

COMPANIONS TOUR Tuesday, October 24, 2006

Day-trip through the Montérégie Countryside

The second day of your visit will be spent beyond Montréal city limits. In Québec, autumn is synonymous with brilliant colours and enchanting landscapes. We invite you to board our luxury coach and explore the Montérégie -- a wonderful region where you can delight in the scenic fall foliage. Amidst the rolling hills and lakes of this region, you will discover a culture rich in art, history, science and technology. The Native Americans have inhabited the area for more than 6,000 years, and the first Canadian railroad was built in the Montérégie, which is just over an hour's drive south of Montréal.



Vagabond Birds -- Round Trips to Watch For

If we are lucky we might get to see "vagabond birds" on our excursion of the countryside. It's a one-of-a-kind sight! Twice a year, hundreds of thousands of snow geese make a stopover on the banks of the St. Lawrence River. In the fall, on their way back from Baffin and Bylot islands, they take a break and "fuel up" in Québec before continuing the long journey to their warm, winter habitat. Then, in the spring they return, stopping by as they wing their way to the Great North, where they spend their summers. It's an annual pilgrimage nearly 4,000 km (2,500 miles) long! You can watch them as they soar through the skies.



Droulers/Tsiionhiakwatha Archaeological Site Looking for Clues on the Extinction of these Native Americans

Your first stop will include a guided tour of this reconstructed Iroquois village, just steps from actual archeological excavation sites.

Discover the lives of Native Americans who populated this region in the 15th century and learn about a people who lived in North America long before the first French colonies arrived. This site dates back to 1450 and is the most significant of its kind in Québec, with more than 150,000 artifacts already uncovered to create a realistic village, including three long houses, walls, and a lookout tower.

L'Hermine Sugar Shack

No visit to this region would be complete without a delicious lunch at a traditional *cabane à sucre*. L'Hermine is a family business offering 5-star regional cuisine and exceptional service. A guided tour offers insight into the history of the maple industry in Québec (which produces 75% of the world's maple syrup). Next, you will sit down to a gourmet meal, including all of the traditional French-Canadian recipes the province is known for, such as baked beans, pea soup, ham and maple pie. Additional choices will be offered for more health-conscious diners.



Saint-Antoine Abbé Micro-Brewery

Save room for a final stop at this micro-brewery, where beer is truly an art form. You will have the opportunity to sip samples of local beers, including honey beer and other enticing flavours, before leaving this colourful region for the return trip back to Montréal.