

{gallery}destinations/2008_QuebecCity{/gallery}

In honor of Quebec's 400th centennial birthday, Aline and I, Hazel, and Aline's folks decided to visit historic Quebec City and participate in the festivities.

Our first day was a long, slow, six-hour ride to the eastern outskirts of Quebec City all the way to Parc de la Chute-Montmorency where we stayed at a [B&B](#) just a five-minute walk beside the scenic waterfall. We lucked out in our choice. For \$85, we got a beautiful room, great view, a pleasant host, a TV to watch Detroit defeat Pittsburgh to win the Stanley Cup and a great breakfast the next morning. After settling in, we walked to the falls and let Hazel run around to her hearts content along the paths. The 83-meter high falls offer a great look-out point over the St. Lawrence River, Ile d'Orleans and the capital. The suspension bridge over the falls was a nice touch. Hazel really enjoyed the slides at the playground.

The next morning over breakfast our host JP regaled us with stories before we headed out on a daytrip to Ile' d'Orleans.

Known as the Garden of Quebec, the island has for many years provided nearby Quebec City with fresh produce and boasts a long standing reputation for quality and authenticity - probably because until 1935, the island was cut off from the rest of the continent thus allowing it to retain its traditional rural way of life. We meandered through various shops including the Domaine Steinbach Cidrerie and the Chocolaterie de l'Ile d'Orleans where we especially enjoyed the hard chocolate topping on the ice cream!

Afterwards, we drove to old Quebec City and settled into our lodgings: [the coach house](#) - a decent apartment suite in old Quebec City before going out for a walk in the historic old town. The apartment was a bit of a letdown after the B&B - more expensive at \$250 per night for all of us, noisy, and smelt of smoke - but staying inside the walled city did have its advantages too. It allowed us to eat in for meals, was easily accessible, and most importantly we didn't have to drive anywhere so Hazel could walk to her hearts content as we visited the historic sites that afternoon and Friday. Particularly impressive were Chateau Frontenac and the Quartier Petit Champlain.

For lunch, Aline and I went to [aux Anciens Canadiens](#) restaurant where they had a very reasonable lunch table d'hote. Aline had a beautiful and tasty french onion soup starter and the daily special which was tender pork with apples in a maple syrup sauce while I went with cream of chicken soup and the more traditional pheasant legs with pork and beans. Aline's meal was the better one. For dessert we both had a maple sugar pie with cream which was fantastic.

One of the reasons we chose this particular week to visit was because among the special events honoring the centennial was an interactive show called 'Il y a longtemps que je t'aime . . . jamais je ne t'oublierai' - a celebration of Quebec's cultural, artistic and musical heritage through song, dance, poetry and storytelling on the very Friday evening we were there. We debated skipping the show because we were tired but were glad we didn't. The [Troupe V'la](#) ['Bon Vent](#) put on a nice two-hour musical voyage depicting the history of Quebec City.

Saturday morning we visited toy store Benjo to ride the electric train, bid adieu to Aline's folks

who were heading off to Newfoundland and then took the more scenic Chemin de Roi route to Montreal on our way back home.