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Quintessential Québec

The old city shines with lively French-Canadian culture. BY SUSAN B. BARNES



Night Out:
Rue de Petit-
Champlain

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More than 400 years of history, a fortified city center and the charms of easily walkable European neighborhoods flow like the St. Lawrence River to create an ambience that can only be found in Québec City.

After the work day ends, window-shop boutiques, art galleries, and specialty and gourmet food shops for inspiration. Québec City's Quartier Petit Champlain is the oldest shopping district in North America, dotted with colorful art shops and sophisticated designer boutiques. For a more local shopping experience, venture to Avenue Cartier in the Arts District to browse fashionable and specialty boutiques in a more intimate setting.

Québécois take pride in their culinary scene, and for good reason. Chefs draw upon the city's French and indigenous roots to create distinct gourmet flavors for everyone to enjoy. Chef François-Emmanuel Nicol tells a story with every dish he creates for the tasting menu

at Tanière³, located in the historic cellars of the Leber and Charest house with stories of their own to tell. At Légende par La Tanière, every ingredient Chef Frédéric Laplante uses in his dishes comes from the province's farms, forests and sea. The results are pleasantly surprising and absolutely delicious.

Île d'Orléans, which sits in the middle of the St. Lawrence River just north of Québec City, hosts a number of vineyards and winemakers who create flavorful wines and ice wines. One to visit is Vignoble Isle de Bacchus, the oldest vineyard on the island.

Fête Arc-en-ciel de Québec, the city's social and arts Pride Festival, runs Sept. 2–5 in Saint-Jean-Baptiste, a neighborhood tucked between Old Québec and Montcalm. Also within Saint-Jean you will find the popular Le Drague Cabaret Club, a cabaret, nightclub and restaurant that opens its doors to everyone. In fact, myriad inclusive restaurants, pubs and bistros like Ninkasi Bat & Bistro and Le Nelligan's Pub stay open late into the night.