

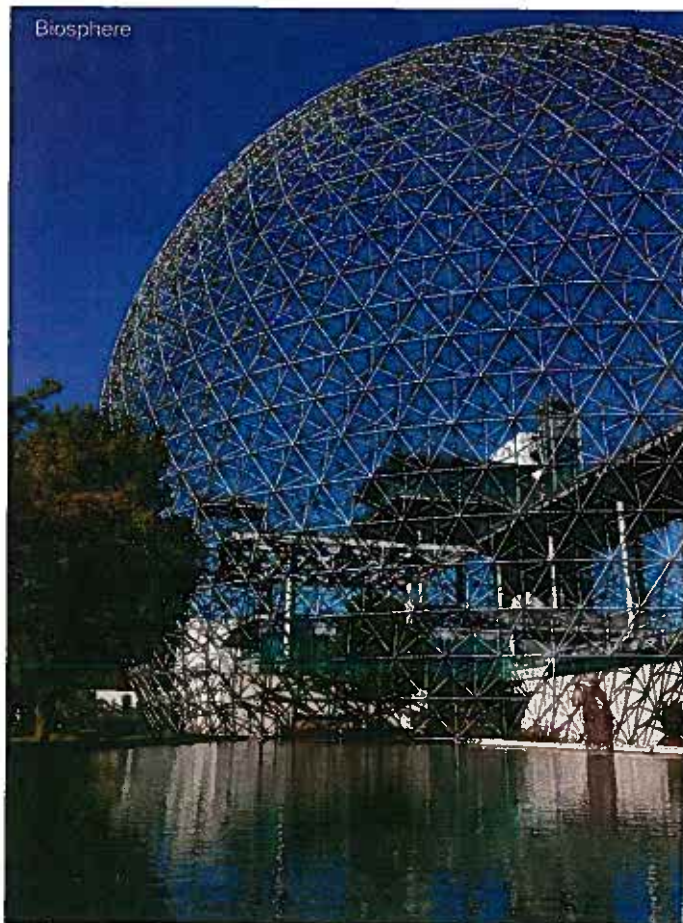
*The Allure of*  
**MONTRÉAL**

by **Joseph Pedro**

**M**y alarm sounds too early, and it's blasting a commercial in French for *Dormez-Vous* mattress, which forces me out of bed. I promised myself an early start the night before in order to work off the piles and piles of *poutine* (French fries with cheese curds and gravy) and the bottles and bottles of *La Fin Du Monde* beer. With the bells of Christ Church Cathedral ushering in a new day, the early Saturday morning streets of Montréal are still empty and void of any evidence of Friday's revelry. Late night sins have given way to Saturday morning peace, and I bask in it. Walking toward "the mountain" (as the locals call the big hill north of downtown) that contains **Mount Royal Park**, a place where the hotel front desk promised beautiful trails for a morning run, I pass through the empty McGill University campus where a boisterous commencement happened the day prior. The cool spring breeze hits my back and aids my ascent up the steep rue Peel.

A middle-aged lesbian couple with a baby carriage comes out of one of the stone buildings owned by the university that line the hill. They wave hello from across the street, and as we approach the park entrance they say, "Bonjour." I smile and mutter a self-conscious "bonjour" in reply. They sense my French anxiety and, instead of just running off, engage me. "Parlez-vous anglais?" one asks. "Yes," I say. "Well, why didn't you say something before?" they ask as if we had been engaged in some lengthy confab. I ask them for the best running route on the mountain, and they explain with extreme brevity, but then insist that I go with them—and they don't take no for an answer.

They turn out to be some of the nicest people I meet on my trip, and they describe what they love most about the city as we pass through the forests and well-manicured fields. They talk of the beautiful local food, the world-renowned education, the acceptance they feel, the arts, how European the city is, and what a well-rounded and wholesome upbringing



ing their baby boy will have here. Just then, I look down to a lower tree-lined path and see a man (or woman) dressed as a squirrel hiding in the trees. I point, we stop, and they laugh and look at each other. "Oh that's *l'écureuil* (the squirrel)," she says. "He hides in the trees and scares people walking by." They wave to him, and they make sure their baby knows that he's there. I am in utter disbelief, and without mentioning it again, they continue on talking about their city.

We reach the top lookout at the Kondiarok Belvedere, and there is a perfect panoramic view of Montréal, a destination that blends the sophisticated and relaxed charm of an old European city with the vibrancy and openness of a modern-day North American metropolis—and it does this all with a certain sense of humor that's decidedly quirky and always filled with a level of surprise.

**M**ontréal is an enticing destination for American gays and lesbians because it's easy to get to and so different from anywhere in the USA.

"It has French flair, an old city, and some of the most liberal queer rights in the world," says Tanya Churchmuch, the Assistant Director of International Relations for Tourism Montréal, as we sit at gay hot spot **NÛVÛ Bistro-Expériences** in Montréal's Gay Village (*Le Village*). She's right. It's only about an hour flight from New York, but soon after arriving I feel like I'm in a whole new world. Especially in this 15-block neighborhood that has a certain live-and-let-live vibe. Unlike in other cities where the gayborhood simply exists, Montréal embraces the gay community along *Sainte-Catherine Est*. With designated street banners, official markings on city maps, and a rainbow-decorated subway station, this neighborhood is a celebration of queer culture.

As Tanya begins to point out all of the different nighttime options to be had along the strip, she looks at me quite seriously and says, "I am just getting started. This is only the village—you'll find [gay people] everywhere and anywhere in Montréal, just living our lives and having fun." A statement I find to be oh so true.

I begin exploring the city by foot and venture down to Old Montréal. It is this area, nestled along the banks of the **Saint Lawrence River**, where I have an out-of-United States experience. As one of the oldest urban areas in the Americas, the district is exactly what you would expect from a place once part of New France. I spend hours admiring and investigating the different buildings and peering into one-of-a-kind shops. There are two centers in Old Montréal. I begin in **Place d'Armes**, a square that features the stunning, Gothic Revival **Notre-Dame Basilica**. Music fans may recognize this beautiful place as the site of Canadian songstress Celine Dion's wedding. For some entertainment, maybe with not as much pizzazz as Celine's wedding, head to the basilica at night to catch the multimedia light-show "And Then There Was Light." Through music, narration, and video on giant "butterfly" projection screens, immerse yourself in the history of this architectural masterpiece. Show times vary throughout the year, but are usually nightly, except for Sundays.

Walk a little farther east to **Place Jacques-Cartier**, a square that leads to the Old Port. Numerous tourist-trap restaurants frame the open space on a hill, but it's a great place to sit outside on a nice day.

The **Old Port of Montréal** was once the commercial hub of the city. I admire the row houses and commerce buildings that remain from an era of extreme wealth along the St. Lawrence. Today, duck boats and evening cruises have replaced freighters, and piers are no longer filled with cargo, but with museums, exhibitions, galleries, and theatres. Thanks to a massive redesign of the waterway in the 1990s, I enjoy a morning walk along the promenade and venture into the area's attractions on the various quays. I cannot resist a special exhibit called "Indiana Jones and the Adventure of Archaeology" at the **Montréal Science Centre**. Its interactive displays make it great fun for those who grew up with the franchise. (Make sure to catch this exhibit by the end of September.)

Mount Royal and Surroundings



Photo: Canadian Tourism Commission, Pierre St-Jacques

**Montréal is a destination that blends the sophisticated and relaxed charm of an old European city with the vibrancy and openness of a modern-day North American metropolis.**

Still feeling like a kid, I stop for an ice cream at **Le Glacier Bilboquet**, which is housed in old shipping containers. I sit on a bench looking out across the water at the modernist marvel **Habitat 67**, a community composed of stacked houses that were designed by Moshe Safdie for Expo '67. It's a visionary creation that is now one of the most expensive properties to own in Montréal.

This area also attracts hefty crowds for numerous special events, including the much-anticipated concert **Igloofest** each January and the annual **Cirque du Soleil** performances. When it comes to catching the latest **Cirque du Soleil** shows, residents of Montréal are lucky; the group's main headquarters and rehearsal space are located in the city, allowing locals to preview the newest shows. This year, the city sees three high-profile performances: *Michael Jackson: Immortal*, *Totem*, and *Dralion*.

**F**resh ideas mixed with a thriving entrepreneurial spirit have brought new life into some buildings around the Old City, in particular to an area known as the **Multimédia District**. Openly gay friends Patrick Meausette and Rob Hack helped lead this urban Renaissance when they transformed the old Darling Foundry into a mixed art space and popular lunchtime spot called **CLUNY Art Bar**. The reinvented infrastructure uses much of the original building and provides an industrial feel with steel pieces and reclaimed wood, but the owners keep it comfortable and welcoming with country-style table settings and flower arrangements. Only

open for breakfast and lunch, the restaurant offers inexpensive food that is hearty yet simple, and includes panini, salads, soups, and daily specials. Attached to the café is a massive space used for art exhibits and spectacular events ranging from same-sex weddings to fashion parties.

As I stroll along the downtown section of Sainte-Catherine, the city's main thoroughfare, I discover a bevy of restaurants, nightlife options (including stripper bars), and an eclectic crowd that provides hours of entertainment. I become quite familiar with the daily characters that line the street, including the always-chatty Hare Krishnas, the in-your-face gutter punks, and the lovely group of corpulent women who sell maple syrup and moose souvenirs. It is on this street that the department store, **La Maison Simons** (or more commonly called **Simons**), attracts a fashionable gay crowd shopping for everything from home goods to fashion and accessories.

Tired of walking, I decide to try out the city's innovative bike share program, **BIXI Bike**. For a small fee and security deposit, you can rent these bikes hourly, and with drop-off stations across the city, it's an easy way to get around. I decide to set my credit limit high and take the bike lanes to a more highbrow street called Sherbrook Ouest. With world-class shopping and superb cultural attractions, this street, just two avenues east, is a whole different ball game. It's often cited as the 5th Avenue of Montréal, and it is part of an area once known as the Golden Square Mile; many still refer to it as this, even though it is technically just Downtown. A look at the grand architecture gives a hint of the wealth here.

The pedestrians that stroll up and down include well-to-do students from McGill University and bourgeois Montréalites, many of which are looking to score some high-end fashions. I lock my bike up and visit a boutique called **Georgio Napoli**, which specializes in men's Italian clothing. Stop here and admire the timeless collection of men's suits, shoes, ties, and accessories. Helpful staff, including fashion consultants, guide you through the most up-to-date designs. Continuing along rue Sherbrook, you will also discover more familiar names like Hermès, Chanel, and Dior.

The three-building cultural institution known as **Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal** is also located here. It's widely recognized as one of the most important art institutions in the world, and you'll see why when you get a taste of the 30,000-piece collection. Spend time exploring the contemporary art galleries, Canadian art galleries (including the whimsical work of Michael Snow), world-culture galleries, and the European masters collections. The most highly anticipated exhibit, "The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk," is attracting fashionistas from all over North America and Europe for an incredible retrospective on this fascinating man and his fashion world. You'll want to walk down this catwalk before it closes on October 2.

Meanwhile, brush up on your Montréal history farther south on Sherbrook at the **McCord Museum of Canadian History**. A special exhibit called "90 Treasures, 90 Stories, 90 Years" is a captivating journey through Montréal's history with over 90 carefully selected items. I love the fashions on display from the 18th century that piece together a history I didn't know much about. My favorite part of the museum is upstairs, where a stunning collection of 1,300 photographs comes together to create a massive panorama of the city. We have Montréal native André Cornellier to thank for the project that allows visitors to sit back and take in the city's impressive landscape and imagine the stories behind the people in the photos.

While you are sure to visit **Le Village** for its numerous nightlife options, the 15 blocks are also a treat during the day, particularly on the weekends, when crowds pack the terraces of the gay bars for drink specials and to admire the people passing by. I am lucky enough to pay a visit to the Village when it is closed to traffic for the summer event called Aires Libres. This year, the city decorated the streets by hanging a canopy of pink beads to create a festive atmosphere unlike any other neighborhood. The street, though, is not just for the LGBT community. I see straight couples pushing baby carriages past the numerous sex shops and gay baths, and older couples chitchatting on the benches. I pop into the oldest gay business in North America, the retailer **Priape**. They are best known for their leather and PVC clothing (which are made in an upstairs atelier, on site). They also have underwear, porn, sex toys, etc. If you're looking for a hearty lunch in a lively atmosphere, try the community favorite, **Le Saloon**. The sleek, moody, club-like space fits the Village perfectly and makes for an ideal spot to meet friends before an evening out. The "Western fusion" cuisine is a mixed bag of favorites: pasta, salads, burgers, and sizeable meat entrées, like the grilled chicken breast that you can have seasoned Mediterranean, Asian, Indian, or BBQ style. At night, the venue hosts lively special events with guest DJs.

The next day, I bike to the artsy, Anglo-speaking, hipster area of the **Mile End** district. This neighborhood is a hotbed for artists and a younger generation that spend their time sitting at cafés, admiring art in the many galleries, and catching shows at various venues. Popular businesses remain from the neighborhood's immigrant days (it was once heavily Greek and Hasidic Jewish) that continue to pull in large numbers of locals and visitors alike. Ask around what the best bagel in the Mile End is and you'll find St. Viateur and Fairmount (located nearly across the street from one another) will both get glowing recommendations. I begin my morning with a hearty, baked bagel with



Statue of Three Women Talking

Habitat 67



cream cheese from **St-Viateur** and absolutely love it. Then, I move to **Café Olimpico** to grab an iced coffee. It is early Saturday morning and this place, which looks like it has been frozen in time with dusty Italian football memorabilia, large televisions, and old wooden tables, has a mixed crowd of old timers and hipsters—I even see the openly gay rapper/performer SoCalled (he performed the night before at the Ukrainian Society) grabbing a latté. There is no seating on the outside patio, so, coffee in hand, I pay a visit to a few thrift stores, including my favorite spot **Local 23**, which prides itself on “finding homes for unwanted clothes.” This small shop on Bernard Ouest has enough second-hand clothes (that are either bought or traded) to occupy a nice chunk of time, and unlike at other thrift stores in the city, you won’t spend a fortune.

Walking along St. Dominique Street, I see signs for a flea market and end up in the basement of a church. The market is called **Spring Puces POP**, and it turns out to be a larger deal than I anticipated. POP Montréal is an annual international music festival that takes place in September, but POP Montréal has grown to showcase much more than just music, holding events throughout the year that include this flea market. This is just another unexpected find in an unexpected place. I also pay a visit to lesbian-owned **Depanneur Le Pick-Up**, a hipster hangout off rue Jean-Talon Ouest on rue Waverly. This is a great example of the area’s eccentricity. The space is a mix between a bodega and an old-school counter café. They serve an affordable lunch that always includes vegetarian or vegan options, but it’s still good for carnivores. I had a delicious pulled pork sandwich out on the back patio where a woman was grilling up veggie burgers, hamburgers, and sausage. She even recommended another place for dinner, a lesbian-owned vegetarian restaurant called **Le Cagibi**, which is about a kilometer walk east on Boulevard Saint Laurent. There, they serve vegetarian cuisine like Brie sandwiches and burritos, salads, and the classic grilled cheese, but they also have wine and beer to keep your thirst quenched during nightly performances of indie bands, spoken-word, and comedy.

Of course, after all this, you’ll probably want a nice place to grab some shuteye. Luckily, Montréal’s hospitality scene is thriving with new hotels, renovations, and options for both the businessperson and the eager traveler. For a boutique hotel that’s a nice blend of design, comfort, and luxury, book a room between Sainte-Catherine and Sherbrook at the recently renovated **Hotel Le Germain**. With an impressive location (perfect for that morning run on Mount Royal), generous room sizes, and superb staff, it’s a relaxing place to call home. The spacious standard rooms are designed with you in mind. I loved crashing on the oversized bed with Marie Saint Pierre signature bedding, easily being able to plug in my laptop and connect to the free Wi-Fi, and taking long showers in the massive bathroom with Molton Brown products.

If you’d rather stay on Sherbrook, a great choice is the **Ritz-Carlton Montréal**, one of the few remaining Grand Dame hotels in the city. While preserving the past and moving into the future, the hotel reopens this year after a comprehensive renovation, which includes updated accommodations and brand-new residences. The Ritz-Carlton Montréal is famed for its high-profile guests from princesses and princes to Hollywood legends like Sophia Loren. Now, thanks to the renovation, a new era for the hotel is about to begin.

One of the newest and hippest hotels on the block is **Hôtel Chez Swann**. This self-proclaimed “living work of art” brings new life and sensuality to Montréal’s boutique hotel scene. The hotel prides itself on uniqueness, and each of the 23 rooms is different from the next. The interiors, designed by Mary Moegenburg, seamlessly play off a classic theater style—grand red curtains separate you from the peek-a-boo shower. Though, you’ll appreciate all of the modern amenities including an iHome, free Wi-Fi, 40-inch television, and unlimited free calls to the US and Canada. Here, you won’t just be sleeping; the hotel also has social events for those who want to get to know fellow guests. Join in on a popcorn and movie night, or grab a drink



in the Wine Cellar that offers more than 90 tastings.

The always gay-friendly **W Montréal** is a prime choice if you want to stay off bustling Sainte-Catherine on Square Victoria Park. Housed in the historic and grand Banque du Canada building, this Starwood property has completely reinvented the space with modern zest mixed with French style. Expect their “Wherever, Whenever” service here after you check into one of the rooms. This W is also home to the AWAY spa that offers signature treatments to revive you during your urban escape. In the warm-weather months, a favorite is the Wunderbar Deck, where a posh crowd sips happy hour cocktails.

**W**hen you’re ready to let loose, Montréal is just the city to do it in. Once the sun goes down, Montréal’s energy explodes. Bachelor and bachelorette parties spill outside of the strip bars, 18-year-old Americans take advantage of the under-21 drinking age, and, of course, the gays queue up for the hottest clubs. The main gay venues are in the Village, and American tourists will find these monstrous dance halls are similar to those found in Europe—multi-level, thumping dance beats, go-go dancers, and hardly an ounce of air to breathe. I endure the line at **Unity** where a smoky main area is packed with gays of all ages. Tired of the non-stop house beat, I find relief upstairs on the gorgeous roof deck. Explaining how I love being able to hang outside, I’m convinced by a group of locals to go to **Complexe Sky**, which they promise has an even better roof and cheap pitchers of sangria. I push through crowds in a dance room and a hip-hop room to get there, and it’s worth it. For those brave enough there is even a large hot tub. We continue on to lesbian-heavy **Le Drugstore**, where a drag show in French is going on. This towering club has seemingly infinite places to hang out. From a saloon-style bar and outdoor smoking/bar patio to a gorgeous

roof deck, I have a good time just exploring. After the drag show, though, the crowd thins out quickly.

Strip bars absolutely do not interest me, but despite this, I am talked into paying a late-night visit to **Le Stock**. I’m lucky to be dragged here on a special theme night that consists of near-naked pirates and Jack Sparrow lookalikes.

Wearied from the non-stop club scene, I try to discover the more alternative, gay nightlife the city is famous for having. I am told that the Mile End, while it doesn’t have any gay-specific clubs open when I’m here, is the best place to find one of the many alterna-queer parties.

I attend a monthly lesbian-run, mixed queer party called **Faggity Ass Fridays**, where “radical queer performance art, drag, cabaret, music, DJs, and lots of sequins” all come together to help raise money for sexual education programs in school. Unlike those in the Village, this party is more representative of the entire LGBT community in Montréal. Getting to know the people, I find out about all sorts of gatherings in the Mile End, including a monthly hipster gay boy party called **Mec Plus Ultra**, a monthly queer party that brings in a slightly younger gay crowd called **Pompe Thursdays**, a bi-monthly women’s party named **Tease**, a professional women’s cocktail party called **Pink 28**, and a monthly lesbian performance and dance gathering that has been going on for ten years called **Meow Mix**. Also, the scores of hipsters were buzzing about the opening in mid-June of the Mile End’s first full-time gay bar called the **Royal Phoenix Bar**.

After I’ve had enough of a good time out, I grab some poutine and walk through the gay village. The lights from the clubs shine out onto the street where men holding hands head off for a passionate rendezvous and women flirting with each other begin impromptu dance performances. I watch this pantomime of pleasure play out before me and feel absolutely at home in this vibrant Canadian city. ■

## EXPLORE

**Bixi Bike** is a public bike share program that began here. Systems in Ottawa, Melbourne, and Minneapolis have adapted the same system. [montreal.bixi.com](http://montreal.bixi.com)

**McCord Museum of Canadian History**, 690 Sherbrooke Street Ouest. Tel: +1-514-285-2000. Brush up on your Canadian history and don't miss the 1,300-photograph panorama of Montréal. [www.mccord-museum.qc.ca](http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca)

**Montréal Science Centre**, 333 Rue de la Commune Ouest. Tel: +1-514-496-4724. It may be designed for kids, but you'll have fun at the interactive exhibits. Catch the Indiana Jones exhibition before it's gone. [www.montrealsciencecentre.com](http://www.montrealsciencecentre.com)

**Mount Royal Park** is a small mountain that has plenty of trails for biking, walking, and running. The top has a gorgeous panoramic view of the city. [www.lemontroyal.com](http://www.lemontroyal.com)

**Musée des Beaux-arts de Montréal**, 1380 Sherbrooke Ouest. Tel: +1-514-285-2000. This massive collection of art has galleries that contain everything from Canadian artists to huge installation pieces. Don't pass up the extremely popular Jean Paul Gaultier exhibit. [www.mbam.qc.ca](http://www.mbam.qc.ca)

**Notre-Dame Basilica**, 211 Rue Notre-Dame Ouest. Tel: +1-514-842-2925. This stunning example of neo-Gothic architecture represents the charm and beauty of Old Montreal. Don't miss the nightly multimedia show "And Then There Was Light." [www.basiliquenddm.org](http://www.basiliquenddm.org)

## EAT

**Café Olimpico**, 124 Rue St-Viateur Ouest. Tel: +1-514-495-0746. This extremely popular morning hang-out for the young hipster set is a Mile End tradition. [www.cafeolimpico.com](http://www.cafeolimpico.com)

**CLUNY Art Bar**, 257 Rue Prince. Tel: +1-514-866-1213. This gay-owned lunch spot is located in an old foundry. Grab a sandwich here and enjoy the industrial, yet comfortable atmosphere. Take a peek in the adjoining art gallery that is sometimes used for big events. [www.fonderiedarting.org](http://www.fonderiedarting.org)

**Depanneur Le Pick-Up**, 7032 Rue Waverly. Tel: +1-514-271-8011. This lesbian-owned, casual eatery dishes out fantastic sandwiches, many with vegetarian counterparts. [www.depanneurlepickup.com](http://www.depanneurlepickup.com)

**Le Cagibi**, 5490 Boulevard Saint-Laurent. Tel: +1-514-509-1199. A lesbian-owned café that has vegetarian cuisine, friendly staff, and nightly performances. [www.lecagibi.ca](http://www.lecagibi.ca)

**Le Glacier Bilboquet**, Quais du Vieux-Port. While there are locations of this ice cream shop throughout Montréal, their outpost on the quay is a perfect example of the city's innovative take on green design—it's located in a shipping crate. [www.bilboquet.ca](http://www.bilboquet.ca)

**Le Saloon**, 1333 Sainte-Catherine Est. Tel: +1-514-522-1333. Great place to get dinner and drinks with a group of friends. Spend your time enjoying the club-like atmosphere. [www.lesaloon.ca](http://www.lesaloon.ca)

**NŪVŪ Bistro-Expériences**, 1336 rue Ste-Catherine Est. Tel: +1-514-940-6888. This gay hotspot right in Le Village has both a tapas and an à-la-carte menu. The food is delicious, but the lively atmosphere is why people continue to come back. [www.bistronuvu.com](http://www.bistronuvu.com)



The Illuminated Crowd

**St-Viateur Bagel**, 263 Rue Saint Viateur Ouest. Tel: +1-514-276-8044. The Montréal bagel is a very controversial subject, but you're sure to have a great experience here. [www.stviateurbagel.com](http://www.stviateurbagel.com)

## SPEND

**Georgio Napoli**, 1176 Rue Sherbrooke Ouest. Tel: +1-514-287-1928. If you're looking for a high-end men's store that sells shirts, jackets, ties, and accessories, look no further.

**La Maison Simons**, 977 Ste-Catherine Ouest. Tel: +1-514-282-1840. This department store has decent prices for clothes and home goods. It's also a very popular daytime hangout for gay men. [www.simons.ca](http://www.simons.ca)

**Local 23**, 23 Rue Bernard Ouest. Tel: +1-514-270-9333. No visit to the Mile End is complete without a little thrifting. Buy, trade, or sell clothes at this cute shop. [www.general54.blogspot.com](http://www.general54.blogspot.com)

**Priape**, 1311, Ste-Catherine Est. Tel: +1-514-521-8451. The flagship gay lifestyle store of Canada, located in the heart of the Village. Grab everything from dildos to new underwear. [www.priape.com](http://www.priape.com)

## DREAM

**Hôtel Chez Swann**, 1444 Drummond St. Tel: +1-514-842-7070. This small hotel is the new kid on the block but is already making a big name for itself. Enjoy whimsical artwork and fun gatherings like movie night or a wine tasting. Rooms from US\$175. [www.hotelchezswann.com](http://www.hotelchezswann.com)

**Hôtel Le Germain**, 2050 rue Mansfield. Tel: +1-514-849-2050. This boutique has big style and a friendly staff that will make your stay in Montréal something truly special. Rooms from US\$230. [www.germainmontreal.com](http://www.germainmontreal.com)

**Ritz-Carlton Montréal**, 1228 Rue Sherbrooke Ouest. Tel: +1-514-842-4212. A recent renovation breathes new life into this Grand Dame hotel located in the Golden Square Mile. [www.ritzmontreal.com](http://www.ritzmontreal.com)

**W Montréal**, 901 Square Victoria. Tel: +1-514-395-3100. Located on Square Victoria, you'll have a royal stay with signature "Wherever, Whenever" service. Don't pass up a cocktail at the Wunderbar Deck where a posh crowd comes to drink. Rooms from US\$295. [www.starwood.com](http://www.starwood.com)

## DANCE

**Complexe Sky**, 1474-78 Ste-Catherine Est. Tel: +1-514-529-6969. Weekday crowds are small, but come on the weekend for a packed house. The roof, with a hot tub, is filled with sangria-sipping studs. [www.complexesky.com](http://www.complexesky.com)

**Le Drugstore**, 11366 Sainte-Catherine Est. Tel: +1-514-524-1960. The towering bar is heavily lesbian, but a mixed crowd comes to watch the drag show and hang out in the various seating areas. [www.ledrugstore.com](http://www.ledrugstore.com)

**Royal Phoenix Bar**, 5788 Boul, St-Laurent. Tel: +1-514-658-1622. The just-opened, first, full-time queer bar in the Mile End attracts the area's eclectic crowd. [www.royalphoenixbar.com](http://www.royalphoenixbar.com)

**Stock Bar**, 1171 Sainte-Catherine Est. Tel: +1-514-842-1336. If you're in the market for a lap dance or just want to check out the Montréal boys dance, you won't want to pass up this experience. [www.stockbar.ca](http://www.stockbar.ca)

**Unity**, 1171 Sainte-Catherine Est. Tel: +1-514-523-2777. A weekend crowd packs the massive dance floor where world-renowned DJs spin the latest dance tracks. During the nice weather, head to the roof. [www.clubunitymontreal.com](http://www.clubunitymontreal.com)