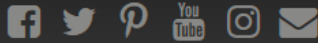


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This Is What It's Really Like to Sleep in an Ice Hotel

BY EMILY CAPIELLO

Think it's cool to sleep on ice? Think again.

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VIA HOTELDEGLACE-CANADA.COM

On a recent trip to Quebec City, I had the opportunity to sleep over at the [Hôtel de Glace](#), the only ice hotel in North America. The hotel has 44 guest rooms and an ice bar, with both only existing from the end of December until March.

Never one to give in to a challenge—especially ones that come with incredible bragging rights—I jumped at the chance, not a second thought in my head. I feel like I should have known better, when everyone we encountered in

Quebec—from the manager of the stunning, modern hotel we slept in the night before to the funny, sweet wine expert at the vineyard we visited—looked at us like we were crazy and all gave us some sort of verbal warning about what we were in for.

Upon check-in, I was directed to, “See the woman upstairs by the fireplace and she will tell you everything you need to know.”

Nestled warmly next to the fireplace was a sweet woman who took turns sitting with all of the guests of the Hôtel de Glace. Soon enough, it was our turn and I started spitting out questions. The essentials first:

“Where do we put our luggage? Are there chargers for our cell phones? Will there be coffee?”

“In the lockers. No, good luck. Yes, but we only have decaf right now,” was her response.



VIA HOTELDECLACE-CANADA.COM

Great. No closet space, no Instagram, and no caffeine. I was already defeated. But, I pressed on.

She then explained that there was a particular way to stay warm and comfortable in the ice hotel. First off, we should actually sleep naked, she suggested.

“That’s not going to happen, so what’s the next best thing?” I asked.

She said not to sleep in any cotton (Great, because all I packed was cotton PJs.) and not to double up on the pajamas because we could overheat in the Nordic sleeping bags we would be sleeping in. If we began to overheat, we would sweat and then begin to get cold.

We were told to store our items in the locker assigned to us, change into our bathing suits, and spend time in the hot tubs and saunas that were situated just outside the ice hotel. Then, we would change into our non-cotton pajamas, bundle up, and make our way to our room when we were ready for bed. Guess who forgot to pack her swimsuit for a trip to Canada in the middle of winter?

Then, she asked us what we would be eating for dinner. I told her I was in the mood for some poutine, a local delicacy of french fries, gravy, and cheese. She said that was an ideal choice as its recommended to eat a heavy meal. "It's like getting ready for hibernation," she said.

If anything could have eased my anxiety at that point, those words were *not* it.



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At dinner, we ate everything on our plates even if we were full. Actually, when dessert came, we started calling other hotels in the area to see if they had any openings. When lucky number eight wanted to charge us about \$80 more than the online price we just decided to go back to sleep on a bed of ice.

CONTENT CONTINUES BELOW AD

We returned to the hotel and grabbed our robes and towels. We opted for long, hot showers instead of skinny dipping in the hot tub. Then we bundled ourselves up in double pajamas (because... cotton), and got our coats, hats, scarves, and gloves on for the trek to our room.

Met by two Nordic sleeping bags and the poorest excuses for pillows, we began trying to figure out how to get comfortable in a room full of ice. Have you tried taking off your shoes in a room in which the floor is ice and not get your socks wet? It took me three yoga positions to get this accomplished. Then, I unzipped the sleeping bag, climbed in and immediately looked like Heimlich from "A Bug's Life." (Don't miss these other [strange and unique hotels around the world](#), too.)



VIA HOTELDECLACE-CANADA.COM

Rolling around to get all the way into the bag and comfortable, I zipped myself up and said my good nights. And then I felt this sharp pain in my head.

My hat had metal studs on it. The metal was getting cold in the... well... cold. I took my hat off and my head started to get cold. I sunk down further into my sleeping bag and thought to myself, "Well, at least if I die in here, it will be in my sleep."

The next thing I knew, the hotel staff was giving us a literal wake-up call (they stand outside your room and tell you to get up!).

The ultimate payoff of having slept in a hotel made of ice?
Now, no matter who is whining and what the problem is, my
response can be, “Did you sleep in an ice hotel? On a literal
bed of ice? No? I don’t want to hear it!”

Read on for [perfect winter vacation ideas for people who
love the cold.](#)