practical Information

**Passports and Visas** You will need to hold a full passport to enter Canada. British Citizens and British Overseas Citizens do not need a visa. If you hold a non-British passport it is best to contact the Canadian High Commission for visa requirements at The Immigration Division, 38 Grosvenor Street, London, W1K 4AA. It is open from 8am until 11am from Monday to Friday. Alternatively you may prefer to check their website at [www.canada.org.uk](http://www.canada.org.uk) for information.

**Time** Québec operates on Eastern Standard Time – GMT -4hrs.

**Electricity** 110 volt

**Baggage** Please make sure that your baggage is clearly marked with your name, inside as well as outside, in case the labels get detached. For your main luggage we will issue you with a complimentary *Walks Worldwide* kitbag. For any hikes you will need a daypack (30 litre), which will contain all you need for the day.

**Vaccinations and medical precautions** You do not need any special vaccinations for Canada. Black flies (an annoying biting insect that Mother Nature seems to have created in order to inhabit some of the world's most beautiful areas) and mosquitoes can be a nuisance during summer so insect repellent is **essential!** Tap water is fine to drink and bottled water prevalent throughout the country.

**Currency** The Canadian unit of currency is the Canadian dollar. The exchange rate usually hovers around \$ Can2.09 = £1. Please check [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for the latest rates. American dollars are also widely accepted. Cash points (or ATMs) are common and credit cards used everywhere. These will often be easier to use than travellers cheques.

Please note that the Canadian government levies a 7% Goods and Service Tax (GST) and Québec a Provincial Sales Tax (PST) on top of advertised prices so bear this in mind in shops and restaurants. Refunds are available through Canada Customs. Tipping is generally at 15%.

**Contact details** It is not our policy to provide addresses and telephone numbers of every location that you will be staying at on this tour as, due to frequent changes in contact details, it is very difficult to provide an accurate list for all our tours. Your Final Joining Instructions, which you will receive approx. two weeks prior to departure, will show any local contact details that are required for your tour. However, we would be glad to provide you with more details if you have a specific reason.

Mobile phones do work in Canada. If you have not used your mobile outside the UK before you will have to contact your operator to enable international calls. Please note that it is expensive to phone both to and out of a mobile when abroad. We do not, however, encourage mobile phone use whilst walking on any of our trips – out of courtesy to other clients please use your mobile phone discretely. If you do need to get in touch, or if anyone needs to get in touch with you, please contact the Walks Worldwide office (01524 242000) during office hours.

**Things to buy** There are many artisans and crafts persons in the area who offer a wide range of goods - unique jewellery, wooden items such as bowls and carvings, stained glass, pottery, Inuit sculptures, paintings, knitting, etc.

**Maps** The province you want a map of is Québec. You will be supplied with maps and route notes on this trip, but you might like to have your own. They can be obtainable locally or if you would like to purchase one in advance we recommend that you contact either: The Map Shop, 15 High Street, Upton-on-Severn, Worcs WR8 0HJ (Tel: 01684 593146) [www.themapshop.co.uk](http://www.themapshop.co.uk) or Stanfords at 12-14 Long Acre, London WC2E 9LP (Tel: 020 7836 1321) [www.stanfords.co.uk](http://www.stanfords.co.uk)

### Books

Fall On Your Knees  
The Shipping News

Anna Marie Macdonald  
Annie Proulx

The Avonlea Chronicles                      Lucy Maude Montgomery  
Grey Owl    Lovat Dickson  
The Mysterious North                      Pierre Berton  
Various stories and poems by Margaret Atwood, Alice Monroe and Robert Service

### **Included in the price**

- Flights and UK airport taxes
- Accommodation in Inns, hotels or chalets (subject to availability – equivalent alternative accommodation may be substituted)
- All breakfasts
- Car hire
- Zodiac whale watching cruise and entry to whale centre
- Route notes and maps

### **Not included**

- Lunches and dinners
- Drinks and personal souvenirs etc..
- Insurance
- Tips
- Extra activities (see below)

### **Optional activities**

Kayaking – You can book this in advance the previous day. Cost is approximately £35 for a full day and £15 for a half day.

Fishing – Check with the local park authorities upon arrival at a park. Day fishing permits will not have to be reserved in advance. The permit costs approximately £7 and river access varies between £10 and £20 depending on location.

For any other activities your accommodation should be able to advise you.

**Flights** We use scheduled services to Montreal. As airlines often change their routings and timings with little warning, we do not state them here but the exact details for your flight will given to you with your booking confirmation. Please note however that these details are subject to change up until the last minute, and there may be occasions when we even need to place passengers on a different airline.

**Local joining details for those not flying from London** We can provide you with a ‘Land Only’ price which does not include airfare or airport transfers. You should arrive in Montreal no later than the afternoon of Day 1. A taxi can be taken to your hotel (payable locally).

### **What our clients have said!**

*‘We received excellent service from your office: Helene Wood was always helpful and efficient.’* **September 2003.**

*‘Firstly, let me say that we had a very good holiday – we could have used an extra day just about everywhere! Helene was especially helpful in dealing with our requests and enquiries.’* **May 2004.**

## Clothing and Equipment Lists

At least one set of smart casual clothes will be useful in hotels on this holiday. Whilst walking you must not worry about how you look: comfort and protection against bad weather are of prime importance. We recommend a number of thin layers rather than a few thick ones. Take old, well-worn clothes rather than rushing out to buy new ones, since they will probably get rough treatment whilst walking. The following list of clothing and equipment is intended to be fairly comprehensive, and experienced trekkers will take a good deal less luggage than we recommend.

<b>CLOTHING</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>Check</b>	<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>Check</b>
Walking boots	1 pair		Rucksack/daypack (30 litre)	
Training shoes	1 pair - all purpose wear.		Camera, film & accessories	
Casual shoes/sandals	Optional. For hotels.		A variety of plastic bags (rucksacks are not waterproof)	
Socks	3+		Sunglasses (UV proof)	
Underwear	3+		Binoculars – essential for bears!	
"T" shirts	3+		Washing & shaving kits	
Long trousers	2+		Large water bottle/hydration kit	
Shorts	2		Map (a set is provided for the trip)	
Light sweaters	1 - 2		Reading material	
Warm fleece	1		Money belt/pouch	
Waterproof jacket	1		<b>Suncream (high factor)</b>	
Waterproof trousers	1		Swimsuit	
<b>Sunhat</b>	<b>1</b>		Tapes / cds for listening to in car	
Gloves	Optional but light and useful if cold			

*The following items should also be considered, and those in bold type essential*

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>Check</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>Check</b>
Notebook diary		Small sewing kit	
Penknife/scissors (not in hand luggage)		<b>Insect repellent</b>	
Spare batteries		Universal travelling adapter	
Spare glasses or contact lenses		Small mirror	
Spare boot laces		Energy sweets	
<b>PASSPORT/MONEY/TICKETS</b>		Padlock(s) for your kitbags	
<b>VALID DRIVING LICENCE</b>			