

## Montreal Restaurants - A small sampling

Montreal is known for its thousands of restaurants (actually, more than 5,000) from almost every country or ethnic background. The joy is in finding the ones off the beaten path where the food is extraordinary. In this listing there is many that never appear on tourist lists. In my view, some of the ones for which Montreal is famous are listed here.

### FRENCH / FRANCAIS

- **Les Halles** - 1450 Crescent (downtown) - 844 2328 (\$\$\$\$) Probably the best in taste, presentation and atmosphere but expensive.
- **Champs Elysee** - 1800 Sherbrooke W. (downtown) - 939 1212 (\$\$\$\$) Very very good and less expensive by a tad.
- **Le St. Amable** - 188 St. Amable (Old Montreal) - 866 3471 (\$\$\$+) For Tourists which is not to say that you wouldn't enjoy the atmosphere and food.
- **Helene de Champlain** - 200 Tour de l'Île (Ste Helene's Island) (\$\$\$\$) Not real easy to get to and serves in timed settings. Atmosphere is good and food OK.
- **L'Express** - 3927 rue St. Denis (see note at bottom) - 845 5333 (\$\$\$) This is one of those small French Bistros for which Montreal is famous.

### EAST INDIAN / INDIENNE DU EST

- **Taj Mahal** - 5026 Sherbrooke W. (Westmount) - 482 0076 (\$\$) Absolutely the best you will ever eat. A must, especially for those who do not think they like Indian food. Try the Chicken Tikki and/or Butter chicken. A real treat in one of those small restaurants for which Montreal is famous. OK to tell them I sent you.
- **Pique Assiette/Bombay Palace** - 2051 Ste Catherine (downtown) - 932 7141 (\$\$\$) as above, recommend for those liking traditional Indian food.

### ITALIAN / ITALIEN

- **Restaurant Le Piemontais** - 1145 Ave De Bullion (corner Rene Levesque) - Phone (514) 861 8122 (\$\$\$\$) Not on any tourist map - is a secret kept by Montrealers. Reservations well in advance are a must. Let the chef make you a sampler not from the menu. You will return.
- **La Transition** - 4858 Sherbrooke St W. ( Westmount) (\$\$\$+) Very good specializing in non-traditional Italian food. Worth the trip out of downtown
- **Antico Martini** - 6450 Somerled (at cavendish) - 489 6804 (\$\$\$) excellent and authentic. Not close to downtown but worth the trip.
- **Wienstein & Gavinos** - Crescent (downtown) - (\$\$\$) Quite good with great atmosphere

### JAPONNESE / JAPONAISE

- **Mikado** - 368 Laurier West (near Parc ave.) - 279 4809 (\$\$\$+) One of the best Sushi places in town. Other dishes are excellent.
- **Koji's Kaizen** - 4120 Ste Catherine west (Westmount) - 932 5654 (\$\$\$+) Very good Sushi bar and restaurant. Closer to downtown near Atwater Metro stop
- **Katsura** - 2170 de la Montagne (Mountain St.) downtown - 849 1172 (\$\$\$\$) Very good but expensive.
- **Sakura Garden** - 2114 de la Montagne - 288 9122 (\$\$) Food rivals its near neighbor the Katsura but less expensive. Fewer choices maybe.
- **Zen** - 1050 Sherbrooke St. West - 499 0801 (\$\$\$\$) Good choice right downtown.

## CHINESE / CHINOISE

- **Elysee Mandrin** - 1221 rue Mackay (downtown) - 866 5975 (\$\$\$) One of several good places close to the center of the city. Szechuan & Pekinese. Keep in mind that the Palais des Congres is adjacent to "Chinatown".
- **Muraille de Chine** - 1017 Boul. St. Laurent (downtown) - 392 1427 (\$\$) Excellent for "Dim Sum" (Chinese brunch). Most of the patrons will be Chinese, its that good
- **Le Chrysantheme** - 1208 Crescent (downtown) - 397 1408 (\$\$\$)
- **Le Piment Rouge** - 1107 rue Peel (downtown) - 866 7816 (\$\$\$+)
- Many others

## THAI / THAILANDAISE

- **Phaya Thai** - 1235 rue Guy (downtown) - 933 9949 (\$\$\$\$) The best Thai food in town. Get the "Seafood in green curry", it is superb.
- **Chao Phraya** - 2067 Stanley (downtown) - 288 2155 (\$\$\$\$)

## CARIBBEAN

- **Caribbean Roti House** - 6892 Victoria (not too close to downtown) - 733 0828 (\$\$) One of several good "Roti" places for a taste of the islands.
- **Pick's** - 5125 de Maisonneuve W. (Westmount) - 486 1857 (\$\$+) Best known for take out Caribbean food. Typical and authentic

## MEXICAN

- **Casa de Mateo** - 440 St. Francois Xavier (Old Montreal) - 844 7448 (\$\$+) Probably the best Mexican restaurant in Montreal. The atmosphere and is good and fresh guacomole made at your table make the trip well worth it.
- **El Coyote** - 1202 Bishop (downtown) - 875 7082 (\$\$\$) As above.

## SPANISH

- **Sancho Panza** - 3458 av du Parc (not too far) - 844 0588 (\$\$\$) Good

## MOROCCAN

- **La Menara** - 256 St. Paul E. (old Montreal) - 861 1989 (\$\$\$\$) A real treat in superb authentic atmosphere plus entertainment (Belly Dancer).
- **El Morocco II** - 3450 Drummond (just above Sherbrooke - downtown) - 844 6888 (\$\$\$\$) Excellent Kosher prepared Moroccan food plus entertainment.

## MISCELLANEOUS - SPECIALITIES

### CREPES (Belgium or Brittany style)

- **A'la Crepe Bretonne** - 5058 ave. du Parc (corner Parc & Laurier) - 278 3353 (\$\$) The original crepe place of Montreal. The taste and sight (watching them made is part of the experience) of very thin pancakes rolled around just about anything - a real treat and found only in Montreal - other than Europe.

## SEA FOOD / FRUITS de MER

- **Melos** - 5357 Av du Parc (Greek restaurant row) - 272 3522 (\$\$\$\$\$) The best Greek sea food anyplace. Expensive but worth it.
- **Tung Ah** - 1172 Bishop (Chinese) - 397 5555 (\$\$\$\$+) Excellent seafood, especially the unusual.

## STEAKS +

- **Moishe's** - 3961 Boul. St. Laurent (close to downtown) - 845 3509 (\$\$\$\$) Worth the trip. Very very good food. Only place to go for steaks, in my opinion.

## SMOKED MEAT

- **Schwartz's** - On the "Main" (boul. St. Laurent) (\$\$+) - A must for atmosphere, tradition, and a traditional Montreal smoked meat sandwich.
- **Snowdon Deli** - 5265 Decarie (Snowdon) (\$\$\$) Well worth the trip
- **The Bown Derby Delicatessen and Restaurant** - 4827 Van Horne (\$\$) (at the Plamadon Metro stop). The best chicken soup anyplace - and that's just the beginning

## MISC

- **Bistro on the Avenue** - 1326 Greene Avenue (Westmount) - 939 6451 (\$\$\$+) Without a doubt the best Creme Brulee you will have ever had. Rest of menu also quite good. Be sure to make a reservation, as it is quite popular.
- **Montreal Bagels** - Nowhere as good as at the original Bagel bakery on St. Vaiteur just off Parc Ave. A must if you like the best bagels and like them fresh/hot
- **Arachova** - across the street from the bagel bakery. (\$\$) This is the originator of the Montreal Souvlaki (Lamb in a pita with the best dressing).
- **Le Paltoquet** - 1464 Van Horne in Outremont - 271 4229 (\$\$) One of those small real french pastry and coffee shop. These are all over Montreal. This is just one of the very good ones.

## SOME CLOSING THOUGHTS

The city abounds in small restaurants with sidewalk eating. This is especially true along St. Denis from de Maisonneuve all the way up to Mt. Royal (about a mile). Many of these are quite good in their own right and give Montreal the European look and feel. Lower St. Denis is noted for these bistros.

For ethnic diversity (which makes Montreal what it is), in my opinion, there is just no street like St. Laurent which divides the city into east and west. It is about 5 or 6 blocks east of the Palais des Congres. From Sherbrooke to Duluth, there are shops from every ethnic community you can name - from food shops to bakeries to places like Toulch Optometry where you can get your eyes checked and get glasses (including Oliver Peoples) in a couple of hours.

Montreal's China Town is adjacent to the Palais des Congress and food from any shop is safe and very good. That area abounds in Chinese restaurants and most are very good.

Enjoy,  
Charles H. Pierce  
A long time Montrealler