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Five Tres-Bon Festivals in Montreal

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PHOTO: The Montreal Jazz Festival spans two weeks every summer. (photo courtesy of Montreal Jazz Festival)

Montreal markets itself as “a city of festivals.”

Typically, whenever a destination describes itself as something, I immediately become skeptical. It usually means that it’s *trying* to be something, which is a lot different than *being* something.

But in the case of Montreal, saying that it is a city of festivals might even be an understatement.

In terms of big, established events, [Montreal will host more than 100 festivals in 2017](#), including 17 this August alone. And when you throw in the lesser-known, one-off festivals not on that list, you get to a point where you could literally attend a party every other day for the entire year.

So maybe, in this case, marketing isn't so deceiving after all.

Take a moment and [browse all the festivals](#). Here are five of our favorites, worth building a trip around if you've never been to Canada's European-influenced metropolis.

Montreal Jazz Festival: Late June/Early July

If you've been to a Jazz festival of late, you know it's anything but traditional. This year, Bob Dylan, Thievery Corporation, and Four Tops all gave ticketed performances indoors. Its multi-stage, free outdoor venue in the heart of downtown drew thousands of attendees for various acts, including Anderson Pak and the Free Nationals.

Outside of the official acts, you'll find classic improv jazz late into the evening in the corners of beer bars like [Brutopia](#). The Festival spans two weeks each summer, so plan on staying up late and sleeping in while you're there.

READ MORE: [Early Look at Montreal's All New Fairmont Queen Elizabeth](#)

Igloo Fest: January

Though you may be skeptical of a winter visit to Montreal, it could be argued that the city is at its most honest when you can see how locals live when the going gets tough, (i.e. when things get really cold).

The yearly Igloo Fest is a multi-stage, outdoor concert in celebration of winter. More importantly, it highlights two of the ways Montrealers like to stay warm: drinking and dancing. As one local put it to me, you have a little to drink, and then you dance. And you keep dancing, so you can stay warm.

Igloo Fest features electronic, house, techno, and other dance-friendly styles. You won't want to stray too far from the ice bar.

Croissant Festival: May

This festival lasts only a day but, hey, that's one way to limit food-induced guilt!

And it's a fantastic day when bakeries across the city sell their croissants for only \$1. Consider this a good excuse to walk the city and visit the bakeries of each neighborhood.

La Grande Dégustation de Montréal: November

This one will make you very happy if you are into wine and beer festivals. Consider it the triathlon of drinking occasions, with more than 200 wine producers, distillers and brewers gathering under one roof to share their latest creations.

The three-day event allows you to taste products from around the world as well as participate in interactive workshops and exhibits, including small tasting groups with producers and cocktail recipes.

READ MORE: [Behind the Scenes of the Montreal Jazz Festival](#)

La Poutine Week: February

Canada's favorite comfort food takes center stage for an entire week each winter. It's a celebration of the dish, but it's also a city-wide competition to discover the best-tasting and most-creative iterations.

If you've never had poutine, it starts with a base of fries, cheese curds and gravy, then builds from there. You can read up on [last year's creations](#) to discover what restaurants came up with, including "ramen poutine," "sweet potato pulled pork poutine" and "poutine Oktoberfest."