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Canada's *Exotic Island* - Îles-de-la-Madeleine

By Mary Hughes



Canada's east coast has a secret called the Magdalen Islands - 80 kilometers long and located in the middle of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Boasting some of the most beautiful beaches, B&Bs, and restaurants, there are lots of recreational activities and places of interest. The challenge is getting there! There are only two ways, plane or boat. You can take your car and travel over by ferry from Prince Edward Island or by cruise ship that departs from Montreal. Several aviation companies offer daily flights to the Îles-de-la-Madeleine, with flights from Montréal, Québec and Gaspé.

But that is part of the fun of this island - it is like being on an exclusive holiday without the crowds and lineups.



Must sees on the island:

Havre-sur-Mer is a fabulous B&B that is right on the shore and offers an incredible view of the beach. Owned by Thérèse Bergeron, her 'Sympathetic Inn' offers 10 rooms and suites with a gourmet multi-course breakfast each morning. Nothing compares to waking up in the sunshine and tranquil winds of the island. It is a beautiful inn that you won't want to leave! www.havresurmer.com

Le Domaine du Vieux Couvent, an old convent, has been transformed into a wonderful New York style hotel. It's owned by Réginald Poirier who bought it 25 years ago and thought he would run it and then sell it in a few years – but he still hasn't left the island! The inn has 10 exquisitely appointed rooms. Be sure to admire the ceiling of your room, for a delicately



painted French verse. Gourmet dining is offered in the evenings in, and outside on a lovely porch overlooking the water. www.domaineduvieuxcouvent.com

La Butte Ronde, Couette et Café; This old school house is over 5,000 sq. ft. and has been turned into an incredible B&B. Owners Guy and Ghislain offer five very upscale and comfortable accommodations. The bathrooms are especially appointed with high-end



La Butte Ronde owners Ghislain Brudreau and Guy Martineau

amenities that you'll definitely want to check out. There is even a grand piano in the living room that Ghislain plays for their guests. Magnificent! www.labutteronde.com

La Salicorne is the island's outdoor adventure resort. Located at the north end of the island, this resort offers pretty much everything from 26 rooms to full dining. You can live your outdoor adventure dream here. Office manager Lola Burke can arrange anything for you, from surf kayaking, exploring the caves by kayak, biking and more.





Try the popular mud bath on Boudreau Island: kayaking from the main beach over to a nearby island, cover yourself in their famous red clay. Loaded with minerals and healing properties, a soak in the mud can bring smooth and refreshed skin, just like a trip to the spa but without the price! Most activities are included with your overnight stay! It is a great deal! www.salicorne.ca

Great Places to sample while on the Island:

Restaurant La Table des Roy offers the best fine dining experiences on the island. You'll find intimate candlelit tables and a gorgeous presentation in a wonderful house-like setting. Be sure to try the Seafood Bouillabaisse. YUM! www.latabledesroy.com

Auberge chez Denis à François: In 1874, during a terrible storm, a ship was washed ashore on the Sandy Hook beach. Using the lumber from the ship's cargo, the inn "Auberge chez Denis à François"

was born. This restaurant and inn is authentic French in every way. Everything on the menu is exceptional and of course the seafood is at the top of the list! www.aubergechezdenis.ca



You can never say no to fresh lobster!

Aéroparc Carrefour d'Aventures

This is an experience not to be missed! Aéroparc offers an array of outdoor sports including kite flying, kite surfing, boarding, buggying and more.

Owned by professional snowboarder and pro-kite surfer Eric Marchand, he and his staff are amazing and you have to try kite flying! www.aerospport.ca

Fromagerie du Pied-de-Vent is the island's cheese store and all the cheese is handmade right on site thanks to their resident cows. Amazing taste and texture and they offer a few varieties including their famous Pied-de-Vent.

Microbrasserie À l'abri de la Tempête

On the island you will love to visit the beer microbrewery - and the best part is the tasting bar upstairs. www.alabridelatempete.com

For more information on other fabulous places contact the Îles-de-la-Madeline please visit: www.tourismeilesdelamadeleine.com or call 877-624-4437