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AREA MAPS

INSIDE

# Washington Flyer

MAGAZINE & TRAVEL GUIDE

JULY/AUGUST 2007

**25 great  
museum  
escapes:  
D.C.'s  
new exhibits,  
hidden gems**

## Super Space

**PLUS:**

**Ethelbert Miller's  
wise words, page 6**

Miller at the new  
City Museum

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**ALSO: MOON DANCE AT U.S. ARBORETUM; MARY CHAPIN CARPENTER AT WOLF TRAP, PAGE 5**

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Summer jaunts to D.C. museums don't have to be predictable. We cover outstanding venues, large and small—including what's new and undiscovered—and provide 25 great excuses for spending part of the dog days perusing the best in art, architecture and invention. **BY JESSICA BIZIK AND MICHAEL MCCARTHY**

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Festival International de Jazz de Montréal

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Airports Authority

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You may not know the name,  
but you will soon. Some insid-  
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Miller**—Washington's man of  
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Laureate. For now, we have  
him all to ourselves.

**BY JOHN GREENYA**

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Main—discovering trendy  
cafés, bistros and theaters.

**BY CATHY SCOTT**

**ALSO:** Sure, you could luxu-  
riate in any number of bou-  
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you'll have just as much fun  
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York have emerged as leaders  
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turn some heads with a few  
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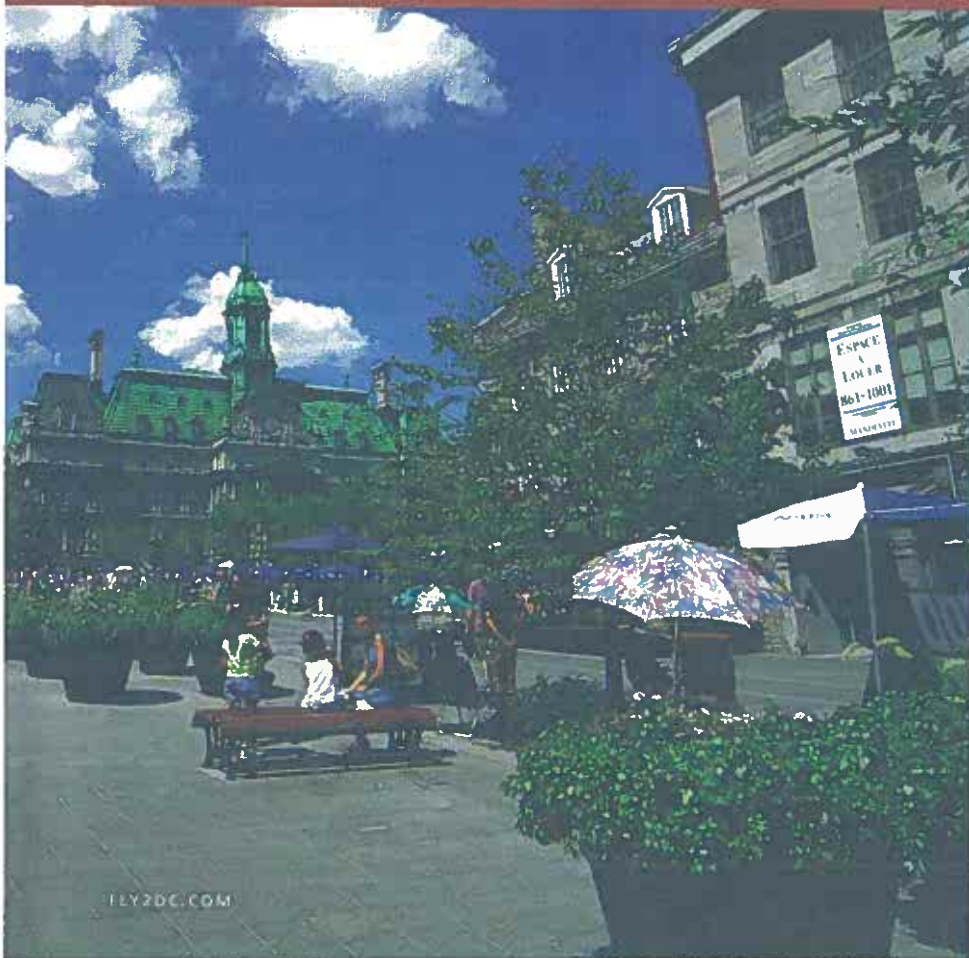
E. Ethelbert Miller  
photographed by  
Forrest MacCormack  
at the City Museum.



# The SCENE

For locals in the know, a stretch of Montréal known as the Plateau has become the most alluring part of town. Keep it to yourself.

BY MARGARET LOFTUS



**It's** Saturday afternoon at **La Vieille Europe**—a glorious little deli—and the place is jumping. A French-speaking maman inspects the dizzying array of sausages. Two old men kvetch about rising rents. A stylish couple stocks up on Valrhona chocolate. On Boulevard St. Laurent, La Vieille Europe (3855 Blvd. St. Laurent, 514-842-5773) is a microcosm of Montréal, where Old World meets new and French and English speakers come together.

For years, St. Laurent was the line that separated French and English Montréal. But today that line is fuzzy, and the result is an eclectic neighborhood that is home to kitschy second-hand stores as well as haute couture, sports bars, sophisticated nightclubs, ethnic grocers and many of the city's top French restaurants.

Tourisme Montréal

Above: Festival International de Jazz de Montréal



Known as the **Plateau Mont-Royal**, or the Plateau, this stretch of some two dozen blocks lies east of Mount Royal Park and a couple of miles (a straight shot on the metro's orange line or a \$7 cab ride) from tourist-heavy Old Montréal. Once a bastion of the French working class (famously chronicled by novelist Michel Tremblay), the Plateau has emerged in the past few years as *the* scene in Montréal, and one that isn't on many tourists' radar.

I spend a few days soaking it all in at the trendy boutiques and stellar restaurants of the Plateau. So why not start at the top? Mention **Toqué!** (3842 rue St. Denis, 514-499-2084) to a Montrealer and you'll get a reverent, "Ah, oui." The restaurant, whose superstar chef Normand Laprise spe-

cializes in Québécois cuisine—fresh produce and meat from local farms—is the premier table in town.

The décor here is understated, and everyone seems to be on his or her best behavior—awaiting a great treat. The first one is a surprisingly tasty amuse-bouche: a Metcalf oyster in rhubarb water and strawberry mousse. For my main course, the foie gras risotto tempts me, but I choose the locally raised lamb with pan juices and garlic puree—which is sublime—and a glass of Barbera. This may be Canada, but don't expect a bargain at this restaurant. The bill comes to \$95 for just moi (I even skipped dessert).

The following day, my guide, Carole LeMaire (Guidatour, 514-844-4021, www.guidatour.qc.ca), gives me the lay of the land. We roam the Avenue Mont Royal, the funkier of the three main arteries of the Plateau. We walk past **La Binerie** (367 ave. Mont-Royal Est, 514-285-9078), a greasy spoon famous for its feves au lard (that's baked beans with lard), a traditional Québécois breakfast dish.

For those who prefer to start their day sans lard, **L'Avenue** (922 ave. du Mont-Royal Est, 514-523-8780) always packs them in with oversized omelets and salads. Across the street, check out **St. Viateur Bagel & Cafe** (1127 ave. Mont-Royal

Est, 514-528-6361, www.stviateurbagel.com), where the bagels—a crispier version of their New York cousins—are baked in a wood-burning oven.

Lox lovers, however, should skip the salmon at St. Viateur and head to **Saum-Mom** (1318 ave. Mont-Royal Est, 514-526-1116), a boutique and café devoted to the pink fish. Over samples of cold-smoked salmon (delightfully mellow and less salty than hot-smoked), Carole gives me the scoop on why Montrealers are so

warm and friendly despite the gloomy weather. "We are a very Latin culture," she says. "It comes from inside."

At the urging of the concierge at the **Hôtel Gault** across town (see "Where to Stay"), tonight I dine at **Laloux** (250 ave. des Pins Est, 514-287-9127, www.laloux.com). The yellow and green walls and high mirrors remind me of Paris bistros and so does the diverse and lively crowd. When I sit down, a ramekin of chicken liver pâté with crostini is delivered to my table. The pâté is so delicious that I'm crushed when the server takes it away—but what he leaves is equally addictive: d'Ambert cheese in phyllo pastry, with honey and figs atop mixed greens. A glass of white port washes the treat down. Next, the sommelier pairs my red snapper with a refreshing Gewürztraminer. Heaven.

## STROLL & SHOP

I'm lured to my first shop by incense that drifts from **Turquoise Decor** (4357 St. Laurent, 514-286-6161), which sells exotic imports such as a Moroccan sheepskin lamp stenciled in henna. I also wander through a cluster of secondhand stores, including the **Friperie St. Laurent** (3976 St. Laurent, 514-842-3893). Here, you can stock up on colorful polyester shirts, thread-bare cor-

## French Wheels

Cycling is the main mode of transport for a lot of Montrealers, and many enthusiasts are lobbying to have the bike paths along city streets cleared of snow in the winter. These are hardy souls. To test the summer streets, contact **Velo Aventure Montréal** (Des Convoyeurs Pier, Old Port of Montréal, entrance to Saint-Laurent St., 514-847-0666, www.veloaventure.com). —M.L.

Yves Marceau/Getty



duroys and that three-quarter-length “Mod Squad” pleather coat you gave away after the 70s. Still, nothing really grabs me until **Soho Mtl** (3715 St. Laurent, 514-843-8201), a super-sleek men and women’s boutique that blares techno music. I ogle the great selection of Italian thong sandals until my ears start to hurt. Next, I step into **Scandale** (3639 St. Laurent, 514-842-4707), which is worth a visit just to see Montréal designer Georges Lévesques’ dramatic creations strewn with feathers and ruffles.

Finally, I hit upon **Lola & Emily** (3475 Blvd. St. Laurent, 514-288-7598, [www.lolaandemily.com](http://www.lolaandemily.com)), a women’s clothing and home accessories boutique that a couple of friends opened last year. I peruse racks of color-coordinated Juicy Couture, Tara Jarmon and local designer Christie N (I fall hard for a pair of Earl jeans).

Lola and Emily send me to two other hotspots. One is **U & I** (3650 and 3652 St. Laurent, 514-844-8788, [www.boutiqueuandi.com](http://www.boutiqueuandi.com)), another chic women and men’s boutique (more techno tunes). **Eskimo** (58 ave. des Pins Est, 514-844-9696, [www.eskimo.design.com](http://www.eskimo.design.com)) is a tiny shop packed with American designers such as Rogan and Development. Shopkeeper John Hatz has an interesting take on the locals and summer weather: “You suffer all winter long, and then sum-



(opposite) Place Jacques-Cartier; (top) Montréal’s dazzling skyline; and (above) Plateau Mont-Royal.

mer comes and you never want to sleep again,” he says. “People here lose their minds in the summer.”

Before I head to the airport the next day, I squeeze in some more exploring—this time on rue St. Denis, the hippest shopping street on the Plateau.

Several Montréal designers have

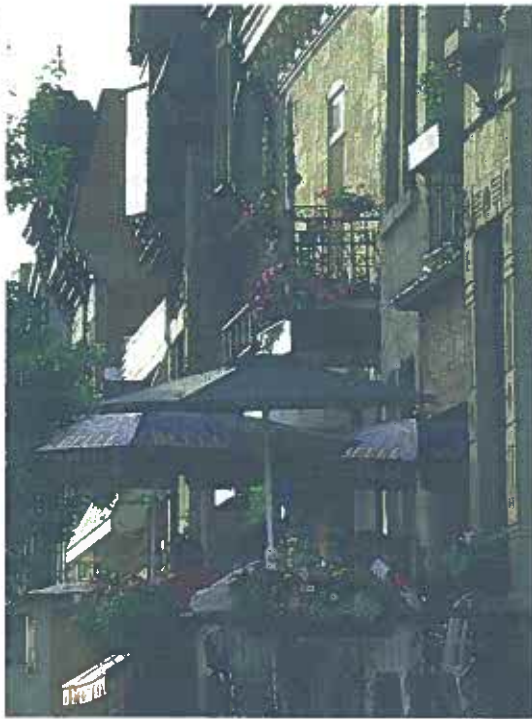
## Where to Stay

For swank digs, you can’t beat **Old Montréal**. In the past few years, boutique hotels have blossomed here. Many are housed in renovated 19th-century commercial buildings, but that’s where the similarities end.

**Hôtel Gault** (449 rue Ste Helene, 514-904-1616, [www.hotelgault.com](http://www.hotelgault.com); from \$250) is known for its modernist design with an orange-and-gray color scheme, polished cement floors and mid-century furniture gems. But mod doesn’t mean austere: the staff is unpretentious, beds are comfy and the cement bathroom floors are heated. Much in the same vein, the serene **Hotel St.-Paul** (355 rue McGill, 514-380-2222, [www.hotelstpaul.com](http://www.hotelstpaul.com); from \$142) focuses on design. Choose between an earth room or sky room. At the opposite end of the spectrum is the lavish **Hotel Le St.-James** (355 rue St. Jacques, 514-841-3111, [www.hotelgstjames.com](http://www.hotelgstjames.com); from \$230). With its Frette linens and top-flight service, no wonder the Rolling Stones booked the whole place the last time they were in town.

While the Plateau overflows with fromage and groovy jeans, one thing it lacks is a lot of lodging. There are a handful of B&Bs and **Auberge de La Fontaine** (1301 rue Rachel Est, 514-597-0166, [www.aubergedelafontaine.com](http://www.aubergedelafontaine.com)), a cozy and quiet inn fashioned out of a couple of Victorian row houses.

For a complete listing, go to [www.tourism-montreal.org](http://www.tourism-montreal.org). —M. L.



Tourisme Montreal/Stephen Poulin

Terrace on Saint-Denis Street in Quartier Latin.

boutiques here, most notably **Jean Airoldi** (4455 St. Denis, 514-287-6524), whose leather pants seem to be the standard for many Montréal femmes. At **Muse** (4467 St. Denis, 514-848-9493,

[www.muse-cchenail.com](http://www.muse-cchenail.com)), Christian Chenail showcases his glamorous Ivana Trump look—but without Trump prices. Already late for my plane, I dash into **Scarpa** (4257 St. Denis, 514-282-6363), a new shoe salon, where I quickly do the math on a pair of red Campers (at \$130, no big Canadian bargain) but I restrain myself.

It rained all morning, but now the sun warms the streets. As if on cue, the Beautiful People are out in force. They stroll on St. Denis and linger over Sunday brunch in sidewalk cafés. But I

don't see people losing their minds, at least not yet. ☺

*Margaret Loftus, who lives on Maryland's Eastern Shore, is a contributing editor at National Geographic Traveler.*


## Summer Lineup

Nearly 2,000 musicians will converge for the 24th annual Montréal Jazz Festival ([www.montrealjazzfest.com](http://www.montrealjazzfest.com)), through July 6. Some 500 shows—jazz, blues, soul, modern, funk and electronic music—will be performed in downtown Montréal. Headliners this year include Norah Jones and Elvis Costello. The Latin Quarter plays host to 2,000 comedy performances (many free) during the Just for Laughs Festival ([www.hahaha.com](http://www.hahaha.com)), July 10 through July 20, the world's largest comedy festival. Check out **Tennis Masters Canada** ([www.tenniscanada.com](http://www.tenniscanada.com)), August 2 through 10, to watch the top 50 men players compete. Or stick around for the **Molson Indy Champ Cart World Series** ([www.molsonindy.com](http://www.molsonindy.com)), August 22 through 24. —M.L.

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