

Québec Invites You to the Table

Let yourself be inspired...



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Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries
et de l'Alimentation du Québec*

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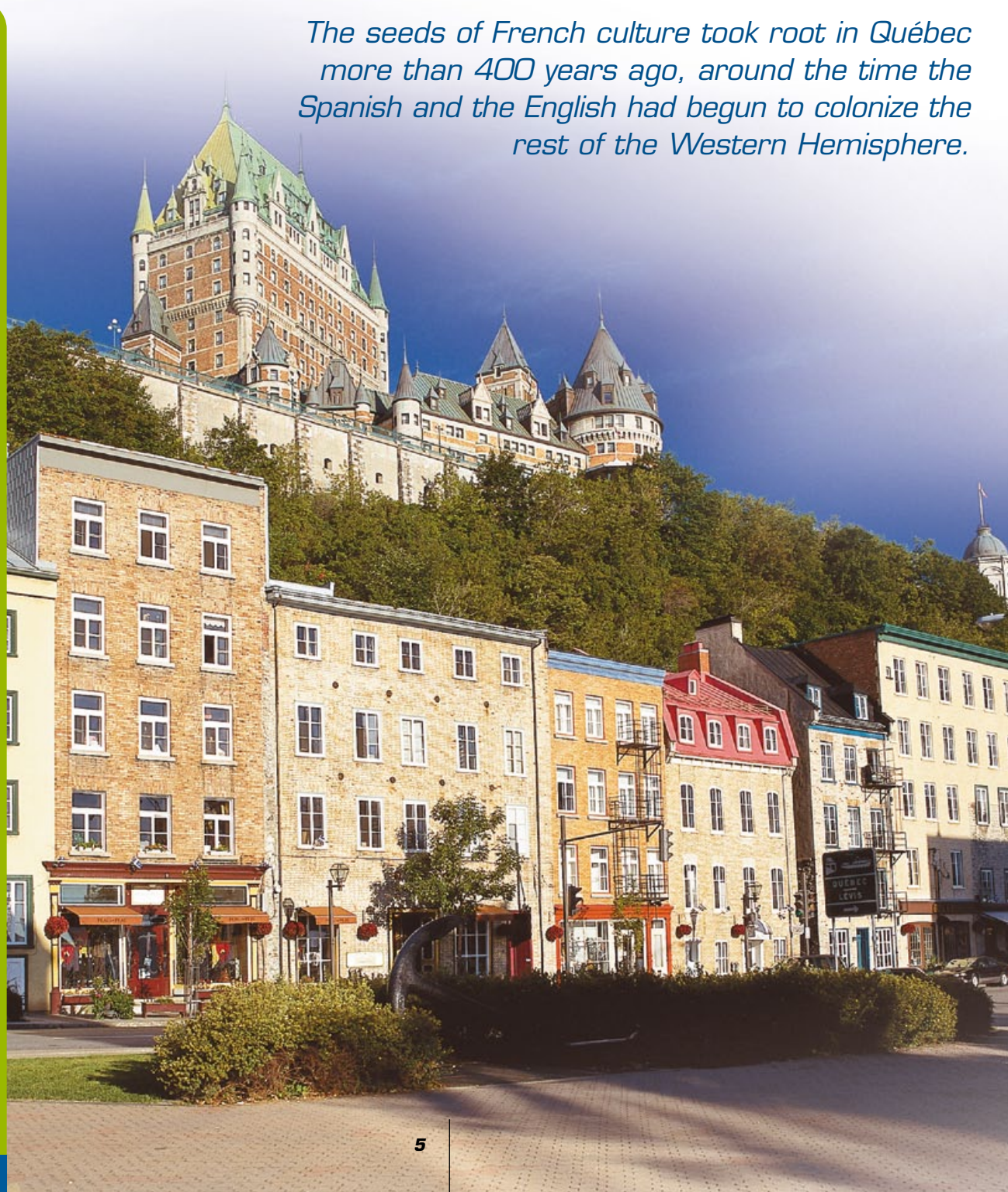
Québec A Unique Culture in North America

Just north of the New England border is a society unlike any other in North America. Originally called New France, it is today known as Québec. French in mind, American at heart, so similar to and yet so different from the United States, Québec offers what many U.S. visitors have called "Paris without the jet lag."

The seeds of French culture took root in Québec more than 400 years ago, around the time the Spanish and the English had begun to colonize the rest of the Western Hemisphere. In those early years, French settlers in "New France" found their Gallic traditions enhanced by those of Québec's other founding cultures, the First Nations (American Indian and Inuit) and the English.

In more recent times, Québec has served as a magnet attracting immigrants from French-speaking populations from around the world—France, Belgium, Switzerland, Indochina, Africa and the Caribbean. They have been joined by thousands of New Quebecers who hail from Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece, and by immigrants of Jewish origin from all over the world. The result has no equal. Québec is North America's only dynamic, creative, multiethnic culture that remains, at heart, undeniably French.

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Québec Where Food Is Art

Nowhere is Québec's French cultural heritage more obvious than when it comes to food. Like their ancestors from France, Quebecers continue to indulge their passion for fine food and drink. What's more, thanks to the culinary contributions of the many nations and peoples who later settled here, Québec has evolved into a vibrant melting pot of ingredients and cooking techniques—and an important producer of exceptional foods, which U.S. food industry professionals have begun to notice.

Whether eating in or out, Quebecers view fine dining as both essential to their contemporary lifestyle and an integral part of their cultural identity. Visitors simply call it one of North America's epicurean gems.

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Exotic tundra fruits and vegetables are handpicked by Québec's aboriginal peoples, processed in ultra-modern facilities in Montréal, Québec City and other urban centers, then exported to the U.S. and abroad.

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Exquisite flower-infused jams and jellies from Québec were honored with prizes at the renowned International Fancy Food and Confection Show in New York City.



No less an authority than the American Cheese Society awards blue ribbons at its annual international competition to Québec-made cow, goat and sheep cheeses.

A Richly Diverse Geography Makes for an Intriguing Market Basket

Québec's population of 7.9 million is well served by a huge territory—Québec is equal in size to Portugal, Spain, France, Belgium, Switzerland and Germany combined!

Québec boasts a wide variety of environments (some would call them *terroirs*), teeming with natural resources, including vast fertile plains, boreal forests that cover half its territory, more than 1 million lakes, rugged seacoasts and 3% of the world's total fresh water supply.



Its fertile plains, mixed forests, rugged seacoasts and natural resources give Québec a competitive advantage in the production of a tremendous variety of Food products.

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With 75% of the world's maple groves in 2010, Québec leads the world in maple sugar production.



In the rich waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, conditions and sustainable fisheries ensure steady natural harvests of not only Nordic shrimp, lobster and snow crab, but also of bottom fish and mollusc species.



Québec's lifeline is the St. Lawrence River. Principal maritime gateway into North America, 1,000 miles long, up to 60 miles wide, navigable year-round, the St. Lawrence sustains 60% of Québec's population on its shores. A concentration of dairy producers, pork, beef, poultry and game meat farmers, and fruit and vegetable growers nestle on both banks, benefiting from the rich earth, temperate climate and four distinct seasons.

As the mighty St. Lawrence River heads northeast, toward the Gulf of St. Lawrence, it turns into an estuary of the Atlantic Ocean, with tides and salt water that provide an ideal environment for fish and seafood.



A Modern Food Industry Combining the Best of All Worlds

Recognized as a sophisticated culinary capital, Québec is also an ultra-modern North American entity, where age-old pleasures of the table meet 21st century growing, processing and packaging technologies, responsible environmental controls, and health and food safety standards that are second to none.

Government monitoring and traceability requirements are stringent in Québec, from farm to processing plant to market. HACCP certification from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is required for any Québec exporter processing meat and fish products. Beyond question a good global neighbor, Québec is firmly committed to sustainable agriculture, employing advanced procedures that respect air, water and soil quality.

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Owing to a convergence of favorable factors—including environmentally sound industry policies, tight government supervision and a fundamental passion for food—Québec food export sales worldwide continue to enjoy annual growth. Québec producers ship to more than 164 countries, with 16% growth between 2005–2010 of their farm and Food products bound for the U.S.





Organic production is a movement among Québec farmers that is growing by leaps and bounds. It now extends into the production of cheeses, soy milk, jams, syrups, pasta, prepared vegetarian dishes, sauces and spreads. Only those producers who adhere to strict government criteria may be called "organic." What's more, many of Québec's organic producers are also accredited by the Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA).

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Free-range, grain-fed poultry from Québec occupies the center of the plate at some of America's most famous restaurants—and center stage at leading U.S. retailers.



The same holds true for Québec's succulent, farm-raised game meats, including red deer, duck, pheasant, quail and bison.



Made in Québec

The Québec food industry is comprised of a broad range of operations. From the small entrepreneurial, family-owned businesses that characterize Québec's specialty food industry to Kraft, Parmalat, Barry Callibaut and Saputo, a few of the multinational food giants with facilities here, Québec has earned a reputation as a supplier of healthy, safely prepared products from today's most in-demand categories.

Québec is home to over 300 varieties of cheeses, many winners at international competitions.



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Reaching beyond its borders, Québec imports ingredients from tropical climates, transforming them into world-class chocolates and coffees.

- Fresh pork, beef, poultry
- Artisanal cheeses
- Exotic game meats and game fowl
- European-inspired charcuterie, including pâtés, cured meats and duck foie gras
- Natural and certified-organic products, including soybeans and other oil plants
- Prepared foods
- Breads and pastries
- Specialty foods
- Fish and seafood
- Kosher-certified items
- Halal-certified food
- Chocolates and candies
- Beverages



Ice apple wine, one of Québec's latest entries in the specialty beverage category, joins other Québécois favorites like microbrews, fruit juices, herbal teas and natural mineral waters.





It's Only one Day from the U.S. market...

Because of its strategic geographical location, Québec has long been a major hub for merchandise of all types transiting between Europe, Asia and North America. Whatever the season, marine, road, rail and air links ensure that goods are delivered fast, fresh and priced to sell.

Since most of Québec's food processors are located just north of the border that separates New England and "New France," products can be trucked to many U.S. markets in one day.



Québec Is Cooking!

Québec food exports are no longer a secret known only to the savviest of U.S. industry professionals. Québec's farm and Food products are now well represented throughout the U.S. by a team of marketing experts who organize trade shows, matchmaking events, sales promotion campaigns, conferences and seminars, designed to help U.S. distributors, retailers and foodservice professionals source and promote Québec foods.



Québec may be 82% French-speaking but it is totally fluent in North American business practices and standards.

**Quebecers Speak French
and your language...
Innovation, Quality and Profit**

Québec's privileged ties do not lie solely with the U.S. market. In fact, more than 22% of its agri-food export shipments are bound for European and Japanese markets, and its agri-food product exports to emerging markets,—Brazil, China, India and Russia—have skyrocketed with growth more than 100% in 2010.

What's more, keenly attuned to ever-changing consumer needs, Québec food processors adapt to new requirements with what has become trademark speed and flexibility.



Québec Delegations

To find out more, refer to the enclosed Québec Delegation Listing Sheet and call the office closest to yours.

Or, to customize your own product searches, log on to www.quebecfood.com



Agriculture, Pêcheries
et Alimentation

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