

What you must know when Traveling to Montreal, Quebec, Canada....

#1: Passports & Visas:

In general, **a valid passport is required for everybody**, while a tourist visa is necessary for visitors from certain countries. Persons who wish to enter Canada should make proper arrangements before leaving their home country. **A visa is not required for U.S. citizens for a stay up to 180 days.**

For U.S. Citizens:

- **AIR TRAVEL:** If you are flying to Canada, **you will need your passport - the U.S. requires a passport to allow you to return to the U.S.** As of January 23, 2007, a valid passport, an Air NEXUS card or a U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Mariner Document is now required from any person entering or returning to the United States by air.
- **LAND & SEA TRAVEL:** All travelers, including U.S. citizens, must present either a WHTI-compliant document (such as a **valid passport**, an Air NEXUS card or a U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Mariner Document) **OR** a **government-issued photo ID**, such as a driver's license, plus proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate.

In the **summer of 2008**, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security plans to **implement the full requirements of the land and sea phase of the WHTI**. The proposed rules will require all travelers, including U.S. citizens, entering the United States at sea or land ports of entry to have either a valid passport; a U.S. passport card; a trusted traveler card such as NEXUS, FAST, or SENTRI; a valid Merchant Mariner Document (MMD) when traveling in conjunction with official maritime business; or a valid U.S. Military identification card when traveling on official orders.

The precise implementation date will be formally announced with at least 60 days notice.

If you would like more information on these new requirements, visit the Web site of the U.S. Department of State, the Department of Homeland Security or Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

For U.S. Residents: The same rules apply as for U.S. citizens, and in addition to their passport, permanent residents also need to carry their Resident Alien Card ("Green Card") for re-entry into the U.S.

For Non-U.S. Citizens: In addition to their passport, travelers from countries other than the U.S. may require a visa. Please contact your local Canadian Embassy, Consulate, or mission for current visa requirements. A list of Visa Office locations can be found at <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/offices/missions.asp>.

#2: Traveling Alone with Minor Children:

Are you a single parent traveling to Canada with a child under 18 years of age?

Foreign officials and transportation companies are vigilant concerning documentation for children crossing international borders. Generally, persons younger than 18 years of age could be considered as children. Unless a child is accompanied by both legal parents, the following documentation should be carried by the child or the accompanying adult:

- a valid passport or proof of citizenship for the child
- A legal document proving that the child has the permission of the lawful parent(s) or guardian(s) to travel and includes contact phone information for the parent (s) or guardian(s). Such a document must be specific for each trip. A sample document provided on this website: http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/before/consent_letter-en.asp

#3: Medical and Other Insurance:

Visitors are not covered by Canadian health insurance plans. Check with your personal medical plan before leaving the U.S. or your home country to ensure you have adequate traveling insurance. Visitors are urged to take out insurance to cover loss incurred in the case of cancellation, medical expenses and damage to or loss of personal effects whenever traveling outside of their own country.

Tax Information:

A federal Goods and Services Tax (GST) of 5% is charged on most goods and services in Canada. A Québec provincial tax (TVQ) of 7.5% is added to all goods and services purchased in the Province of Québec. A non-refundable 3% per night hotel tax is also in effect in Montréal. Individual tourists are no longer allowed to apply for GST rebates. For more information on tax rebates available, go to <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/visitors>.

Other General Information for Montreal:

Currency: Canadian Dollar

The monetary system in Canada is based on dollars and cents. Bank debit or credit cards are the most convenient means of getting cash at the many 24-hour-access automated banking machines. Many businesses also accept U.S. currency and traveller's cheques, however, your change will be in Canadian currency. It's a good idea to carry Canadian currency. International currency exchanges are available at the airport and at all the banks in the city.

Official Language of the Country: French and English. French is the official language of Québec, but the majority of people in Montreal are bilingual.

Population: At the time of the 2006 census, the Island of Montreal had approximately 1.9 million residents. The population of Montreal grows by some 11,000 people per year, mostly as a result of immigration from abroad.

Time Zone: Montréal switches to Eastern Daylight Time (summer time zone) on the first Sunday of April and returns to Eastern Standard Time (winter time zone) on the last Sunday of October. The time difference between Montréal time and Greenwich Mean Time is less than 4 hours in the summer and less than 5 hours in the winter.

Weather: With summer temperatures cooling down into the 60s (degrees Fahrenheit) and little humidity, Montreal is a great city to visit in September. Although this is a very pleasant summer climate, do pack a light jacket for possibly cool evenings. Visitors to Montreal in September should be prepared for a variety of temperatures.

Credit Cards: Major credit cards (VISA, MasterCard, American Express) are generally accepted by Canadian businesses.

Store Hours: Most shops are open from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 or 6:00 p.m., Monday to Saturday. Many store hours are extended to 8:00 or 9:00 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays, and most stores are open Sundays until 5:00 p.m.

Taxicabs: Taxis are readily available. Most taxis will take credit cards, but not all. 15% tipping is appropriate.

Public Transportation: Public transport is a great way to get around Montréal. The big blue signs with the white arrows will lead you to the city's underground métro system—one of the safest in the world. The métro is fast and it links all of downtown and major tourist destinations, as well as connecting to Montréal's frequent bus service and the train. For more information, contact **Société de transport de Montréal (STM)** - (514) 786-4636, www.stm.info.

Tipping: 15% in restaurants (for large parties it is sometimes automatically added), 15% for taxicabs and hairdressers. It is also appropriate to tip doormen (at least \$1.00 per bag and \$1.00 for getting a cab), and hotel housekeeping (\$2 per day is now the standard). Note the Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth will automatically charge your hotel room folio \$2.50 Canadian per piece of luggage delivered to or picked up from your room.

Electricity: Electrical outlets in Canada provide the same current as in the United States—110 volts (60 cycles). If you are traveling from Europe or elsewhere, you will need an adapter to use your small appliances, if they are designed for a different standard. (Note the Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth does have hair dryers and irons in each guest room).

Other questions? Go to:

<http://www.tourisme-montreal.org/services/common/Bienvenue.asp?SectionName=B2C> for travel tips. For more information on Montreal and all it has to offer, visit www.tourisme-montreal.org, the website of Montreal Tourism. You may also call them at (514) 873-2015 or toll-free at (877) BONJOUR (266-5687).