

MAGIC The Gathering **GRAND PRIX MONTREAL**

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Judge's Travel Guide

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Source: <http://dionysosphotography.blogspot.ca/>

GP Montreal 2017 Travel Guide 1

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1. Welcome to Montreal

1.1 General Information

Welcome judges to Montreal! The following guide should help to make life easier for you as you navigate our beautiful city during the Grand Prix weekend. First, some general information and tips:

Montreal is the major metropolis in the province of Quebec, with a population of 1.6 million people. Located on an island in the middle of the St Lawrence River, it is the second largest city in Canada by population, after Toronto. Although the larger metropolitan area is quite expansive, this guide will focus primarily on the downtown core, as that is where the Grand Prix is being held, and where many of the interesting places to see can be found.

Downtown Montreal is located to the south of the mountain for which the city is named (Mont Royal). As a consequence, there is a simple and good rule of thumb to get your bearings when in the downtown core: North is uphill. At any given intersection, you will usually be able to determine North by looking for the direction which leads up the mountain.

As with most Canadian cities, if you ever find yourself lost you can always rely on our handy network of Tim Hortons coffee shops, dotted throughout the downtown core. All Tim Hortons now offer free Wi-Fi access, so if you've not got a data plan on your smartphone (or if your plan doesn't work in Canada) you can always find your bearings by connecting to their internet. This is also true for many Starbucks and Second Cup coffee shops.



Source: Google street view

1.2 Public transit (STM)

The STM, Montreal's public transit system, is relatively easy to use. Much like other metropolitan cities (London, Paris, etc.), the most reliable way to purchase transit fares is through use of a card. There are two types of card you can buy: a permanent, rechargeable opus card (pictured left), or a temporary non-rechargeable "Occasionnelle" (pictured right):



Either card can be purchased from ticket booth attendants in the metro and bus stations themselves, but to buy one you must purchase at least one transit fare as well. The rechargeable opus card costs \$6, in addition to the transit fare, and can be used to hold either individual fares or period-validity passes. The non-rechargeable card comes free with the purchase of the fare or pass, and for that reason it is the option we recommend unless you intend to stay for longer than three days.

Regarding the fares themselves, the best options are either a consecutive 3-day pass for \$18, or an unlimited weekend pass for \$13.75 (which runs from 16:00 on Friday to 05:00 on Monday). These will allow you the flexibility of making an unlimited number of trips over the validity period (including the 747 bus to and from the airport, see 2.2 below). If you prefer, you can purchase individual fares in groups of one (\$3.25), two (\$6.00), or ten (\$27.00). In that case, you will need to recharge your opus card when you run out of fares. The opus card can be recharged at machines like these:



Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OPUS_card

The backbone of the transit system is the underground metro. In fact, you will likely not need to use busses at all (other than the 747 airport bus), provided you stay within the downtown core, as the majority of the places in this guide are within easy walking distance of a metro station. Here is a map of the metro system:



Source: <http://www.stm.info/en/info/networks/metro>

Downtown Montreal is essentially located between the Lionel-Groulx and Berri-UQAM stations. You will therefore not need to worry about using anything other than the Green and Orange lines to get around. In Montreal when you board a metro train the direction of travel is indicated by the name of the terminal station in that direction. Therefore, when travelling East you will be going in the direction of Montmorency (Orange line) or Honoré-Beaugrand (Green line), whereas when travelling West you will be going in the direction of Côte-Vertu (Orange line) or Angrignon (Green line).

If you have a smartphone, there is a very useful app available both on Android and iOS which will help you navigate the STM system: <http://www.stm.info/en/info/advice/5-ways-view-bus-schedules/mobile-tools>

1.3 A note on surviving in Quebec as a non-francophone

One thing you will immediately notice upon your arrival in Montreal is the predominance of the French language. French is used in all public signage as a matter of law, and you may find that some Quebecers take the exclusive use of French VERY seriously. Although most public servants are usually very accommodating of anglophone tourists, you should not be surprised to find that at least a few may be standoffish, and some may (rarely) go so far as to refuse to serve you in English.

If this happens there is unfortunately little you can do. As French is the only official language of Quebec, public servants are not required to serve you in any language other than French. Your best bet is of course to be polite and try to communicate that you are a visitor and that you can't speak French. It may help if you make some attempt to greet them in French using the following basic phrases (to learn pronunciation, the google translate voice feature works pretty well):

- Bonjour! Parlez-vous Anglais? (Hello! Do you speak English?)
- Désolé! Je ne parle pas Français! (Sorry! I can't speak French!)
- Pouvez-vous me diriger vers [location]? (Could you please direct me to [location]?)

Thankfully, this is far less likely to be an issue in private businesses, where customer service is the name of the game. Still, even then you should expect that you will first be addressed in French, and it is up to you to initiate communication in English.

2. Tournament Venue

2.1 Location

The venue for the Grand Prix is Place Bonaventure, a major convention centre located in downtown Montreal.

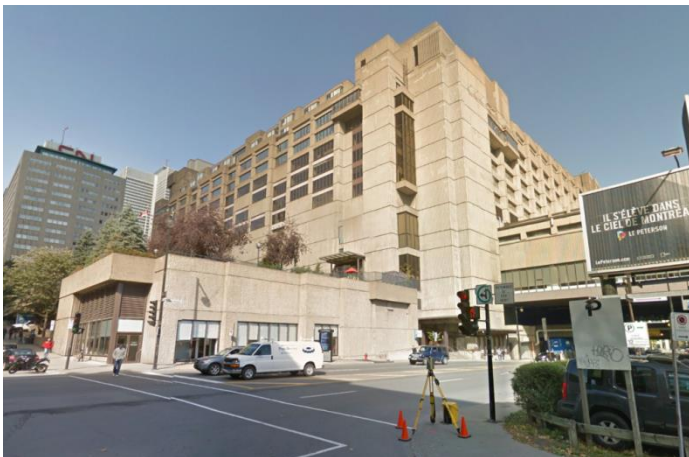
Place Bonaventure

800 Rue de la Gauchetière Ouest
Montréal, QC
H5A 1K6

<http://placebonaventure.com/en/>



Source : <http://www.bonjourquebec.com/>



Source: Google Street View, from the intersection of Mansfield and Saint Antoine West

2.2 How to get there from the airport (YUL)

Immediately as you leave the airport on the “Arrivals” level you will see a line of taxis and limos available for hire. Place Bonaventure is a well-known location, so any taxi driver should be able to get you there without further directions. All the major taxi companies offer a \$40.00 flat rate from the airport to the downtown core, so it is best if you can arrange to split the fare with others. Please note that ride sharing services such as Uber are **not** an option, as they are legally prohibited from picking up at the airport.

Also available is the 747 bus service from the airport to the downtown core. As this bus is part of the general STM public transit system, the fare is included within the 3-day and all-weekend passes mentioned in section 1.2 above. If you do not opt for one of these passes, the fare is \$10.00, although once purchased the ticket is good on any STM service for 24 hours, not just the 747 bus. Tickets can be purchased from machines on the “Arrivals” level of the airport. The bus makes several stops, but the closest one to the venue is stop 5 (Mansfield) on the following map:



For more details about the 747 bus, see this website:

<http://www.admtl.com/en/access/transport/buses-747-express>

Or this PDF:

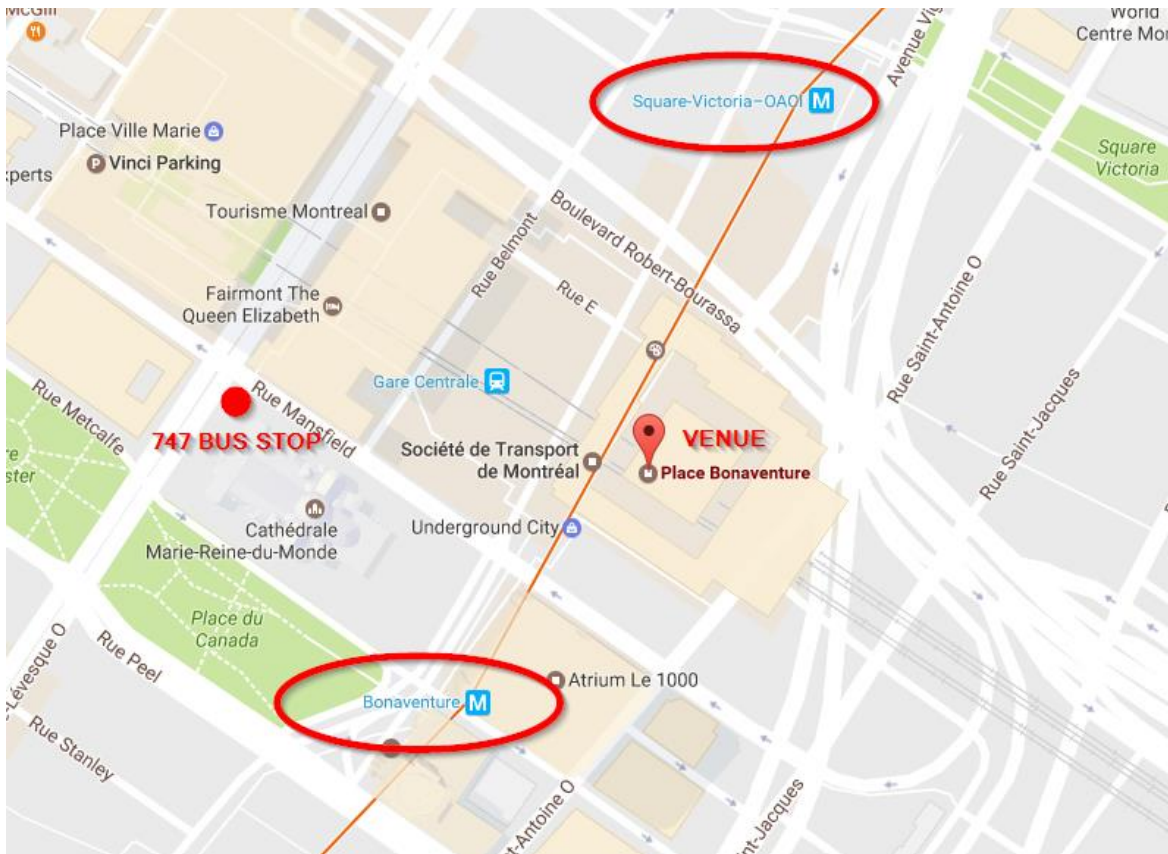
<http://www.stm.info/sites/default/files/planibus/en/747.pdf>

2.3 How to get there by public transit

Place Bonaventure is rather conveniently situated between the Bonaventure and Square Victoria metro stations on the Orange Line (the circled stations on the map below; see also the metro map in section 1.2 above).

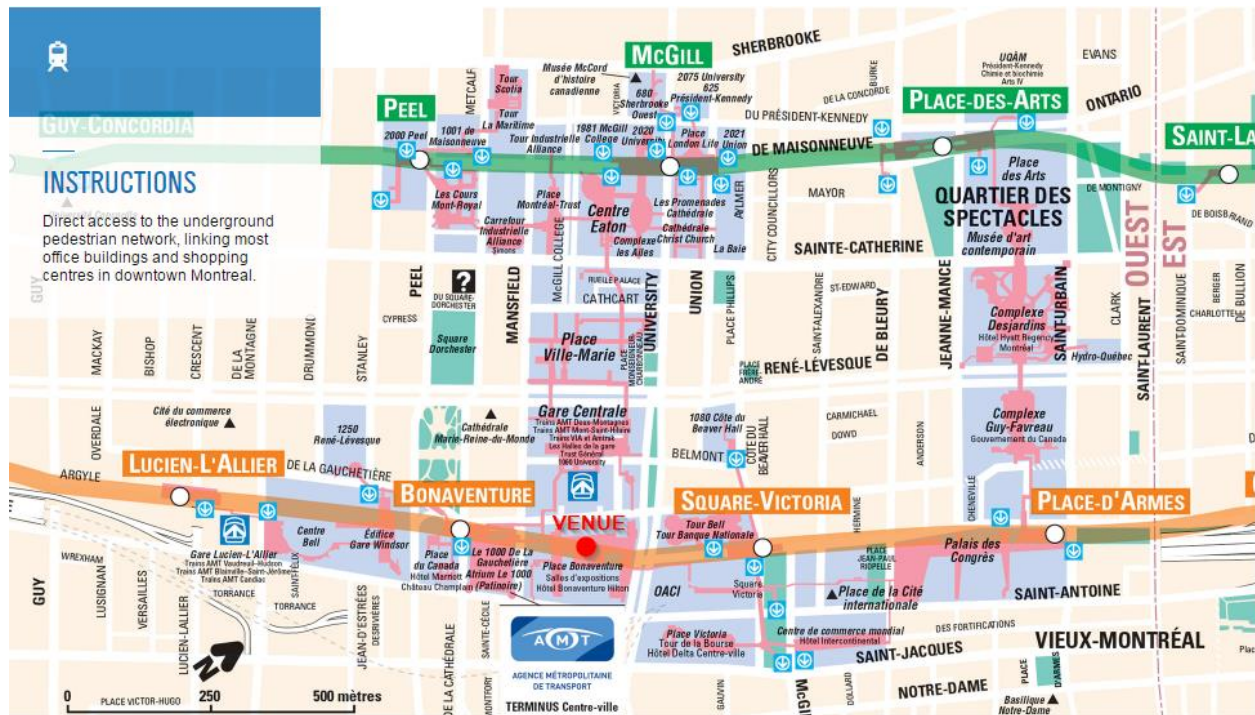
You can find additional directions here:

<http://placebonaventure.com/en/getting-there>



Source: Google Maps

Finally, note that the convention center is directly connected to Montreal's underground city, allowing for easy access to many sources of food, entertainment, and shopping. On the map below, the area shaded in pink is all underground and connected.



Source: <http://placebonaventure.com/en/getting-there/underground/>

3. Accommodation

3.1 Staff Hotel

Spellkeeper has arranged for a room block to be available for judges and players to book at the Marriot, a five minute walk from the venue.

Montreal Marriott Chateau Champlain

1050 de la Gauchetiere West
Montreal, QC
H3B 4C9

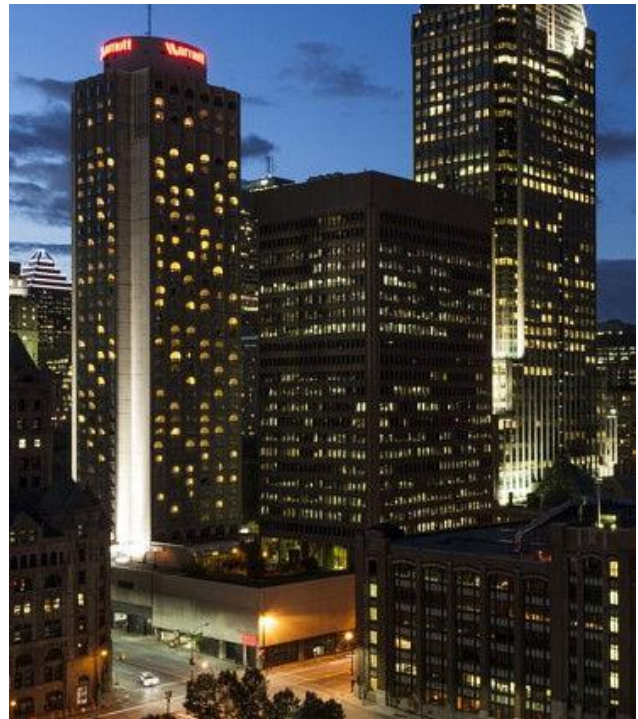
~\$180 per night

In order to take advantage of this, follow this link:

[Click Here](#)

You can also make reservations by phone:

1-800-200-5909



Be warned that this room block is open to players as well as judges so it is likely to fill up quickly!

3.2 Other Hotels near the venue

There are a number of other hotels near the venue if you wish to make independent arrangements, as well as some hostels which are slightly further away. Here are the details for a few of them:

3.2.1 Auberge Montreal Espace Confort

2050 Saint Denis Street
Montreal, QC H2X 3K7
(514) 849-0505

5 min walk from Sherbrooke metro station, which is five stops away from the venue on the Orange line.

~\$140 per night

3.2.2 Samesun Montreal Central Hostel

1586 Saint-Hubert
Montreal, QC H2L 3Z3
(514) 843-5739

5 min walk from Berri-QUAM metro station, which is four stops away from the venue on the Orange line.

~\$140 per night for private room (ensuite)

3.2.3 Le Centre Sheraton Hotel

1201 Boulevard René-Lévesque West,
Montréal, QC H3B 2L7
(514) 878-2000

10 min walk from venue

~\$300 per night

4. Food and drink

4.1 Places near the venue

4.1.1 Fast food

There are a variety of fast food options close by, either in Place Bonaventure itself, at the Gare Centrale (Central Station) located on the other side of the street, or in the underground tunnel that links the two buildings. It takes a maximum of 10 minutes to walk from the venue to any destination listed below. Note that these will, of course, be popular choices for many players, so if you have time you may want to explore some alternative options. Also, note that it is not guaranteed that all of the listed options will be open during the whole weekend (especially Sunday).

Place Bonaventure/Underground tunnel	Gare Centrale Building
Green Traiteur and Café (Vegetarian)	Basha (Chicken/Beef Shawarma)
La Prep (Healthy food)	Cantor (Bakery)
Marcello's (Coffee and Deli sandwiches)	Dame Nature Restaurant (hot/cold meals)
Place Tevere (Pizza and Pasta)	Deli Planet (Deli Restaurant)
Presse Café (Coffee Shop)	Fusée Rotisserie (Rotisserie Chicken)
Starbucks	Kababgy (Chicken Shawarma)
Subway	McDonald's
Sukiyaki (Asian food)	Subway
Sushi Quartier	Sushi Shop
Tiki-Ming (Asian food)	Starbucks
Valentine (Fast food)	Thai Express
	Tim Hortons (Coffee, Donuts, Sandwiches)

4.1.2 Other Options

The venue is located not far from Montreal's Chinatown. Simply walk east along La Gauchetiere for 15 minutes or so until you get to Saint Urbain and you will find a variety of hole-in-the-wall restaurants on each side. A little farther up St Urbain you can find **La Maison Kim Fung** on your right, which offers a Dim Sum lunch or an a la carte dinner (the Peking duck is quite good):

1111, Rue Saint-Urbain, #M05
Montreal, QC H2Z 1Y6
514.878.2888
<http://www.restaurantchinatownkimfung.com/>

Alternatively, you could walk north along Mansfield until you hit St Catherine's (10 min walk), at which point turning west leads you past **Reuben's** (high-end deli) and **Les 3 Brasseurs** (a brew pub).

1116 Rue Ste-Catherine O,
Montréal, QC H3B 1H5
514.866.1029
<http://reubensdeli.com/>

732 Rue Ste-Catherine O
Montréal, QC H3B 2V5
514.788.6333
<http://les3brasseurs.ca/eng/>



4.2 Ramen

At a 15 minute walk from the venue you can find **Hakata Ramen**, one of our personal favourite restaurants. The ramen soups are made traditionally (handmade noodles, soup base made fresh daily, great meats and vegetables) and the service is always excellent. They also offer a variety of other great dishes, so take a look at the menu on their website. Unlike many other ramen places, this one has a big dining room which can handle larger groups.

1216 Stanley Street, Suite 200 (2nd floor)
Montreal, QC H3B 2S7
514.759.6688

15 minute walk northwest of the venue, or take the Bell Centre Exit at metro Bonaventure then follow north on Stanley Street

<http://www.hakataramen.ca/>



Photo: Hakata Ramen Facebook page

If you've got time on your hands, we also strongly recommend **Yokato Yokabai**, which offers a traditionally Japanese ramen experience. It is quite popular, however, so be prepared to wait half an hour or more for a seat if you arrive at peak hours. Contrary to Hakata, this place is very small, so it is best to go alone rather than in a group.

4185 Drolet
Montreal, QC H2W 2L5
514.282.9991

10 minute walk from Mount Royal metro on the Orange line

4.3 Poke

Ever heard of Poke (pronounced “Pok-hey”)? This dish of Hawaiian origin could be best described as deconstructed Sushi in a bowl. Think raw fish marinated in a mix of Asian spices, diced and put on a bed of rice with various vegetables. Poke is quickly gaining popularity in Montreal among those seeking more exotic culinary experiences, so here are a couple of places you can find it:

Koa Lua
1212 Union Avenue
Montreal, QC H3B 3C4

Located between McGill metro station on the Green line and Square Victoria metro station on the Orange line

Venice MTL
1045 Cote du Beaver Hall
Montreal, QC H2Z 1S5

5 minute walk from Square Victoria metro station on the Orange line



Photo: Venice MTL

4.4 Local specialties

Montreal is host to a wide variety of different cultures, but that does not mean it hasn't got a distinct culture of its own. For the more adventurous of you, we have provided below a selection of quintessentially "Montreal" foods. Please note that these places are not within easy walking distance of the venue, so you will need to make use of public transit.

4.4.1 Schwartz's Deli

This is the home of the famous Montreal-style smoked meat sandwich. Every day at lunchtime a crowd of people can be seen waiting outside—either for a spot in the deli, or to place an order for take-away. Popular with businessmen and tourists alike, we would certainly recommend this classic Montreal experience.

**3895 Boulevard Saint-Laurent,
Montréal, QC H2W 1L2**

514.842.4813

<http://schwartzsdeli.com/ca/en/>

Bus 55 North stops directly outside



Source:

<https://blogs.mcgill.ca/gradlife/2010/10/06/what%E2%80%99s-montreal%E2%80%99s-b-k-s/>



Source:

<http://www.whatquebecwants.com/whatquebecwants/foodservice/>

4.4.2 Montreal style bagels

For those interested in learning what *real* bagels should taste like (none of that New York-style hogwash), head down to one of Montreal's two renowned bagel bakeries: **Fairmount Bagel** or **St Viateur Bagel**. Although these aren't places to sit down and eat, you can't go wrong taking out an order of a dozen fresh bagels with a side of smoked salmon spread or cream cheese. They make for a nice light lunch, and you should have plenty to spare for breakfast the next morning.

Fairmount Bagel
74 Avenue Fairmount Ouest,
Montréal, QC H2T 2M2
<http://www.fairmountbagel.com/>



Source:
<http://thedailyeater.com/dev/2010/10/montreal-bagels.html>



Source: <http://www.montrealfooddivas.com/st-viateur-bagel-montreal-bakery/>

St Viateur Bagel
263 Rue Saint Viateur Ouest,
Montréal, QC H2V 1Y1
<https://www.stviateurbagel.com/>

4.4.3 Poutine

Of course, nothing could be more quintessentially *Québécois* than poutine. Although you can find versions of this simple food all over the world (for instance, a variant can be found at kebab vans in the UK under the moniker “cheesy chips and gravy”), nothing beats the original. Wherever you look for fast food in Montreal, you are likely to find this item on the menu. Popular fast-food establishments include **La Belle Province**, **Lafleur**, and **St. Hubert**.

If you are interested in a more unique poutine experience, try visiting **La Banquise**, where they specialize in an entire menu dedicated to nothing but variations on the classic:

994, rue Rachel Est
Montréal, Québec H2J 2J3
514.525.2415

<http://labanquise.com/en/>

*10 minute walk from Station Mont-Royal
on the Orange line*



Open 24/7, La Banquise offer a really wide range of poutines (about 30 or so) from the classical one to the more complicated ones. It also offers a variety of microbrewery beers to accompany your meal.

Word of warning: because of its popularity, expect to have to wait in line if you wish to eat on-site during its rush hours (lunchtime, suppertime, and at 3AM when night clubs close).

5. Entertainment

5.1 Gaming Pubs

5.1.1 Randolph Pub Ludique

Unlike traditional LGS businesses, this is actually a gaming pub! There is a \$5 cover charge, which allows you to sit and play any of their wide selection of available board games. They serve a good variety of Quebec-brewed beers and ales, as well as light finger food and cocktails.

<http://www.randolphpub.ca/>

**2041 St-Denis
Montréal, H2X 3K8
514 419-5001**

10 minute walk from Station Sherbrooke on the Orange Line



5.1.2 Le Colonel Moutarde

Like the Randolph, the Colonel Moutarde offers a variety of excellent drinks and great food to eat. So long as one orders food or drink, there is no additional cover charge to play the games.

Both pubs have dedicated staff who are very knowledgeable about board games and can give you advice on the best game to play, depending on your group's size and preferences. This is perfect for small groups who wish to unwind after a hard day at the Grand Prix!

<http://colonelmoutarde.ca/>

**4418 Saint-Denis Street
Montreal, H2J 2L1
438.385.4418**

5 minute walk from Station Mont-Royal on the Orange Line

5.1.3 Nexus Smart Bar

The Nexus SmartBar opened at the end of 2015 and has quickly become the go-to place to watch e-sports while drinking an assortment of videogame-themed drinks. If there is a big e-sport event going on that is being streamed on Twitch, it will likely be featured here for you to cheer on your favorite player/team.

There also video games consoles (Xbox One, PS4, Wii U) everywhere which you are free to use to play with or against your friends (a deposit required for borrowing controllers).

<http://www.nexus.bar/en>

323 Ontario Street East

Montreal, H2X 1H7

5-10 minute walk from Station Berri-UQAM on the Green and Orange lines

5.2 Escape Rooms

Escape rooms have become quite popular in Montreal these past two years, and there are a variety of options of varying themes and difficulties. The escape room experience is fun, challenging, and an excellent teamwork-building exercise. Considering their popularity, however, it is strongly suggested you reserve in advance as soon as possible.

5.2.1 A/MAZE Montreal

3550 Saint-Jacques Street

Montreal, H4C 1H2

5 minute walk from Lionel-Groulx station on the Orange and Green lines

<http://www.amazemontreal.com/>

5.2.2 Trouvez la clé / Find the Key

1000 Amherst Street

Montreal, H2L 3K5

10 minute walk from Berri-UQAM station on the Orange and Green lines

<http://findthekey.ca/>

5.2.3 Obsidiem

2025 Parthenais Street

Montreal, H2K 3T2

5-10 min walk from Frontenac station on the Green Line

<http://obsidem.com/en/>

5.2.4 Eskapaz

3955 St-Laurent Boulevard

Montreal, H2W 1Y4

15 minute walk from Sherbrooke station on the Orange line

http://www.ezkapaz.com/welcome/#ezkapaz_en