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Pick up and recharge your batteries at StoneHaven le Manoir



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[StoneHaven le Manoir](#) is without a doubt an essential destination for a remarkable stay. Affiliated to Relais & Châteaux since December 2021 – this is an address to discover.



COURTESY STONEHAVEN THE MANSION

Nestled in the heart of the Laurentians in the pretty town of Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts, this gem of a hotel, which offers breathtaking views of the region and Lac-des-Sables, is located just an hour from Montreal. Its recent alliance with the large [Relais & Châteaux](#) family has given this prestigious establishment international recognition, both for its excellence

in terms of accommodation – with remarkable rooms and suites – and for its exceptional gastronomic cuisine. Staying at the manor is living an ultimate experience, based on a unique and incomparable conception of the Art of Living; where the atmosphere is conducive to relaxation and rejuvenation.



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In the entrance hall of the mansion, one is amazed by the long corridor which crosses the premises, up to the ballroom on the opposite side.

Upon arrival at the manor, we are taken care of: we take care of our luggage, we are shown around the owner and we are informed of the activities available on the premises. What we particularly like is the opulent and very English atmosphere that reigns at the manor: it feels like being propelled into another era.

While our luggage is taken up to the room, the daytime butler greets us at her desk, offers us a glass of water and gives us a summary of our stay: reservation for dinner, lunch, massage. You feel at ease, in the warm atmosphere of these prestigious places, in one of the 34 cozy rooms of the manor.



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One of the snowshoe trails leads to the belvedere, where you can enjoy a breathtaking view of Lac-des-sables.

The experience is different depending on the season. In winter, people go there to recharge their batteries while enjoying the beauty of the white landscape, the spa, the cross-country skiing and snowshoeing trails. From your room, admiring the panoramic view of Lac-des-Sables and the mountains in the background is an experience in itself. It is also an ideal destination for couples, who will share the pleasures of an exquisite meal, the benefits of a good massage followed by a moment for two in the jacuzzi and steam bath.

Then, take advantage of the afternoon to undertake an idyllic excursion in the mountains: the choice is vast on some 25 kilometers of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing trails, which turn into as many hiking trails in summer. In summer, you can admire the Italian garden and take advantage of the swimming pool.



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In the extension of the chic dining room is the veranda, for those who wish to eat near the windows.

A chef in the kitchen

Several things set StoneHaven apart from other hotels that offer dining and relaxation. It's not just the superior service, it's all the added details that add value to our stay. In the restaurant, the French chef Éric Gonzalez creates delicious culinary combinations, combining fresh and local products with classic specialties from the South of France, his native country. Settled in Quebec for more than 20 years, chef Gonzalez passed through several prestigious restaurants before ending up in this little corner of paradise in the Laurentians: des Enfants Terribles at the restaurant of the Saint-James hotel, passing by the Atelier Joël Robuchon at the Casino de Montreal. To name just a few.



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The gastronomic intention of chef Éric Gonzalez is to bring to life a culinary emotion. Classic dishes of French cuisine reinvented with local products, depending on the season.

Although the chef's reputation is well established, each plate served in the manor's restaurant is a work of art in itself, which we dare not touch because it is so beautiful. We first delight in savoring it with our eyes, then let our taste buds discover what our imagination had suggested to us. The manor's restaurant offers an à la carte menu, a 5-course menu and an 8-course menu. We tried the 8-course menu and it was like prolonging the pleasure of the meal for three hours: each plate becomes a surprise that we eagerly await. What about the food-wine pairing concocted by the sommelier and presented when the plate is served (this is one of the added details we were talking about above...). We tasted wines from France, Niagara, Alsace and Spain,



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A detour to the beauty house

For the massage, we prepare in the room: we put on a bathrobe to go to the Félix Forrest beauty center, located opposite the jacuzzi and not far from the hammam. The pretty white house has several rooms: private massage room, shower, sauna and beauty room for aesthetic treatments.



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The hammam is located in the old root cellar – from the time of Mr. Gibbons – completely transformed, you guessed it.

After the massage, take a shower and finish the relaxation experience in the jacuzzi, then why not in the hammam – steam bath. At the time of the visit, a second hotel, smaller than the mansion, was under renovation. It will offer 17 additional rooms.



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Visitors can take advantage of 25 kilometers of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing trails, to be covered according to their level of expertise.

Hiking, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing

Place of calm and healing between all: the wood is so vast that we did not meet anyone. On your return, the prospect of relaxing in the spa – before or after the gourmet meal – is reassuring and provides a feeling of benevolence that is welcome. A break in the middle of our busy lives, beyond the stress of the pandemic and confinement. A stay of pure happiness, with nothing else to do but to appreciate the good things suggested by the manor.

Playing chess, reading, playing a board game: there is so much space in these places that everyone can find a quiet place to indulge in their favorite pastime.

In the panoramic room on the third floor of the manor – where you can enjoy the most beautiful view of Lac-des-Sables and the region – visitors can look at several photos dating from the time of Mr. Gibbons.



COURTESY STONEHAVEN THE MANSION

Once upon a time there was a Montrealer who made his fortune...

We cannot talk about StoneHaven le manoir without telling a bit of history, which adds to the distinction of the place and provides this respectable atmosphere with old charm. At the start of the 20th century, Montreal businessman Douglas Lorne McGibbon made his fortune in the rubber industry. Struck by tuberculosis, he had to leave the city and it was while looking for a suitable place to create a sanatorium in Quebec that he discovered Sainte-Agathe des Monts, located 400 meters above sea level. This is the perfect place. Mr. McGibbon will leave Montreal and will build his mansion, facing Lac-des-Sables, but on the opposite bank of the sanatorium – today an administrative services pavilion of the Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts hospital.



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Recently renovated, the prestigious establishment showcases decoration and furnishings from the beginning of the 20th century.

After the death of Mr. Gibbons, the manor will be used by a religious congregation until the mid-1990s. Then, we will try unsuccessfully to give it other vocations. Fallen into oblivion, the manor regained its former glory when real estate developer [Georges Coulombe](#) acquired it in 2015. The hotel could not have found a better owner: curator and modernizer, Mr. Coulombe invests in the restoration of heritage buildings. The renovations will last a little over three years and Stonehaven Le Manoir will see the light of day in 2019. Since its acquisition by the current owner, the mansion has been completely transformed to regain the soul and spirit of its beginnings, while offering the comfort 21st century modern.

The adventure of StoneHaven The mansion is just beginning: soon a second dining room in the current ballroom - with its adjacent kitchen - for à la carte meals. The current dining room and veranda will be reserved for 5 or 8-course meals. The extension to the manor which will include 17 additional rooms, located closer to the mountain (in the building formerly occupied by the nuns at the time of the Oblate fathers. Thus, many additions to reinforce the experience of the art of living. After an unforgettable stay between these ancient stone walls and British atmosphere, we want to come back. In autumn, perhaps? The colors must be magnificent, in front of a delicious meal.