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

TRAVELLING IN 2017

Mind if we tag along?

I was intrigued by a recent *La Presse* article headlined “Quand voyager fait peur” (“Travel has become a scary prospect”). And for good reason: The article cites a survey conducted by the Travel Health Insurance Association of Canada in which 13 percent of respondents claimed to have changed their travel plans because of social unrest or violence at their prospective destinations. But don’t we all agree that travelling brings with it a willingness to live in a different environment and sometimes to even take some calculated risks?

Unforeseen events, cancelled or delayed flights, lost luggage, labour strikes, natural disasters... These are facts of life to which no one

is immune. But, as the survey suggests, the

need to feel reassured may be stronger these days. If we find incidents happening here at home disturbing, imagine how we’d feel when we’re thousands of kilometres away and left to our own devices!

The testimony of a traveller who found herself at Brussels Airport during the terrorist attacks in March 2016, published in an earlier issue of the magazine, succinctly sums up the attitude of today’s consumers: “There is no question I would ever stop travelling!” And she’s not the only one who feels that way.

Strictly speaking, the latest data from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) show a 6-percent increase in the number of air travellers, from 3.5 billion in 2015 to 3.7 billion in 2016. In plain terms, people love to travel, to dream... they just need reassurance, and that’s perfectly understandable.

**IN PLAIN TERMS,
PEOPLE LOVE TO
TRAVEL, TO DREAM...
THEY JUST NEED
REASSURANCE, AND
THAT’S PERFECTLY
UNDERSTANDABLE.**

Safeguarding travellers

Beyond helping customers with their arrangements, our travel counsellors

are always present and offer priceless assistance to travellers abroad should an unforeseen event occur during their trip. For example, they can secure a seat on another flight, extend a travel-insurance policy, help with repatriation procedures, or deal with airline companies during an emergency. Let’s face it: Travel agents are truly the best resource for travellers caught in unforeseen circumstances. They can make all the difference.

Paradoxically, while travellers have access to so many different platforms as they prepare their travel schedule themselves, their need for a solid anchor of assistance and support when the situation demands it is perhaps more critical today than ever before, and that’s precisely our commitment.

And as this famous quote says: “Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things you didn’t do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.”

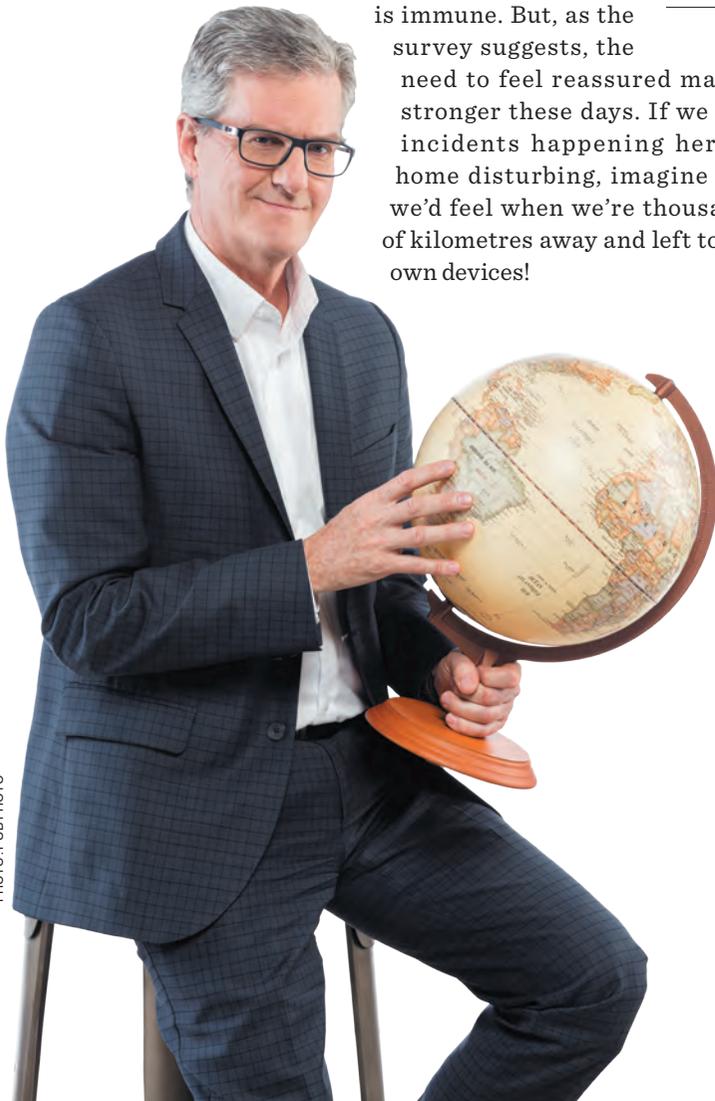


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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Lachance'.

Richard Lachance
President and CEO



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ENCOUNTER WITH A PRINCESS

Just a few kilometres beyond the medieval town of San Gimignano, a wine estate owned by a noble Tuscan family awaits you. And it is Princess Natalia Guicciardini Strozzi herself that often welcomes visitors.

BY CATHERINE ELIE

A fine rain falls on the Tuscan countryside and we almost miss the entrance to the estate, hidden in the trees. At the end of its cypress alley, the Villa Cusona appears like a ray of sunshine with its ochre-coloured walls. Wineries abound in the region, but this one is special, dating back more than a thousand years. And it is a real princess who welcomes us: Natalia Guicciardini Strozzi and her sister, Irina, are following in their father's footsteps. The family's history is fascinating. The Guicciardinis were counts in their part of the world whereas the Strozzi were princes. They were also wealthy bankers and direct business rivals of the powerful Medici family in Florence. Notable Renaissance names keep cropping up during the conversation: Machiavelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Mona Lisa... The princess boasts Lisa Gherardini del Giocondo among her

ancestors, who is believed to have modelled for the world-renowned *Mona Lisa* portrait. But it's wine, not paintings, that brings us back to the present time. Tasting begins with a Vernaccia di San Gimignano DOCG, a white wine made from a centuries-old local grape variety. Sumptuous reds follow, including the Millanni, so named in celebration of the estate's millenary anniversary in 1994. We can't possibly leave without a couple of bottles – and more than a few dazzling memories.

► Visits by appointment only, guicciardinistrozzi.it/en



Memories of Chaplin live on

It is on the shores of Switzerland's Lake Geneva, in Corsier-sur-Vevey, that Charlie Chaplin spent the last 25 years of his life with Oona, his wife and mother to 8 of his 11 children. That is also where the *Chaplin's World By Grévin* museum opened its doors last April, brainchild of Quebec museologist Yves Durand and Swiss architect Philippe Meylan.

"The idea is to give fans not only an opportunity to step into the comedian's shoes but also to allow them, including children, to touch and experience everything," explains the museologist. "They can, for example, walk into the restaurant that was featured in *The Immigrant*, or sit in the barber's chair that was part of the famous scene in *The Great Dictator*."

Following the interactive tour, visitors cross the vast gardens to the manor where the family lived until recently. Inside the manor, the tour is punctuated by several short movies shot by Oona, showing Chaplin and the children clowning around together.

The museum also includes wax figures created by the Grévin franchise. You'll see replicas of Charlie and Oona and friends such as Albert Einstein, Winston Churchill and Michael Jackson. The tour ends in the bedroom where Chaplin drew his last breath on Christmas night in 1977 – guaranteed to draw a tear from most visitors.

► chaplinmuseum.com
www.myswitzerland.com/en-ca/charlie-chaplin-montreux

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Backup batteries are heavy and bulky. Enter TravelCard! This 4.9-mm-thick charger for iPhones and Android phones is the size of a credit card. It fits snugly inside your wallet and, at \$30, won't drastically drain it. This is also a good example of voluntary simplicity: Plug it in and it starts charging. The device can also serve as a bridge between smartphone and PC, synchronizing data as it charges. It takes only a few minutes for its 1,500-mAh capacity to give your phone a power boost.

► travelcardcharger.com



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► meememory.com

Three cheers for March break!

Top up on laughter and fun with these family activities - both indoors and out.

BY NATHALIE DE GRANDMONT



PHOTO: TOHU

MONTREAL / "Falla" fun

Spring break is the ideal time to discover the Falla workshops at Montreal's TOHU centre. Offered on the first Saturday of every month (until April 2017), these 75-minute creative sessions are designed to inspire 3- to 12-year-olds to explore - through the use of the plastic arts, storytelling and music - the diversity that characterizes life in Montreal today. The March 4th workshop, for example, will feature a journey into the heart of Haiti. Participants will learn how to create papier-mâché masks according to Jacmel's carnival traditions.

tohu.ca ▶ Saturdays: 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Fees: \$5 (children), free for chaperons. 514-376-TOHU or 1-888-376-TOHU (8648)

ST-GABRIEL-DE-VALCARTIER / Play in the snow or the water

This winter all eyes are on Valcartier Vacation Village. In addition to its newly acquired ice hotel, which its redesign team describes as "more spectacular this season than ever before," the facility boasts a brand-new four-star hotel and a large indoor water park with 15 different slides. Visitors now have a choice: playing indoors or out. And it's all just 20 minutes' drive north of Quebec City.

valcartier.com ▶ Fees: \$36.95/person/day (height: 1.32 metres/4 feet 3 inches); \$24.95/person/day (under 1.32-metres); free for children age 2 and under. CAA-Quebec members get 10-percent discount on Passport + Rafting and Ice Hotel tickets. 1-888-384-5524



LAVAL /

Soak up fresh air at Parc de la Rivière-des-Mille-Îles

Parc de la Rivière-des-Mille-Îles is the perfect place to revel in the outdoors. From the end of January until March break, the Berge des Baigneurs sector in Old Sainte-Rose welcomes visitors every Saturday and Sunday. There are toboggan slopes, skiing, hiking and snowshoeing trails, an ice-skating path and a number of ice-fishing cabins. During Spring Break, further activities will include animated paths (running in the woods, walking, overcoming obstacles, etc.). Activities are free, except for ice-fishing.

parc-mille-iles.qc.ca ▶ Open weekends and all through the March break period. 450-622-1020



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NEW ZEALAND

WINE AND ADVENTURE



New Zealand's South Island pairs lavish scenery with world-class wine.

BY MARY BABBITT

You've seen it in the movies – a land so beautiful that it seems almost fictional. No wonder director Peter Jackson cast it as Middle-earth in his fantasy trilogies *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*. Jackson shot footage all over New Zealand, but he set some of the most luminous scenes on the South Island amid the magical terrain of the Central Otago region. The crystalline Southern Alps touch clear blue sky; glaciers flow through alpine rock and tussock to beech forest below; lakes and rivers glow turquoise from glacial dust. Vistas like these can feed your soul for a lifetime.

For your more earthy side, consider this: Central Otago has emerged as a flourishing wine territory. Since the 1980s it has been producing wines prized for their purity and intensity, in varieties from delicate Riesling to finicky Pinot Noir. At a latitude of 45 degrees south, the climate in this most southerly of all winemaking regions – hot, dry summers and cool, sunny autumns in the October-to-April growing season – matches conditions along the Northern Hemisphere's 45th parallel, the wine world's magical latitude that crosses France's Bordeaux, Italy's Piedmont, Oregon's Willamette Valley, and other hallowed appellations.

France and Italy can look back at thousands of years of winemaking, but the terroir of Central Otago is still revealing itself. Vines planted during the gold rush of the 1860s died off after the gold ran out, and more than a century passed before growers put down new roots. In mineral-rich, free-draining soil on hillsides and in glacial gorges, vines have to work hard. The results are small yields and mouth-filling flavours.



Located on the shores of scenic Lake Wakatipu, Queenstown boasts a multitude of extreme adventure-tourism activities.



◀ The region's flagship grape, Pinot Noir, produces wines prized for their purity and intensity.

Pinot Noir, the region's flagship grape, is a touchy one, temperamental and prone to several kinds of mould. But Kiwis don't shy away from a challenge. Queenstown, in Central Otago, sits on stunning Lake Wakatipu and has some 220 forms of adventure tourism – paragliding, skiing, white-water boating, and bungee jumping, to name a few. The world's first commercial bungee site opened here in 1988. So why not embrace the adventure of making premier vintages?

Among the populace, there's no wine snobbery. During a hike, a bike ride, or a drive, visitors can drop in at a tasting room – called a cellar door in New Zealand. Two wineries, Peregrine, 27 kilometres

east of Queenstown, and Rippon, 72 kilometres to the north, are a feast for the eyes. Peregrine's stunning building evokes the wing of a falcon in flight. Rippon, which holds a huge concert every other summer (February 2018), is located next to picturesque Lake Wanaka.

Other Central Otago wineries, such as Amisfield, Mt Difficulty, and Gibbston Valley Wines, sport fine restaurants that can turn a short visit into a deliciously lazy afternoon. Dining and taking in heavenly views while sipping something divine creates a sensation that any traveller can cherish: the feeling you've been let in on a special secret.



The Otago Central Rail Trail stretches over 150 kilometres along an ancient railway.

BUNGEE JUMPING ◀ Queenstown is home to three bungee sites, including the original one at the Kawarau Bridge, where thrill seekers trust a springy cord to stop a long fall just before they hit the ground. Every company's pitch contains the same words: "Safe? We invented safe." Still feeling uncertain? The swing is a more recent and slightly less nerve-racking addition.

Hiking

About one-third of the South Island is protected in reserves or parks, and Central Otago is laced with trails ideal for tramping (hiking) and mountain biking. Rob Roy Glacier Track trail, located in Mount Aspiring National Park, boasts waterfalls and hanging glaciers that take your mind off the steep climb. Routeburn Track, linking Mount Aspiring and Fiordland National Parks, is a three-day hike for serious trekkers, who can overnight in huts along the way. Trails near Lakes Wakatipu, Wanaka, Dunstan, and Hayes offer numerous day hikes, less ambitious but no less astonishing.

Jet boating

Another adrenaline rush invented in New Zealand, jet boats speed up or down rapids and turn circles in only a few inches of water. Excursions zoom up the scenic Shotover, Dart and Matukituki rivers. Thrilling jet boat trips allow passengers to explore hidden hiking spots, discover *Lord of the Rings* and *Hobbit* film locations, and take in awe-inspiring views of hanging glaciers and peaks in Mount Aspiring National Park, part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Biking

Of the many great bike paths in Central Otago, perhaps the most popular is this 150-kilometre former rail route that cyclists can dip into for shorter rides. As if the landscape weren't motivation enough, you'll be tempted by the pubs and cafés along the trail.

BUNGEE JUMPING ▶

activities.nz.com/central-otago/bungy-jumping

HIKING ▶ centralotagonz.com/tracks-and-walks

JET BOATING ▶

activities.nz.com/central-otago/jet-boating

BIKING ▶ otagocentralrailtrail.co.nz



DISCOVER NEW ZEALAND BY AUTOTOUR ▶ "Sensational New Zealand" and "New Zealand in the Wild" — on offer until September 2017

▶ caaquebec.com/travel

Earnslaw Burn Track: This breathtaking trail begins near Glenorchy and leads to the Earnslaw Burn Glacier.



WHERE TO TASTE

Central Otago's gorgeous, sparsely populated countryside shelters more than 80 wineries. A few favourites:

AMISFIELD ▶ Sip Pinot Noir and aromatic whites at the winery and bistro about 15 minutes from Queenstown overlooking Lake Hayes. AMISFIELD.CO.NZ.

GIBBSTON VALLEY WINES ▶ It released the first commercial Central Otago Pinot Noir in 1987 and houses New Zealand's largest wine cave and the Gibbston Valley Restaurant.

GIBBSTONVALLEYNZ.COM.

MT DIFFICULTY ▶ The Cellar Door restaurant, located in Bannockburn, sits on a rocky outcrop and looks across the Cromwell Basin to Lake Dunstan. MTDIFFICULTY.CO.NZ.

PEREGRINE ▶ Once a sheep station in the Gibbston region, the winery focuses on Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, and Riesling.

PEREGRINEWINES.CO.NZ.

RIPPON ▶ This biodynamic winery takes its relation to the environment seriously. RIPPON.CO.NZ.

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PARIS

Parisians Rahma and Maurice Bodinier have always lived on the Right Bank of the Seine River. Read on as the couple takes us on a tour of their favourite haunts in the 18th arrondissement.

BY JOSÉE LARIVÉE

Montmartre's
Place du Tertre

Emerging from the Anvers metro station, where Boulevard de Rochechouart straddles the 9th and 18th arrondissements, head up the hill on Rue de Steinkerque toward the Abbesses, a charming neighbourhood turned bobo (bourgeois-bohemian). Turn left on Rue Tardieu, then right on Rue des Trois-Frères, where you will find friendly cafés and the famous Épicerie Collignon, known to tourists as one of the settings for the 2001 movie *Amélie* (*Le Fabuleux Destin d'Amélie Poulain*).

Continue leisurely uphill toward the Butte Montmartre and the Place du Tertre. To avoid crowds, especially in the summer months, Parisians prefer to take Rue des Abbesses, which runs almost parallel and to the left of Rue des Trois-Frères. Pause at La Mascotte for tasty oysters and a glass of Sancerre. If you're there at 5 p.m., you'll very likely spot the famous cabaret owner, Michou, sipping Champagne. (Michou's cabaret, located on nearby Rue des Martyrs, was the inspiration for the wildly popular film *La Cage aux Folles*.) Keep heading left and you'll come across Église Saint-Jean-de-Montmartre and its magnificent stained glass windows. The church is one of the rare Paris structures built with bricks and reinforced concrete.

? PRACTICAL INFO

POPULATION ▶ 2.254 million (out of the 12 million in Greater Paris)

A FAMOUS VENUE ▶ Le Bateau Lavoir, a building located in the charming Place Émile-Goudeau, was home, at the start of the 20th century, to then-penniless painters and poets including Apollinaire, Modigliani and Picasso. Rebuilt with concrete following a fire, the building now provides 25 studios for young artists.

A CHEAP EATERIE ▶ Bouillon Chartier, at 7 Rue du Faubourg-Montmartre, is a legendary spot. This ancient brasserie (since 1896) offers inexpensive meals amid splendidly ornate decor. A word of advice: Arrive early because they don't take reservations.

BOUILLON-CHARTIER.COM/EN

Another top venue is the trendy La Fourmi café-bar, located at the corner of Rue des Martyrs and Boulevard de Clichy. Boasting a relaxed ambiance and excellent music, La Fourmi is popular with concertgoers from La Cigale theatre next door. Rue des Martyrs leads directly into the sophisticated 9th arrondissement, lined with upscale retailers – épicerie fines, chocolatiers, bakery and pastry shops.



▶ See the map of Paris' 18th arrondissement in the magazine's digital version.

10 WAYS TO CELEBRATE CANADA

This year, Canada turns 150. Here are 10 exciting trips to mark the milestone, from hiking through breathtaking landscapes to wandering off the beaten track, meeting local folks along the way. Each location is unique and each adventure carries an emotional charge.

BY LEA CURRIE, ASHLYN GEORGE, NATHALIE DE GRANDMONT,
CATHERINE ELIE, CRAIG MOY, DAVID NATHAN, BARB SLIGL

The legendary Cabot Trail offers one of the most beautiful road trips in the country.



NEWFOUNDLAND /**Journey to the edge of the earth**

01 / Last year, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau spent a few vacation days on Fogo Island off the northeastern coast of Newfoundland. The island's remote location – at the farthest edge of the country – is precisely its appeal. Tranquil and sparsely populated, it inspires visitors to switch off completely. There's nothing to do here – except admire fishing ports and a shoreline strewn with wildflowers, or roam through the rugged landscapes of Titling, or scale the famous Brimstone Head that is believed to contain mysterious powers. The Fogo Island Inn, featuring a unique architecture and island-inspired interior design and cuisine, has effectively put Fogo on the international travel map. It has become a favourite destination for well-off travelers. Every room boasts huge picture windows so you can watch whales and icebergs from the comfort of your bed. The inn has also developed hiking trails along the shoreline and is a major sponsor of a thriving artistic community. (N.D.E.G.)

► fogoislandinn.ca / newfoundlandlabrador.com



PHOTO: THE FOGO ISLAND INN

NOVA SCOTIA /**Taking the mythical road**

02 / Fancy a road trip by car or motorcycle? The 300-kilometre Cabot Trail is considered one of Canada's most scenic drives. It loops around Cape Breton Island and in its northern section passes through Cape Breton Highlands National Park, some areas of which are strikingly reminiscent of the Scottish Highlands. Elsewhere, the Trail runs from barren peaks to lush gorges and valleys, but for the most part it hugs the shoreline offering spectacular views of steep oceanside cliffs lashed by wind and waves. Here and there, hiking trails will tempt you to explore the local flora and fauna. Be sure to stop and relax along the way – to enjoy the fish and chips at Chéticamp, an Acadian fishing village, or to take part in a *ceilidh* at Ingonish, where Celtic culture is alive and well. (N.D.E.G.)

► novascotia.com

**PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND /****A gourmet getaway in Charlottetown**

03 / Prince Edward Island is Canada's smallest province by pretty much any measure. Its capital, Charlottetown, is similarly the country's littlest "big" city. But what the birthplace of Confederation lacks in size, it makes up for in history and local flavour. The coastal city is ideally designed for on-foot exploration: Most key sites are within a 10-minute stroll. The Taste the Town walking tour, a foodie-focused journey through Charlottetown's downtown, traces its roots back to 1720. The tour, starting at Founders' Hall, offers a leisurely exploration of must-see attractions such as St. Dunstan's Basilica, with breaks at quaint local restaurants along the way. Among the possible scrumptious samples are locally harvested mussels at the Olde Dublin Pub and the province's finest french fries – perfectly golden and crisp and made with P.E.I. Russet-Burbank potatoes – from The Chip Shack. Another culinary must-have: local lobster rolls at Peake's Quay, as well as a scoop of Gooney Mooey (vanilla ice cream with English toffee, caramel and flakes of chocolate) at Cows. If your timing's right, you can catch a free outdoor concert there too. (L.C.)

► tourismpei.com

NEW BRUNSWICK /

An Acadian micro-distillery

04 / Of course, there are beaches too. We've all seen the ads claiming that New Brunswick has the warmest salt water in Canada. But for an offbeat experience, head straight for Acadia's very first micro-distillery called Fils du Roy, in the hamlet of Petit Paquetville. It opened in 2012 and, barely a year later, won the double-gold medal at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition for its now iconic Thuya gin. Sébastien Roy and his family, who own Fils du Roy, had always dreamed of offering the world a taste of their beloved Acadia so, for them, it is "mission accomplished!" You'll discover a whole range of spirits here, including La Courailleuse absinthe, another medallist at international competitions. And as a bonus, you'll get to experience the legendary warmth and genuine hospitality of Acadians themselves. Incidentally, the nearby village of Paquetville, too, has its own claim to fame: It's the birthplace of the celebrated folksinger Edith Butler. (D.N.)

► tourismnewbrunswick.ca / distilliefilsduroy.com



► Check out the Oysters Rockefeller with Absinthe recipe from Little Louis, the CAA/AAA Four-Diamond restaurant in Moncton.



QUEBEC /

Defying the wind

05 / Adrift in the immense Gulf of St. Lawrence, the Magdalen Islands welcome you to a unique experience. Here, the wind blows incessantly, hurling waves and lashing the red sandstone cliffs into whimsical sculptures. Kitesurfers are in their element here, and it's a treat just to watch them glide over the water's surface at great speed, soaring sky-high then pirouetting back down in impossibly spectacular fashion. One week every July, kitesurfers convene here to participate in the Rendez-Vous Aventure wind-sports tournament. The Tourisme Îles de la Madeleine website has a map for all kinds of sliding and wind sports. But if you prefer cycling to water sports, there's the 100-kilometre Route Verte that runs along the sea and the main road and links one end of the archipelago (Havre Aubert) to the other (Grande Entrée). Or you can take your time riding leisurely from one village to the next, getting a chance to admire picture-perfect landscapes punctuated with colourful island houses. (C.E.)

► tourismeilesdelamadeleine.com

PHOTO: MICHEL BONATO

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SPOTLIGHT ON CANADA'S GASTRONOMY COURTESY OF RICARDO

BY MYRIAM HUZEL

Did you know that the world's best wild rice is produced right here in Canada? That the Chinese are keen on Ontario ginseng? That most of the couscous sold in Canada – not to mention exported to the United States and Europe – is manufactured by a Moroccan immigrant family in Candiac, Quebec? These are just a few of the themes featured in Chef Ricardo's *We Are the Best* series, retained by the Government of Canada as one of the Canada 150 Signature Initiative Projects meant to celebrate Confederation's 150th anniversary. The series consists of 52 bilingual videos featuring Ricardo's gourmet detours and visits with dedicated artisans in each province. Here are some of his favourite moments.

A CRUSTACEAN WORTH DISCOVERING ▶ “Stimpson's surf clams from the Îles de la Madeleine... I was surprised by their sweet taste. The Japanese use these clams for sushi and they are wild about them. In fact, we export most of our catch to Asia.”

A FARMHOUSE DINNER ▶ “A meal with a family of farmers in Saskatchewan... The spaghetti was perhaps a bit overcooked but the homegrown legume salad was delicious! All the farm employees were invited and they said grace before the meal. That was really special.”

A MEMORABLE REPAST ▶ “I was bowled over by the fresh-caught giant scallops I tasted on a boat in Digby, Nova Scotia. I ate a dozen of them. There was only one way to describe them: super fresh!”

▶ The three-minute videos are released each week between January 9th and December 31st 2017, in formats for television, websites and social media.

RICARDOCUISINE.COM/WE-ARE-THE-BEST



Discover Ricardo's clam recipe in the magazine's digital version.



ONTARIO / Discover the County's wineries and dunes

06 / We're talking about Prince Edward County (PEC), a peninsula west of Kingston that marches straight into Lake Ontario. Just four hours from Montreal and three from Ottawa, PEC has two great attractions: the Sandbanks Dunes – reminiscent of Cape Cod – and the wineries, which have been booming over the past few years. You can visit most of them without appointment and picnic there. In spring, accommodation is easier to find than during the summer, while weekends are busy all year round. There are hotels of course, like the Drake Devonshire, and also B&Bs. One of the newcomers is the Mystic Dandelion conveniently located in the heart of the County, featuring beautiful rooms with modern bathrooms and a pool you can relax in at day's end. Although owner Silvia Chambray's husband is French chef Sébastien Schwab, it is she who prepares the fabulous breakfasts at the Mystic Dandelion. Passionate about her adopted home, she can provide guests with all kinds of information about local markets and restaurants, wineries and upcoming events. (C.E.)

▶ Visitthecounty.ca / princeedwardcountywines.ca
drakedevonshire.ca / themysticdandelion.com

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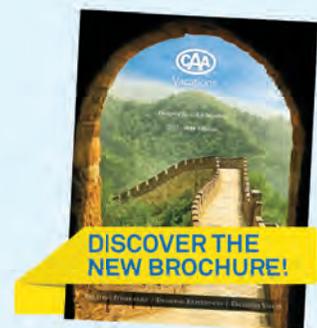
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1. \$150 savings and \$80 excursion credit are offered for Best of Portugal. Exclusive CAA benefits for the other trips. 2. Not offered for Elegance of Egypt. Consult the CAA Vacations 2017-2018 brochure for complete details, terms and conditions. CAA-Quebec Travel is a Quebec permit holder.

MANITOBA / In search of polar bears

07 / Located 1,000 kilometres north of Winnipeg, the tiny town of Churchill seems like a dot on the shores of the immense Hudson Bay, and yet it's well known as the polar-bear capital of the world. Spotting a mama bear with her cub or a pair of battling male bears is a thrilling prospect even from the vantage point of a glassed-in, giant-tired Tundra Buggy. October is the best time for a winter northern safari when hundreds of bears arrive on the shores of Hudson Bay and wait for ice floes to form anew, crucial for the bears' seal hunt. In summer, while bears are less abundant, hundreds of belugas come to swim in the bay. Northern lights also offer a spectacular show. Accommodation is limited, so it's recommended you reserve long in advance. (N.D.E.G.)

► travelmanitoba.com



PHOTO: ASHLYN GEORGE

SASKATCHEWAN / In the footsteps of explorers

08 / Hidden deep within the thick boreal forest, Saskatchewan's Lac La Ronge Provincial Park is a well-kept secret. About a four-hour drive from Saskatoon, the park is one of the largest in the province and is home to more than a hundred lakes, one of which is Lac La Ronge. Named by early French traders because of the high level of beaver activity, Lac La Ronge defined the lives of 19th-century voyageurs who transported furs on the Churchill River, just as it beckons today's boaters, fishers and hikers. For a unique experience, head north to the First Nations community of Stanley Mission, a 80-kilometre ride north of the small town of La Ronge. There, Jim's Camp, a local fishing and guiding services provider, offers a motorboat tour to explore the rich history and landscapes along the waterways of the Churchill River. After a short 16-kilometre boat ride from town, you will arrive at Fisher Rapids near the base of the 10-metre high Nistowiak Falls, one of Saskatchewan's highest. Hike the well-trod trail to the outlook atop the falls. It's a beautiful if somewhat precarious perch: There are no guardrails or safety fences to block the view of the water thundering over a rocky ledge between Iskwatikan and Nistowiak lakes. But what a spectacular view! The town of La Ronge offers a variety of accommodations including several fully equipped campgrounds. (A.G.)

► tourismsaskatchewan.com

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ALBERTA /

Horseback riding in glacier country

09 / Most of us have seen photographs of Lake Louise. But now that you're actually part of the photos themselves, you can hardly believe what you're looking at: the impossibly turquoise lake waters, the imposing Rockies and their sparkling, snowy peaks... No wonder Lake Louise (our cover) is considered one of the most spectacularly beautiful places on earth. Located some 60 kilometres north of Banff, the lake owes its magical hues to the fine-grained rock particles deposited by glacial melt. At an altitude of 1,750 metres, the lake doesn't thaw until late May and its waters remain close to freezing point even in mid-summer. It's in July or August when the thaw is at its peak that the colour of the water is the most vibrant. The Rockies offer many unforgettable experiences, like Brewster Adventures' four-hour horse ride from Lake Louise to the circa-1924 Plain of Six Glaciers Tea House. The morning or afternoon expedition winds its way through mountains and sub-alpine forest – as well as the Victoria icefield and other breathtaking glaciers – as you ascend to a secluded cabin. **(C.E., C.M.)**

PHOTO: PAUL ZIZKA

► travelalberta.com / banfflakelouise.com

BRITISH COLUMBIA /

Take a hike on the West Coast Trail

10 / The epic and legendary 75-kilometre West Coast Trail traces the shoreline between Bamfield and Port Renfrew in Pacific Rim National Park, a bucket-list hike that attracts visitors from around the world. It can take a hard-core three days to a more leisurely week to complete, trekking through mud and across boardwalks, climbing ladders, traversing bridges, pulling cable cars and recovering in beachside camps. But eating breakfast next to the rumbling of Tsusiat Falls is worth it. If multi-day hiking and sleeping under the stars – and reserving your spot a year in advance – isn't your thing, you can still take a day hike along a portion of the 47-kilometre Juan de Fuca Marine Trail located just south with an easy-access trailhead at China Beach near Sooke. **(B.S.)**

► westcoasttrail.com





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- ▶ Same thing applies if you find your ATV out of gas near an outfitter's camp. We'll come get you, no matter what time of year.
- ▶ Your side-by-side UTV is also covered. Don't worry about that flat tire: Our towing service is just a call away!

As the warm weather approaches...

With only a few more weeks until spring, snowmobiles will soon be in storage. But we'll still be there for you and your ATV, your car, your motorcycle and your bicycle.

And, so that you take even more advantage of the sunny days ahead, we offer a whole range of benefits and rebates for your spring and summer outings. Restaurants, activities, shopping... Never leave home without your CAA-Quebec card.

DRIVING WHILE IMPAIRED /**Get ready to pay!**

In Quebec alone, about 15,000 motorists see their licences suspended each year because of alcohol-impaired driving. Beyond the potential consequences in human lives, which are obviously in themselves traumatic, a first offence can cost around \$6,000 in penalties!

Costs and related measures pile up

If convicted of impaired driving, you'll have to pay a minimum \$1,000 fine, to which a host of other costs can be added, like higher automobile insurance premiums (up to 200-percent higher), \$300 in extra insurance payable to the Société de l'assurance automobile, the cost of an *Alcofrein* session (\$150), as well as the mandatory \$300 summary evaluation for alcohol-related behaviour, and lawyer's fees (averaging \$300/h).

And then there's the following:

- ▶ an immediate 90-day suspension of your driver's licence;
- ▶ fees for vehicle towing and storage;
- ▶ the possible requirement to install an alcohol-interlock device.

In 2017, there's absolutely no excuse for driving while impaired when a multitude of alternatives are available – taxis, for example, as well as drive-you-home or designated-driver services. So make the right choice! And by the way, have you thought about CAA-Quebec's Safe Ride Service?

**MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION AND ROAD SAFETY /****CAA-Quebec endorses CAA recommendations**

Last summer, CAA-Quebec published the results of a member survey revealing a majority (84 percent) of respondents who were worried about the effect of marijuana use on driving. We are now fully endorsing recommendations made by the Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF) in its study entitled *Cannabis & Road Safety: Policy Challenges*.

The recommendations of the study, conducted for the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA), include continuing research into the impact of marijuana use on driving. Researchers believe that training law-enforcement officers to recognize drug-impaired drivers, as well as the purchase of detection kits, are also essential measures. Moreover, amendments to provincial legislation and penalties for drug-impaired driving must be based on clear policy orientations established by the federal government.

The CAA has submitted this study to the federal Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation. In so doing, it seeks to raise politicians' awareness of the importance of introducing the proper measures and to remind them that Canadians are concerned about the impact of cannabis legalization on road safety.

Latest news: In its final report released to the public in mid-December, the task force concludes with recommendations that echo CAA-Quebec road safety concerns. Will the federal government implement them quickly? Stay tuned.

A victory for air travellers

In his editorial last year (*Touring*, Spring 2016), president and CEO Richard Lachance called for an air-passenger bill of rights modelled after those that already exist in the United States and Europe. This will soon become a reality: Last November 3, Transport Minister Marc Garneau announced plans to develop such legislation.

The proposed charter will have airline companies adopt clear minimum requirements for compensation so that Canadians fully understand exactly what their rights are whenever they travel. CAA-Quebec and CAA National applaud this initiative and will work in concert with the authorities and the industry toward making the charter a reality.

While the precise terms of a final charter have yet to be defined, all travellers can look forward to measures that will make their travel experience more relaxing.



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Fairmont
Le Château Frontenac

CAA/AAA 2017 DIAMOND AWARDS / The cream of the crop!

Being on the list for CAA/AAA Diamond Awards, a program that rates lodgings and restaurants across North America and the Caribbean, is an outstanding accomplishment. The requirements are stringent. Again this year, many Quebec establishments have excelled.

Remarkably, some winners succeed year after year in being placed on the prestigious list – an incredible achievement! Across Quebec, 56 establishments have earned Four or Five Diamonds: 34 lodgings, including one Five-Diamond recipient, and 22 restaurants, two of which captured Five Diamonds. Bravo!

Also of note:

▶ Two newcomers: Both the Restaurant Le Saint-Amour in Quebec City and the Renaissance Montreal Downtown Hotel received Four Diamonds.

▶ Fairmont Le Château Frontenac continues its reign among Quebec Four-Diamond lodgings, retaining this rating for its forty-second year!

Whether you want to celebrate a birthday or another special occasion, or simply want to experience something new, Diamond establishments are ideal. Go out and discover them!

Did you know? The Four- and Five-Diamond award-winning restaurants and lodgings are listed in CAA-Quebec travel literature distributed to members, including the TourBook travel guides. They are also clearly indicated in Trip-TiK® itinerary maps (accessible at CAAQUEBEC.COM). Have them on hand when travelling!

To learn more about this program, consult the On the Road section (Services: Trip Planning) at CAAQUEBEC.COM.

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Our auto experts, present at both shows, are available to exchange views on electric vehicles.

Electric vehicles a hit at the Montreal Auto Show

Again this year, CAA-Quebec was out in force at the Montreal International Auto Show with a fleet of electric vehicles (EVs) for visitors to try out. Increasingly present on our roads, EV success at the show confirms its strong appeal for quite a few fans.

Obviously, CAA-Quebec isn't the only player in this adventure. We'd like to acknowledge the contribution of the Quebec government and more particularly the Quebec Ministère de l'Énergie et des Ressources naturelles, the Montreal and Quebec auto shows, and FLO, a Quebec supplier of charging stations.

Quebec City is next!

CAA-Quebec and its partners will also gather at the Quebec City International Auto Show, from March 7 through 12 at the Quebec City Expocité.

More than a dozen vehicles will get a test run over a 5.1-kilometre track. The tests are free – on a first-come, first-serve basis. You will need to be at least 21 years old and hold a valid driver's licence to participate. See you there!



AUTOMOBILE AND TOURING CLUB OF QUEBEC (A.T.C.Q.)

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL AND EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF MEMBERS

Notice is hereby given that an annual general and extraordinary meeting of members of the Automobile and Touring Club of Quebec (the "Association") will be held at Auberge Saint-Antoine, 8 Saint-Antoine Street, Quebec City, Quebec, on Wednesday, April 12, 2017, at 11:30 a.m., for the following purposes:

1. To receive the Management's reports;
2. To receive the Association's financial statements for the fiscal year ending November 30, 2016, as well as the auditors' report thereon;
3. To adopt, by special resolution, By-law 2016-1 to amend the definition of "associate members" in the Administrative By-laws;
4. To elect Directors;
5. To appoint the Association's auditors and authorize the Directors to establish their compensation;
6. To deliberate on any other item that may be duly submitted to the meeting or to any adjournment thereof.

Quebec City, December 1, 2016
 Me Denise Cloutier
 Corporate Secretary

CAA-QUEBEC FOUNDATION AND PROTÉGEZ-VOUS /
 Do breath-alcohol analyzers pass
 the reliability test?

Personal breath-alcohol analyzers are sold in pharmacies, SAQ stores and online. But the question is, are they reliable? The CAA-Quebec Foundation and *Protégez-Vous* magazine decided to test 10 models, priced between \$20 and \$180, and compare them to a benchmark model – the one used by Sûreté du Québec.

In a controlled environment, six participants of different sizes and genders drank alcohol and then started the test, supervised by toxicologists from the Laboratoire des sciences judiciaires et de médecine légale du Québec.



Four of the 10 personal breath-alcohol analyzers produced readings similar to those produced by the Sûreté du Québec device. In other words, they passed the reliability test. But their use may still not be a good idea because they may not have been properly calibrated. In order to produce accurate results, breath-alcohol analyzers must be recalibrated once a year. Moreover, readings obtained from personal breath-alcohol analyzers are inadmissible in court. They cannot be used to prove that you were below the legal limit of 80 mg of alcohol per 100 mL of blood (.08).

While personal breath-alcohol analyzers may soothe your conscience, we still stand by our recommendation to make a clear choice between drinking and driving. Getting behind the wheel while impaired is a dangerous decision, even if your test result is less than .08.

The complete test results are available in the December 2016 issue of *Protégez-Vous*. See all the details at CAAQUEBEC.COM.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Quebec Ministère des Transports and appropriate municipalities will invest at least \$15 million – if they haven't already done so – to repair thoroughfares and sections of roadway that had been targeted by our 2016 *Worst Roads* Campaign. Our effort to make Quebec roads safer will continue in 2017. Stay tuned for details coming soon and vote!

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Advice section



QUESTION / The malfunction indicator lamp (the “check engine” light) is illuminated on my dashboard. One of my friends tells me this isn’t too serious. Is he right?

— JEAN MARCOUX, ROBERVAL

ANSWER / While a simple gas cap not properly closed could cause the malfunction indicator to light up, it’s usually a sign of something else. We recommend taking action without delay. Here’s why.

The “On-board diagnostics” (OBD) standard

When your vehicle’s computer lights up the malfunction indicator lamp, it’s quite often because it has detected a compliance failure with pollution-control requirements. Since 1996, automakers have had to comply with federal law that requires them to meet guidelines on car emissions released into the atmosphere. The OBD standard is a result of this law. It involves the complex management of several systems – including the engine control system, the anti-pollution system and the precise diagnostic system – to limit the polluting emissions and, in turn, the overconsumption of fuel.

Trouble codes

Many people think they just need to know the trouble code and replace the corres-

ponding piece. Wrong! When your mechanic communicates with your vehicle’s computer, he has to analyze a series of trouble codes stored in the computer’s memory from the time the problem appeared. The mechanic then has to follow a pre-established procedure to carry out tests that will lead him to resolving the issue. Finally, to ensure the problem is resolved, the mechanic has to conduct a specially conceived road test.

In summary, you should always consult your car owner’s manual to check the exact meaning of the malfunction indicator lamp. For example, a flashing “check engine” light signals a more serious problem that can damage a catalytic converter. Get it looked at – for the sake of your safety, the longevity of the car and potentially mounting repair costs!

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MEMBER TESTIMONIAL

Bad luck strikes twice

When Claude Tremblay returned from vacation, he wasn't expecting to find a flooded basement nor to experience the nightmare again after the renovations were barely finished. And yet...

A CAA-Quebec member for the past 15 years, Claude Tremblay learned about CAA-Quebec insurance plans by reading about it in *Touring* (now *CAA-Quebec Magazine*). A simple phone call convinced him to insure his house as well as his and his wife's cars – at a saving of \$1,400 a year.

On April 8, 2016, upon returning from a vacation in the south, Tremblay had the opportunity to test the value of this new insurance. He found eight inches of water in his basement! A valve located above the hot-water tank had cracked while he was away. The damage was significant: The staircase leading down to the basement needed to be redone and the floor, the furniture and some other items were goners.

Tremblay called his insurance agent, Annie Tannous. "She worked so quickly," he said, "and I was allowed to choose my own contractor. Three days after the disaster was discovered, I received my cheque and the work was already in progress. I couldn't believe it!"

A few months later, just after hanging the last framed picture on the wall, the couple left for a few hours to plan their next vacation. Upon their return, they heard a strange noise and discovered a part of the bathroom faucet had given out and water was spraying everywhere – including down the stairs and into the newly refinished basement.

"The word 'discouraged' is not strong enough to express how I felt," says Tremblay. "My wife was shaking. I called Ms. Tannous again. She couldn't believe her ears. My contractor thought I was joking, but it was the truth. There was two inches of water in the basement. One of the new chairs went right



PHOTO: ÉTIENNE BOISVERT

to the bin before I even had time to sit on it," Tremblay says today with a laugh.

If he's able to laugh, it's because Tannous took care of the second claim just as well as the first, with compassion and speed. "We hear so many horror stories, but she made the situation easier." And you know what's even more ironic? Tremblay works at home. Technically speaking, he spends all day at home.

Still wary, Tremblay now shuts off his water valve when he's gone for hours at a time. He's even thinking of installing a surveillance system with water detection sensors. Understandable. At the very least, he knows that CAA-Quebec and Ms. Tannous will answer his call!

TELL US YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH CAA-QUEBEC.

► Does your no-stress card give you a boost? Email your story to MAGAZINECAAQUEBEC@CAAQUEBEC.COM. It could appear in the next "Member Testimonial" column and earn you 100 CAA Dollars.

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ALASKA ▶ From Juneau, we sailed 72 kilometres through a magical setting southward to Tracy Arm Fjord. The inlet meanders amid majestic mountains, with snowy peaks and glacier-carved cliffs that look like mummified elephant paws. The journey's most memorable point was the sight of Sawyer Glacier splitting and shedding large pieces of ice that crashed into the sea as gently as clouds billowing in an Arctic-blue sky. © **ANDRÉ PAUL THERRIEN, MONT-SAINT-HILAIRE**

Send your favourite travel photo (maximum 5 megabytes) to CAAQUEBEC.COM/CAAQUEBEC before March 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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See the complete address list in the digital version of the magazine.

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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

Are you concerned about the potential impact on road safety of legalized cannabis use?

Texting is a far more worrisome activity than smoking cannabis. Of course, some people already drive while under the influence of cannabis, and I think that's more dangerous than drinking and driving.

▶ **JULIE CÔTÉ, SAINT-JÉRÔME**

Each individual must be aware of his responsibilities and not drive under the influence.

▶ **SYLVIE LÉVESQUE, SHERBROOKE**

Yes, I am concerned. And I hope that law enforcement will deal with it in the same way they do with drinking and driving in order to ensure public safety.

▶ **ANDRÉ COUTURE, SHERBROOKE**

Yes, because it will be far more difficult to determine the threshold for cannabis consumption, unlike that of alcohol (0.08).

▶ **RÉGIS BLAIS, MONTRÉAL**

NEXT QUESTION:

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

Send a brief answer to CAAQUEBEC.COM/CAAQUEBECMAGAZINE before March 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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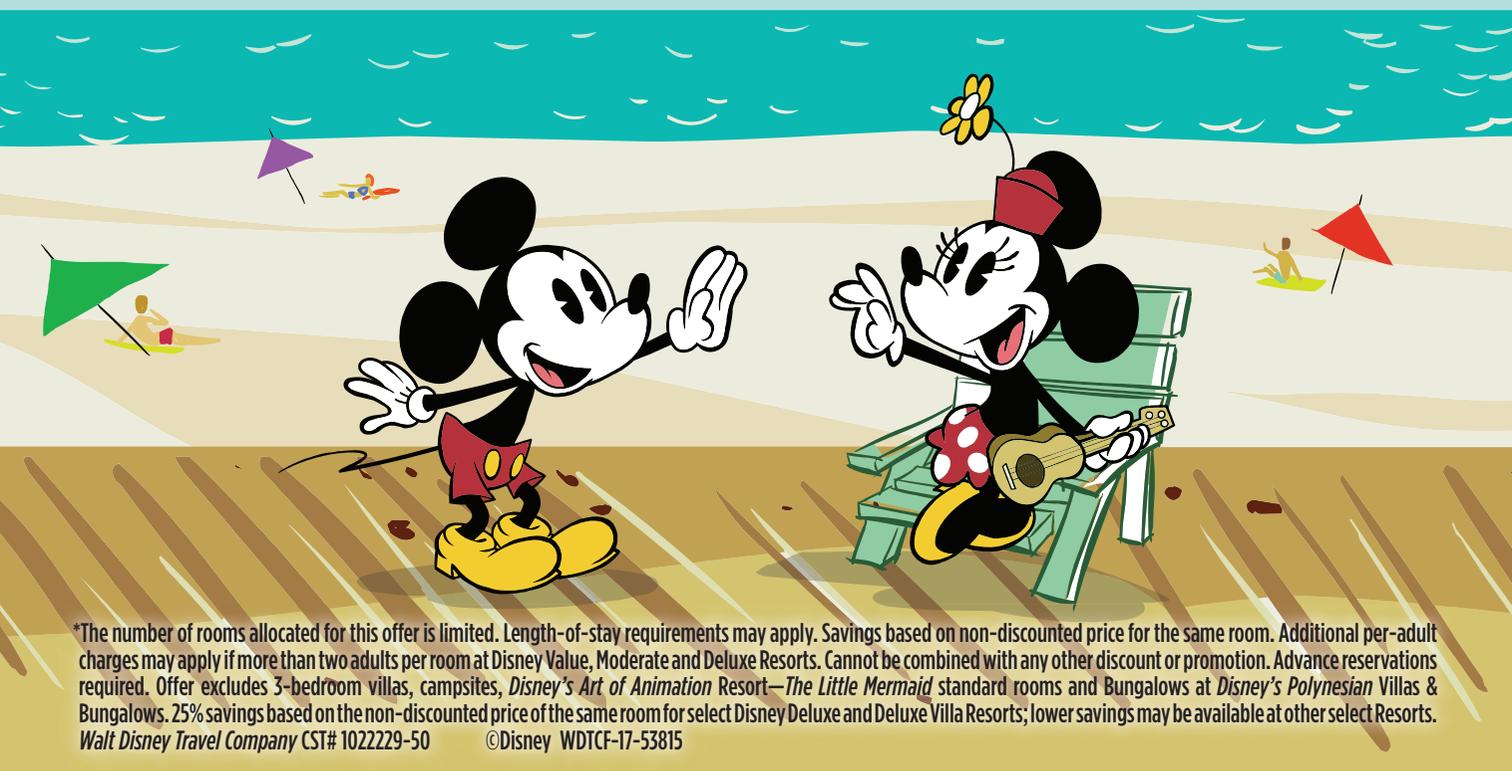
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A WHITER SHADE OF PALE

BY CHANTAL LAPOINTE

Dominated for years by dark wood varieties – for the most part stained and glossy – light wood floors are making a comeback, with maple, cherry and oak leading the way. “They have the advantage of looking neater and are more forgiving when it comes to scratches,” says Denis Desgagné, owner of Parquet Design D & D. “They also make a room feel brighter and more spacious.” The current trend is for sustainably produced hardwood flooring, in greyish or whitewashed-stain colours with a textured finish – brushed, oiled, embossed or antique. As with barn wood, the goal is to achieve a weathered, old-fashioned feel that suits any decor or setting – contemporary or rustic, urban or rural. In other words, beauty lies in the imperfections.

► Our thanks go to Denis Desgagné, Parquet Design D & D, Saint-Constant



PHOTOS: PARQUET DESIGN D & D

5 THINGS TO DO

BEFORE YOU REMOVE A WALL

An open floor plan is definitely the current home design trend. But tearing down an interior wall to open up the space can be risky and should not be taken lightly. Here are five tips to avoid disaster.

BY JACQUELINE SIMONEAU



01 Determine whether the wall is structural

Structural or load-bearing walls support the roof, floors and non-structural walls. They keep the house standing and, therefore, are vital. So before knocking down a wall, find out whether or not it is load-bearing. The blueprints or building plans for the house – available from your municipality if you don't already have a copy on hand – will indicate the location of supporting beams and structural walls. There are also signs in the house that can help you identify them. For example, check in the basement to see if there's a wall or an I-beam directly below the wall you'd like to remove. If the two parallel partitions run the entire length of the building, then your targeted wall is indeed load-bearing. The direction of the roof trusses or the floor joists can provide another clue: If they run perpendicu-

lar to the targeted wall, the latter is definitely structural. Moreover, a load-bearing wall generally has a double top plate, you should however open up the wall at a few places to inspect it. For peace of mind, it's highly recommended that you consult a building professional such as a structural engineer. Your house's structural integrity and your own safety depend on it.

02 Open up the wall

Once you've determined the type of wall you're dealing with, the next step is to find out what's inside. Use a utility knife (never brute strength) to cut out an opening. Proceed cautiously so as not to damage what you might find within, like electrical wires, water pipes, heating or vent ducts, or some other surprise or two if your house is several decades old. If you do find something, be sure to call in a professional electrician or

plumber who can safely remove or relocate anything unexpected. This will inevitably involve extra costs, but it's necessary. A word of advice: Contact the professionals ahead of time to avoid delays.

03 Support the load temporarily while the wall is being removed

Removing a structural wall requires careful planning. Before proceeding, you must absolutely install a support beam or pillar – from floor to ceiling – to bear the load while the wall is being demolished. This will prevent damage to the structural integrity of your home. A tip: If the wall in question is used to support the roof, it's preferable to remove it in summer rather than winter because any accumulated snow on the roof will increase the load on the temporary support beam.

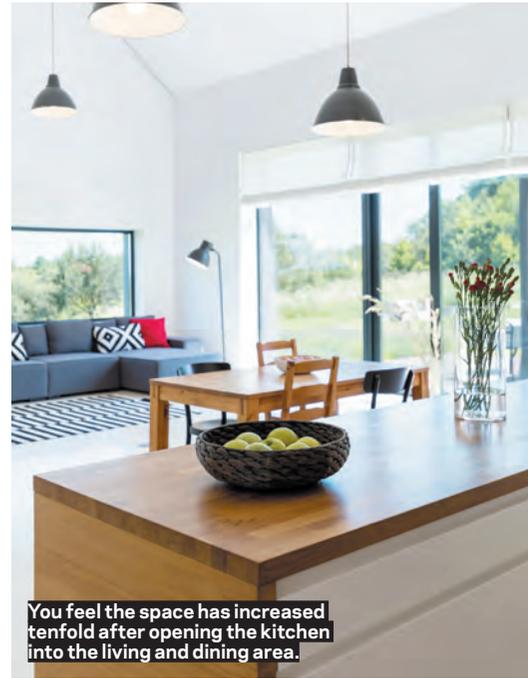
04 Replace the load-bearing wall

Once the wall is demolished, you will need other means to support the weight of the level above, such as ceiling beams and pillars on either side of the new opening. Note that these replacement structures don't all have the same strength and rigidity, so make sure the weight is properly distributed to prevent the roof or floor from sagging, either in the short or long term. Also, the new beams and pillars must extend all the way to the basement foundation to ensure overall stability. The job of assessing load-bearing capabilities and the related construction work to be done is complex and requires professional attention. Consult a structural engineer.

05 Factor in extra expenses

The project doesn't end with the wall removal. There are still repairs necessary to make everything match throughout the house. These will include redoing or patching the floor, filling the gap left in the ceiling (for example, with a strip of gypsum board), fixing the joints, and repainting. This work should be planned ahead of time and be included in the renovation budget, with extra allowances if you plan to have them done professionally.

► Our thanks go to Steve Lampron, owner of Merlam Construction & Rénovation, and to Maxime Thibodeau of MTIC Ingénieur Conseil for their assistance.



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Home

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Home automation

GOES MAINSTREAM

Dreaming of a smart home? Why not! Technological advances combined with falling prices have made home automation increasingly affordable.

BY JACQUELINE SIMONEAU



Control lighting

Control motorized blinds

Lock the doors

Play music

Control room temperature

Home automation (also known as *domotics* or *domotica*) refers to a system that allows you to remotely automate, program and control an array of electric and electronic home appliances.

Today's versions have nothing in common with those of the 1980s. The so-called Internet of Things (IoT) has given way to innovative and highly efficient systems. Not that long ago, home automation required all kinds of complex wiring and was accessible only from remote-control devices or specific control panels inside the home itself. Today, most systems operate wirelessly, running on different frequencies than those for other Wi-Fi devices thereby limiting interference and ensuring reliability. In short, it is now possible to program several functions using a smartphone, tablet or computer from wherever you happen to be. Moreover, wireless technology permits you to set up a home-automation system either in a newly built or existing home.

A basic *domotic* system usually controls lighting, heating and alarm systems, although you can add another feature, like a smart lock or a connected garage door, depending on your budget and requirements. The possibilities are almost limitless.

A technology that simplifies your life

Home automation can do a great many different things: remotely control heating and air conditioning, adjust the lighting in individual rooms when and how you wish, automatically shut off the lights when no one's in the room, open and close keyless locks, shut cottage windows after everyone has left, start the coffee machine before you get out of bed, open and close motorized blinds, activate or deactivate the pool heater, activate the automatic blocking system if the sewer backs up, and a lot more.

The overall advantages are significant. Home automation will make your house:

More energy-and cost-efficient

You can program your home-automation system into an energy-saving mode while you're out and set it back to normal upon your return. Better still, if the lighting and heating systems are connected to the alarm system, the latter can shut off the lights and lower the heat automatically when it's activated. So

WIRED OR WIRELESS?

Sometimes, wireless components can be combined with the wired variety for better results – this is called hybrid installation. For example, wireless detectors cannot be completely concealed in walls (the way that wires are concealed around doors and windows) because their batteries must remain accessible. And if you are one of those people who sometimes forget to change the batteries in all your detectors on a regular basis, then wired components may be preferable, although it could mean finishing off the installation with wireless elements for remote monitoring.

you won't have to start the operation all over again each time you leave the house. In short, by programming the lighting, heating, air conditioning and electric appliances (like the washing machine and pool heater) according to your needs, you avoid wasting energy while reducing your utility costs.

More comfortable and welcoming

Thanks to better controls for lighting, heating and air conditioning. In effect, domotics will help promote a sense of well-being.

More time-efficient

You can activate or deactivate several functions with a single click from inside your home or remotely. You also gain greater peace of mind by preprogramming everything.

More secure

The alarm system connected to the home-automation system ensures not only the security of your home but it also allows you to oversee it from afar. For example, you can observe the inside and outside of your property anytime from your smartphone or tablet, even receive an automatic alert in the case of a break-in, a gas leak or a water leak. A plus for your safety is the "smart" garage door: The moment your vehicle approaches your home, the garage door opens, the alarm system deactivates and a light comes on.

Accessories for the connected home

When it's time to purchase and set up your domotic system adapted to your needs, be sure to hire a home automation expert.

Smart smoke and carbon-monoxide detectors

Who hasn't burned the toast and caused the smoke alarm to go off? With this device, you no longer have to climb onto a chair and wave a dish towel to make it stop. You can now do it with your telephone. Also, instead of an ear-piercing alarm, the smart detector uses a speaker to voice if it detects smoke or carbon monoxide, and where it is. It will also send you a message if it detects anything unusual in the house. (About \$125)

Smart outlet

This remotely activates and deactivates electrical appliances whenever you want. For example, several outlets can be programmed so that the lights, air conditioner or stereo come on as soon as you get home. (About \$50)

Smart door lock

Loaded down with groceries, you're desperately searching through your purse for the house key. A smart lock will eliminate this frustrating problem. Connected to your cellphone, it automatically locks or unlocks the door as you approach it. The device also allows you to lock or unlock the door for your houseguests, even if you're not at home. (About \$250)

Smart LED lighting

This not only allows you to turn the lights on and off remotely, but also to set and adjust the intensity according to the activities and the desired ambiance. Another advantage: It can be programmed to follow sunrise and sunset. In the evening, for example, lights brighten gradually, and in the morning, they are off. (About \$25)



Smart doorbell

You're not home when someone rings the doorbell. Wherever you happen to be – at the office, the cottage or anywhere else – you can communicate with the person at your door by means of a camera or a voice command. (About \$200)

Motorized blinds

They open and close at set times to factor in the entry of sunrays and light. (From \$300 to \$1,000 for a 1.5-metre x 1.5-metre window; prices vary depending on the power of the motor and the quality of the materials.)

Mirror screen

The television set is integrated in a mirror and, in fact, it becomes a mirror when it's turned off. This is particularly practical for those who enjoy watching TV in the bathroom without compromising aesthetics. (From \$2,000 to \$50,000, depending on the size, style and finish)



► How do you avoid potential security breaches? Consult our magazine's digital version for more information.

Our thanks go to Francis Paré, president of ASC Sécurité, and to Denis Primeau, president of Technisécur Électronique, for their assistance.

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CAR SHARING

ONE FOR ALL AND ALL FOR ONE

Rather than keeping a couple of cars in your garage, why not just borrow one whenever you need it? Welcome to the age of carsharing and ridesharing 2.0.

BY NADINE FILION

Carsharing or the use of a self-service vehicle (SSV) is essentially a big-city kind of approach because cities are where demand is strongest for the service to be profitable. At Montreal-based Communauto, North America's very first SSV network, you can reserve a car for a round trip, picking it up at and returning it to the same predetermined location. Car2go, launched by Daimler AG in 2008, offers flexible one-way point-to-point rentals. Vehicles can be located and booked through a smartphone and returned practically anywhere within the company's operating areas in the city.

But how much does this transport option, which includes gas and insurance, actually cost? "Generally speaking, somewhere between a bus ticket and a taxi ride," says Florence Paulhiac-Scherrer, director of the Chaire de recherche-innovation en stratégies intégrées transport-urbanisme (In.SITU) at Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM).

And then there's ridesharing, also known as carpooling. AmigoExpress/Kangaride (a CAA-Quebec

partner) – which turned 10 last year – claims it is Canada’s most active ridesharing community, with 350,000 subscribers who either offer – or avail themselves of – some 1.5 million vacant seats in private vehicles.

Uber changed the game

The carsharing movement has taken off like a rocket since 2014. As have Uber and Lyft, Uber’s main but lesser-known competitor – even though this isn’t exactly a ridesharing platform. According to *The Economist*, 30 million customers patronize Uber each month in 425 cities around the globe. John Zimmer, Lyft’s co-founder, likens the current fleet of private automobiles to a hotel with a high vacancy rate. In fact, study after study shows that private cars are parked 90 to 96 percent of the time.

It’s nothing short of a revolution and carmakers are staking their claims. In an interview with *Fortune* magazine, General Motors CEO Mary Barra says that the practice of carsharing will transform the industry more profoundly than even electric or self-driving vehicles.

Today, almost all major automakers have formed alliances with carsharing companies or are actively seeking partners. General Motors (GM) has invested \$500-million in Lyft. Toyota and Volvo have teamed up with Uber. BMW has created its own carsharing service called DriveNow. The Chinese company Geely, which owns Volvo, has launched Lynk & Co, a new brand dedicated to carsharing. Daimler has enhanced its Car2go network with Mercedes-Benz sedans, and the French group PSA Peugeot-Citroën has bought a stake in Quebec-based Communauto.

Complementary services

The influx of companies has driven down carsharing rates – whether by the minute, hour or day. The cost of subscription fees, when applicable, has also been sharply reduced.

Carsharing appeals mainly to people who don’t want to spend money on car maintenance, repairs, registration, insurance, tires, gas and parking.

“Imagine, driving cars without necessarily owning them,” says Paulhiac-Scherrer. “The more SSVs there are on the market, the more flexibility they offer, and the more users they attract. I’ve just sold my SUV and instead use the many carsharing services available in Montreal – I keep signing up for carsharing programs.”

The competition keeps growing too. There are now apps for peer-to-peer carsharing companies like Turo (in Canada since last year), GetAround, and Maven (a GM creation that claims to have Canada “on its radar screen”). All use digital platforms to pair private car owners and drivers who are interested in renting vehicles for short periods like by the hour, day or week. Owners cover the cost of ownership and drivers have access to readily available vehicles at a lower cost than that charged by a traditional car rental company. Call it the Airbnb of vehicles!

“It’s true. There are similarities with Airbnb since we’re dealing with shared facilities,” says Peter Kosak, GM Executive Director of Urban Mobility. Kosak is developing residential carsharing programs to offer apartment-building occupants free access to SSVs and even carsharing subscriptions. The initiative, begun in early summer 2015 with the Ritz Plaza Stonehenge in New York City, has now spread to properties in Chicago and Miami. Similar deals may be on the horizon for the city of Toronto.

Montreal had a taste of the phenomenon early on with the Communauto network, which has now installed SSV facilities in a number of commercial and residential properties. La Roue is one of these facilities – also Quebec’s very first carsharing service network for seniors – inaugurated last summer by the Au Fil de l’Eau residence in Rivière-des-Prairies. ▶

CARSHARING HOUSEHOLDS ESTIMATE THEY DRIVE LESS FREQUENTLY — BY 25 PERCENT — THAN THEIR CAR-OWNING COUNTERPARTS. SIMPLY PUT, SAVING MONEY INVOLVES MAKING COMPROMISES WHEN IT COMES TO MOBILITY.

**But there's a drawback:
Driving has increased!**

New-generation carsharing is such a recent phenomenon that even the latest studies can't accurately quantify how much money users save compared to the cost of owning a vehicle. But all the same, let's try to figure it out. Compared with the average annual cost of about \$7,728 for owning and operating a Honda Civic (according to a recent CAA-Quebec calculation), a Communauto subscriber spends five times less, or only an average of \$1,600, says Marco Viviani, Communauto Development and Public Relations Director.

Also, carsharing households estimate they drive less frequently – by 25 percent – than their car-owning counterparts. Simply put, saving money involves making compromises when it comes to mobility. Moreover, Communauto affirms that each of its SSVs replaces 10 private vehicles – and most North American studies show the replacement ratio to be between 5 and 15 private cars to each SSV.

Still, driving itself remains high. Last summer, the Transportation Sustainability Research Center (TSRC) at the University of California, Berkeley, published a study on the impact of Car2go one-way carsharing on five North American cities including Calgary and Vancouver. The thrust of the study boils down to an estimation of the number of unsold cars. The same research indicates that the vast majority of SSV users do not own a vehicle (this finding echoes a Communauto report that shows 90 percent of its subscribers are carless).

In Vancouver and Calgary, barely 2 percent of Car2go subscribers gave up owning their own cars.

The study also reveals that if Car2go subscribers hadn't taken advantage of carsharing, they would have resorted to public transport rather than buying a car for themselves. In fact, the TSRC indicates that 24 percent of Car2go users in Calgary and 19 percent in Vancouver claim to have reduced their use of commuter trains. The drop in taxi rides by Car2go subscribers is more dramatic: 64 percent in Calgary and 65 percent in Vancouver.

▶ **Smart Mobility 2015 study conducted by Deloitte Consulting LLP Transportation, reveals that those who relinquished their cars in favour of carsharing took several years to make that decision. "Giving up the family car isn't instantaneous," the authors note.**



PHOTO: CAR2GO

None of these findings surprise Paulhiac-Scherrer. "Even today, 70 to 75 percent of the population drive. Carsharing may permit people to rationalize their travels. But it also promotes driving when we would prefer the use of public transportation instead. In short, we essentially trade one kind of mileage for another."

▶ **Remember that it's the member - not his or her car - that's covered by CAA-Quebec services, whether it be for roadside assistance or a safe ride home. You're covered even if you find yourself in a car other than your own.**



► “The holder of a vacant car seat gets, on average, about \$10 per trip, the seat renter benefits from a less expensive ride than if he drove himself, and one that is also more comfortable and faster than if he used public transit all the way.” Obviously, Netlift receives a fee for each transaction.

LOOKING BEYOND TRADITIONAL RIDESHARING

Montreal-based company Netlift offers a solution tailored to today’s transportation reality as a whole, rather than focussing on a single aspect of it.

And that’s why Montreal firm Netlift – founded two years ago by Quebecer Marc-Antoine Ducas – is such a sensible solution. For this 40-something information-technology engineer, mobility can be improved not just by using public transportation, Car2go, Communauto and AmigoExpress but also by using all those seats in private cars that are empty during every workday rush hour. “For Montreal, that amounts to 1.5 million trips made by drivers sitting alone in their cars,” says Ducas. “And that means there are some four million empty car seats on the city’s congested streets, more than the city’s population.”

The Netlift app wants to sell those empty seats, “but not by traditional ridesharing means, which studies confirm are unsustainable.” Instead, Ducas advocates intermodal commuting; in other words, combining car travel with public transit. “We calculate all the segments to the minute, study drivers’ route patterns, and compile an inventory of commuting needs. Tell us where you live, where you want to go and at what time, and our algorithm will create a route for you. We can even take you to areas with no metro or bus connections.”

To those who think that such a system would make people shun the bus, Ducas says, “Mass transit

cannot solve all the problems. There are segments where it makes no sense to have a bus stop or metro line.” Ducas even envisions multimodal transfers (on an all-inclusive transit pass or a monthly pass that would include car travel), insisting the future of public transportation is through the automobile.

Netlift has recently formed a partnership with CAA-Quebec. Members get a 10-percent discount for each ride as a passenger, and/or a \$25 Couche-Tard voucher on their first carpool offer. “CAA-Quebec is a recognized brand that benefits from great loyalty and trust of users,” Ducas says. “It’s a perfect marriage that will help us get to know those drivers who are not yet ready to give up their cars for public transport but who, we hope, will eventually see Netlift as an opportunity to reduce their travel costs.”

“We’ve always advocated sustainable mobility,” says Philippe St-Pierre, CAA-Quebec Director of Public Affairs. “We didn’t decide to promote responsible automobile use just recently but have done so since the outset. And in our opinion, it makes sense to ask a colleague for a ride to the office – or to help a colleague to get there – and thereby save \$30 to \$40 per week.”

RESERVED LANES /

Reserved for whom?

You may think you're familiar with the rules governing reserved lanes in Quebec. Well, brace yourself for a couple of surprises...

▶ **TRUE OR FALSE?** A motorist driving a child to day-care can use a high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane. True. There is no age requirement for carpooling. "In fact," says Transport Québec spokesperson Solène Lemay, "a parent taking a child to daycare is assumed to be carpooling."

▶ **TRUE OR FALSE?** In an urban area, a driver can use the reserved lane adjacent to the sidewalk if he intends to make a right-hand turn at the next intersection.

False. Before moving into that lane, the driver must wait until the double line (broken or solid) becomes a single broken line before the intersection.

▶ **TRUE OR FALSE?** Electric vehicles have access to all reserved carpool lanes in Quebec, even when the driver is alone.

False. It's been a year since electric and hybrid cars with a green licence plate have been allowed access to some reserved lanes, even without a passenger. But this only applies to 10 or so highways – half of which are in Greater Montreal and half in the Quebec City area – that display the EV green logo road sign.

TRANSPORTELECTRIQUES.GOUV.QC.CA/EN/BE-PART-OF-THE-CHANGE/



▶ **TRUE OR FALSE?** Contravening carpool-lane rules carries a fine and demerit points.

True and false. According to Article 310 of the Highway Safety Code, the HOV-lane violator is fined \$100 to \$200, but receives no demerit points to his driving record.



PEDESTRIAN SIGNALS /

Can drivers turn or not?

While the white "walk" signal is lit up at an intersection, a motorist cannot make a right turn (a red light or a straight-ahead green arrow indicates that turning is prohibited). When the flashing hand light indicates the imminent expiration of the walk signal, the pedestrian still has the right of way but must stop if he thinks he hasn't enough time to reach the other side. If no pedestrian is waiting to cross, a motorist can turn – whether left or right – if his own traffic light is green, or if, in the case of a right turn on red, the situation permits.

At an intersection with traffic lights but no pedestrian signals, pedestrians facing a green light always have the right of way.

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Two myths about filling up

Does filling up in the morning cost less? The answer is no. Read on.

You may have received emails or seen posts claiming that filling up your car first thing in the morning when the temperature is cooler gets a better bang for your buck than filling up in the middle of a hot day. It sounds logical: The more the mercury drops, the more a liquid's volume contracts and becomes denser. As such, you get more at 5 °C than at 25 °C.

Unfortunately, that's not the case. Gas station fuel reservoirs are deep underground where the tem-

perature barely fluctuates. No matter what time of day you decide to fill up the car, the density of the gas will be practically identical. "And," says Sylvain Légaré, of CAA-Quebec's Automotive Advisory Services, "even if external cisterns were used, you certainly wouldn't notice a difference filling up a 60-litre tank."

Get a handle on it

Another myth to debunk is that flow rate influences the amount of gas obtained. Because they are subjected to Measurement Canada rules – not to mention modern, electronic fuel delivery – our gas pumps don't mistake volume delivered, regardless of whether you hold the trigger halfway or all the way down. "Even if a gas pump does react slightly differently during a slow-flow delivery or a fast one, Measurements Canada guarantees that the pump measure is exact for all flow rates in its approved operating range," says organization spokesperson Stéfanie Power.

Still think you're a victim of an inexact measurement at the pump? If you couldn't resolve the problem with the retailer, Measurement Canada (a division of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada) invites you to submit a complaint. But keep in mind, says the government agency, a tank's declared capacity – whether in a car or a portable jerry can, is only approximate, making any comparison difficult.

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Replacement insurance or replacement-cost endorsement?

Auto dealerships have offered replacement insurance for some years now, enabling owners to get a same-value replacement vehicle in case of total loss due to accident or theft. Automobile insurers, on the other hand, offer a replacement-cost endorsement on your existing insurance policy. Which option is best for you?

BY JACQUELINE SIMONEAU

If your vehicle was stolen or totalled in a collision, your basic auto insurance policy only covers you for the car's market value on the day of the loss, not the price you paid for it. This kind of settlement could hurt you financially if you still owe more than the vehicle's value at the time of the loss. Cars generally depreciate faster than the car loans owners are paying off. In other words, the insurance payment wouldn't even cover the outstanding balance owing, and you'd have to make up the difference. This is where replacement insurance and the replacement-cost endorsement come in handy. Both options provide protection against the vehicle's depreciation.

Even though these products are similar enough, each has particular characteristics that may influence your choice.

Replacement insurance

Replacement insurance is normally available through car dealerships – both new and used – although damage insurance brokers and agents can also sell it. To obtain replacement insurance, you must first have traditional car insurance because all replacement insurance does is add a monetary compensation to the indemnity already specified by your insurance policy.

The premium is fixed for the entire duration of the policy, which may vary from one to eight years. The amount is based on the vehicle's value and the term of the contract. It can be paid in full at the time of purchase or be included in your car loan, in which case you'll also have to pay interest (unless you get zero-percent financing) as well as dealer commission fees. On this score, the Autorité des marchés financiers (AMF) rules that the dealer must declare the commission he receives if it exceeds 30 percent of the insurance cost.

One advantage is that, in the event of a claim, you'll be reimbursed for the amount of the insurance deductible. Another is that the premium cannot be modified at any time, even if your driving record has deteriorated in the meantime. So replacement insurance can be advantageous if you're an unlucky or careless driver with accumulated losses. Coverage ends following a claim or with the expiration of the policy.

Good to know: By law, the dealer must give you a "Distribution Guide" and explain how replacement insurance works, clearly state exclusions, inform you of the procedure for submitting a claim, and explain your recourse if the insurer refuses to pay the claim. Make sure that no steps are skipped. If you purchase replacement insurance from your car dealer, you can cancel your contract within 10 days of signing without penalty. You will be reimbursed for any premiums you've already paid.

In the case of a total loss due to theft or collision, the indemnity must serve exclusively for the replacement of the vehicle. When you buy the insurance, you must choose one of two options: get a same-value replacement vehicle from the dealer named in the contract or choose one yourself.

Replacement-cost endorsement

This protection is only available from insurance agents and brokers. The replacement-cost endorsement is added to your existing insurance policy at the time you purchase a car.

The premium is payable annually and the amount may increase a little every year. Get a couple of quotes because the price can vary from one insurer to another. The price is calculated using the same criteria (age, gender, vehicle value, driving record, credit score) as the main insurance premium.

Generally speaking, the coverage is spread over four or five years. But, unlike replacement insurance, you can either keep or cancel the endorsement at each policy renewal. Therefore, you need not necessarily commit to coverage over several years. If you cancel the endorsement before the expiration of your annual car insurance policy, you will be reimbursed for the unused portion, minus a penalty. On the other hand,

the insurer could refuse renewal if you've made repeated claims or if you haven't paid your premiums. But if your insurance record is unblemished, the replacement-cost endorsement could prove to be more advantageous than replacement insurance.

Another difference: In the case of indemnification, the payment you receive can be used as you see fit, either to buy a replacement vehicle from wherever you like or keep the cash (after paying off the loan, of course) with no obligation to replace the vehicle. How-

ever, if you leased the vehicle, the indemnification cheque will be made payable to you and the lessor (the carmaker or a financial institution). You must, therefore, arrange with the latter if you wish to get a cash settlement or another make of vehicle.

Coverage doesn't automatically end after a claim. Your new vehicle could be covered under the same policy.

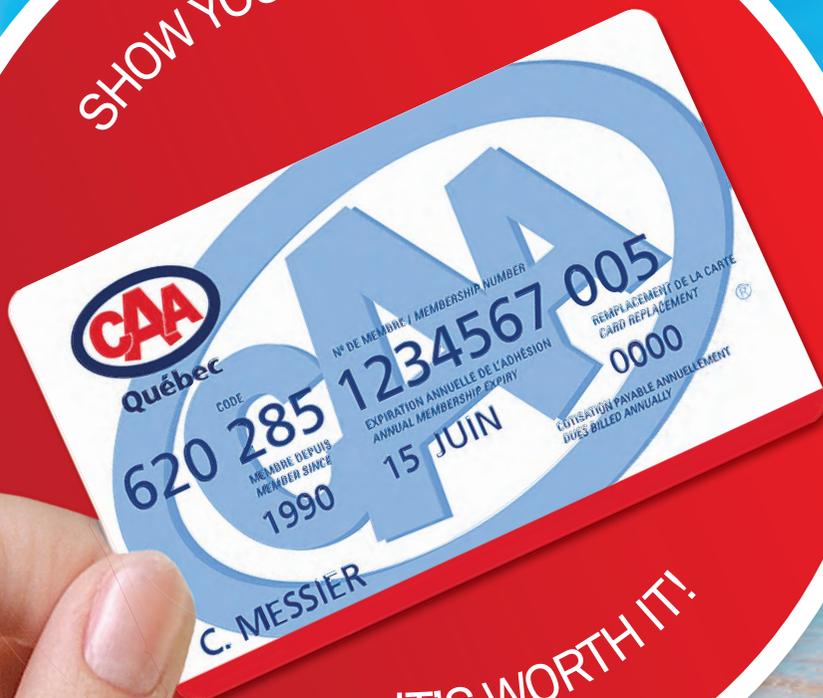
EVEN THOUGH THESE PRODUCTS ARE SIMILAR ENOUGH, EACH HAS PARTICULAR CHARACTERISTICS THAT MAY INFLUENCE YOUR CHOICE.

► Our thanks go to Suzanne Michaud, CAA-Quebec Vice-President, Insurance, for her assistance.

MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE ►
 Don't make a hasty decision. You're not obliged to confirm your choice of insurance at the time of signing the promise to purchase at the dealership. It's wise to approach other insurance agents or brokers so you can compare products and prices and choose whichever suits you best.



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2017 HONDA CIVIC HATCHBACK

PRICE: \$22,985 to \$32,285

PROS: Very good handling, powerful and fuel-efficient turbo engine, enjoyable transmissions, roomy and versatile interior, generous equipment.

CONS: Poor visibility, high entry price, Sport and Sport Touring require premium fuel, complex and frustrating touch screen.

► **Quick quiz:** What year did Honda stop selling the Civic hatchback in Canada? No, not 2000; it was 2005, after the two-door SiR was dropped. Twelve years later, the celebrated Civic hatchback is back, with two more doors and a turbo under the hood. Essentially, it is a more dynamic and more luxurious version of the sedan, with the “true” sports cars of the lineup, the long-awaited Si and Type R, still to come.

In trading a trunk for a hatchback cargo area, Honda is positioning its best-selling Civic even higher on the capability scale. The hatchback adds versatility, vivacity and a dose of welcome excitement to the frugality, solidity and balance of the sedan. At more than \$23,000 the base LX version is not nearly as affordable as the small Civic hatchbacks of old. However, it has all it takes to attract today’s compact-hatchback enthusiasts, especially if they want a bit more luxury.

TEST MODEL

ENGINE: 1.5-litre turbo direct-injection 4-cylinder (174 hp)

TRANSMISSION: 6-speed manual

DRIVETRAIN: Front-wheel drive

FUEL ECONOMY, CITY/HIGHWAY COMBINED
(Natural Resources Canada): 7.2 L/100 km

2017 TOYOTA PRIUS

PRICE: \$28,745 to \$34,310

PROS: Very low fuel consumption, more-stable ride, versatile interior, improved soundproofing, numerous safety features, exceptional reliability.

CONS: Still-limited power, poor tire grip, mediocre rear visibility, restrictive driving position, controversial styling.

► The fourth-generation Prius has been on the road for just over a year. Its highly aerodynamic shape dissimulates a brand-new global platform destined to serve as the foundation for a host of other Toyota and Lexus models. The powertrain has undergone several changes, including the addition of a new, more compact battery for certain versions. Good news: All Prius models now come with a suite of advanced safety features, such as automatic emergency braking.

The redesigned Prius has made progress on a number of fronts relative to its predecessor. Without being sporty, it definitely displays more composure with no loss of comfort. Improved seats and soundproofing refine the ride even more on long trips. Hopefully the controversial look won’t be too off-putting for potential buyers, because they’d miss out on one of the most frugal and reliable vehicles on the road today.

TEST MODEL

ENGINE: 1.8-litre 4-cylinder and electric motor (121 hp)

TRANSMISSION: Continuously variable automatic

DRIVETRAIN: Front-wheel drive

TEMPERATURE: 2 °C to 23 °C

TESTED FUEL ECONOMY: 4 L/100 km





2017 CADILLAC XT5

PRICE: \$47,100 to \$75,585

PROS: Luxurious finish, enjoyable to drive, powerful engine, reasonable fuel consumption, advanced safety equipment easily accessible.

CONS: Deficient visibility, tight rear seating, suspension sometimes harsh, overly noisy ride, certain controls are complex.

► The XT5 is the renewed version of the SRX crossover, Cadillac's best-selling model. Redesigned from the ground up, the 2017 XT5 is built on a new, lighter chassis which GM will be using for several of its other SUVs. Also new are an improved all-wheel-drive system and an eight-speed transmission. The XT5 still counts on a V6 engine and five-passenger cabin as it takes aim at segment rivals BMW X3, Lexus RX 350 and Mercedes-Benz GLC.

At first glance, the XT5 looks built to please. The cabin is impressively comfortable, materials are suitably luxurious, and its stable, dynamic handling is typical of today's Cadillacs. However, the XT5 can be a tight fit; the rear seats are simply too small, even for average-sized adults. GM will also have to refine the ride a bit more still to reach the high standards set by the German competition in a highly disputed segment.

TEST MODEL

ENGINE: 3.6-litre direct-injection V6 (310 hp)

TRANSMISSION: 8-speed automatic with manual mode

DRIVETRAIN: All-wheel drive

TEMPERATURE: -1 °C to 14 °C

TESTED FUEL ECONOMY: 10.4 L/100 km

2017 BMW 7 SERIES

PRICE: \$110,045 to \$192,195

PROS: Impressive performance, exemplary transmission, low fuel consumption (highway), composed handling, top-notch soundproofing, faultless finish and comfort.

CONS: Indigestible price, numerous and expensive options, fixed rear seatbacks, too-light steering, complex mechanicals.

► There are so many SUVs on our roads today that we almost forget that the real flagships in most prestige-car lineups are the full-size sedans. The BMW 7 Series is no exception, especially after its 2016 renewal. We logged nearly 1,500 km at the wheel of a short-wheelbase 750i xDrive to find out what the privileged few gain by spending more than \$2,000 a month on a car.

Quite frankly, we'd have to be very hard to please to find a major fault with the most expensive car ever tested by CAA-Quebec. Mechanically harmonious, sumptuously appointed, irreproachably comfortable: the 750i XDrive is a car you'd like to drive to the ends of the earth, especially with the extended range afforded by relatively low highway fuel consumption. Cars like this are often the harbingers of technologies that eventually migrate to more affordable models, and that alone justifies their existence, even if they are inaccessible to 99 percent of motorists.

TEST MODEL

ENGINE: 4.4-litre turbo direct-injection V8 (445 hp)

TRANSMISSION: 8-speed automatic with manual mode

DRIVETRAIN: All-wheel drive

TEMPERATURE: -2 °C to 19 °C

TESTED FUEL ECONOMY: 9.4 L/100 km





2017 NISSAN TITAN AND TITAN XD

PRICE: \$46,445 to \$78,295

PROS: Powerful engines (gasoline and diesel), stable and comfortable ride, robust XD version exclusive to segment, roomy and well-finished cabin.

CONS: High entry price, harsh transmission with diesel engine, too-small touch screen buttons, no automatic transfer case, few advanced safety features.

TEST MODEL

ENGINE: 5.0-litre direct-injection turbodiesel V8 (310 hp)

TRANSMISSION: 6-speed automatic with manual mode

DRIVETRAIN: Part-time 4-wheel drive

TEMPERATURE: 3 °C to 23 °C

TESTED FUEL CONSUMPTION: 15 L/100 km

► Twelve years after launch, the Titan was in need of a serious update. Japan's Number Two vehicle manufacturer set out by introducing a new, more robust variant of its pickup: the XD. For 2017, it is following up with a redesigned version of the "standard" Titan, still offered with a 5.6-litre V8, extensively revised. A V6 will be added during the model-year; a Cummins diesel engine is exclusive to the XD both in the lineup and in the half-ton pickup segment.

After several years of sluggish sales, the Nissan Titan now deserves full consideration when it comes time to shop for a pickup. Mechanically up to date, comfortable and pleasant to drive, it delivers the practicality and capabilities expected in a half-ton truck plus several innovation bonuses. In addition, the XD model could seal the deal for certain buyers who want a bit more robustness without having to step up to a bigger, more expensive "2500" model.

ERRATUM

In our previous issue (*CAA-Quebec Magazine*, Winter 2016), the article "Israel: A Land of Contrasts" mentioned, under the caption on page 20, "... Christians, Arabs and Jews sell religious objects [...] and souvenirs." It should have read "... Christians, Muslims and Jews...". The word 'Arabs' is, of course, not synonymous with 'Muslims' – as there are also Arab Christians and Jews. Our thanks to the reader who pointed this out.

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ADVERTISING

Advertising Representation Christiane Grondin, 514-237-4864 / **Sales Coordinator** Ingrid Martinez

PRODUCTION

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*Total amount: \$102.33 (including taxes). **Adding another member to your account costs 50% of the price of the CAA Classic membership. The additional member must be aged 16 or over and live at the same address as the primary member. The enrolment application must be submitted by a member in good standing, and only they can request CAA Dollars. The amounts shown are effective until December 31, 2017. This offer cannot be combined with any other. See the *Member's Handbook and Discounts and Privileges Guide* for complete descriptions of services, discounts, products, benefits and rules related to CAA-Quebec membership, or visit caaquebec.com.



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* Average saving based on information gathered between August 23 and September 5, 2016, from 1,500 new clients who purchased the automobile No-Stress Policy[®], the home No-Stress Policy[®], or both combined. This amount is not a guaranteed saving.

** Only members can sign up for the No-Stress Policy[®]. However, non-members have access to other coverage. For more details, call us at 1 866 221-9301.
CAA-Quebec auto and home insurance is underwritten by Prysm general insurance Inc. and distributed by CAA-Quebec. It is available exclusively in Quebec.



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