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CONTENTS

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Editorial

- 2** **WHILE WAITING FOR THE AUTONOMOUS CAR...**

Travel

- 4** **MAGIC MOMENTS**
▶ Death Valley: Land of extremes
- 6** **TO DISCOVER**
▶ X-Nature: Young people meet Mother Nature
▶ Kéroul: Accessible travel for all
▶ Gyroplane: A discovery flight
▶ The camping app *Le Campeur*
▶ Goal Zero: Stay connected in the wilderness
- 11** **SHORT STAYS**
▶ Cycling the Blueberry Trail
- 18** **TAKING OFF**
▶ Hawaii: Volcanoes and the Aloha spirit

Home

- 47** **GREEN LIVING**
▶ Eco-friendly construction
- 52** **PRACTICAL MATTERS**
▶ Warm up the pool!
- 54** **INSURANCES**
▶ Should your wine be insured?

Automobile

- 59** **TRENDS**
▶ Same platform, multiple vehicles
- 63** **PRACTICAL MATTERS**
▶ Battery basics
- 64** **ZOOM**
▶ Formula E comes to Montreal
- 66** **ROAD TESTS**



CAA-Quebec and You

- 27** **FRONT & CENTRE**
▶ CAA-Quebec Foundation: Road-safety research is our mission
- 28** **NEWS**
▶ The past year at CAA-Quebec
▶ Photo radars: When will the revenue finally be invested in road safety?
▶ Provincial consultation on road safety: CAA-Quebec adds its expertise
▶ Quebec's *Worst Roads*
▶ Road-congestion study: Millions of dollars go up in smoke
- 34** **MY NO-STRESS CARD**
▶ Testimonial: Never without his card
▶ Dream vacations with *explore Amérique du Nord*
▶ Is it time to replace your roof?
▶ Just the ticket: *L'Annuel de l'auto d'occasion*
▶ TripTik: New and improved
▶ Postcard: Austria
▶ Travel Q & A
- 45** **HOW TO REACH US**



Download the magazine's digital version via the App Store or Google Play. You'll find exclusive videos and still more insightful contents.

While waiting for the autonomous car ...

For decades, technology has come to the motorist's rescue either by providing protection or assistance. This has contributed to improving the road-safety record. If the past is any indication, can we hope that the number of road-accident victims will continue to diminish? Perhaps, but at the same time we must be careful not to trivialize the importance of driver behaviour and judgment in favour of technologies that certainly allow real gains in road safety.

Thus, even before electronic stability control (ESC) became mandatory in 2011, Transport Canada cited data suggesting that, between 2000 and 2005, 29 percent of fatal and injury-sustaining collisions caused by loss of control could have been prevented if all light vehicles in Canada had been equipped with ESC. In the United States, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) estimated the potential reduction of fatal-accident risk at 49 percent.

Clearly, technology isn't the answer to everything. That's why it's important that we work to change the way we behave on the road. Technology notwithstanding, citizens and organizations, who participated in the recent public consultation on road safety held by the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (see article on p. 30), had genuine concerns precisely to do with human behaviour! Have we forgotten perhaps that driving is still a complex activity, one that requires our total attention?

Nonetheless, automatic emergency braking will be standard in 99 percent of new vehicles within five years. According to the IIHS, this technology could prevent some 28,000 road accidents in the United States by 2025. That's a huge gain for road safety. Toyota didn't wait and has added its Safety Sense package to almost all its 2017 models. Interestingly enough, some basic models may lack air conditioning, but are equipped with automatic emergency braking

and adaptive cruise control, designed to keep a set distance behind another vehicle. And this is far from over!

Such driver-assist devices pave the way for 100-percent autonomous cars, promising to reduce traffic accidents dramatically. But until then, all drivers should keep in mind their personal role in their behaviour. Our daily travels will be safer as a result. And to the best of our knowledge, no technology currently in use equals the good judgment of a conscientious driver.

**CLEARLY,
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ISN'T THE ANSWER
TO EVERYTHING.
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Richard Lachance
President and CEO



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United States

DEATH VALLEY

Scorching winds, heavenly landscapes and unrelenting sunshine combine to make Death Valley a land of extremes. North America's hottest and driest place is also a region of astonishing beauty.

BY MARIE-NOËL OUMET

Located about two hours west of Las Vegas, with breathtaking panoramas and temperatures hovering around 45°C, Death Valley National Park offers an unparalleled experience to visitors brave enough to venture there during the summer months. Roaming its barren hills, salt flats and canyons, you feel as if you were transported to another planet, inhospitable and fascinating at the same time.

There's so much to explore – Dante's View, Zabriskie Point, the salt formations at Devil's Golf Course, the Mesquite Flat sand dunes, to name only the best known. The renowned valley deserves at least an overnight stay so you can be there both at sunrise and sunset when it reveals its full splendour. At night, the starry sky is so remarkably clear that Death Valley National Park has been designated an "International Dark-Sky Park" by the

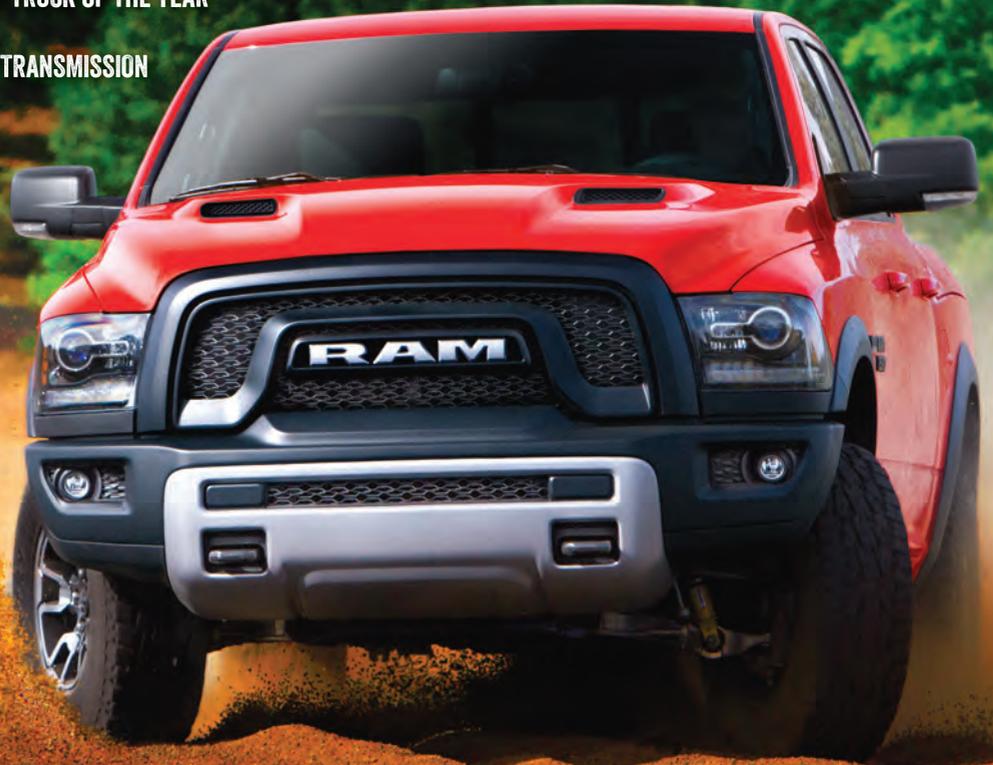
eponymous association. The Furnace Creek Resort is a convenient place to spend the night, and where you can also cool off poolside during the day. In fact, life in Death Valley revolves around this complex that has wide-ranging amenities including a museum devoted to Death Valley's colourful history.

► **California and Las Vegas: three departures in 2017. Info at VOYAGE.CAAQUEBEC.COM/EN/**

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HAUTE-MAURICIE / Young people meet Mother Nature

X-Nature Triton is a three-day program designed to introduce 12- to 17-year-olds to the natural world. It was launched last year by the outfitter La Seigneurie du Triton with the support of the Fondation de la faune du Québec and several similar organizations. Located near Lac-Édouard in Haute Mauricie, this well-known fishing-and-hunting outfitter is the ideal place to get to know more about mother nature. Accessible only by boat, the site feels magical. Youngsters can try a wide range of outdoor activities: fly-fishing, hunting and canoeing, as well as studying the biology of captured species and different approaches for protecting natural habitats. During their stay, young people will also learn about the lives of fur-bearing animals, trapping methods, and outdoor survival techniques.

► seigneuriedutriton.com

KÉROUL / Accessible travel for all

It's not easy travelling with a disabled person, finding a wheelchair-accessible hotel room or adapted transportation in an unfamiliar city. Kéroul is a non-profit organization that, since 1979, has worked to make travel and the arts available to people with restricted physical abilities. Its "Destinations for All" certification gives a seal of approval to those Quebec cities it identifies as providing the right kind of practical support to those who need it – accommodation, transportation, restaurants, attractions, shops, and so on. These cities and towns are awarded one to five stars based on Kéroul's accessibility standards. The website also serves as a search engine to find an accessible restaurant, camping ground or pharmacy in a given area. The association has developed something called "The Accessible Road," a tool that covers 17 Quebec tourist regions and more than 250 travel websites.

► keroul.qc.ca / larouteaccessible.com/index.php/en/



AUTOGYRO / A discovery flight

An autogyro or gyroplane is a flying machine that is between a helicopter and a fixed-wing aircraft. Gyro Aventure, located at both Neuville and Drummondville airports, is where you can try it out. Owner Denis Anctil and his team offer two choices: a 30- or 45-minute "discovery" flight, or a 60-minute Quebec City tour. Both options are a terrific way to admire Quebec's natural beauty and landmarks from a great altitude: the majestic St. Lawrence River, the broad Plains of Abraham, Vieux-Québec architectural gems like Château Frontenac, and more. The planes are equipped with dual controls so, if you wish, you yourself can pilot the return flight to the airport – assisted, of course, by a qualified instructor.

► gyroaventure.com



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Le Campeur

LE CAMPEUR / Camping app

New recreational-vehicle (RV) owners have much to learn about caring for and making the most of their vehicle, not to mention about where RVs are allowed. Fortunately, the Fédération québécoise de camping et de caravaning (FQCC) has made a free tool available (only in French) – called Le Campeur – to help RV owners navigate all that. Composed of an interactive map and a mobile app for Android and Apple operating system (iOS) users, Le Campeur also helps to locate camping grounds, service stations, stores specializing in all things RV and camping.

► lecampeur.mobi

DID YOU KNOW ? ► CAA-Quebec offers CAA Plus RV memberships for RV owners. For more information, visit CAAQUEBEC.COM/EN/BECOME-A-MEMBER/

GOAL ZERO / Stay connected in the wilderness

It's not always easy to combine camping and electronic devices that constantly seem to require charging. The Goal Zero's Guide 10 Plus Solar Kit can come in handy! This kit consists of a 7-watt solar panel and a powerful 9,200-mAH recharger with four removable AA or AAA batteries (perfect also for devices with no built-in battery). A USB port and a 12V socket power all the other electronic devices you might decide to bring along. The \$120 price may sound steep, but is worth it – especially in the age of Instagram.

► goalzero.com



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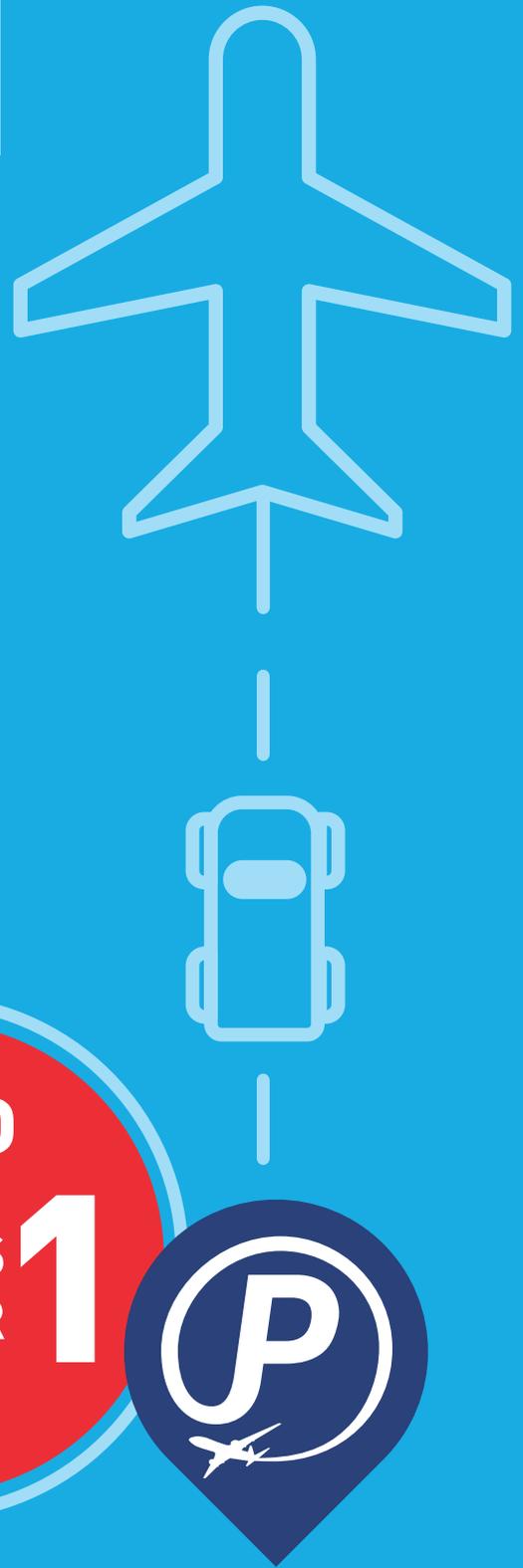
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CYCLING THE BLUEBERRY TRAIL

The Véloroute des Bleuets is a 256-kilometre cycling loop around Lac Saint-Jean. The landscapes, gourmet stops and available services along the way combine to make it an unforgettable experience.

BY CHANTAL LAPOINTE

The Véloroute des Bleuets features the kind of amenities that are a cyclist's dream. The trail is as popular as ever, having welcomed more than 50,000 visitors during the summer of 2015 alone. Roughly half were out-of-towners, attracted by the majestic Lac-Saint-Jean region that makes two-wheeled exploration so much fun. The trail is flexible so you can take the time to enjoy the changing landscapes and ride at your own pace or in step with the mood and hospitality of the *Jeannois*, as people of Lac-Saint-Jean are called.

Green vacations

Linked to the Vélo Québec Route Verte, your journey can be accomplished in just three or four days, but to fully appreciate it, take five or six. Enjoy an afternoon dip in the lake, for example, or take an evening walk through the Saint-Félicien Zoo and experience the new Anima Lumina light show created by Montreal multimedia giant Moment Factory. ▶

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You can stop as often as you wish to sample local delicacies. In fact, the Véloroute features itineraries of varying lengths, all on mostly paved, flat surfaces. “Most people ride two 20- or 30-kilometre segments a day, often no more than 3 or 4 hours,” says Véloroute manager David Lecointre. “There’s a village every 15 kilometres or so, not to mention bike-repair shops. Signage is good, and if you tire, there’s a shuttle to help you along. It really is a worry-free ride.”

Planning your trip

Summer’s a busy season, so it’s important to book ahead for the best accommodations and luggage transport. Take time to have your bike checked over and study ferry options and schedules. The Véloroute website provides a host of practical information, which is also available at any of the four Véloroute bike shops.

Sunbathing at Pointe-Taillon

Take it from the pros: When you set out from Alma, ride counter-clockwise, remembering that the trail loops around the lake. Soon you’ll find yourself on a 16-kilometre car-free stretch through Parc national de la Pointe-Taillon, a peninsula best known for its sandy beaches and peaty terrain. The fauna and flora, too, hold lots of surprises for cyclists. The road here is not paved but, instead, is covered with compacted stone dust – easygoing on a bike. When the sun is at its hottest, stop for a dip in the cool water or to relax on the long sandy shore. If the weather is exceptionally clear, you can see right across Lac Saint-Jean to the opposite shore. At 1,000 square kilometres, the lake is one of Quebec’s 10 largest – so large in fact it seems like a landlocked sea! Camping in the nearby village of Sainte-Monique will round out your day. ▶

GOURMET SHOPS

LA CHOCOLATERIE DES PÈRES TRAPPISTES in Mistassini is an institution. Try the chocolate-covered blueberries.

CHOCOLATERIEDESPERES.COM

LA FROMAGERIE PERRON in Saint-Prime. Try the aged cheddar and the still-warm Couïc-Couïc cheese. The poutine bar is another treat.

FROMAGERIEPERRON.COM

LA TABLÉE DU LAC in Métabetchouan. A combined butcher shop, fine grocery store and bakery, it offers delicious terroir products for picnicking. LATABLEEDULAC.COM

LA CHOCOLATERIE AU CŒUR FONDANT in Alma. The *parfait aux œufs fondants* and house ice-cream sandwiches are divine.

AUCOEURFONDANT.COM

L'AUBERGE-BISTRO ROSE & BASILIC in Alma. One of the best restaurants in the region. ROSEETBASILIC.COM

THREE MICROBREWERIES La Chouape in Saint-Félicien LACHOUAPE.COM, La Microbrasserie du Lac-Saint-Jean in Saint-Gédéon MICRODULAC.COM, and Microbrasserie Le Coureur des Bois in Dolbeau-Mistassini.

LES DÉLICIES DU LAC-SAINT-JEAN in Albanel, a shop dedicated to all things blueberry. DELICESDULAC.COM

DÉDÉLICIEUX in Normandin. This breakfast-and-lunch restaurant was named for the late singer “Dédé” Fortin, a Normandin native. Offers generous helpings before you hit the road again. DEDELICIEUX.COM





Located between Saint-Gédéon and Métabetchouan, the O'Soleil co-operative offers kitesurfing and a host of other outdoor activities.

Chute-à-l'Ours tourist site

The Véloroute winds its way through 15 municipalities as well as the First Nations community of Mashteuatsh. It also leads to tourist sites dotting the roads that overlook some of the lake's tributaries. One of those sites is Chute-à-l'Ours, named after

the 1.5-kilometre rapids that form a part of the Ashuapmushuan River in Normandin. This is a fine wilderness setting either for fishing or spending the night. The site is also a vacation village of sorts, offering camping grounds, log cabins and cottages complete with swimming pool, bingo nights and activities for children.

Surfing and music at Saint-Gédéon

The Saint-Gédéon-Desbiens stretch runs closer to the shoreline and along the railroad tracks. Here, the view is especially stunning, an added bonus at journey's end and ready for scrapbook snapshots. Located along the border between Saint-Gédéon and Métabetchouan, the O'Soleil co-operative is a handy place to unwind and take stock of your lake-circling expedition. Founded by a group of young university students interested in adventure travel, the co-op offers a variety of activities ranging from adrenaline-rushing water sports like kitesurfing and paddle-boarding to music shows, bistro fare of fresh, local ingredients, and bike rentals.

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GOOD TO KNOW

EN ROUTE TO THE VÉLOROUTE ▶ Stop at La Pulperie de Chicoutimi museum, a historic site worth the detour. CAA-Quebec members get 25% off the ticket price.

THE VÉLOROUTE BIKE EXPERIENCE SAGUENAY-LAC-SAINT-JEAN ▶ The brochure (free to download, \$10 by mail) is a handy resource for organizing your trip. VELOROUTE-BLEUETS.QC.CA

MORE CYCLING ▶ The *Québec à vélo* and *Le Québec cyclable* guides are available at a CAA-QuebecTravel Boutique. BOUTIQUE.CAAQUEBEC.COM

PEDAL ON WITH PEACE OF MIND! ▶ CAA-Quebec Bike Assist can take you and your bike wherever you need to go. CAAQUEBEC.COM/EN/ON-THE-ROAD/SERVICES/BIKE-ASSIST/

TRAVERSÉE DU LAC SAINT-JEAN ▶ (depart from Péribonka and arrive at Roberval): July 22-29, 2017

LE FESTIVAL DU BLEUET DE DOLBEAU-MISTASSINI
▶ August 2-6, 2017

LE FESTIRAME D'ALMA
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▶ See map and other addresses in the magazine's digital version.

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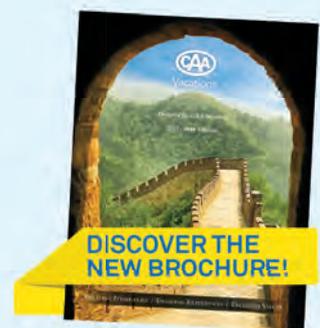
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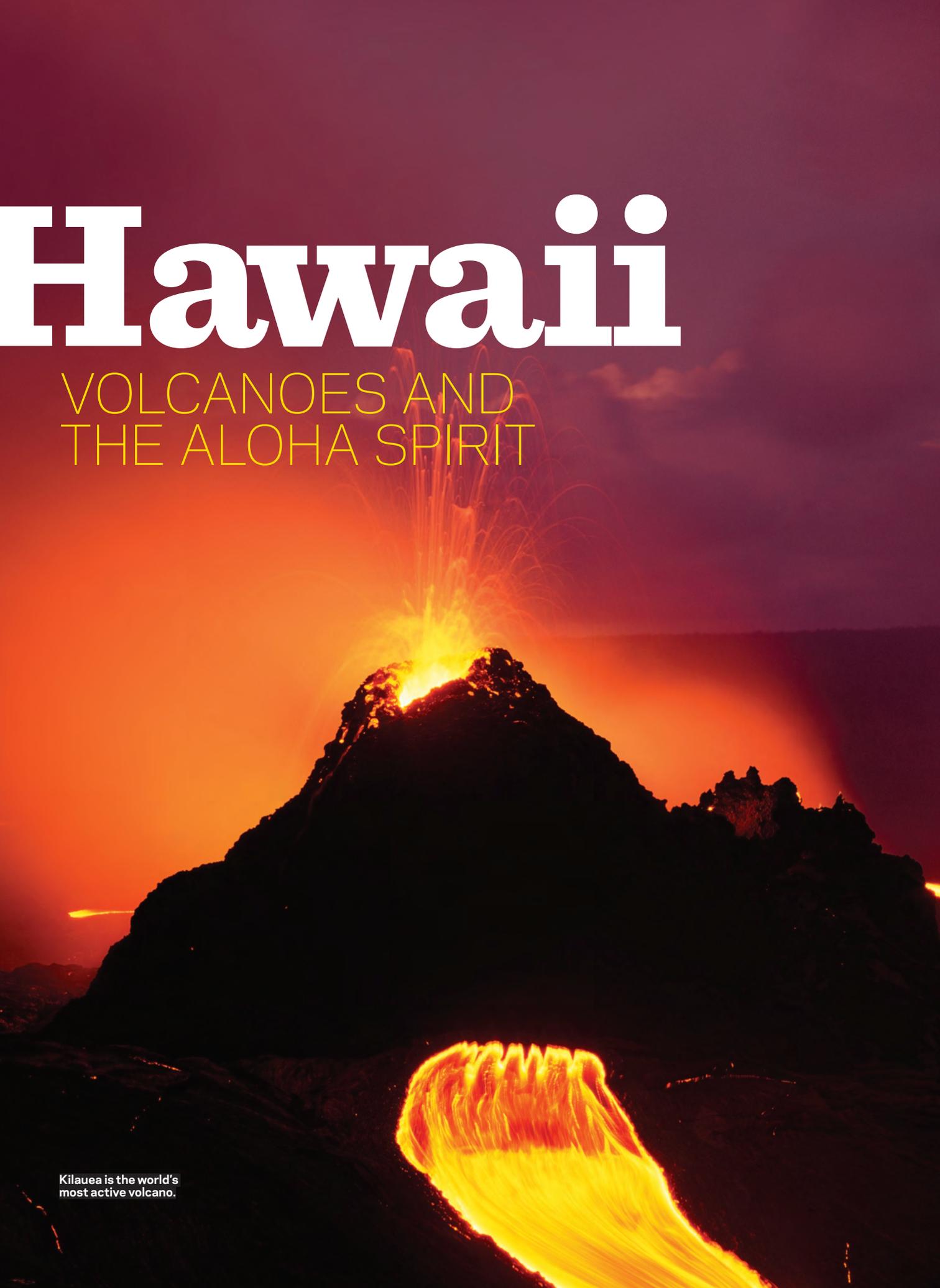
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1. \$150 savings and \$80 excursion credit are offered for Best of Germany and Treasures of Ireland. Exclusive CAA benefits for the other trips. 2. Not offered for Treasures of the Incas and Classical India & Nepal. Consult the CAA Vacations 2017-2018 brochure for complete details, terms and conditions. CAA-Quebec Travel is a Quebec permit holder.

Hawaii

VOLCANOES AND
THE ALOHA SPIRIT

Kilauea is the world's
most active volcano.



If you get a kick from veering off the beaten path *en famille*, then head for Big Island. An unforgettable experience – for parents and kids alike – awaits you.

BY MARIE-JOSÉ DESMARAIS

Big Island (whose name is Hawaii, like the state itself) is by far the largest, youngest and wildest island in the Hawaiian archipelago. Volcanoes, lava fields and deserted beaches, they're everywhere you look. For our two teenagers, it turned out to be a mecca for exciting outdoor fun. They tried it all – diving, surfing, camping on a volcano – and came within an inch of throwing away their cellphones and other electronic gadgets! The change of scenery is so dramatic that you can't help but succumb to the aloha spirit. Aloha, meaning hello, also denotes the Hawaiian culture of respect, altruism, hospitality and harmonious living – the perfect antidote to our normally frenzied lives.

Glamping under the stars

The Hawaii Volcanoes National Park is Big Island's number one attraction – no surprise since the island contains a total of five volcanoes, including Mauna Loa and Kilauea, two of the world's most active. In fact, Kilauea has been in constant eruption since 1983. Its lava flows have smothered villages, roads and forests, completely altering the region's geography. So don't just rush through the park, as many visitors are prone to do. Allow at least two full days. On the menu are 100 miles of trails to explore and a host of natural phenomena to observe. There are two must-do hikes to fit into your itinerary. The first is Kilauea Iki Trail, a three-hour hike through a lush rainforest taking you down to the lava floor toward an old crater. You'll see fumaroles (formed along cracks and fissures) from which volcanic gas escapes into the air. The second must-do is the Thurston Lava Tube, a 20-minute hike through a dimly lit cave



formed by lava that flowed 500 years ago. And the giant-fern forest leading to it is an experience all by itself: shades of Jurassic Park!

What about the sort of images we see on television and in travel brochures – molten lava splashing into the ocean and exploding on impact? Well, don't hold your breath: That doesn't happen every day. It all depends on the volcano itself – and the decision of park rangers, who may restrict access to the site for safety reasons. Still, you can try your luck by hiking on out-of-the-way trails at nightfall. The show, if there is one, will be spectacular especially at sunset.



◀ The farther north you go, the cooler the temperature gets and the scrubbier the vegetation becomes. Then, at the tip of the island, you're greeted by an amazing view over the Waipio Valley, the most beautiful you can imagine...

The problem is how to get back to the hotel afterward. A boat or helicopter ride (from Hilo) would be memorable, but not easy on the pocketbook.

Volcano House is the only available lodging inside the park. It affords an amazing view of the crater. We opted for glamping under the stars: a cabin with comfortable beds and hotel-quality sheets and duvets – my kind of camping! We gave the barbecue a pass and took all our meals in the hotel restaurant, ever mindful of reserving a table by the window. Come evening, the view of the glowing crater took our breaths away but not our appetites!

Astonishing climate zones

Big Island is home to eight distinct climate zones, ranging from polar to tropical, and dry to continuously wet. In winter, you can even ski on Mauna Kea (Hawaiian for “white mountain”). Most hotels, vacation-condo rentals and tourist resorts are concentrated along the sunny west coast, around Kona, Waikoloa and Mauna Lani. Lush green golf courses abound, flower gardens thrive and the beaches are lined with palm trees even though it is in a desert zone where the temperature is a constant 28°C. But the minute you go outside the zone, black lava fields will greet you on every side as will an almost total absence of vegetation. You might begin to feel as if you had landed on the surface of Mars. It's no surprise, then, that NASA has established a Mars-simulation habitat on Mauna Loa to test human living conditions on the red planet.

To explore Big Island's eye-popping diversity, take the scenic Saddle Road that runs the width of the island, from Kona to Hilo. You'll pass expanses of black lava, followed by verdant hills and plains, the Mars-like red-rock desert near Mauna Kea and,



The Pu'u Wekiu cinder cone on Mauna Kea



Hawaii's abundant marine life is a coveted draw for divers.

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Mauna Kea Beach, one of Big Island's finest

©MARIE-JOSE DESMARAIS

finally, a fog-shrouded fern forest in the middle of a cold-and-wet zone – all that after barely 80 kilometres! On the return journey, go to Hilo, then head north along the Hamakua Coast, a tropical zone. Be sure to stop at the Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden and Akaka Falls, where you'll cross a thick rainforest punctuated with prehistoric flowers and vertiginous falls. The farther north you go, the cooler the temperature gets and the scrubbier the vegetation becomes. And then, suddenly at the summit, you're greeted by an amazing view over the Waipio Valley, the most beautiful that you can imagine... in the fog. A few minutes later heading back south, the season changes again: a vista of desert, blazing sun and azure sky. Truly an experience worth repeating.

In search of hidden beaches

The west – or Kona – coast has the clearest waters in the entire archipelago, not to mention magnificent beaches more suitable for swimming than surfing. Postcard-perfect Hapuna Beach tops the list. Mauna Kea Beach is ideal for swimming, scuba-diving lessons or just reading under a shady tree. But if you are already a diving aficionado, head straight for Kona where you can charter a boat that will take you to extraordinary sites. That was what we did. And don't forget your GoPro camera. My favourite beach, though, is Waialea, known only to the locals. No billboards or ads promote this hidden beauty. The easiest



Waialea Beach

RECOMMENDED GOURMET SPOTS

In the Kona region: **DA POKE SHACK** and **COSTCO** (yes, Costco – if you have a membership card): for a choice of poké (seasoned raw tuna cubes) for takeout or eating on the spot. **VILLAGE BURGER** in Waimea: for local beef and rare condiments. **KEN'S HOUSE OF PANCAKES** in Hilo: for its original menu and the staff screaming "Sumooo!" when a customer orders a giant portion (a teen fave). **LAVA LAVA BEACH CLUB** in Waikoloa: for its beach bar, tables in the sand, ukulele players and lighted torches at sunset.

► **Featured in the magazine's digital version: Don't miss our exclusive Hawaiian salmon poké recipe, a cooking video from the explore series.**





The towering Akaka Falls plummets 1.20 metres into a stream-eroded gorge.

way to reach it is to exit the highway at mile marker 71. There's white sand, black volcanic rocks and impressive waves, and the water is the most beautiful turquoise I've seen in Hawaii. Makalawena is another must-see, accessible only by four-wheelers where you'll probably be all by your lonesome. And then there's Green Sand Beach, located at the southern tip of the island and truly far from the madding crowd. And, oh yes, the sand is green here! Just by setting foot on it, you can brag that you've been to the southern-most part of the entire United States.

We did not go to Green Sand Beach. We did not dive at night with giant manta rays (a hallucinating experience, I hear). And we did not go to the top of Mauna Kea to stargaze. Despite a two-week stay on Big Island, we did not manage to do everything. But that gives us a reason to go back. And soon, I hope.



► Discover Maui in the magazine's digital version.

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PRACTICAL INFORMATION

WHEN TO GO ▶ Hawaii's average temperature varies slightly from one season to the next: 29°C in summer (drier) and 26°C in winter (more humid). In fact, it's the geography that determines the climate, changing dramatically from one coast to the other, in valleys or on mountaintops. In July and August, prices are lower and there are fewer tourists than in winter (especially during the holidays or spring break). You'll get the most substantial savings from mid-April to early June, and again from September to mid-December.

HOW TO GET THERE ▶ There are no direct flights from Quebec. You'll have to change planes once or twice depending on the airline. If you visit two islands, plan to arrive on one and depart from the other to save time and money. Inter-island flight

fare is less than \$100 per segment, if you book ahead. Hawaiian Airlines offers frequent and reliable flights.

WHERE TO STAY ▶ Options abound but, for a family, the most practical choice is to rent a condo or townhouse with facilities like a swimming pool, barbecue and outdoor gym in one of the many resorts. You'll appreciate having a kitchen for some meals, especially to make lunches for your day trips. And it's always handy to have a washing machine.

TRAVEL GUIDES ▶ The *Hawaii Revealed* guides, meticulously produced by locals, are far and away the best. Gohawaii.com covers a wide range of subjects and offers recommendations based on different modes of travel.

CAR RENTALS ▶ A car is indispensable for seeing the real Hawaii, especially if you want to go off on an expedition or explore out-of-the-way beaches. Check your personal auto policy before leaving to avoid paying insurance on top of your car rental costs (see our tips on CAAQUEBEC.COM).



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- Hawaii - Captivating Islands (2017)
- From Australia to Hawaii - The Pacific Route (2018)
- From Hawaii to Vancouver (2018)

▶ voyage.caaquebec.com/en

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Terms & Conditions: *Offer valid on new 2017 bookings made between April 2, 2017, and July 7, 2017. This offer is applicable to any Rocky Mountaineer holiday of five or more days booked in GoldLeaf Deluxe, GoldLeaf or SilverLeaf Service from the 2017 Rocky Mountaineer brochure on selected dates only. Deposits are required at the time of booking. Travel during the 2017 Rocky Mountaineer season between April and October on selected dates. Offer must be requested at the time of booking and will not be automatically allocated or retrospectively added. Free Seattle, Vancouver, Victoria, or Calgary accommodation matches the accommodation grade of the package booked. Free Vancouver, Victoria or Calgary accommodation can only be added to a Rocky Mountaineer package starting or ending in Vancouver or Calgary. Free Seattle accommodation can only be added to a Rocky Mountaineer package including Coastal Passage starting or ending in Seattle. The free additional hotel night cannot be booked as a stand-alone one night booking. Rocky Mountaineer reserves the right to amend the hotels included in the package in order to secure consecutive nights stay. Subject to availability: hotel properties will be allocated based on available inventory. Offer is not applicable to 2 or 3-day rail only bookings, Group Tour bookings or child prices. Not available in conjunction with any other offer. Offer has no cash value and is non-transferable. Offer is capacity controlled and may be modified, withdrawn or amended without prior notice. **CAA-Quebec Travel(r) Complimentary Inclusions: The CAA Member Benefit Merchandise Credit is with qualifying Rocky Mountaineer vacation packages in GoldLeaf Service or SilverLeaf Service. Eight (8) days or more in GoldLeaf Service receive \$200 per couple (\$100 per adult) Onboard Merchandise Credit. Eight (8) days or more in SilverLeaf Service receive \$100 per couple (\$50 per adult) Onboard Merchandise Credit. Four to seven (4-7) days in GoldLeaf Service receive \$100 per couple (\$50 per adult) Onboard Merchandise Credit. Four to seven (4-7) days in SilverLeaf Service receive \$70 per couple (\$35 per adult) Onboard Merchandise Credit. Redemption of merchandise credit is only available onboard the Rocky Mountaineer train. Additional conditions apply. CAA-Quebec Travel is a permit holder.

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EXPERIENCE THE BENEFITS



CAA-QUEBEC FOUNDATION

Road-safety research is our mission

The recent arrival of the CAA-Quebec Foundation's new director (see sidebar) reinforces the organization's goal to actively promote traffic safety and continue its commitment to the community. The results of its two research studies on the driving behaviour of young and older drivers will be made public this year.

Conducted by a team of Université de Montréal researchers, the first study – *Influence des parents et des pairs sur la prise de risque des jeunes conducteurs* ["Influence of parents and peers on risk-taking by young drivers"] – measures the degree of parental influence on student drivers and that exerted by peers after such student drivers receive their drivers' licences. Researchers also looked into

the impact and frequency of drug or alcohol use on young drivers' impulsive and risk-taking behaviour.

Initiated by the Laboratoire en informatique cognitive et environnement de formation de l'Université TÉLUQ, the second study – *Sécurité routière et conducteurs vieillissants* ["Road safety and aging drivers"] – analyzes older drivers' attention spans and vigilance. The researchers also looked into how intelligent transport systems (ITS) – like lane-departure warning or drowsy-alert detection – can assist drivers.

Based on the studies' findings, the Foundation will pursue its awareness-raising efforts promoting the adoption of the best driving behaviours on the road.



A NEW DIRECTOR AT THE FOUNDATION'S HELM

Marco Harrison has succeeded Yvon Lapointe as head of CAA-Quebec Foundation.

Bringing broad experience in the field of public safety and management, Mr. Harrison worked for 25 years at the Sûreté du Québec, including several years as police chief of MRC des Appalaches. A road-safety enthusiast, he is particularly proud that the awareness-raising activities he had organized for secondary-school graduates in his district were later adopted elsewhere in the province. He plans to pursue the goals of prevention and education in road safety and eco-mobility at CAA-Quebec Foundation.

Portrait of an action-packed year

The CAA-Quebec annual members' meeting, held last April 12 in Quebec City, was an opportunity for management to take stock of the just-ended fiscal year. The results matched expectations, starting with 1,272,000 members and counting on the current roster.

AUTOMOTIVE:

A sector always in demand

- ▶ Roadside assistance: 640,000 calls received and acted on
- ▶ *Service Tracker*: Wider access throughout Quebec (this app lets you follow the CAA-Quebec patroller in real time after you've requested roadside assistance)
- ▶ ATVs and snowmobiles now covered (CAA Plus and Premier options)
- ▶ Battery Assist: New service stations, in addition to Emergency Road Service
- ▶ Automotive Advisory Services: 121,000 calls received
- ▶ More than 1 million transactions performed in our 11 Registrations Centres
- ▶ Increased enrolment in all four CAA-Quebec driving schools

TRAVEL: A busy year despite uncertainties in the market

- ▶ Record performance in all CAA-Quebec Travel Centres
- ▶ Exclusive *explore* products constantly refined and fine-tuned; creation of the *explore Signature* brochure
- ▶ Increased online sales at CAA-Quebec Travel Boutique
- ▶ Increased demand for TripTik™ Travel Planner on CAAQUEBEC.COM
- ▶ 141,000 requests for passport photos and international driving permits

HOME: We guard your home with you

- ▶ CAA-Quebec residential services have been reorganized to partner the CAA-Quebec No-Stress™ home policy for more effective protection
- ▶ Publication of the online guide *Drains and Foundations: Prevention or Repair?*



INSURANCE: For auto, home, travel, life, health and accident coverage

- ▶ A positive debut for the CAA-Quebec Damage Insurance Agency: Thousands of No-Stress™ home and auto policies sold in the first year
- ▶ New temporary life-insurance products, thanks to CAA-Quebec's newly signed agreement with Manulife

The CAA Dollars and Discounts Program is as popular as ever!

- ▶ Not surprisingly, a whopping 74 percent of homeowners took advantage of the benefits last year!
- ▶ A host of new partners – Joe Fresh, BIXI, Netlift, Ricardo Media and La Source – joined the Privileges Program, a boost for younger members and Montrealers!
- ▶ Couche-Tard remains our members' all-time favourite partner (see p. 37)

And a host of other successes

- ▶ *CAA-Quebec Magazine*, formerly *Touring*, now has a digital version, made available to all its 941,000 readers
- ▶ caaquebec.com had almost 6,000,000 visits last year
- ▶ 3,500 media interventions to inform and aid members and the general public

PHOTO RADARS /

**WHEN WILL THE REVENUE
FINALLY BE INVESTED
IN ROAD SAFETY?**

CAA-Quebec has been clamouring about this for a long time. A road-safety assistance program, financed by photo radar revenue, deserves to see the light of day.

The use of the millions of dollars collected from traffic infractions for the benefit of road safety – more particularly of road-accident victims – has always been one of the prerequisites for making the use of photo radar socially acceptable. But since radar was first deployed in 2009, funds have lain idle with no measure of use yet suggested.

CAA-Quebec has approached the relevant authorities directly, requesting an immediate implementation of the proposed program. After eight years, the time is now.



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Quebec's worst roads

The *Worst Roads* campaign was back last spring – for the third consecutive year. For a month, you could use one of the rare platforms available to Quebec motorists to identify the province's problem roads and voice your concerns about road maintenance.

More than 14,000 votes were cast last year, resulting in millions of dollars being invested in maintenance and repair work. Nine out of the 10 stretches of road identified were scheduled for repair, at an estimated cost of \$15.6 million. And here's the good news: Several relevant authorities have promised to keep the work going over the next few years.

For details regarding investments made and to see the 2017 list of worst roads, visit CAAQUEBEC.COM.



QUEBEC'S FIRST-EVER PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON ROAD SAFETY /

CAA-Quebec brings its expertise

Last winter, the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ) invited individuals, groups and organizations to participate in a province-wide public consultation on road safety and its ramifications.

In advance, CAA-Quebec conducted an online member survey dealing with various road-safety themes and prepared a report touching on 15 points affecting a broad spectrum of road-user types: children, adults, pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, motorists and professional drivers.

Among our recommendations to improve road safety are measures aimed at eliminating impaired driving, cellphone use behind the wheel, and other such distractions.

So far, there have been incremental but fragile gains at best. Nevertheless, we can only hope that, in the long run, this effort will prove beneficial for all our citizens.



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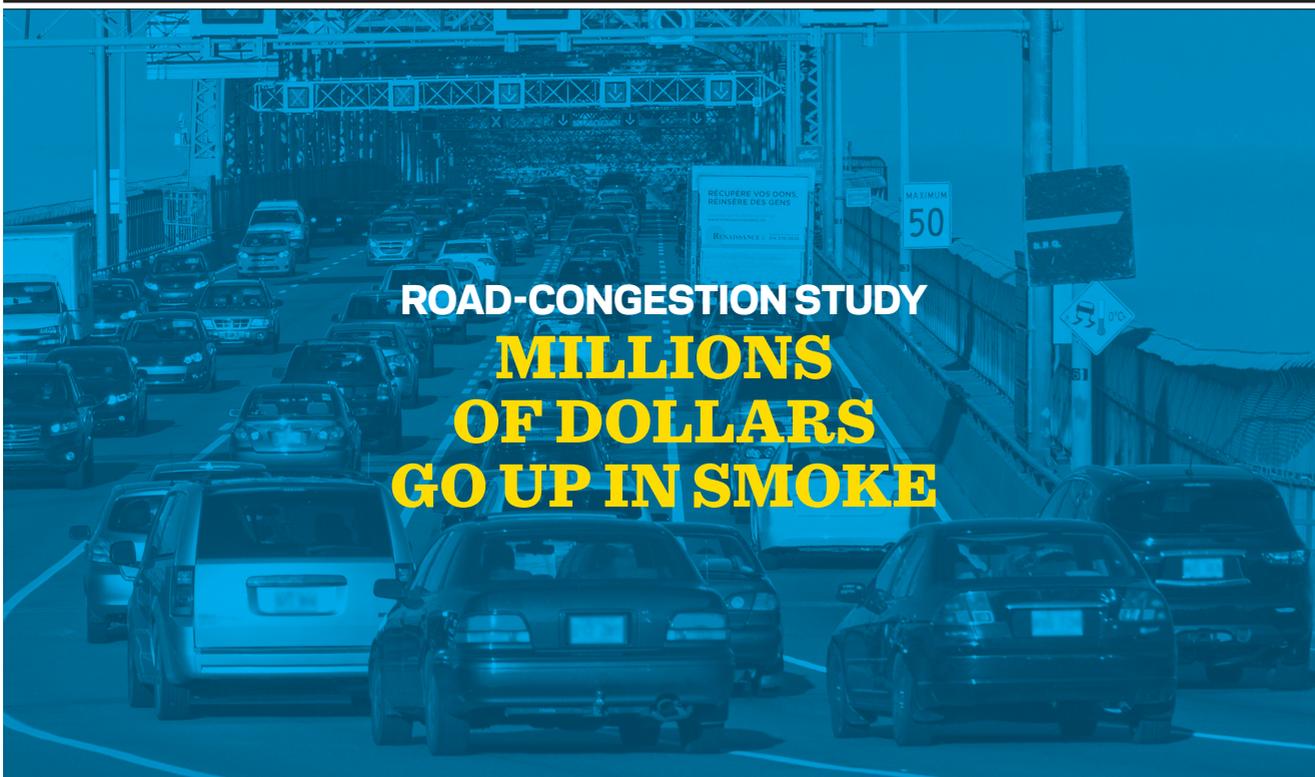
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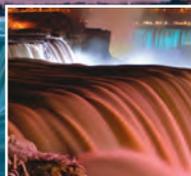
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Entitled *Grinding to a Halt: Evaluating Canada's Worst Bottlenecks*, a study commissioned by the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) casts a troubling spotlight on traffic congestion across the country. Millions of hours lost, commute time increased by 50 percent, tens of millions of litres of fuel wasted... The combined losses amount to almost \$300 million a year.

Quebec City and Montreal well represented

Montreal garners 5 of the top 20 bottlenecks. Quebec City has only one problematic stretch but is, nonetheless, the only medium-sized city in Canada to figure in the study.

Breakdown of losses sustained by motorists in Montreal and Quebec City

	NUMBER OF HOURS OF DELAY	ESTIMATED COST OF LOST HOURS	FUEL OVERCONSUMPTION (IN LITRES)
MONTREAL	3 M	\$75 M	7 M
QUEBEC	80,000	\$1.8 M	1 M

In CAA-Quebec's judgment, it's imperative to anticipate long-term needs so that the circulation of people and goods can be organized smoothly. For this reason, the study's conclusions have been sent to the relevant provincial and municipal authorities.

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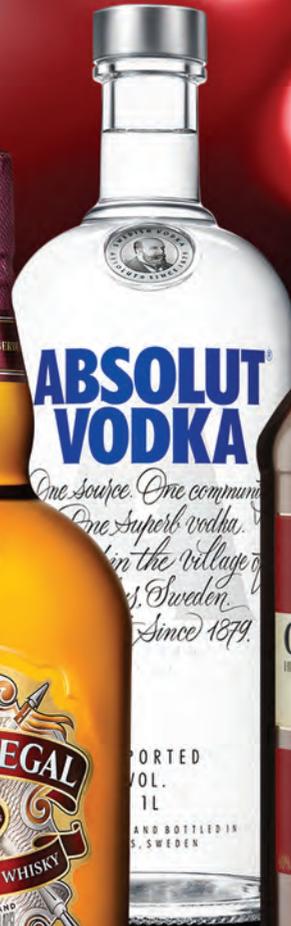
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MEMBER TESTIMONIAL
Never without his card!

For as long as he hangs on to his vehicles, Gilles Blais will have his CAA-Quebec member card in his pocket. It's his insurance policy, he says. And that's even more so since the day snowmobiles were included in CAA-Quebec Emergency Road Service. He has been snowmobiling for 45 years and counting.



PHOTO: PATRICK SÉGUIN

Blais makes seven or eight snowmobile trips every winter. Last January, as he was into the fourth day of a 1,400-kilometre journey, his Bombardier BRP conked out. He was in the Bernière area in Lévis, a long way from his destination. "It was a fuse, I later learned. Since I didn't want to delay my six companions, I called CAA-Quebec. The patroller showed up right on time and drove me all the way to Bécancour where I'd left my truck and towline. I even arrived back before my buddies," he chuckles.

Also a motorcyclist, this Gatineau member joined CAA-Quebec two decades ago. "I've always had good service," he says. He's had both his motorcycle and his car towed at one time or another. He's also enjoyed discounts at hotels and shops while travelling. He heard about the snowmobile and ATV service on the radio.

"With a snowmobile, you never know what can happen. In the 1970s, we used to start out with a dozen members and, by the time we reached our destination, we were just two," he enjoys reporting. "I even had to ask strangers to drive me home. Now, no more worries with CAA-Quebec."

Preparing for a major trip to New Brunswick next year, the snowmobiler is thinking about upgrading his CAA Plus membership to CAA Premier so that he can be entitled to 500 kilometres of towing. This way, he could have peace of mind and get the most out of his journey.

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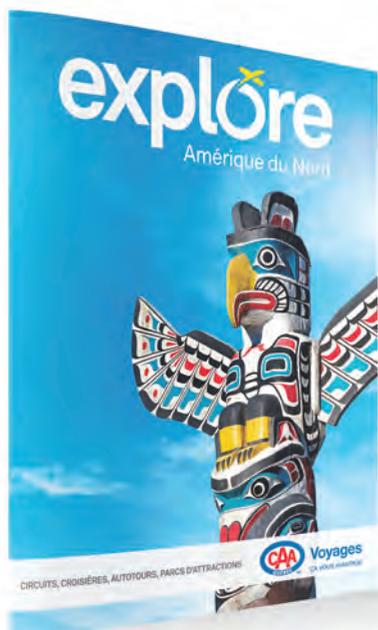
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In the mood for a Quebec escapade this summer? To explore a particular region in Canada? To criss-cross the United States? The latest *explôre Amérique du Nord* issue – produced by CAA-Quebec and Tours Chanteclerc – features a range of options for getting to know our spellbinding continent.

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The latest online version of the *Refaire ma toiture de bardeaux* guide is now available. It includes everything you need to know about the subject – how to assess the condition of your roof, how to choose the right contractor, what essential elements should be included in a contract, insurance and guarantee issues, and how to maintain your new roof. You'll also learn about the different components of a roof – crucial when it comes to assessing the estimates you'll receive.

And, of course, our Residential Advisory Services are an added resource, whether it's a question of recommending certified roofers or answering your questions.

We will be revisiting our other home guides over the next few months. So visit CAAQUEBEC.COM often and check out the CAA-Quebec newsletter.

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REVISED COUCHE-TARD OFFER /

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We've taken your comments about the Couche-Tard offer to heart – after all, member service is our number-one priority – and are pleased to announce some good news: Rebates will be offered on each gas top-up at Couche-Tard, no matter how many litres you purchase.

- As of May 3, CAA-Dollar rebates will be applied as follows:
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- 55 LITRES AND MORE** ▶ 3 ¢ rebate per litre in CAA Dollars

CAA Plus RV or CAA Premier RV members will get 3¢ per litre with each top-up, regardless of the number of litres purchased.

For more information regarding this offer or the CAA-Quebec Privileges Program, consult our website's CAA Dollars and Discounts section. Or call us at 1-800-686-9243.



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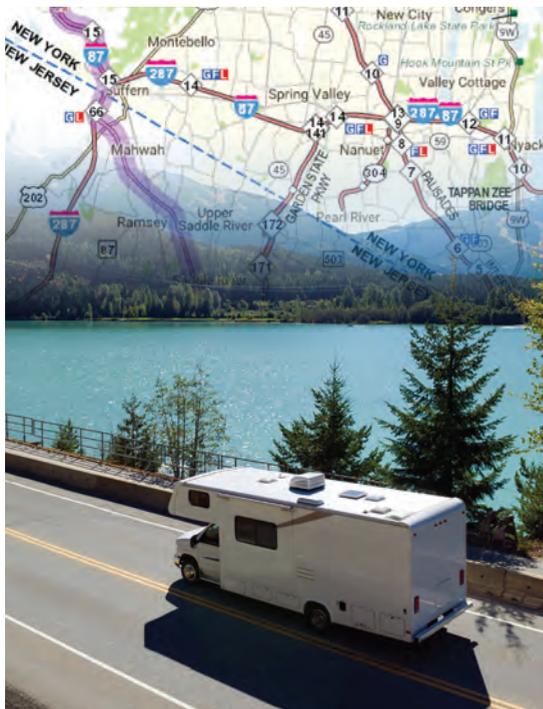
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TO BETTER MEET YOUR NEEDS /
 TripTik™ has been revamped

Working along with AAA, CAA-Quebec has listened carefully to all your comments and can now offer a new and improved TripTik™ – complete with new cartographics. It's been our members' travel companion for decades and now, having been reviewed yet again, it is definitely improved!

The general layout has been reconfigured to provide better visualization of each map, using fewer pages. You'll also find:

- ▶ More visible route changes
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From now until the end of spring, these improvements will be included in all TripTik™ versions. You can order by calling 1-800-686-9243, going online at caaquebec.com, or at any of our 14 Travel Centres.

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THE ANNUEL DE L'AUTO D'OCCASION /

CAA-Quebec continues its collaboration with the *Annuel de l'auto d'occasion* team led by Benoit Charette. This indispensable guide highlights 265 models from 2011 to 2016. You'll also find two feature articles – one on motor-oil consumption, the other about used-vehicle misconceptions – written by our own automotive experts. A modest investment to help you make a well-informed purchase decision.

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POSTCARD



AUSTRIA ▶ Perched on a hillside overlooking superb Hallstätter See (Lake Hallstatt), the Tyrolean village of Hallstatt is essentially car-free (automobile traffic is diverted to a tunnel through the mountain). Nestled in the shadow of soaring snow-capped summits, Hallstatt's pretty houses on stilts have helped make it a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site. Hikers, too, will enjoy the trails that criss-cross the area. 📍 [DANIEL CHAREST, QUEBEC CITY](#)

Send your favourite travel photo (maximum 5 megabytes) to [CAAQUEBEC.COM/CAAQUEBEC MAGAZINE](#) before June 7, 2017, along with a description of approximately 80 words. If your photo is published in the next issue of the magazine, you win a Landau-Marine Protector set of two suitcases (19" and 24") - a \$240 value.

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Travel

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**This offer cannot be combined with any other offer or promotion. The 25% discount is applied to the less expensive pair when the first one is a prescription pair. Not applicable on Oakley products. Michel Laurendeau, optician.



QUESTION / Are fares offered by low-cost carriers really advantageous? — D. LESSARD, SAGUENAY

ANSWER / They may be a good deal, but it's important to compare what they include and don't include so you know exactly what you're going to get for your money.

Several low-cost carriers practise something called unbundling, that is, selling each service separately – flight, premium seats, checked luggage, etc. So keep an eye on those extra fees.

Seats

- ▶ Seats included in low-cost fares are narrower than those offered by regular airlines. You'll have to pay extra for more space.
- ▶ Unlike regular airlines which charge for seat selection for overall outbound and inbound flights, low-cost carriers demand seat-selection fees for each flight segment. For example, a Montreal-Rome-Montreal journey may involve two plane changes, so you'll have to pay \$100 (\$25 X 4).

Carry-on luggage

- ▶ Most low-cost carriers allow one item, like a handbag, a briefcase or a small knapsack. Any larger item incurs a fee.

Checked luggage

- ▶ Fees automatically apply with low-cost carriers. There are no exceptions.

On-board services

- ▶ Food and refreshments: You pay for everything, including coffee or juice, even on transatlantic flights.
- ▶ Entertainment: none

Remember that what may sound like a good deal at first glance isn't always the case. Some low-cost companies even add booking fees to advertised fares, depending on the destination. So read the fine print. But if you're not bothered by narrower seats or paying for each item that you consume, why not give it a try?

Several regular carriers have decided to counter this competition – American Airlines, for example – and they now offer “super saver” fares. You'll sit in the same plane as full-fare passengers, but your conditions will be altogether different: limited carry-ons, extra fees for larger items, and other such restrictions. So choose what's best for you, and bon voyage.



ANGELINA MICONIATIS,
SENIOR DIRECTOR
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See the complete address list in the digital version of the magazine.

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Moving?

Don't forget to give your new address to CAA-Quebec. By doing so you'll be sure we can always be in touch, send you your copy of CAA-Quebec Magazine and continue providing you with the best service we can. You can give us your change of address by calling 514-861-7575 (Montreal) or 1-800-686-9243. You may also do it online at caaquebec.com. Access your membership file in the Member account column and click on Change of address notice.

THE FLOOR IS YOURS

Have you ever made a home-insurance claim?
If so, what was the reason?

Yes, once when a ceiling leak turned into a miniature Niagara Falls! Thank goodness for home insurance.

▶ DANIEL GUAIANI, PIERREFONDS

Never! But had I thought about it, I should have made a claim when, some time ago, my hockey gear was stolen from my car.

▶ ÉTIENNE CARRIER,
SAINT-HONORÉ-DE-SHENLEY

My car shelter collapsed with my car inside. Good thing I had replacement-cost coverage.

▶ VITTORIO SCARDAONI, MONTRÉAL

Yes, right after the 1998 ice storm. Our Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu region was badly hit!

▶ CARMEN LONGPRÉ,
SAINT-JEAN-SUR-RICHELIEU

NEXT QUESTION :

Where do you earn your CAA Dollars? And how do you use them?

Send a brief answer to CAAQUEBEC.COM/CAAQUEBECMAGAZINE before June 7, 2017. If it's published, you'll win 50 CAA Dollars.

NOTE: CAA-Quebec reserves the right to edit and condense the responses chosen in order to meet CAA-Quebec Magazine criteria. Thank you for your understanding.



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Green

CONSTRUCTION



When it comes to home construction or renovations, most Quebecers tend to go “green”, motivated by energy savings, health benefits, and quality of life. / BY CHANTAL LAPOINTE

According to a 2014 market study conducted by Écohome, half of Quebec new homes (amounting to 3 percent of the province’s annual real-estate inventory) involved green construction. And that’s thanks in part to so-called Generation Yers – thirtysomethings like Mélanie Fortier and Robert Clouatre whose goal is to live in an environmentally friendly house amidst nature. After taking the time to research and reflect, the couple chose straw bales for house insulation. Nestled among trees, their new abode is splendid. Admittedly, construction took longer than usual but that was because they did a lot of the work themselves in order to reduce costs.

“Quality materials won’t end up in landfills, and artisanal techniques are expensive,” explains Fortier, an elementary school teacher. “And it took a while to find these materials and choose the right contractors, people who really shared our values and wouldn’t take shortcuts. That said, I think the situation is improving. Today, there are a lot of socially conscious construction options and it’s increasingly easier to find information and share experiences online.” In fact, Fortier and Clouatre kept a blog throughout their ambitious project that attracted much attention in Quebec. No doubt about it: Social media has given an added boost to our knowledge of materials and architectural styles that together inform the business of “green” living.

Pay attention

Do eco-friendly homes really warrant such serious attention when there’s still so much to be done in other fields, like transportation or food? “In 2017,

it's unacceptable not to pay attention," declares Eco-Home founder Emmanuel Cosgrove. "A major portion of our resources like water and energy is spent on our homes – so it makes absolute sense to build them more efficiently by going green." For architect André Bourassa, another eco-home pioneer, "green" construction is nothing but beneficial. "Comfort, air quality, lower energy bills, less garbage... all that is good for people and for the planet," Bourassa says very optimistically. "The younger generation demands eco-homes. Biosourced materials are discussed in architecture schools. Eco-homes are gaining ground."

A healthy home

Alejandro Montero, founder of Tergos Architecture & Construction in Quebec City, is proud of the "green" practice he started in the early 2000s. "In the beginning, we were called 'crunchy granola' types, but today people better understand the health and economic benefits of living in an eco-home." The company's ecological approach emphasizes con-



Cellulose insulation, made of shredded newspaper waste fireproofed with natural salt

struction quality, a bioclimatic concept, site integration, locally sourced materials (natural, recycled or recyclable), energy efficiency and resource management. "In fact, 'green' construction means aiming for the highest quality standards," Montero says.

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Estimating the costs

Contrary to popular belief, opting for an eco-home doesn't necessarily entail significant additional costs. That said, money still remains a big factor in discouraging current or future homeowners from deciding to go green. It's a thorny issue, says Montero: "Extra costs are estimated between 2 and 5 percent but, in fact, the house isn't more expensive because it's ecological but because the materials are of better quality." In this sense, real-estate agents put the added value of an eco-home between 5 and 15 percent.

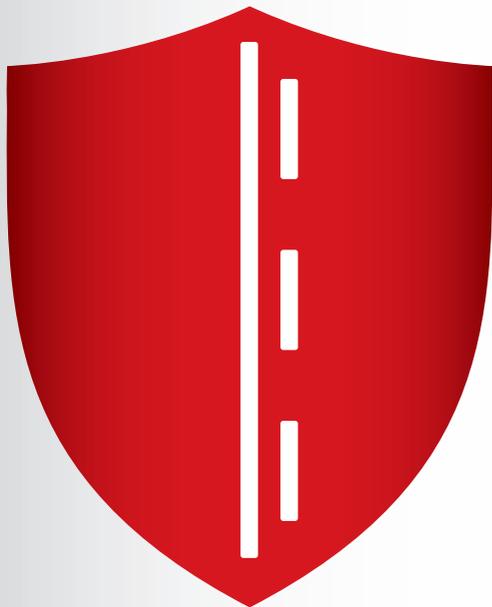
Green building materials

Experts distinguish between two types of materials: biosourced and ecological. Biosourced materials are derived from renewable biomass materials such as plant and animal organic matter. Throughout their entire life cycle, ecological materials leave smaller environmental footprints than conventional products. "We've seen great improvements in both types," says Julie-Anne Chayer, president of Canada Green

FINDING THE RIGHT CONTRACTOR ▶ While more contractors are now calling themselves "green" - some are even certified "eco-contractors" - others remain resistant to eco-products or to recycling and waste-reducing efforts. To be certain that your renovations will be successful, insist on a detailed contract specifying all phases of the work, including the product brands to be used. Besides helping you find a contractor, CAA-Quebec makes different tools available to guide you through this crucial step. Consult CAAQUEBEC.COM/EN

▶ maisonderobertetmelanie.blogspot.ca
hemppconstruction.com

Building Council - Quebec Section. "Manufacturers have fine-tuned their products to respond to consumer demand, and time is on our side." One example is cellulose insulation, made of shredded newspaper waste fireproofed with natural salt. "It's ecological, inexpensive and effective," Cosgrove comments. And then there are wood-fibre panels - an alternative to particle board - that Bourassa prefers for building frames, not to mention



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carbonized-wood siding and mineral paints. Gabriel Gauthier, founder of ArtCan Turnkey Hemp Construction in Shefford, Quebec, has been building hemp homes since 2004. “This renewable resource serves as both insulation and interior finish. It offers exceptional comfort, durability and an authentic look.” Gauthier’s order book fills up faster each year. “Consumers do their own research and are better informed. They’re sold on eco-homes.”

FOR MORE INFO

CONSEIL DU BÂTIMENT DURABLE CANADA - QUEBEC ▶ A platform for information, experience-sharing and green-professional-skills training. The national office - CANADA GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL - administers sustainability-certification programs like the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system.

BATIMENTDURABLE.CA

ECOHOME ▶ Information and workshops about sustainable building products and techniques. The French website - ECOHABITATION.COM - features a list of addresses for the purchase of building products (click *Annuaire* then *Achat de matériaux récupérés*). A solid benchmark for sustainable housing solutions. ECOHOME.NET



▶ For more information about the different certification programs, consult the digital version of the magazine.

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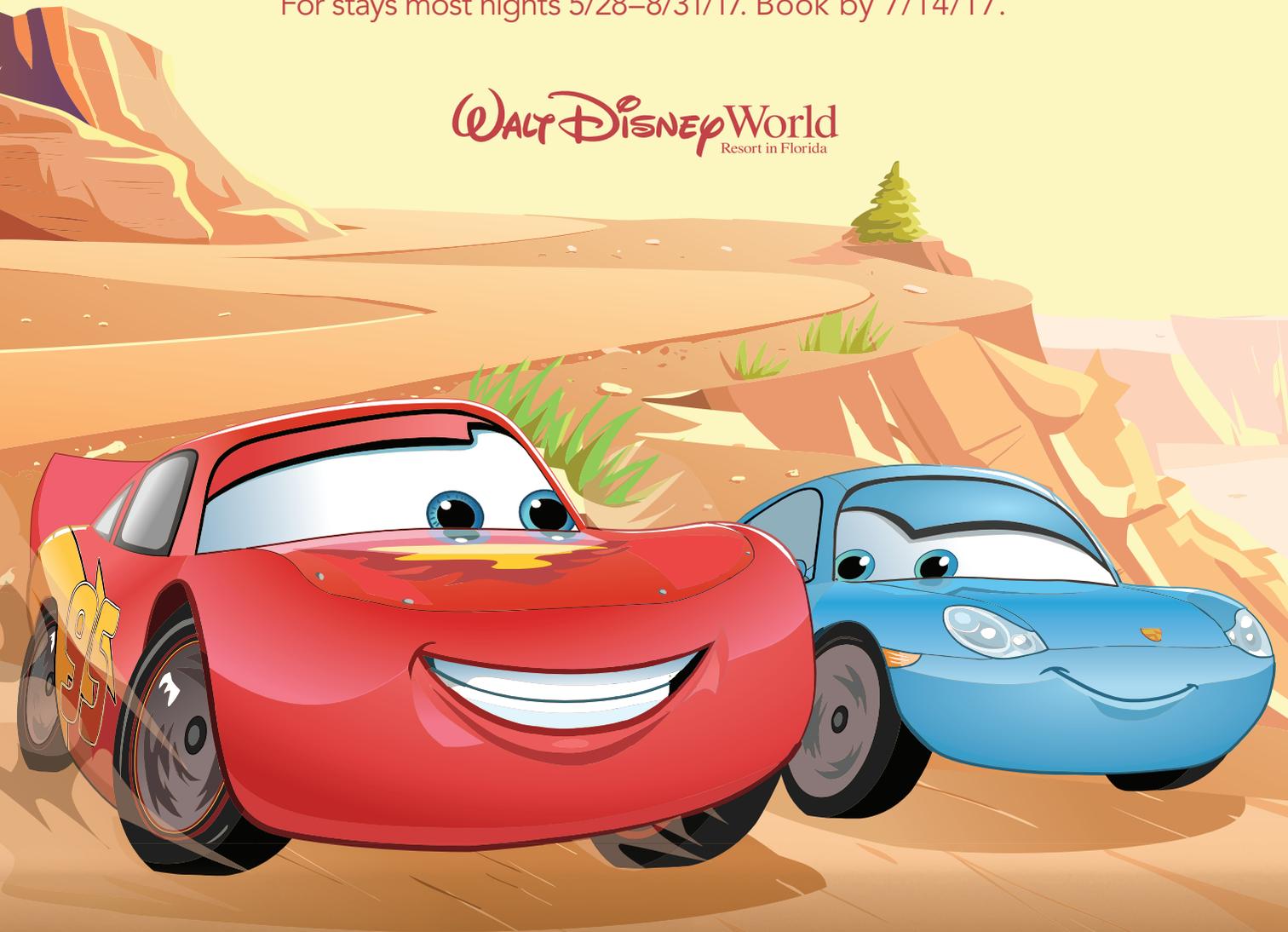
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WARM UP THE POOL!

Swimming season is short in Quebec. To extend the pleasure, you've decided to buy a pool heater but that, inevitably, comes with a price. / BY JACQUELINE SIMONEAU

Installing a pool heater is an investment that you cannot recover when you sell the house – no more, in fact, than the pool itself. But if you long to luxuriate in comfortable pool water and prolong this euphoria

for a few more weeks every summer, then it's worth it. But to avoid unpleasant surprises, it's best to find out how much it will cost before taking the plunge.

Purchase price

There are three main types of pool heater: heat pump, electric and gas (natural or propane), all suitable for either in-ground or above-ground pools. But an in-ground pool usually requires a more powerful, high-performance unit. A heat pump retails between \$1,400 and \$4,300, an electric heater between \$450 and \$950, and a gas unit between \$1,500 and \$3,500.

Installation cost

Regardless of type, a heater will cost an additional \$150 to have it installed. Plumbing materials (like pipes and connectors) are usually included. But there

are also extras to consider, like a bypass valve (about \$75) and the electrical hookup – which in some cases may require adding a dedicated breaker to your panel. These add-ons must be installed by a qualified electrician. A gas pool heater needs to sit on a concrete slab and, if it uses propane, you'll have to buy or rent a propane tank and check municipal bylaws regarding its installation. If you decide to place the gas heater in a shed, be sure to ask a professional to install a chimney for it.

Operating costs

These vary significantly from one system to another. Electric and gas heaters consume a lot of energy, heat pumps much less. Factors like the volume of water to be heated, the desired temperature, the frequency of use and the pool's location – under full sun or in the shade – will all have an impact on the energy bill. Generally speaking, however, the energy required in heating a 21-foot above-ground pool or a 14-by-28 in-ground pool will cost \$300 to \$350 per season with a heat pump, \$1,000 to \$1,500 with an electric heater, and \$1,000 to \$2,000 with gas.

SOLAR POOL COVER ▶ Heat loss in a pool is mainly caused by evaporation, especially at night. A solar pool cover limits evaporation and, as a result, heat loss. According to Hydro-Québec, using both a pool heater and a solar cover (electric or heat pump) can reduce heating costs by 45 percent per season. A heat-pump cover is a must in colder climates.

▶ Our thanks go to Vicky Lepage, sales and marketing manager at Concept Piscine Design, for her assistance.

Insurance

No doubt you've already told your insurance company about the swimming pool in your backyard. If you haven't, now is the time to do so. And be sure to mention your newly acquired pool heater. A swimming-pool endorsement will then be added to your homeowner policy, indicating both the premiums and coverage amount based on the age of the pool.

▶ In the magazine's digital version: More information about what type of heater to buy and how to maintain it.

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SHOULD YOU INSURE YOUR WINE?

You keep a few fine bottles of wine in your cellar. The question is: If disaster strikes, will your homeowner's policy cover them?

BY JACQUELINE SIMONEAU

If you buy wine that costs less than \$100 a bottle, there's really no need to insure it separately. Most all-risk home insurance (which covers all risks except those specifically excluded in the policy) will reimburse a maximum \$100 for each bottle of wine, spirit and alcoholic beverage lost – up to \$5,000 per claim, provided the bottles were kept in the insured location. On the other hand, if you own bottles that are worth more than \$100 each, you need specific coverage. Since the maximum wine-insurance amount varies from one company to another, take time to become better informed. CAA-Quebec insurance allows you to insure up to \$20,000 in wine and spirits.

When you sign up for insurance, make an inventory of your cellar and establish the average value of each bottle as well as the overall value of your collection. Update your inventory thereafter to factor in bottles that have been consumed or added. As the need arises, call on an expert to estimate the value, because this kind of list is generally required when making a claim.

Finally, note that wines and spirits are protected against the same causes – fire, theft, vandalism – as those described in your homeowner-insurance policy. This means that your wine collection will not be protected against sewer backups or earthquakes, unless such endorsements are added to your basic policy.

► Our thanks go to Suzanne Michaud, Vice-President - Insurance at CAA-Quebec.

ALFRED CELLAR-MANAGEMENT APP ► This mobile app allows users to establish an inventory of their wines based on their real-time market value, and keep it up to date at all times. Incidentally, all the wines sold at the SAQ are listed on Alfred. The subscription fee is \$9.95 per month. The "Alfred Secure" coverage insures your wine against most disasters, including corked wine, if you so choose.

► alfredsommelier.com

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Volkswagen

*Base MSRP of a new and unregistered 2018 Atlas 2.0 TSI Trendline with 8-speed automatic transmission is \$37,585. \$1,795 freight and PDI are included. License, insurance, registration, options, any dealer or other fees (where applicable) and applicable taxes are extra. Dealer may sell for less. US preproduction model shown. Model shown for illustration purposes only. Vehicle may not be exactly as shown. Dealer order/trade may be necessary. "Atlas" is a trademark of Volkswagen AG. "Volkswagen", the Volkswagen logo and "4MOTION" are registered trademarks of Volkswagen AG. © 2017 Volkswagen Canada.

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Prices and product descriptions were accurate as of April 10, 2017, and apply to new bookings made from May 4 to 31, 2017. Prices are per-person in Canadian currency for double occupancy. They include flight from Montreal (except for City Breaks and the New York City stay), from Quebec City for Excursions and Discoveries, transfers, accommodation, meals mentioned, some visits and taxes, except some airport taxes that are payable on-site. Prices are subject to supplier availability. For general conditions and product details, please see the explore Amérique du Nord brochure, 2017 edition. *CAA Dollars offered to CAA-Québec members only. Does not apply to City Breaks, the Total Freedom package, Chicago and New York City tours. Other conditions apply. 1. For a departure from June 1 to 30, 2017, or from September 1 to 30, 2017. 2. For daytime matches on September 2 and 3, 2017. 3. For most stays from June 1 to 30, 2017. Does not include flight.

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Travel

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The architecture developed for Volkswagen's Touareg (starting price: \$53,755) also serves the Bentley Bentayga, the world's most expensive SUV (its price can easily climb from \$266,000 to over \$400,000).

CAR MARRIAGES

SAME PLATFORM, MULTIPLE VEHICLES

Sliding into your new Toyota Yaris sedan, you get a sense of déjà vu. The dashboard, the steering wheel, the control unit... didn't you see them before in a Mazda? You open the hood and there they are – Mazda logo stickers here and there. Welcome to the world of automotive platform-sharing.

BY NADINE FILION

If you're a regular reader of road-test reports, then you're already familiar with the term "platform" – journalists sometimes use the word "architecture." But what you're actually picturing is the car's chassis. The platform is something much larger. It's the virtual meeting of all the components, whether mechanical, electronic or electric, as well as parameters and variables that, together, underpin a car's assembly.

Developing a single platform today costs manufacturers billions of dollars. That's because over and above the actual engineering and design adaptation, there are also the tools and production processes and their integration into the assembly line, never mind respecting the different norms – from environmental to safety concerns.

It's hardly surprising that there's now a trend in sharing and marrying such platforms.

From badge engineering to star system

In the 1960s, GM went for economies of scale by sharing the architecture of its Chevrolet Chevelle with the Pontiac Tempest and LeMans, the Buick Skylark and the Oldsmobile Cutlass.

A decade later, Ford took it a step further with rebadging, sometimes called badge engineering. This process was nothing more than different radiator grills, back ends and logos from one model to another. American automakers have exploited this opportunity until very recently. Some examples: the Ford Tempo and

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the Mercury Topaz, or the Chrysler Town & Country and the Dodge Grand Caravan.

Fast-forward to today when platforms have become real stars in the industry, attracting the attention of journalists and car buffs alike. The latest platforms – like the Global Platform unveiled by Subaru last fall – even have their own professional photos, as if they were new car models.

By the end of the 1990s and the early 2000s, platform-sharing between automakers accelerated. As always the goal was to absorb soaring design and engineering costs. Consider, for example, the now defunct Toyota Matrix and Pontiac Vibe, which had once enjoyed great success.

Not all alliances have been happy ones, however. Ford, which jockeyed for luxury brands like Jaguar in 1989, delivered the Jaguar X-Type, a sedan that was named one of the all-time 50 worst cars by *Time* magazine.

That said, several Ford vehicles, notably the high-end Taurus and the Explorer SUV, still benefit from the expertise acquired from Volvo's architects, even though the Swedish brand has long since fallen into the hands of Chinese automaker Geely.

Even today, the Jeep Grand Cherokee has some Mercedes-Benz ML-Class (now the GLE) in its nose, while the Chrysler 300 sedan has the genes of the Mercedes-Benz E-Class despite the Chrysler-Daimler (Mercedes-Benz) divorce.

What about open relationships?

Instead of getting married, more and more manufacturers are choosing open relationships. Japanese automaker Toyota has agreements not only with Germany's BMW to share green technologies and develop a sports car (consider the return of the Toyota Supra and the arrival of the BMW Z5) but also with Japanese colleague Mazda. This



The Fiat-Chrysler marriage has produced a remarkable sharing: The tiny Jeep Renegade, assembled on the same platform as the Fiat 500X, and built in Italy!

AND JUST WHERE DO CONSUMERS FIT INTO ALL THIS? PLATFORM-SHARING ALLOWS AFFORDABLE VEHICLES TO BENEFIT FROM TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES AND THE HIGHER STANDARDS OF PLATFORMS DEVELOPED FOR HIGH-END VEHICLES.

hasn't stopped Mazda from signing an alliance with FCA (Fiat Chrysler Automobiles) to build its Fiat 124 on the architecture of the illustrious Mazda MX-5 (or the Miata as those in the know refer to it).

At the same time, Infiniti agreed to build the small Mercedes-Benz CLA and GLA as well as the upcoming pickup – the Mercedes-Benz X-Class – in its new plant in Mexico.

The new trendy word: modular

The MQB modular platform – for Modularer Querbaukasten – launched by Volkswagen, represents a new departure. This architecture is so versatile that it can accommodate 34 models from the Volkswagen Group (which includes Porsche, Audi, Lamborghini

and Bentley among others). This means that the MQB can support almost two-thirds of the 10 million cars assembled annually by the automaker.

A decade earlier, platforms responsible for the production of more than one million cars a year were rare. And experts were critical when the 2003 Porsche Cayenne was assembled on the Volkswagen Touareg platform. Today, no one is surprised to learn that the latter architecture is also being used by Audi Q7, Bentley Bentayga and the upcoming SUV from Lamborghini.

This is economy of scale – as long as everything works. If something goes wrong with one of the mega-platforms, imagine the consequences. One defective airbag would affect countless models, and result in an enormous number of recalls.



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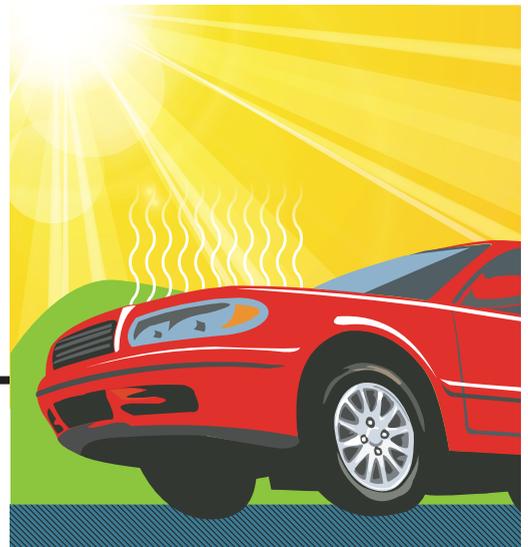
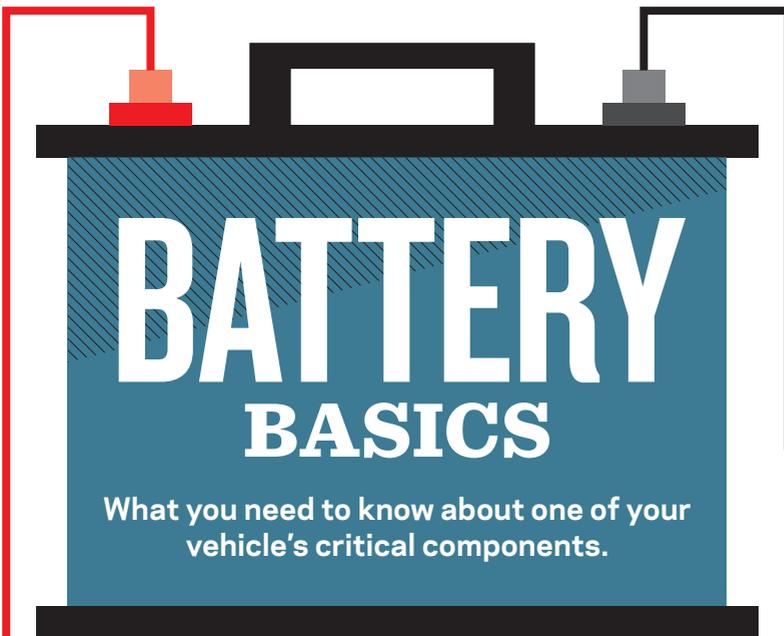
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 Batteries lose capacity over time. An average battery has an optimal lifespan of three to five years.

ENGINE IS SLOW TO TURN OVER
 It takes 100 to 200 amps of battery power to get a car going. A sluggish start could mean an insufficient charge.

HEADLIGHTS DIM WHILE IDLING
 When idle, a car may draw more power than the alternator alone can produce. Dim headlights could mean a drained battery or a faulty charging system.

DIGITAL SYSTEMS POWER DOWN QUICKLY
 Radio, GPS and other accessories use battery power when the engine is off. Performance issues suggest a depleted battery or may potentially stem from a more serious malfunction.

EXTREME TEMPERATURES

It's not just winter that's tough on the battery. During a scorching summer, a vehicle's battery is kept active, which causes the internal plates to sulphate. Sulphation affects the battery's performance and can cause premature aging. Heat can flatten a battery 33 percent faster than a low temperature. **TIPS** ▶ Before it starts to get really hot, have the battery's charge checked. Make sure that the terminals are clean. Don't overdo the AC because it can increase the heat under the hood.

BATTERIES LOSE JUICE EVEN WHEN NOT IN USE

Get a battery tender if you don't expect to drive for long periods of time. Designed to stay connected without the danger of overcharging, a smart battery tender ensures that the battery's charge is maintained at optimum voltage during the off months.

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**FORMULA E /****On the streets of Montreal**

In 2014, the FIA (Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile) launched the Formula E (for electric) world championship. The 2016-2017 season kicked off in Hong Kong last October and will end with two successive races, on July 29 and 30, 2017, on the streets of Montreal.

Event spokesperson Patrick Carpentier – famous for his CART, Champ Car and Nascar successes – admits he's never raced with electric vehicles but can see their potential. "In five years, EVs could be more powerful than Formula One cars," he predicts. Currently, these electric-powered single-seaters can reach 225 kilometres an hour.

This year's participants include major automakers and famous car-racing brands like Renault, Audi, BMW, Jaguar, Andretti Autosport and DS Virgin Racing, although Tesla is a no-show, curiously enough. All teams use the same chassis, which can be matched with their own powertrain. Driving range remains the biggest handicap (as with regular EVs): The drivers must make a pit stop halfway through the race to change cars. Unlike Formula One races, each F-E race takes place on a single day, including practice and qualifying sessions, and it's all accomplished with little noise pollution and no gasoline smell! Spectators may even test-drive electric vehicles, courtesy of CAA-Quebec and its partners.

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2017 HYUNDAI IONIQ

PRICE: \$25,700 to \$43,700 (estimated)

PROS: Three engine choices, quiet and spirited acceleration (electric), precise steering, stable ride, roomy interior and trunk, generous equipment.

CONS: Road noise, poor rear visibility, timid performance (hybrid), too-sensitive traction control.

► With the launch of the Ioniq, Hyundai ups its eco-friendly vehicle offerings fourfold. The newcomer comes as a plug-in hybrid (as does the midsize Sonata sedan) as well as a classic hybrid and a fully electric car. The plug-in hybrid won't be available until the end of the summer, but dealers are already offering the other two versions, which target buyers of the Toyota Prius and the all-new Chevrolet Bolt EV, respectively.

Spacious, well-equipped and fun to drive, the Ioniq is an appealing contender in the green-car segment. It remains to be seen whether the hybrid can deliver in terms of fuel economy, announced by Hyundai as bettering that, already impressive, of the current Prius. As for the electric model, while its 200-km range is less persuasive than the Bolt EV's 380 km, it could be sufficient for a wide swath of buyers, at a cost of at least \$7,000 less.

TEST MODEL (ELECTRIC)

ENGINE: Electric (118 hp) with 28 kWh lithium-ion polymer battery

TRANSMISSION: 1-speed automatic (direct drive)

DRIVETRAIN: Front-wheel drive

CLAIMED RANGE: 200 km

RECHARGING: 24 min up to 80% capacity (400-volt charging); 4 hr 24 min (240-volt charging); 24 hr (120-volt outlet)

ENERGY CONSUMPTION (MANUFACTURER'S DATA): 15.5 kWh/100 km (equivalent to 1.7 L/100 km)

2017 BUICK ENVISION

PRICE: \$41,695 to \$55,430

PROS: Well-adapted turbo engine, comfortable ride, good soundproofing, roomy interior, simple controls, judicious pricing.

CONS: Occasional transmission hesitation, vague steering, body lean in turns, some cheap-looking plastics.

► The Envision enlists in the red-hot luxury compact crossover segment. Aimed at the Acura RDX, Audi Q5 and Mercedes-Benz GLC, the Envision comes with a new platform and all-wheel-drive system by GM. And though Buick offered a handful of high-end turbo-engine versions in 2016, it is this year that the lineup really takes off with the arrival of more-affordable four-cylinder naturally aspirated (non-turbo) models.

Can the Envision hold up to comparison to the pillars of its segment? In terms of comfort, quiet and engine performance, it's hands down. In this respect, it could even show certain highly reputed models a thing or two while still maintaining the advantage of a very reasonable price. However, Buick will have to enhance the driving experience somewhat, and polish interior finish, to meet the high expectations of target buyers.

TEST MODEL

ENGINE: 2.0-litre turbo direct-injection 4-cylinder (252 hp)

TRANSMISSION: 6-speed automatic with manual mode

DRIVETRAIN: All-wheel drive

FUEL ECONOMY, CITY/HIGHWAY COMBINED (NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA): 10.6 L/100 km





2017 MAZDA 3

PRICE: \$17,595 to \$31,245

PROS: Sporty handling, exemplary steering, excellent driving position, good finish, logical controls.

CONS: Restrictive rear seating and trunk, poor soundproofing, inadequate visibility, advanced safety equipment not offered on lower trim levels.

► The Mazda 3 gets a modest refresh in 2017 after three years without major change. Along with some subtle touch-ups to the front, there is a new centre console and enhanced equipment. Above all, each model now receives active power management technology to sharpen cornering agility even more. Mazda is one of a diminishing number of car builders to still offer a manual transmission in all versions of its compact, even the most powerful and luxurious of the lineup.

It's not just for show: No other compact on the market offers a comparable driving experience, except perhaps the Volkswagen Golf. Better still, there is little or no impact on comfort thanks to the well-tuned suspension. However, it looks like we'll have to wait for the next generation to enjoy an environment as quiet and spacious as found in the competition.

TEST MODEL

ENGINE: 2.5-litre direct-injection 4-cylinder (184 hp)

TRANSMISSION: 6-speed automatic with manual mode

DRIVETRAIN: Front-wheel drive

TEST TEMPERATURE: -20°C to 5°C

TESTED FUEL ECONOMY: 9.8 L/100 km

2017 PORSCHE MACAN

PRICE: \$53,900 to \$152,855

PROS: Thrilling V6 engines, exemplary transmission, ultraprecise steering, sporty handling, body-hugging seats, attentive finish.

CONS: High price, numerous and pricy options, 4-cylinder engine lacks pizzazz, tight rear seats, limited cargo space, restricted rear visibility.

► Two years ago, the Macan marked Porsche's entry into the highly competitive luxury compact crossover segment. For 2017, the celebrated brand's most affordable lineup adds an even more accessible four-cylinder model. Divested of the S-version's V6, the new Macan sells for \$6,500 less than the former base model. But when you're already spending \$50,000-plus on a vehicle, exactly what are you saving?

Let's get one thing straight: a 252-hp 4-cylinder is amply sufficient for an SUV the size of the Macan. But to render justice to the Porsche badge and take full advantage of the sporty handling, more is needed. In fact, if you are interested in the base Macan, here's some friendly advice. First, strike it off your list immediately if you plan on hauling cargo and rear-seat passengers at the same time. And, above all, do not test drive the S-version: the thrill of its heady mechanicals may make you forget your wallet at the dealership.

TEST MODEL

ENGINE: 2.0-litre turbo direct-injection 4-cylinder (252hp)

TRANSMISSION: 7-speed dual-clutch automatic with manual mode

DRIVETRAIN: All-wheel drive

TEST TEMPERATURE: -22°C to 5°C

TESTED FUEL ECONOMY: 10.8 L/100 km





2017 SUBARU IMPREZA

PRICE: \$21,590 to \$32,590

PROS: Good equipment/price ratio, very efficient standard all-wheel drive, good ride/handling balance, roomy interior, improved finish and controls.

CONS: Unconvincing performance, unproven engine reliability, visibility poorer than before, still-inadequate soundproofing.

TEST MODEL

ENGINE: 2.0-litre direct-injection 4-cylinder (152 hp)

TRANSMISSION: Continuously variable automatic with manual mode

DRIVETRAIN: All-wheel drive

FUEL ECONOMY, CITY/HIGHWAY COMBINED (NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA): 7.5 L/100 km

► A redesigned version of the Subaru Impreza has appeared every four or five years since the introduction of the second generation in 2002. This time, Subaru didn't stop with an update of styling and features. Instead, the compact Impreza became the first to get a new global platform that will underpin all of Subaru's other models. Several components of the engine and automatic transmission also were revised. Naturally, Subaru's trademark full-time all-wheel-drive system is still standard.

Though not revolutionary, the 2017 Impreza is definitively a better vehicle. Subaru has added a liberal dose of refinement and a touch of style to the stability, versatility and safety that have made the reputation of the Impreza. Combined with the Impreza's noteworthy winter capability, this newest version has what it takes to attract even more buyers, as long as performance is not their first priority.

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