



## Quebec City & the Saguenay Fjord Trip Notes July 15 – 23, 2017

### **Headline:**

Quebec is the French side of Canada. They like to talk about being their own country and have had a close vote to become just that. We were there a few years ago for a few days prior and after a week-long bicycle ride.

Trip Outline - This exploration of the heart of French-speaking North America captures some of the province of Quebec's most stunning and diverse scenery, from grandiose national and provincial parks to charming villages nestled in rolling farmland, never far from the majestic Saint Lawrence River. The tour begins and ends in Quebec City—considered the most European city on the continent. You travel north along the Saint Lawrence River, past the farms and hamlets of the Charlevoix region to the fascinating Saguenay Fjord, rich in natural history. An ancient valley more than 60 miles long with steep granite cliffs carved by retreating glaciers, the Saguenay Saint Lawrence Marine Park is a unique ecosystem where the fresh water of the Saguenay River meets the salt water of the Saint Lawrence estuary—providing habitat for diverse marine life, including minke and beluga whales, viewed aboard a private boat or from coastal walks. Returning south, you stop overnight in quaint Baie-Saint-Paul, to discover Grands-Jardins National Park. Quebec City, the heart of the province, was founded in 1608 by Samuel de Champlain as a fur-trading post, and centuries later world-class museums, well-preserved architectural gems, and deep history have made it a UNESCO World Heritage site. Spectacular scenery joined with the excellent French-rooted cuisine and warm hospitality of the Québécois combine to create a memorable trip, which is much closer to home than it feels.

### **Pros and Cons:**

- If you're new to my chatter type reports, know that I started writing in my early marathon days, and my goal was to state Pros and Cons of the Marathon as well as incentivizing runners to stay and be a tourist. Race Directors generally approved of my reports and appreciated my giving both sides. Thus – don't take my 'cons' as complaints.
- Lots of eating – country walkers, country stragglers, country eaters, country waddlers. I usually come home with 3-4 extra pounds, get rid of 2-3 of them before heading out again. This math won't work.
- Stronger hikers on this trip than many other trips.
- Excellent guides, which is usual for the company, but the young new fellow was exceptional.
- The sisters from Oklahoma were a treasure. Pretty, fun, smart, and sometimes even pleasantly "blonde."

### **Sweet quotes:**

*If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there.*

*To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all."*

*One's life has value so long as one attributes value to the life of others, by means of love, friendship, and compassion"*

## **Sweet group:**



Lots of special folks with the mother and three sisters from Oklahoma really being the breath of fresh air.

## **From the web:**

- Quebec City, aka Ville de Québec in French, is the capital of Canada's Quebec province. Population in the ½ million range. Known for its location on the Saint Lawrence River and its historic Old Quebec which features fortified city walls. These walls are the only ones left in northern North America and are a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Quebec City is French-speaking, known for its architecture, European feel, and various annual festivals.
- Quebec City was the first city in Canada to be established as a permanent settlement in the 1500s.
- In 1700s it was taken over by the British; then in 1760 France regained control, until 1763 when it was ceded to Great Britain.
- During the American Revolution, battles took place to liberate the city from British control. But revolutionary troops were defeated, which led to the splitting of British North America, instead of having Canada join the Continental Congress to become a part of the United States.
- Around this same time, the U.S. began to annex some Canadian lands, so construction of the Citadel of Quebec began in 1820 to protect the city.
- Quebec City is one of Canada's largest cities. Most of the economy is based on transportation, tourism, the service sector and defense.
- Quebec City is along the Saint Lawrence River near where it meets the St. Charles River. Because it is located along these waterways, most of the city is flat and low-lying, though the Laurentian Mountains are north of the city.
- The climate of Quebec City is variable with the summer warm and humid, winter very cold and windy. Snowfall is one of the highest amounts in Canada.
- Quebec City is one of the most visited places in Canada due to its various festivals and the many historic sites like the Citadel of Quebec.

## **Daily Notes Home**

### **On way to Canada**

This is for a six day hiking trip out of Quebec City and up north into the only fiord in North America. It is my next to last trip with this company for reasons that many of you know. (I am looking for an international company but I'm very happy with my domestic hiking group [www.ParksPlusHiking.com](http://www.ParksPlusHiking.com)).

I wasn't home from my Yosemite trip long enough to get rid of the huge black bruise and bump on my backside. Or the ugly scrapes on one leg from brambles. Yet those boo-boos won't hold me back and I look

forward to some more moderate hiking than I usually get with this company. I say that following the Yosemite hike where I couldn't do it all. Couldn't keep up. Am I at a middle-of-the-road stage of life?

To the airport: Being very spoiled by United and Newark's terminal C, I was sorry to be relegated to terminal A where there is no pre-check and Disneyesque lines costing 25 minutes. It's no wonder many people do not enjoy travel. But I found a beautiful newly renovated United Club all glass enclosed and then just enough of a tiny little duty-free shop to supply my next weeks' worth of alcohol.

Is it surprising to know that I am not an easy-going traveler? I worried but got through security with my trekking poles. I worried but got through Canadian customs with my little bit of semi-legal food. I worried but found an ATM, and found a nice taxi driver with a set price. All that after agonizing over my packing and related separation anxiety from my stuff, my house, and my husband. No, not in that order.

Tom and I were last in Quebec City in 2006 for a bicycle ride up north. We loved the City but it would be Tom's last guided bike ride with a group. Those guides and the prior ones on our Prague to Vienna ride turned him against tour groups.

Ginny, my friend from Chicago with blue sky marketing, had just been in Quebec City when I was booking my trip and complaining about the expensive hotel rooms. So I checked into her suggested suite at the Le Pont Royale which is a perfect and lovely little spot at the base of old town, with updated efficiency suites. They have a unique umbrella system that collects rainwater. I'll give you a picture. It is almost next door to where Tom and I stayed before and it is within a couple blocks of where I stay at the end of my tour.

Off I went hunting the evening bus tour but all of the buses were fully booked and I really didn't mind because I then walked miles. I ended up at the famous hilltop Fairmont Château Frontenac in their bar for a drink and appetizer. It was a long ways up there but there was no way I was going to take the funicular even if it didn't have a long line - which it did. I came down the long windy staircase.

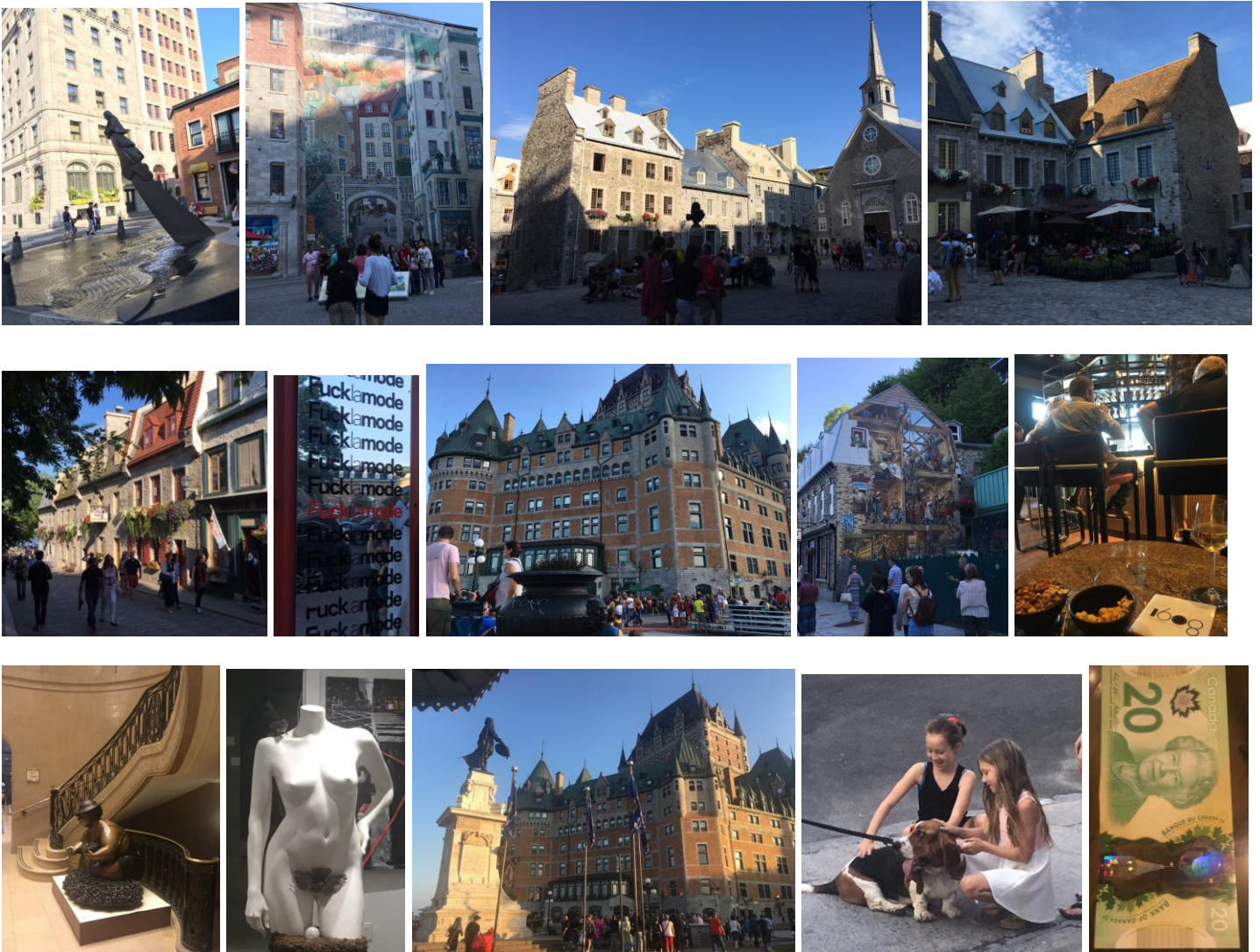
**Pictures include** my room, out the window, and these unique upside down umbrellas that collect rainwater. And one of the many manhole cover pictures I found for Beverly's collection.

That four letter word that's repeated is the name of a shop and you can buy clothes with that on it too. The buildings with artwork to the side were a lot nicer. As to the marble statuary of a women's nude figure, yes that is a flying bird on her crotch. That took a lot of imagination to create but I wonder what kind of a person would purchase it and where would they put it.

Did you see the picture of their currency? I had an envelope with about C\$120 of 20-bills from our trip some years ago. I don't think people like taking those old bills. The new ones feel like plastic and part is see-through with hologram images of the queen and maybe the Château Fairmont Frontenac.

And on that I think I will quit because I'm frankly tired from worrying myself while I was packing, while I was getting here, while I was checking in, and look what happened: everything is great. Or as Tom would say, "life is good".





### ***First full day in Quebec City***

Yesterday I was in the City from about 5 PM. Today is my only full day on my own.

At breakfast I figured out that they might speak French but the food in my French sounding hotel, Le Pont Royal, is very British. Runny eggs, no plain yogurt, only white bread and white bagels, velveta type cheese, sausage that taste like canned Vienna sausage, etc. And - you may be surprised to know this but the people in Paris have always been hugely more friendly and helpful than I have encountered here. We shall see - it's not even a day worth of interactions yet no I have gotten similar input from yesterday's trip notes.

On a few occasions since arriving I have considered having a snit over what I thought was unsatisfactory customer treatment. The Hotel required a deposit for a multiple plug adapter that should have been there anyway. A Bus Driver rudely sent me to the back of a line I hadn't seen, then tersely reported they were sold out anyway. The hotel said NO I couldn't buy my bus ticket on board (I could). There's more ....

Weather was hot and muggy but probably not over 80° yesterday. Today it is cool enough for a light jacket, overcast, and it looked like rain but only showers happened.

Last night I walked the Ramparts, said to be three miles long and the only true one in the Americas. The problem was once you got on them it was hard to get down; I could see down to my hotel but had to go another half mile to exit. Straight down a sweet little cobblestone street. From above I could see a long mountain range where I learn there are Thousands of lakes and it is only about 50 miles to the US. I felt safe

walking in the early evening as it is said to have the lowest crime rate in Canada. I must've liked the ramparts because I headed there again today. Straight up.

I've felt good hearing French language again though there's an abundance of Americans here due to the strong dollar. (In many cases you can't miss them). Our first trip to Montreal after returning from Europe in the late 70s we could tell the difference in the French language used in Canada. No longer. To remind me of France, there were plenty of French restaurants and those little Parisian water fountains intended to fill your water bottle. I learned some history of their Citadel: the language was French but the customs and uniforms were British. I have heard that the two sides still don't coexist all that well.

Nevertheless the weather, I booked a bus tour thinking it will be somewhat different from Tomorrow's guided walking tour. Despite the sprinkling, tourists filled up the top of the double-decker open top bus and the lines of tourist didn't mind waiting another 30 minutes for the next bus so they could sit on top. We saw lots of tin roofs, lots of copper roofs and plenty said to be fake but gives a good impression. We drove the Grand Allee where Tom and I had walked during a Grand Prix Bicycle race. After I took myself to the big indoor market I was impressed at how many miles Tom and I had put on in the past. They were tuckering me out now. Yet I found myself back up at the magical hilltop castle hotel and on a side street indulging in an Aperol Spritz. I should have returned to the chateau's hotel bar.

**Pictures include:** My climb to the top of the Museum of civilization with an overview of old town and the St. Lawrence River.

There were multiple more buildings covered with artwork.

I got myself as far as the big market so decided I may as well go on to the train station. It is noted to be over 100 years old. The outside was more impressive than the inside.

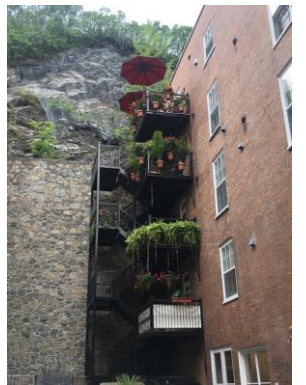
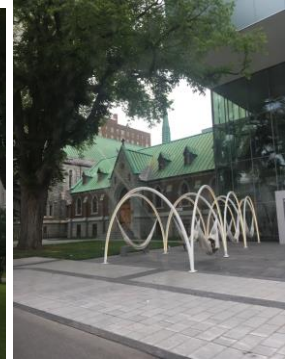
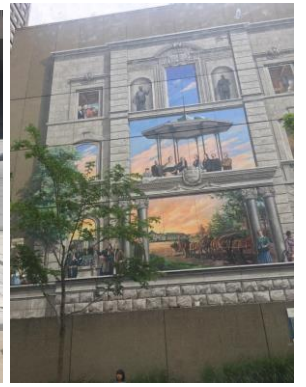
Be sure to note the columns that are covered with ivy and cactus and different plants. The old ancient restaurant in red and white is the oldest building in Quebec City and where Tom and I had two delightful (ancienne recipes) meals before. The pedestrian Street with all the artists is a little bit like Paris's Montmartre. I had a ringside seat surrounded by flower boxes and watery Aperol Spritz. Being next-door to the Château should have warned me they'd take advantage of tourists? Yet the ambience and the parade of people were worth it.

Tomorrow I start at six day hiking trip. Here is the description: This exploration of the heart of French-speaking North America captures some of the province of Quebec's most stunning and diverse scenery, from grandiose national and provincial parks to charming villages nestled in rolling farmland, never far from the majestic Saint Lawrence River. The tour begins and ends in Quebec City—considered the most European city on the continent. You travel north along the Saint Lawrence River, past the farms and hamlets of the Charlevoix region to the fascinating Saguenay Fjord, rich in natural history. An ancient valley more than 60 miles long with steep granite cliffs carved by retreating glaciers, the Saguenay Saint Lawrence Marine Park is a unique ecosystem where the fresh water of the Saguenay River meets the salt water of the Saint Lawrence estuary—providing habitat for diverse marine life, including minke and beluga whales, viewed aboard a private boat or from coastal walks. Returning south, you stop overnight in quaint Baie-Saint-Paul, to discover Grands-Jardins National Park. Quebec City, the heart of the province, was founded in 1608 by Samuel de Champlain as a fur-trading post, and centuries later world-class museums, well-preserved architectural gems, and deep history have made it a UNESCO World Heritage site. Spectacular scenery joined with the excellent French-rooted cuisine and warm hospitality of the Québécois combine to create a memorable trip, which is much closer to home than it feels.

Correction. Thank you to Nola, who was once a Canadian. There are many other Canadian fjords in British Columbia. See **List of fjords in Canada - Wikipedia** - [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_fjords\\_in\\_Canada](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_fjords_in_Canada)

Note: corrections appreciated. Comments also. Maybe I'll learn something!







### ***Monday - First hiking day***

What are we doing today? We're getting up real early for me and walking to the pricey pre-tour hotel.

Coincidentally, the hotel Ginny told me about that I'm in, is within three blocks of the pre-tour hotel and in between is the hotel Tom and I stayed a few years ago.

From tour company: After a brief orientation meeting in Quebec City where you meet your guide(s) and fellow travelers, you embark on a guided exploration of Quebec City where you learn about its history, from the first European settlements in the early 17th century to the present and, in particular, the struggle for control of the continent between the French and English in the 18th century. As a result of that conflict, Quebec City is the only fortified city north of Mexico. It's charming cobbled "Lower Town" and the Place Royale date to the earliest days of the French colony. Architectural landmarks of stone and wood, winding streets, and outdoor cafés are all a part of the tapestry of this French-speaking city.

After a picnic lunch you begin the drive northeast to the town of Tadoussac. This lovely village is located at the confluence of the Saint Lawrence River and the Saguenay Fjord and was the first trading post in New France, founded in 1600, making it the oldest surviving French settlement in the Americas. A stunning setting, the sheltered bay is surrounded by unique sand dunes, the cliffs of the Saguenay in the background, and the vast St. Lawrence—home to an abundance of marine life. Your home for the next two nights is the historical Hotel Tadoussac. This evening, enjoy a welcome dinner of refined Québécois cuisine in its intimate dining room that overlooks the St. Lawrence River. End.

Tour guide named Simon is so good that I have his card, will make contact with a big thank you, and would consider bringing friends here.

Orphanage girls sent over? I've got to research this. The story sounds like there was a huge abundance of man in Canada and thus many young French girls from orphanages were brought over and expected to find marriage partners. The big ha ha is that if men did not marry they couldn't get a hunting license. Re population was the goal.

Huge tides. Like a Nova Scotia they are rather extreme and when they're out is ugly and when they're in it's worrisome. Not so pretty out of town.

Air canceled. I always worry and show up for Tours a couple days ahead of time. In this case for one of our gals it didn't work and her flight from Oklahoma didn't make it until we were to be well up north. As much as it was inconvenient for everyone. Probably everyone agreed that it was the right thing to do to wait two or three hours and pick her up from the airport. That made our drive very late but the guides kept us entertained with a lot of sites along the way and facts about Canada.

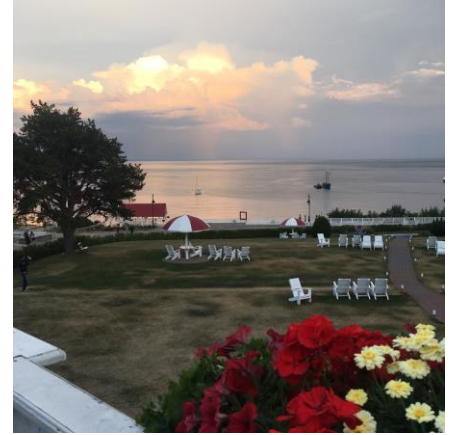
St Anne's Basilica and cyclorama is somewhere that I felt like maybe our bicycle trip came this far up. I knew we came as far as the huge water falls that we saw on the way but I suspect it was also to the basilica and the next town up. I need to find more about the Basilica because it really is dramatically beautiful and expensive on the grounds.

We stopped for a break at Charlevoix - a 4.5 km meteor hole. Yep, you heard that right. It was Near to St Paul where we will return for one night. It was like a huge call Dara or a big hole in the ground where the meteor hit.

The drive was not only 3 1/2 hours plus but we also drive thru pig farms next to low tide river. Pretty smelly. Yet next came the Car Ferry with (think about it) big full flammable oil tankers. It was a short ride to the hotel and really needed.

We arrived at the hotel at about 7:40pm, 10 minutes after we were due for dinner but 20 minutes before cocktails on the balcony. Some people managed to get a shower in, something I would never be able to do, and even less so because I like to talk to Tom and my room key didn't work, and my room is so small I was stunned. But like paradise lodge at Mount Rainier, all you do is look out the window and you forget it all.

Dinner probably didn't start until nearly 9 PM which was terribly unfortunate because it was a four diamond restaurant with a unique and lovely menu. I'll add a picture. I walked out toward the end of the main course, before the cheese, the amusettes, and the desserts.



Look up this hotel. It is on the water, next-door to the oldest church in Canada, with a view to die for. But don't be jealous because it is hot and there's no air conditioning and the fan isn't doing it and it's a very old fashion though elegant for its time hotel.

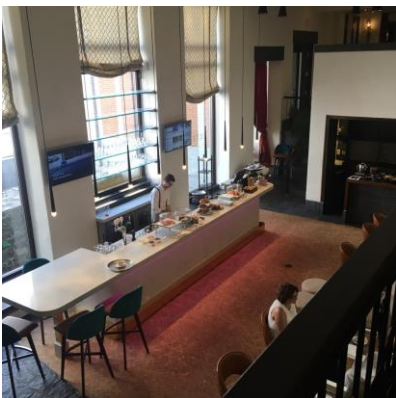
Since it is already midnight, I will let it go at that because we leave quite early in the morning. Up at 6 AM is painful.

[www.hoteltadoussac.com](http://www.hoteltadoussac.com) - A grand hotel in the 19th-century tradition, this historical complex overlooks the waters of sheltered Tadoussac Bay and offers extensive grounds, an outdoor swimming pool and spa. Simple but comfortable guest rooms compliment an inviting bar and patio area with views of Saguenay Fjord.

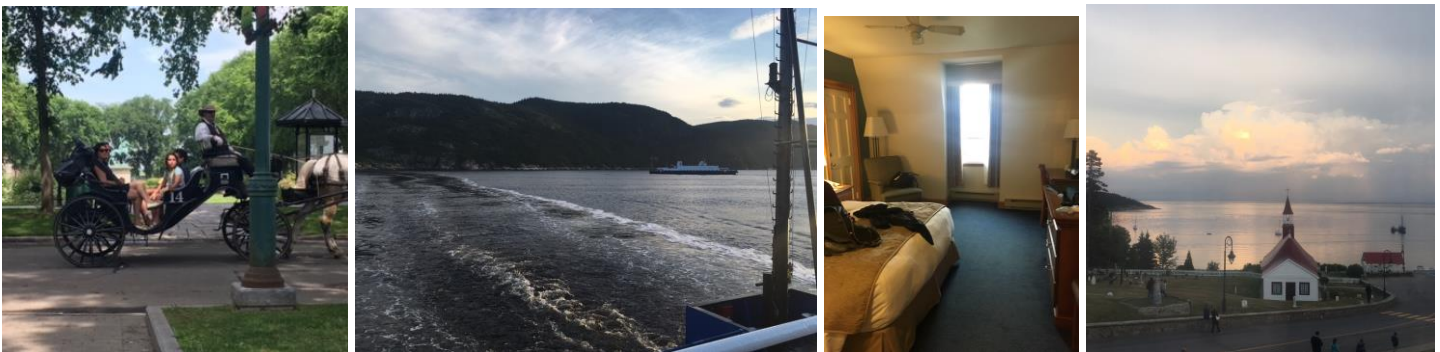
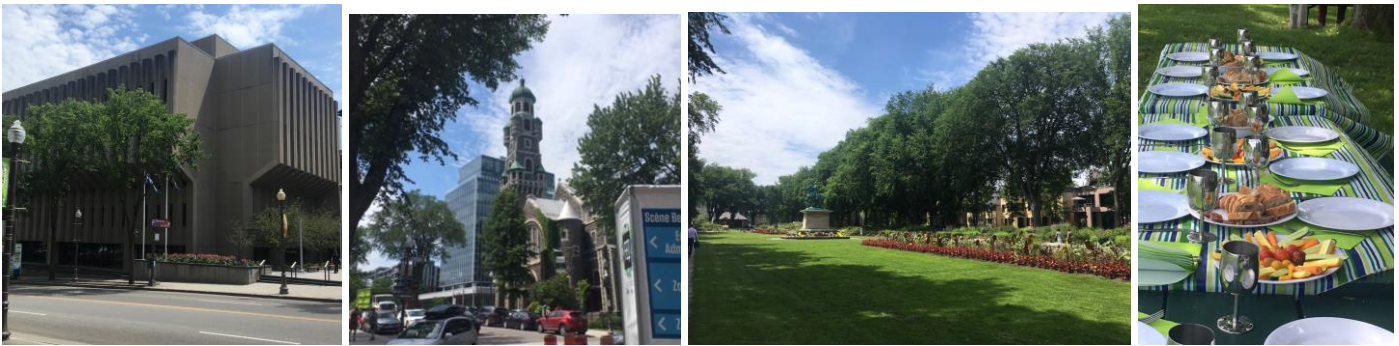
***Pictures include:***

Part of the lobby of the hotel where I met the guides and where I will return in four days. There will be a major regatta going on of the tall ships.  
Our walking tour gave better light for one of the buildings artwork.  
Years ago we went into the Nunnery. This time the chapel was closed but we got an example of how cloistered they were. See the grill work? That was the only way they could visit family  
To the citadel office say hi on a hill and where it was quite impossible for the enemy to get. The boys in costume gave us a lesson on firing of Musket.  
Then onto the parliament building with statuary of famous women and across the street something better and safer and spookier than the citadel. When they have the uprisings Parliament built this war zone building.  
The picnic in the park was a lot of work for the guides and done quite well. They even melted chocolate for over the fresh berries for dessert.

Whale watching in a little zodiac boat tomorrow. Good night or goodbye.







FISH  
 Have enjoyed...  
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**Tuesday - second day of hiking and still in Tadoussac.**

I'm in this sweet lovely little town with a gorgeous view and far too much heat. Yet I guess much of the world is suffering heat. Too bad there's no air conditioning here. Tadoussac only has a population of about 800 people but it's been around serving more than that number of tourist at a time for over 100 years. It has a special listing of being one of the most beautiful bays in the world. Their bay and its adjoining waters is noted for having more than a dozen species of marine mammals. More coming on that.

I described the hotel and complained about my tiny room yesterday and got no sympathy at all. I'll add a picture of this huge old resort on the water. It has a view straight out my window of Quebec's oldest church.

After I left dinner early yesterday, I learned about half the table followed along. Still we didn't get to bed till near midnight. Then again for the second dinner, I also left early. I say early but 10:30 PM is not early in my book.

I'll learn more about the fjords today but it's necessary to say that I've been corrected that there are many fjords in North America. This one has a lot of "only" and unique things about it but it is not the "only" one. I don't know where I got that incorrect fact.

On the itinerary: Sentier Le Fjord to Saint-Louis Lookout; 4-6 miles, easy to moderate with one challenging section, 920-ft. gain. Today, after a copious breakfast, you begin your exploration of the Saguenay Fjord and St. Lawrence Estuary. One of the longest fjords in the world at just over 60 miles, the Saguenay is unusual not only because its fresh waters run into the saline estuary, but also for its southerly location—most fjords are at much higher latitudes (in either the Northern or Southern Hemispheres). Created in the last Ice Age around 10,000 years ago, the fjord features steep cliffs on either side, rising to 1,400 feet at the highest point and plunging below the surface to a maximum of almost 900 feet. An incredible diversity of wildlife thrives in this amazing geography—beluga whales gather here in the summer, it is thought, for the unique combination of waters and sandy floor, and the cliffs are an ecological success story for the return of peregrine falcons. Today's walk provides an opportunity to view both as you make your way to the Baie Sainte Marguerite and the Beluga Halt overlook—as its name implies, a place to spot the small white whales. You continue on to the St. Louis viewpoint, watching for raptors. On-going archaeological surveys have uncovered evidence of Iroquois seal-hunting settlements along the shore, millennia before the arrival of European explorers. You return to your hotel to refresh after a full day. Time permitting you explore the charming center of Tadoussac, an easy stroll from the hotel, with its many small shops featuring regional handicrafts and food products, relax at the pool or gardens before enjoying another sumptuous meal at a nearby restaurant. End.

**Pictures include** two of the resort hotel taken off the web. Its four diamond restaurant is probably a calling card.

Then a couple pictures from our high view point where some saw the beluga whales and I just saw some breaks in the water.

I couldn't stand taking a picture of our picnic because it was in the full sun and it was hot and thus I found an excuse to go into the visitor center as quickly as I could.

For the whale watching we got all dressed up in these warm suits that I couldn't bear to put on at first and couldn't imagine needing. Wrong. By the time we returned three hours later my fingers were numb and I was trembling. I had a momentary thought of trembling in fear over this young little girl being our captain. Yes, I got into the zodiacs. It was a very fast and bumpy ride and sometimes you had to hold on. I did hold onto my stomach surprisingly.

Dinner was said to be even better than the night before. We are, after all, country eaters and not just country walkers. I have often said that by the end of the week we are Country Waddlers. I didn't care too much but the dishes were elegant enough I have given you some of the pictures. Mine was the kale salad with goat cheese followed by a small piece of salmon.

I first hesitated to go on the whale watch but I knew it was needed or it would be the best thing of the week that I missed. It was also good that I didn't need to sit at the dinner and hear about the 60 foot fin whale that I missed, or the pod of Belugas or all the many minke whales seen breaching.

The real story was quite a bit less exciting. 50 minute ride out to the watching area, similar amount of time sitting in a rocking boat holding your stomach, 50 minutes back, and silly amount of time getting dressed and undressed for the cold wet ride. The truth and unexciting story? We saw the blow hole and a bit of the fin and had to trust that it was a 60 foot well underneath. Since that is three times the size of our zodiac ...Ugh, a thought not good. The Belugas were way far off in the distance and the Minke pod did put on a show and we saw a little bit of their shiny back breaching the surface. Very little.

Do you know what a City Girl is? I'm convinced that I am a Zoo Girl as it just takes too much effort to see critters in their habitat.

Tomorrow? When I left dinner I didn't even want to know anything about the next except "when was the van leaving" and I would meet them with my suitcase after a nice lie in, otherwise known as a civilized alarm setting

of 8am not 5:30am. I can only guess that whatever they are doing in the morning without me will be one of the best hikes of the week.



**Introduction**  
 A soirée de char-à-voiture  
 Un aperçu des musées - notamment à la Walker, Simon, coppe, tentes de pain - et aussi de la fête de pain et miel à l'Écluse.  
 Inaade de grand maritime et hale accueillant au port de commerce  
 Cerveau mouillé, les gâteaux avec produits de pays locaux, fromage de chèvre, vinaigrette aux herbes méditerranéennes.  
 Pétales des îles de la Madeline posées à l'insolentale  
 Pétales posés, pain de tomates au fromage grillé, tomates blanches au citron  
 Dégustation de la Côte-Nord dans les îles  
 C'est simple de faire grillé, pain de tomates, tomates blanches au citron  
 Boudin, croûte mouillée et chape d'algues de la Côte-Nord  
 Boudin au beurre cuit au four, tomates couronnées au poivre, miel cuit  
 Boudin d'agneau et pain  
 Boudin d'agneau blanc, fond de sauce tomate et brioche de pain

**Le développement**  
 Crabe des neiges de la Côte-Nord  
 Crabe des neiges, crabe, beurre à la crème, jus de citron, huile d'olive  
 Assiette de la mer au curry  
 Crème de brocoli, moules, pommes de terre, courgettes, patates, tomates de saison, tomates fraîches, miel de canola et curry  
 Filet de saumon grillé et sauce de tomates croustillantes  
 Filet de saumon grillé, pain de tomates croustillantes, miel de tomates au citron  
 Filet saumon de saumon rouge de Québec, fond de sauce à l'huile de truffe  
 Filet saumon de saumon rouge au miel, fond de sauce à l'huile de truffe, pommes de terre de saison  
 Côte de bœuf A.A.A. (pour deux) du Québec  
 Côte de bœuf, fond de sauce, tomates crouillantes au poivre, légumes de saison

**La conclusion**  
 Assiette des artisans fromagers  
 Sélection de fromages Québécois  
 Crème brûlée au thé Chai  
 Boudin crouillé et épaves méditerranéennes  
 Le show parfait  
 Côte de bœuf au thé Chai accompagné du miel de glucose  
 Soirée terminée avec un char-à-voiture.





**Wednesday - third day of trip and leaving this lovely little quaint town.**

The towns name Tadoussac comes from being nestled in between two hills that looks like two bosoms and comes from an Inuit name. Something like the Grand Tetons are named.

Re corrections and fiord info: [http://www.cbc.ca/sevenwonders/wonder\\_saguenay\\_fjord.html](http://www.cbc.ca/sevenwonders/wonder_saguenay_fjord.html)  
[http://parcmarin.qc.ca/page\\_details/the-saguenay-fjord/](http://parcmarin.qc.ca/page_details/the-saguenay-fjord/)

I have a lot of very smart friends who corrected me about the fjord being the only in North America. So I offer some of the above information and again say that I don't know where I got that from but it is obviously incorrect.

Today: I happily missed whatever was on the agenda for this morning and the van and I didn't depart until 11 AM. I say happily because we have been on a roller coaster. We might come in from a hike and have 20 minutes to unpack, shower and change before meeting for dinner. Yes, some can do it. Some say they can then we wait for them. Dinners are extensive and go on until very late. Even my leaving at the main course has meant not turning my light off until well after midnight. I am aware that I am one of the few who do not like long dinners.

Free time gave a chance to talk to Tom. The internet has been frustrating so he just dialed and called the room. I maybe should bite the bullet and buy an international internet plan. I've always felt it was an expensive rip-off in lieu of free WiFi. But free has been giving me my money's worth.

On the itinerary: In the afternoon, your walk takes you through the nearby dunes, actually marine terraces, remnants of the last Ice Age. At a lookout over the Saint Lawrence, you take in the expansive views, scanning for eagles and peregrine falcons, before descending to the sandy beach. From the crescent beach, you may spot one of the river's beluga whales. Climbing back up and over the dunes, you loop back to your hotel. After, you shuttle from Tadoussac to La Malbaie where you board Le Train Léger for a spectacular ride along the Saint Lawrence River to your hotel in Baie-Saint-Paul where you enjoy a savory dinner at the hotel. Hôtel Le Germain Charlevoix, Baie-Saint-Paul – 1 night - END

The French language. It feels so good to hear the language and to be among the French speakers. But I am often reminded of some of the humorous downsides too. Paperwork and taking their time is one of them. At breakfast they need my name, room number, and tour affiliation. There are two places on their form that need marked followed by completing a form in triplicate. Two piles are formed on the check-in desk and one goes to the table. Checking out of the hotel takes a number of forms, discussions, stapled receipts, and an inordinate amount of time. But all the while we get to hear the French language. One of our guides reminds us how it takes three lines on a sign in French but only one short line for the English translation.

Car ferries. They are frequent and they are free if there is no road service in the area. That was the case for this day. I met up with the group for an 11 AM departure. They had been to a bird sanctuary with a big overlook and yes it was a shame that I missed it. Sort of.

Religion here is interesting in that there basically is none. Churches are converted to condos or office buildings and apparently they went from very heavy religion to under 5% of the population attend any church service. I could go into any number of reasons they told us but who knows.

First Nations, Inuit and Meites: I have the first two of their listed ethnic people's but I'm not sure the third one is spelled correctly. It is that mixture of the French with First Nation peoples. Quebec considers themselves somewhat separate and the legislation on that is hard to follow. At least they're not having the big dissensions or any current feuding going on now but the more recent votes for seceding (sp?) was quite close.

Austin was a fill in tour guide. Lucky for us. He has a phenomenal grasp of history, perfect English and French, is young and has very good humor. Carol is quite good too but Austin is a unique stand out full of enthusiasm for Canada. On long van rides he regaled us with either song contests or history of the area. Or surprise snacks of Canadian origin like cheese curds and even messy poutine.

Poutine: is poubelle French for garbage? Similar but good. Imagine a casserole of French fries and poured over the top is some icky gravy and add various things like cheese curds. Ellen once took us to a Los Angeles restaurant that had a whole menu of different poutines. Cheese curds are also in Wisconsin but I suspect both came from here.

On the little 1 1/2 hour tourist train ride we were served champagne and a bag lunch. The train pulls up right at our hotel complex which was built by the founder of Cirque du Soleil. It is a very modern room and quite welcome though small. Very small. Finally air conditioning but also a little porch. When I went out to get the view from the porch I was greeted by an overly friendly ground hog so the door got closed quickly and the air conditioner turned on.

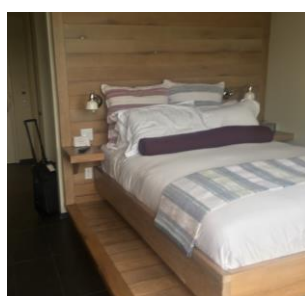
We had maps in hand and a list of restaurants in the little local village when I mentioned to the guides that I was pleased to have a night off without another big dinner but I was surprised because the itinerary shows dinner at the hotel. By the time I had made four trips back-and-forth hunting for my luggage I saw the guides again; they had just learned that indeed we do have dinner at the hotel so they are busy knocking on doors to advise.

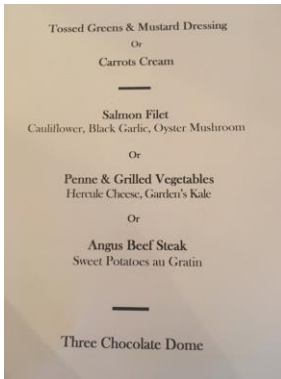
**Pictures include:** A chocolate shop name that is a play on the French language.

Looking back at our sweet little village as we left by car ferry.

At the train station, our guides pulled out the cooler and opened the bar for local wines, maple beers or whatever. The train was a nice diversion from what would have been a lot of driving. Angie is our elder at age 78 and she's doing really well. Here is a picture of Angie enjoying champagne.

And now it is good night. I've had a long conversation with Tom after we figured out how to make the phone work and I get up at 6 AM.





### ***Thursday the fourth day of hiking.***

We moved out of the Cirque du Soleil hotel early morning. It was about 45 minutes ride to a hike of 4-5 hours. A hike that Steve and Nola would approve since it was a good workout.

From itinerary: Mont du Lac des Cygnes; 8.2 miles, moderate, 1,650-ft. elevation gain. Transfer to Quebec City. This morning, our destination is the Grands-Jardins National Park. We begin on the well maintained trails to Mont du Lac des Cygnes, one of the centerpieces of the park. You enjoy a picnic lunch along the way. At the summit, you take in panoramic views of the Charlevoix Crater and the Taiga forest, which is unusual at this latitude. This unique environment earned the region a rating as a World Biosphere Reserve. Keep your eyes peeled for some of the park's many inhabitants, such as black bear, moose, woodland caribou, grey wolves, red foxes, porcupines, common loons, lynx, and spruce grouse.

Continuing south to Quebec City, you arrive at your hotel, the Auberge Saint Antoine, located in the heart of the lower "old" town and rated as one of Canada's best hotels. Built on the foundation of an old warehouse, the hotel today displays more than 700 priceless historical finds that were uncovered during construction. On the way to dinner, you stroll through the cobblestone streets perusing the many outdoor cafés, intriguing parks and squares, and numerous quaint shops.

Hotel Auberge Saint-Antoine, Quebec City – 3 nights -- [www.saint-antoine.com](http://www.saint-antoine.com)

This award-winning Relais & Chateaux property on the banks of the mighty Saint Lawrence River evokes comfort, ambiance, and warmth. Located in the lower town of Quebec City, the Auberge is perfectly situated only steps from the museums, galleries, and cafés of the Old Port. End.

Weather: A 30% chance of rain waited till we were done at 3 PM. I'm sure they should thank me because I carried my heavy rain gear all day.

The Great Canadian Food Tour: Lots of samples and tastes and today was a stop at a Tim Horton store along with the good yet sad story of Tim Horton. "Tim Bits" seem to be the same as Dunkin' Donuts donut-holes but we don't know which came first.

As usual, we get into the hotel and have just a bit over an hour to find out room, unpack and settle, get cleaned up, wash clothes, call hubby, and meet for dinner. I don't do that very well and certainly not happily.

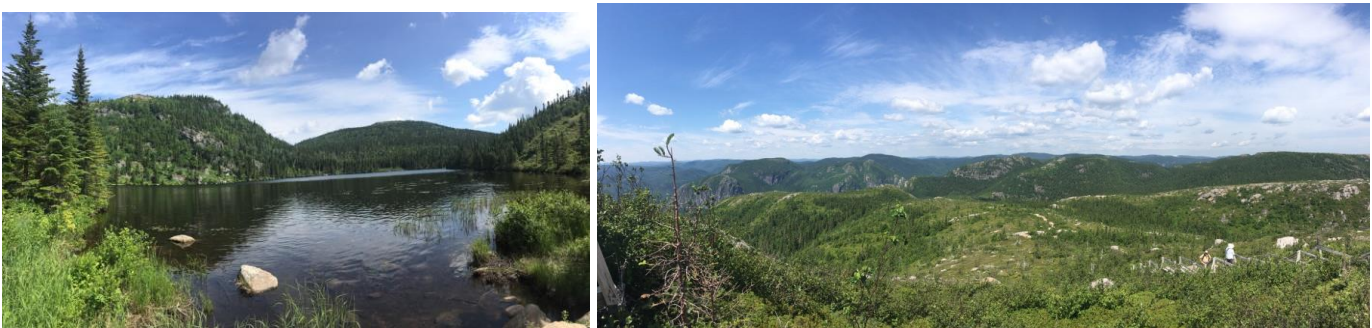
Dinner was a bomb. We had a 6:30 PM meet up for a walk, a 7PM dinner and we didn't get any food until 8:15 PM. I was not a happy camper and no food could taste very good after having a long hike with limited food and such a delay. I think we all literally inhaled our first course. I had a beet salad but was afraid of another poached egg on

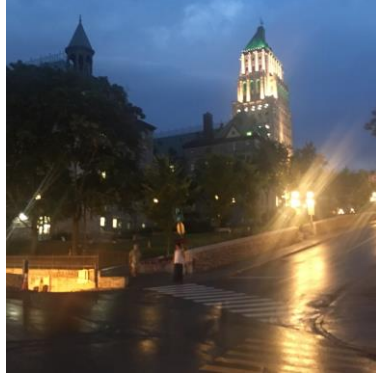


top that might be uncooked like last night so it was just beat salad with goat cheese. Some had a Boar pate with octopus crumbles. Honest. And it was good. The specialty was a chicken dish but I had the salmon on a bed of risotto. I left the dinner early but early is more like 10pm. Again I choose the walk home along the ramparts and down the quaint little cobblestone street and over rue St Paul.

The hotel description above would suggest it was going to be spectacular and it is very well appointed and luxurious but it is very small. Allegedly there is a smaller room and I can't imagine. Yes, it is likely that I am spoiled. Thank you Tom.

The tall ships are in port and I should speak more of them after I see them more close up. But tomorrow is an early morning and another rather strenuous hike. One of those pictures is just to remind me that we saw a bear across the valley. I can find it on the picture but I bet you can't. It was all very exciting too many of our





### **Friday - The last full day of hiking**

And it's a good thing it's the last day as I am losing patience. We were to leave at 8:30 AM, I made it, but four did NOT until 15 and 20 minutes later.

From the itinerary: Parc National de la Jacques-Cartier; 7 miles, moderate, 1,500-ft. elevation gain. Just over an hour from Quebec City is one of the province of Quebec's largest provincial parks, the Parc National de la Jacques-Cartier. The landscape is characterized by remarkable contrasts—this mountainous upland plateau is cut by steep-sided glacial valleys. A river winds through the most spectacular of them, the Vallée de la Jacques-Cartier, a trench more than 1,800 feet deep. In forests of yellow birch, sugar maple, and black spruce, you are immersed in the classic woodland of North America—habitat for myriad bird and animal species, from the small northern chickadee to large mammals such as black bear, moose, and even re-introduced caribou in the more remote regions. There are a variety of trails to choose from, all of which have lovely views of the valley. You enjoy a trailside lunch at a scenic point.

This afternoon, you return to your hotel to freshen up for another evening in Quebec City. You have some time to wander before dinner at another outstanding restaurant, where warm hospitality and exquisite French cuisine provide a fond farewell meal. End

The park is about 45 minute drive north. One person decided not to come and four should not have since they showed up so late. Smile.

Each day has been 7-8 miles but steep and rocky. Today was 5 1/2 hours with 20-30 minute picnic break. Each day was a full three water bottle day with no need for a toilet stop proving it was a very sweaty day.

This hike, like my last one, gave the leaders a scare on the last full day. Last accident was a sprained ankle on a stream crossing. This one was a big face plant and a concussion worry and a loss of front teeth worry.

Weather: I had mixed emotions about the 40 percent chance of rain starting just as we began our hike. At least it would be cooler. We fixed our picnic in the sprinkles. We ate it later in the full sun with both blue jays and squirrels stealing our lunch out of our hands.

Bugs? Yes! But the bites haven't resulted in sores. Yet. (Later: big weepy sores that stayed a few days.)

Note: I always appreciate comments and corrections. (One is never too old to learn? I wonder!). Neither Siri nor I caught the "secede" use/spelling error. How about: They were not successful in the secession effort".

Huttopia. Yes, that is spelled correctly. Some of their parks feature these special little glamping huts.

Question: how dangerous is the sun on the scalp when you don't wear a hat? How much might my hair protect me or not? Should I worry about the piece of bug scratched off my scalp?

**Pictures include:** Not only are the tall ships in town, but a lot of tourists and this one was it driving what I believe is an Excalibur.

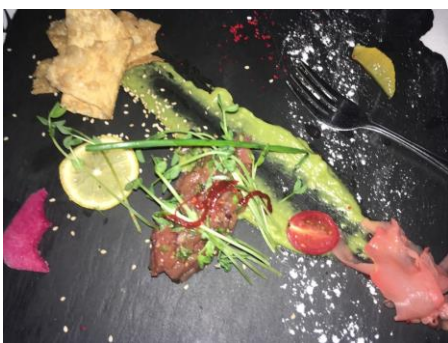
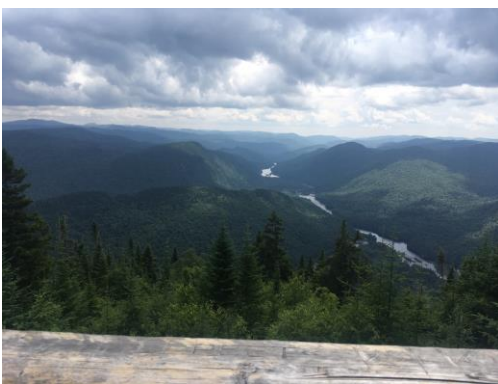
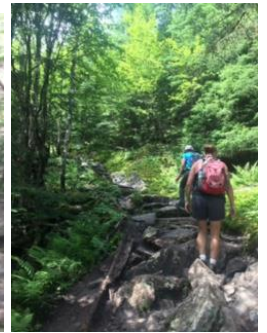
What does a \$25 breakfast look like? Here is my poached egg, sausage, potatoes, and tomatoes.



The hike felt like it was straight up in some cases. It was almost all steps of some sort and mostly of small boulders and roots. It would have been lovely with a little change of scenery but it was a little bit of a slog being all the same. I've given you a panorama of the view at the top and the picnic. Dinner probably wasn't fine dining but it was enjoyable. And Tom would've loved the huge chunk of foie gras offered. I had the sushi tuna followed by the pork with goat cheese.

As usual, I ran off on my own leaving dinner early and enjoyed the walk home very much. The night shot is looking up at the Château.

I'm skipping the ferry ride and view across the river tomorrow early morning. I've been there and I will get to sleep in until 8:30 AM.



<b>ENTRÉE</b> Soupe à l'oignon en croûte et Migneron de Charlevoix Tartare de thon Yellowfin au sésame grillé et gingembre	<b>APPETIZER</b> Crisped French onion soup with Migneron cheese Yellowfin tuna tataki with ginger and grilled sésame
<b>PLATS PRINCIPAUX</b> Arrivage du jour Dugléré et crevettes gratin dauphinois Porc du Québec au fromage de chèvre chaud jus de viande au whiskey légumes du moment Volaille et foie gras de canard sauce caramel aux 5 épices	<b>MAIN COURSE</b> Catch of the day Dugléré-shrimp with gratin dauphinois Québec's pork with hot goat cheese whiskey sauce daily vegetables Poultry with duck foie gras five spices caramel sauce
<b>DESSERT</b> Crème brûlée à l'érable café ou thé	<b>DESSERT</b> Maple-syrup crème brûlée coffee or tea



### **Saturday – the last day of the tour.**

It was like the last day of summer camp all day. Numerous goodbyes and hugs and even gifts of awards from the guides. Almost to the point of being silly and yet sweet nevertheless.

From the itinerary: Quebec City–Lévis ferry; Quebec City market tour - After a delicious breakfast, you may choose to board the Quebec City–Lévis ferry and enjoy a brief walk up the stairs to a splendid view point of this south shore city founded in 1861. Learn about its history General James Wolfe's camp in the territory of Pointe-Lévy and the siege of Quebec City. Later, we regroup at the hotel and meet our local guide who will take us on an off-the-beaten-path walking food tour and tasting. Experience a mix of fun culinary exploration and cultural immersion in Quebec City's diverse neighborhoods. After a final lunch you bid farewell and begin your journey home or continue your exploration of this unique corner of North America. 2:30pm Departure at hotel. End.



While I have been on the ferry during an earlier visit, I chose to sleep in and was up at 8 AM instead of the usual 6 AM.

Eat and more eat: my breakfast didn't come for about 45 minutes which meant I was eating breakfast at 10:15 AM, then met them at 11 AM for the food tour, then off to lunch at 12:30 PM. I'd say that was honoring the "country eaters" theme and created more than a few "country waddlers".

Beaver tails. Fortunately these classic tourist treats were not included in our snacks. I saw plenty of them and ate one on my last trip. One is enough.

<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/BeaverTails>

Lunch was in a monastery which is not only a ramparts located hotel now but also a museum and a Health Spa with a restaurant. **Le Monastère des Augustines** - "In 1639, three Augustinian nuns came to Quebec City with a charter from King Louis XIII, to care for the sick and to open the continent's first hospital north of Mexico. Some three and a half centuries later, facing rapidly dwindling numbers and the eventual extinction of their monastery, the sisters have turned their monastery into a wellness hotel, operated under the umbrella of a non-profit, to perpetuate their mission of healing." See more at:

<https://beta.theglobeandmail.com/life/travel/relax-in-a-quebec-city-abbey-at-le-monastere-des-augustines/article31765107/?ref=https://www.theglobeandmail.com&service=mobile>

Bugs: I told you wrong when I said that the bugs weren't leaving sores. All around my hairline and my neck are ugly lumps and weepy sores and they seem to be making the adjoining neck muscles sore. Darn. Yet - if this is my biggest problem, I'm in good shape. The feet and legs feel fine with no soreness.

Another correction: The accident on my last hike was to Marie-Claire and this hike was to Terri. Not me. Sorry to alarm my daughter and others.

Not quite to Utopia? I had learned that cancer rates had been very high in Quebec. Here's the most recent article found: "Quebec area where cancer rates are 80 times higher to be studied".

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/health-and-fitness/health/quebec-area-where-cancer-rates-are-80-times-higher-to-be-studied/article12033398/?service=amp>

Travel: I got this warning notice from United - "**Travel disruptions possible due to inclement weather in the New York area** - Because of inclement weather affecting the New York area on Sunday, July 23, we are offering .... " It is good that there is a first class type lounge by AX at the airport.

The tall ships are here. So are hordes of tourists who were always in my way. The lines to get into the ships looked Disneyesque. I saw a few street performers, watched a Cirque du Soleil type of show on a mock boat, and enjoyed watching the children in the open wading pool. I thought to get out of the crowds I could walk to upper town again, but it was not to be as it was practically shoulder to shoulder with all restaurants having long lines too. Business and the economy are good. I got another walk on the ramparts and my little cobblestone street and added about 4 miles.

**Tall ships** - <http://www.rdv2017.com/en/the-event/>

Ramparts- those I keep returning to climb and walk along. According to Wikipedia: "Located in Canada, the Ramparts of Quebec City are the only remaining fortified city walls in North America north of Mexico. The British began redefining the existing walls, after they took Quebec City from the French in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759."

I should've stayed up on the ramparts for the 10 PM fireworks. But by then I had my jammies on. I could look out my window and see them reflected in the window reflections.

***Pictures include:***

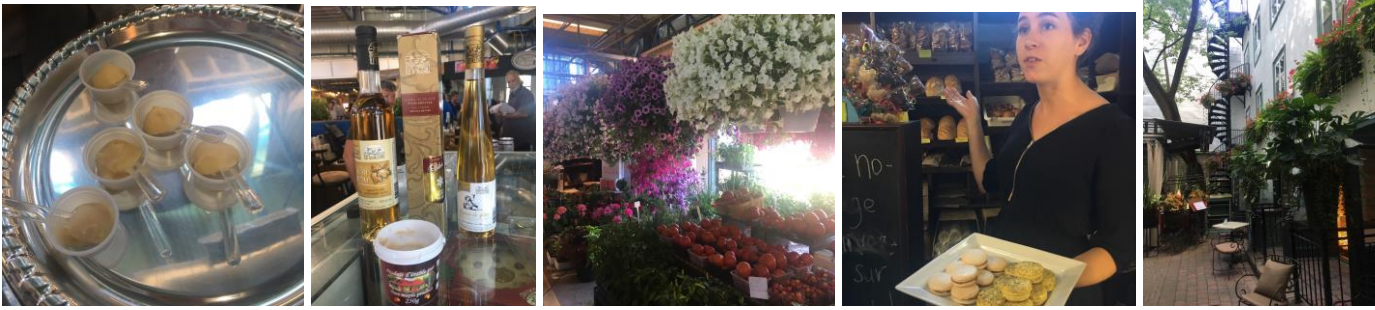
Our various tastings on the food tour. Three kinds of local cheese. Fresh strawberries. Three kinds of a type of ice wine made from apples. Two apple butter spreads. Three kinds of locally made sausages with one cheese infused and another based on wine. Followed by some thicker but melt in your mouth macaroons.

And yes, it is true that we went direct from the tastings to lunch. The lunch was a pleasant surprise as it was in the monastery and excellent food.

I sneaked into a few rooms of the museum.

I was glad to get out of the crowds; the only way to do so was to return to my room despite it being early evening - so I anticipate an early night, catching up on sleep, and seeing Tom tomorrow afternoon. May the weather gods bless me.





**Sunday - on the way home**

It didn't go as planned but it reminds me why we like to be a frequent flyer. My flight from Quebec City to Newark was canceled just as I was leaving the hotel; but United immediately gave me options and booked me on Air Canada with no questions. Checking in at the Quebec airport gave me a priority line and a nice lounge.

I choose the flight through Ottawa and was glad to see I'd skipped the Montreal connection as it was on a long delay. I'd have spent the night in Montreal - not that Montreal is so bad but I would certainly rather be home. I nearly spent the night in Ottawa as my flight was first canceled, then reinstated, then delayed and delayed, but got me home a bit after mid-night.

**Next?** I'm home for part of a week before heading off to Colorado for another hike, this time with [www.ParksPlusHiking.com](http://www.ParksPlusHiking.com) to their hometown of Salida, plus the Great Sand Dunes, plus Mount Princeton. I've done the hike before and been to Salida maybe four times now. Then I go to Colorado Springs for a few days with Dave and Dana, marathon and hiking friends from NJ since moved to Colorado. Late August Tom and I go to Barcelona for a few days prior to what will be my last Country Walkers trip, up to the Costa Brava and home area of Salvador Dali. We have a few days booked in Barcelona post hike, in the same glorious apartment we've stayed twice before.

## ***Itinerary***

### **Sat Jul 15**

1:45pm Depart Newark EWR via UA#4233  
3:21pm Arrive Quebec City YQB

Shuttle or taxi? Per Port Royal: We do not have a shuttle service at the hotel, but there are taxis that will gladly take you to the hotel for a fixed rate of \$ 35 CAD. As for the Auberge Saint-Pierre it is less than ten minutes' walk from the hotel.

Host Hotel Auberge Sainte Antoine  
8, Rue de Saint-Antoine, Quebec City, Quebec G1K 4C9, Canada Tel 888.692.2211  
Tele: 418 692 2211 [www.saint-antoine.com](http://www.saint-antoine.com) [info@saint-antoine.com](mailto:info@saint-antoine.com)

Hotel Port Royal Hotel – 2 nights on own  
144 rue Saint Pierre, Quebec, QC G 1k 8N8 Canada Tele: 1 418 692 2777  
[www.leportroyal.com](http://www.leportroyal.com) [info@leportroyal.com](mailto:info@leportroyal.com)  
yes coffee and refrig in deluxe suite; breakfast included

Overview by [www.CountryWalkers.com](http://www.CountryWalkers.com) - This exploration of the heart of French-speaking North America captures some of the province of Quebec's most stunning and diverse scenery, from grandiose national and provincial parks to charming villages nestled in rolling farmland, never far from the majestic Saint Lawrence River. The tour begins and ends in Quebec City—considered the most European city on the continent. You travel north along the Saint Lawrence River, past the farms and hamlets of the Charlevoix region to the fascinating Saguenay Fjord, rich in natural history. An ancient valley more than 60 miles long with steep granite cliffs carved by retreating glaciers, the Saguenay Saint Lawrence Marine Park is a unique ecosystem where the fresh water of the Saguenay River meets the salt water of the Saint Lawrence estuary—providing habitat for diverse marine life, including minke and beluga whales, viewed aboard a private boat or from coastal walks. Returning south, you stop overnight in quaint Baie-Saint-Paul, to discover Grands-Jardins National Park. Quebec City, the heart of the province, was founded in 1608 by Samuel de Champlain as a fur-trading post, and centuries later world-class museums, well-preserved architectural gems, and deep history have made it a UNESCO World Heritage site. Spectacular scenery joined with the excellent French-rooted cuisine and warm hospitality of the Québécois combine to create a memorable trip, which is much closer to home than it feels.

### **Mon Jul 17 – Day 1 of hike**

9:00am Meet at host hotel – Port Royal says it's a 10 minute walk and suitable for suitcase  
Auberge Sainte Antoine  
8, Rue de Saint-Antoine, Quebec City, Quebec G1K 4C9, Canada Tel 888.692.2211  
[www.saint-antoine.com](http://www.saint-antoine.com) [info@saint-antoine.com](mailto:info@saint-antoine.com)

Quebec City walking tour; 2-3 miles, easy city walking. Transfer to Tadoussac

After a brief orientation meeting in Quebec City where you meet your guide(s) and fellow travelers, you embark on a guided exploration of Quebec City where you learn about its history, from the first European settlements in the early 17th century to the present and, in particular, the struggle for control of the continent between the French and English in the 18th century. As a result of that conflict, Quebec City is the only fortified city north of Mexico. It's charming cobbled "Lower Town" and the Place Royale date to the earliest days of the French colony. Architectural landmarks of stone and wood, winding streets, and outdoor cafés are all a part of the tapestry of this French-speaking city. After a picnic lunch you begin the drive northeast to the town of Tadoussac. This lovely village is located at the confluence of the Saint Lawrence River and the Saguenay Fjord and was the first

trading post in New France, founded in 1600, making it the oldest surviving French settlement in the Americas. A stunning setting, the sheltered bay is surrounded by unique sand dunes, the cliffs of the Saguenay in the background, and the vast St. Lawrence—home to an abundance of marine life.

Your home for the next two nights is the historical Hotel Tadoussac. This evening, enjoy a welcome dinner of refined Québécois cuisine in its intimate dining room that overlooks the St. Lawrence River.

Hotel Hotel Tadoussac, Tadoussac – 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 nights  
165, rue Bord de l'Eau, Tadoussac, QC G0T 2A0, Quebec, Canada Tel 418.235.4421  
Email info.hoteltadoussac@silverbirchhotels.com www.hoteltadoussac.com  
Coffee yes; WiFi yes  
Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

A grand hotel in the 19th-century tradition, this historical complex overlooks the waters of sheltered Tadoussac Bay and offers extensive grounds, an outdoor swimming pool and spa. Simple but comfortable guest rooms compliment an inviting bar and patio area with views of Saguenay Fjord.

### **Tue Jul 18 - DAY 2 of hike**

Sentier Le Fjord to Saint-Louis Lookout; 4-6 miles, easy to moderate with one challenging section, 920-ft. elevation gain

Zodiac whale watch moved from Wednesday to Tuesday? No

Today, after a copious breakfast, you begin your exploration of the Saguenay Fjord and St. Lawrence Estuary. One of the longest fjords in the world at just over 60 miles, the Saguenay is unusual not only because its fresh waters run into the saline estuary, but also for its southerly location—most fjords are at much higher latitudes (in either the Northern or Southern Hemispheres).

Created in the last Ice Age around 10,000 years ago, the fjord features steep cliffs on either side, rising to 1,400 feet at the highest point and plunging below the surface to a maximum of almost 900 feet. An incredible diversity of wildlife thrives in this amazing geography—beluga whales gather here in the summer, it is thought, for the unique combination of waters and sandy floor, and the cliffs are an ecological success story for the return of peregrine falcons. Today's walk provides an opportunity to view both as you make your way to the Baie Sainte Marguerite and the Beluga Halt overlook—as its name implies, a place to spot the small white whales. You continue on to the St. Louis viewpoint, watching for raptors. On-going archaeological surveys have uncovered evidence of Iroquois seal-hunting settlements along the shore, millennia before the arrival of European explorers.

You return to your hotel to refresh after a full day. Time permitting you explore the charming center of Tadoussac, an easy stroll from the hotel, with its many small shops featuring regional handicrafts and food products, relax at the pool or gardens before enjoying another sumptuous meal at a nearby restaurant.

Hotel Hotel Tadoussac, Tadoussac – 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 nights

### **Wed Jul 19 - DAY 3 of hike**

Zodiac whale watch (moved to Tuesday?) Dunes walk; 2-3 miles, easy to moderate. Scenic train to Baie-Saint-Paul

This morning you embark on an exciting whale watch by Zodiac boat, cruising into the Saint Lawrence River and underneath the soaring granite cliffs of the fjord. With luck, you may spot minke or beluga whales, just two of ten different species that make their summer home in these rich, warm,

salty waters. The compact Zodiac allows for up-close encounters with these large mammals and your experience is enriched by commentary from your guide on board.

In the afternoon, your walk takes you through the nearby dunes, actually marine terraces, remnants of the last Ice Age. At a lookout over the Saint Lawrence, you take in the expansive views, scanning for eagles and peregrine falcons, before descending to the sandy beach. From the crescent beach, you may spot one of the river's beluga whales. Climbing back up and over the dunes, you loop back to your hotel.

After, you shuttle from Tadoussac to La Malbaie where you board Le Train Léger for a spectacular ride along the Saint Lawrence River to your hotel in Baie-Saint-Paul where you enjoy a savory dinner at the hotel.

Hotel            Hôtel Le Germain Charlevoix, Baie-Saint-Paul – 1 night  
50, rue de la Ferme, Baie-Saint-Paul, Quebec, G3Z 0G2 Canada Tel 844.240.4700  
Email [infohotel@legermainhotels.com](mailto:infohotel@legermainhotels.com) [www.legermainhotels.com](http://www.legermainhotels.com)  
Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.  
Coffee yes; WiFi yes

### **Thu Jul 20 - DAY 4 of hike**

Mont du Lac des Cygnes; 2.5 or 5 miles, moderate, 820 or 1,650-ft. elevation gain. Transfer to Quebec City

This morning, our destination is the Grands-Jardins National Park. We begin on the well maintained trails to Mont du Lac des Cygnes, one of the centerpieces of the park. You enjoy a picnic lunch along the way. At the summit, you take in panoramic views of the Charlevoix Crater and the Taiga forest, which is unusual at this latitude. This unique environment earned the region a rating as a World Biosphere Reserve. Keep your eyes peeled for some of the park's many inhabitants, such as black bear, moose, woodland caribou, grey wolves, red foxes, porcupines, common loons, lynx, and spruce grouse.

Continuing south to Quebec City, you arrive at your hotel, the Auberge Saint Antoine, located in the heart of the lower "old" town and rated as one of Canada's best hotels. Built on the foundation of an old warehouse, the hotel today displays more than 700 priceless historical finds that were uncovered during construction. On the way to dinner, you stroll through the cobblestone streets perusing the many outdoor cafés, intriguing parks and squares, and numerous quaint shops.

Hotel            Auberge Saint-Antoine, Quebec City – 2 nights with CW plus 1 night on own  
8, Rue de Saint-Antoine, Quebec City, Quebec G1K 4C9, Canada Tel 888.692.2211  
[www.saint-antoine.com](http://www.saint-antoine.com) [info@saint-antoine.com](mailto:info@saint-antoine.com)  
Coffee yes; WiFi yes

This award-winning Relais & Châteaux property on the banks of the mighty Saint Lawrence River evokes comfort, ambiance, and warmth. Located in the lower town of Quebec City, the Auberge is perfectly situated only steps from the museums, galleries, and cafés of the Old Port.

### **Fri Jul 21 - DAY 5 of hike**

Parc National de la Jacques-Cartier; 3-6 miles, moderate, 1,500-ft. elevation gain or easier option; 2-3 miles

Just over an hour from Quebec City is one of the province of Quebec's largest provincial parks, the Parc National de la Jacques-Cartier. The landscape is characterized by remarkable contrasts—this

mountainous upland plateau is cut by steep-sided glacial valleys. A river winds through the most spectacular of them, the Vallée de la Jacques-Cartier, a trench more than 1,800 feet deep. In forests of yellow birch, sugar maple, and black spruce, you are immersed in the classic woodland of North America—habitat for myriad bird and animal species, from the small northern chickadee to large mammals such as black bear, moose, and even re-introduced caribou in the more remote regions. There are a variety of trails to choose from, all of which have lovely views of the valley. You enjoy a trailside lunch at a scenic point.

This afternoon, you return to your hotel to freshen up for another evening in Quebec City. You have some time to wander before dinner at another outstanding restaurant, where warm hospitality and exquisite French cuisine provide a fond farewell meal.

Hotel Auberge Saint-Antoine, Quebec City – 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 nights with CW then 3<sup>rd</sup> night on own  
8, Rue de Saint-Antoine, Quebec City, Quebec G1K 4C9, Canada Tel 888.692.2211  
www.saint-antoine.com [info@saint-antoine.com](mailto:info@saint-antoine.com)

### **Sat Jul 22 - DAY 6 of hike**

Optional Quebec City–Lévis ferry; 2 miles, easy. Quebec City market tour; 1-2 miles, easy city walking. Departure from Quebec City

After a delicious breakfast, you may choose to board the Quebec City–Lévis ferry and enjoy a brief walk up the stairs to a splendid view point of this south shore city founded in 1861. Learn about its history General James Wolfe's camp in the territory of Pointe-Lévy and the siege of Quebec City. Later, we regroup at the hotel and meet our local guide who will take us on an off-the-beaten-path walking food tour and tasting. Experience a mix of fun culinary exploration and cultural immersion in Quebec City's diverse neighborhoods.

After a final lunch you bid farewell and begin your journey home or continue your exploration of this unique corner of North America.

2:00pm Departure at Quebec City train station (La Gare du Palais), Quebec City, Canada

2:30pm Departure at Auberge Saint- Antoine, Quebec City, Canada

Hotel Auberge Saint Antoine – 3<sup>rd</sup> night – on own  
8, Rue de Saint-Antoine, Quebec City, Quebec G1K 4C9, Canada Tel 888.692.2211  
www.saint-antoine.com [info@saint-antoine.com](mailto:info@saint-antoine.com)

### **Sun Jul 23**

1:00pm Taxi

3:56pm Depart Quebec City YQB via UA#4185 – later note that flight was canceled

5:43pm Arrive Newark EWR

Went through Ottawa with more delays until after midnight

### ***Participants:***

Diana Burton, Middletown NJ

Adrienne Dominguez, Bethesda MD

Leah Gajan, Broken Arrow OK

Rachel Gillispie, Arcadia OK

Kathleen (Kathy) Grim, Reading PA



Kristin Lasater, Tulsa OK  
Angie & Patience McGinnis, Portland OR  
Kelli McMaugh, Westlake OH  
William (Willie) Miller & Terese (Terry) Ricca, Voorhees NJ  
Janet and Thomas (Tom) Rosinski, Scottsdale AZ  
Paula Smith, Sapulpa OK  
Brett & Nancy Stearns, Santa Ynex CA

***Guides:***

Carole Rasmussen – Traveling and outdoor activities have always been great passions for Carole. Her studies in tourism and later in teaching French and English have led to various guiding experiences in Quebec, throughout Canada and in Europe. She has been a high school teacher for many years and still takes advantage of her free time to discover and travel. She particularly enjoys trekking and has explored some of the most beautiful and challenging trails in New Zealand, Corsica, and Peru, to name a few. Always traveling extensively in her native Quebec, she enjoys its cultural diversity, its history, and its magnificent landscapes.

Nice surprise - Austin Denham - A natural teacher with a passion for culture and the ability to connect and adapt to his surroundings, Austin Denham is the perfect guide to help you get the most out of your Country Walkers' experience. Austin's particular talents as an improviser and his adaptability have been honed as a part of his work as a secondary school history teacher. Originally from the prairies of Saskatchewan, Austin now spends his time exploring Quebec in search of the next great fishing hole and studying the interwoven cultures that make up the Canadian identity. Whether it is snowboarding in the Canadian Rockies or scuba diving in Nicaragua, an enthusiasm for the outdoors and a wide-range of sports keeps him busy year round.

Cancel - Joanie Lefebvre – Like many in her field, Joanie has a love for the outdoors that began as a child, traveling her native Quebec's extraordinary landscapes. Throughout the years her guiding career brought her all over the world, climbing, hiking, skiing, and biking her way across the globe. Her educational background in the humanities and her passion for new cultural experiences continually drive her positive attitude and outgoing personality. Joanie's love for the open air is so strong that even when she's not guiding, you'll likely find her off exploring in one of the many North American mountain ranges.

***Emergency:***

By email: [Mail@oncallinternational.com](mailto:Mail@oncallinternational.com)  
By phone: 800 555 9095 or 603 894 4710

**ITINERARY CHANGES** - Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual activities, sites, and accommodations may vary due to season, special events, weather, or transportation schedules. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary, since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance and unforeseen circumstances may arise that mandate change. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience.

**RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL** - Country Walkers is a leader in active travel with responsible tourism an integral part of our core values. Our tours reflect our dedication to best travel practices—and to the preservation of indigenous cultures and the environment. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every traveler to the CW Travelers Fund, which supports designated projects in the communities and habitats in which we travel. We invite you to learn more about our efforts and initiatives for giving back.

Here's just one example that highlights our sustainable practices:

We proudly support the Fondation Sur la pointe des pieds (On the Tip of the Toes) in Quebec. The objective of the program is to provide young people (ages 14 to 29) living with cancer a chance to regain their well-being by facing the challenge of therapeutic adventure expeditions. Each expedition is free of charge to participants and includes activities such as canoeing, kayaking, sailing, and hiking in the summer and dogsledding, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling in the winter. Every trip is fully supervised by medical personnel and outdoor experts. These adventures are a chance to make nature accessible to young people with cancer and show them they can live extraordinary adventures and accomplish great things. Each expedition is tailored to their capacities with the hope that they can gain strength and face what lies ahead on their path to recovery. The story of the origin of the organization's name is most interesting: In 1996, a Quebec explorer was returning from the South Pole as they were organizing their first expedition. During a conference, an 8-year-old boy asked him how does one become an "explorer". The explorer answered: "When I was your age, I rose on the tip of my toes and found out that I could see further."

We invite you to learn more at [pointedespieds.com](http://pointedespieds.com).

#### Tour Itinerary Overview

##### TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Auberge Saint-Antoine (lobby), Quebec City, Canada, 9:00 a.m. 8, Rue de Saint-Antoine Quebec City, Quebec G1K 4C9, Canada Tel 888.692.2211 [saint-antoine.com](http://saint-antoine.com)

##### NIGHTS 1 & 2

Hotel Tadoussac Tadoussac, Quebec, Canada Tel 418.235.4421 Email

[info.hoteltadoussac@silverbirchhotels.com](mailto:info.hoteltadoussac@silverbirchhotels.com) [hoteltadoussac.com](http://hoteltadoussac.com) Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

##### NIGHT 3

Hôtel Le Germain Charlevoix 50, rue de la Ferme, Baie-Saint-Paul, Quebec, G3Z 0G2 Canada Tel 844.240.4700 Email [infohotel@legermainhotels.com](mailto:infohotel@legermainhotels.com) [legermainhotels.com](http://legermainhotels.com) Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

##### NIGHTS 4 & 5

Auberge Saint-Antoine Quebec City, Quebec, Canada Tel 888.692.2211 Email [info@saint-antoine.com](mailto:info@saint-antoine.com) [saint-antoine.com](http://saint-antoine.com) Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

**TOUR DEPARTURE POINTS AND TIMES** • Quebec City train station (La Gare du Palais), Quebec City, Canada, 2:00 p.m. • Auberge Saint-Antoine, Quebec City, Canada, 2:30 p.m.

**EMERGENCY CONTACT** - One Call International Email [mail@oncallinternational.com](mailto:mail@oncallinternational.com)

If communicating from within the US If communicating from within the US If communicating from within the US If communicating from within the US

Text 603.945.0103 Tel 800.555.9095

If calling from outside the US If calling from outside the US If calling from outside the US If calling from outside the US Tel 603.894.4710

When calling from outside the USA, you will need to dial the access code for the country you are calling from (a complete list of access codes, provided by AT&T, can be found on the Country Walkers website under Travel Tips and Travel Resources: International Access Codes). In the unlikely event you are unable to connect by phone with One Call, or the region you are calling from does not have an access code, you should speak with a live international operator and ask them to place a collect call to 800.555.9095 or 603.894.4710.