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World Cup Soccer Fever Hits Montreal

A Montrealer's guide to where the action is

BY MICHAEL GORMAN

Montrealers love a good party, no matter what the occasion. If the revelry happens to spill out of our living rooms and into the streets or the nearest neighbourhood bar, so much the better. When it comes to the guest list, our credo is simple: the more the merrier.

Nowhere is this collective quest for celebration more evident than during our myriad summer festivals, from Jazz to Just for Laughs, but when it comes on the cleated heels of a major sporting event,

.....
continued on page three



Barmaid Amélie Rheault serves up a pint to client Roger Delisle at the Cage aux Sports resto-bar on René Lévesque West, where big-screen TVs will show all World Cup games live.

Philly Stakes

Brontë Restaurant, Restaurant Garçon and Joe Beef

BY PHIL PRICE

This column is to give you, the reader, epicurean enlightenment from me, a humble lover of all things food. I don't have a background in the culinary arts. I hold no degrees from the *Cordon Bleu*, I am not a trained chef, nor have I ever owned a restaurant. I write about food because I love it. I love to talk about it, to cook it, to consider it, to smell and taste it. I have worked in restaurants as a bus-boy, a dish pig, a waiter and a line cook. I have a copy of

continued on page six

Maternally Yours

Cafés and Sunscreen

BY ANNIKA MELANSON

My pre-child motto was: 'cafés are for double espressos, not for double strollers.' I used to cringe at the sight of a mother or father trying desperately to squeeze a heavily overloaded stroller through the narrow doorway of a coffee shop, and hoped that they wouldn't sit near me.

The Café

Now that I am a mother myself, I can appreciate what



continued on page ten

CONFESSION no.1 |

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- Formula One. www.grandprix.ca 514.350.0000. June 23-25.
- St-Ambroise Montreal Fringe Festival. www.montrealfringe.ca 514.849.FEST. June 8-18.
- Carifesta Parade. René Levesque Blvd. to Place Emilie Gamelin (Berri Park) www.carifesta.ca 514.735.2232. Saturday July 8.
- *Deep Sea 3D*. IMAX Theatre: 333 de la Commune Street West www.centredessciencesdemontreal.com 514.496.4724. Until October 1.
- Montreal Chamber Music Festival. St. James United Church: 463 St. Catherine St. West www.festivalmontreal.org 514.489.7444. June 9-30.
- L'International des Feux Loto-Québec. Parc Jean Drapeau. www.internationaldesfeuxloto-quebec.com 514.790.1245. June 17-July 2
- Festival International de Jazz de Montréal. www.montrealjazzfest.com 514.523.3378 June 29-July 9.

■ Have an event you know about or want to publicize *for late July or early August*? Send your idea in the above format to vivvamountreal@pricepatterson.com. If it fits in with *Vivva Montreal*, we'll publish it.

Irving Mitchell Kalichman

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We are very pleased to announce that **Sophie Perron** has been admitted to the partnership. M^e Perron was called to the Bar in 1997 and spent the first three years of her career at a full service international law firm. She joined us in 2000 and practices in the areas of civil and commercial litigation at the trial and appellate levels.

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WORLD CUP... *continued from page one*

particularly one taking place outside our fair city, the festivities tend to be somewhat more intimate.

True, the after-party can take on huge proportions when the locals win – think impromptu Stanley Cup parades (okay, think really, really hard. We know it's been awhile). But for a more regionalized taste of sports frenzy in Montreal, it's best to seek out some of the liberal smatterings of neighbourhood cheer that rise up in pockets around the island when a favourite team is on the pitch in, say, a World Cup soccer match.

The FIFA World Cup Germany 2006 runs from June 9 to the final showdown on July 9, and, as always, Montrealers are paying attention, urging on their heroes as they hoist a few among friends, either at home, or, quite often, in one of the city's many sports-minded resto-bars.

To get the party started, the hot ticket in town was the kick-off party that the German Consulate General of Montreal threw on Friday June 9, at **Le Complexe** on Bishop Street.

'We're expecting a lot of people,' Mike Empari, night manager of Le Complexe, said last week, adding that the price of a ticket included food, a beverage and the chance to win a trip to Germany.

'There's most definitely a lot of excitement in Montreal surrounding the World Cup this year,' says Empari, partly because, in the past, international time differences have made it difficult for most people to take in the games as they unfold live, such as when Japan and Korea hosted the Cup in 2002. That's not the case this year and Empari says Le Complexe, formerly the Rocksbury, is committed to showing all of the 2006 World Cup contests on its big-screen TVs.

Same goes for the **Cage aux Sports** on René Lévesque West between Bishop and Mackay streets. Though each of the more than half-dozen central locations of the popular sports-bar chain sets its own policies about marking an occasion like the World Cup, this one plans to extend its hours to accommodate soccer fever.

'We're going to show each and every game, even at 9 am,' says manager Phanie Charbonneau, adding she expects momentum to build as the tournament progresses.

'We may not be that busy for the first match, but for the final, there's going to be a lot of people here.'

Here in Montreal, the embattled Canadiens hockey team last tasted Stanley Cup glory in 1993 and the Expos baseball squad packed up and headed south to Washington, DC, at the end of the 2004 season and a lengthy struggle to retain its fan base. That leaves the Montreal Impact as one of the city's two major-league sports teams and major hopes for glory, making now the perfect time to stand up and take notice of soccer.

In fact, though nowhere near pandemic proportions among Montreal's often finicky sports fans, soccer fever in the city has extended beyond even the World Cup matches themselves, as La Lucarne, Cinémathèque québécoise, TV5 and the Goethe Institute teamed up to mount a film festival featuring soccer-related movies in the run-up to the Cup.

When it comes to international competitions with no home team to root for, loyalties tend to run along nationalistic lines,

which means you can expect to find a neighbourhood venue hopping on game day wherever members of the city's myriad cultural communities congregate.

'We should be jam-packed when Italy plays,' says a manager at **Café Corona** in the St. Leonard district, a hub of the local Italian community. Soccer is a big deal to the café's clientele, says Elio, who declined to give his last name, and they'll be out in full force whenever their countrymen are on the pitch.

'As long as Italy stays in it, we should be good, but it's going to depend on how they advance.'

When Brazil took the Cup in 2002, it wasn't unusual to see the country's flag flying from the windows of cars parading along the city's main thoroughfares, horns blaring. Such is the excitement of World Cup fever in Montreal.

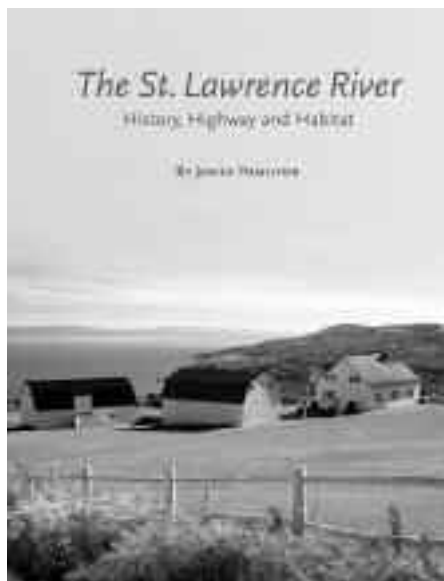
Even the retiring homebody need not worry about missing a match. Radio station **940 Montreal** has announced plans to broadcast all the games live and provide twice-hourly updates from opening day through to the final.

So although the actual competition is taking place a world away, there's really no excuse not to celebrate the FIFA World Cup Germany 2006. Thousands of Montrealers will be doing the same.

Michael Gorman is a writer in Montreal.



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5½ Things that Vivva Montreal recommends you do in June in Montreal

- 1 Have a drink at any place on the east side of McGill College
Great sun and atmosphere. Remember what McGill College used to be like?
- 2 Have a cheap lunch at the Café Victoria (Victoria at Somerville)
Great sun comes in over the low building on the west side of the street.
- 3 Have dinner at the Claremont (5032 Sherbrooke St. West) – outside
What Montrealers call 'north' is really west, so the northerly face of the restaurant means lots of sun and evening warmth.
- 4 Walk around Old Montreal and the Old Port
Why not?
- 5 Go to either of Montreal's lookouts (in Mount Royal Park and on top of Westmount)
Why not?
- ½ Drink beer on your back porch.
½ *Why not? (Docked a ½ unit for lack of originality.)*

Have 5½ Things to recommend for July?
Send your idea to vivvamontreal@pricepatterson.com

CASINO...

continued from page 12

eral floors heaving with a cross-section of distracted human life, converting banknotes into coins and chips to wager with.

One criticism of the place is its poor (or perhaps fiendishly clever) floor plan. At times, you can see everything – the bar at the top, your friends on the floor above you, the only empty seat at the Blackjack table on the floor below you – except for stairs leading up or down. Be prepared to trek through acres of noisy slots in search of the toilets (which are clean enough, but badly in need of an update).

You can play from a nickel a spin in the slots. Elsewhere, American Roulette,



Mike H. as Scott Caan

one hand of Blackjack and forget about tomorrow. But visions of a last paragraph stretched thinly across my word processor forced me to stretch the money out.

SLOTS: When last I played slot machines, they didn't accept banknotes. These days, you can join a player's club which provides you with a loyalty card on a curly cable. Plug in your card and you will earn points for every dollar wagered.

It became apparent within two spins that I had no idea what to do. The cherries, melons and bars of my misspent youth were now complex symbols, faces and multipliers. Once I found the button to bet nine credits per spin, my demise was mercifully swift.

RESULT: -\$20

POKER: I am honour-bound to mention that the casino doesn't offer real, Texas Hold'em Poker. Caribbean Stud is the closest they get. The minimum \$5



Alexis as Shaobo Qin

stake meant my \$40 had a chance of going somewhere. First hand, I misread my cards and doubled my ante. The dealer failed to qualify and I made a \$5 profit. This turned out to be my only winning bet of the night.

RESULT: -\$40

ROULETTE: European Roulette has been lucky for me in days gone by. I tend to favour number 29, my birthday, with a ten-chip bet covering numbers from 21 through 7 via zero. American Roulette has two zeroes, though, and that's what I blame for my eventual loss.

RESULT: -\$40

LET IT RIDE: A full house in Let It Ride saved my bacon during a trip to the Niagara Falls Casino, and it's here I



Adrian as Brad Pitt

turned with my last \$70. You place three equal bets, are dealt three cards and can remove up to two of the bets if you don't make a pair of tens or better. Fun, if a little dumb.

Eventually I blew out with a pair of Jacks against the dealer's Aces and nines.

RESULT: -\$70

I slunk back upstairs to find the remaining Ocean's Six playing the horse racing slot machine. Between them, they lost a total of eight dollars.



Elkin as Julia Roberts

The Hangover

I didn't wake up with a pile of money or Julia Roberts by my side. Nor was I in a tax haven or a prison cell. At no stage did I have a gun held to my head. Real life has little in common with the movies.

For fear of sounding like a government agency, take only what you can afford to lose to the Montreal casino. I won't promise you glamour or under-dressed women, though you might find both on a lucky summer's night.

Montreal Casino:

1 Avenue du Casino H3C 4W7.
Tel: 514.392.2746
www.casino-de-montreal.com

Ashley Cotter-Cairns is a freelance writer from England currently residing in Hudson.

He has written for a number of publications, including In Camera magazine, UK Maxim, TheNet, International Traveller, Business Life and En Route. In collaboration with his wife, Carolina Pla, he has also written and sold a screenplay, The Witch and The Famous.



Mike T. as George Clooney

Blackjack, Let It Ride, Baccarat, Caribbean Stud Poker and Craps provide the thrills. Roulette has a minimum bet of five chips per spin.

This caught me out on my first table, \$2 chips and at least \$10 per turn.

\$20 doesn't go far under those conditions.

The night was young, but I'm less young than I used to be. Beer and my baby son Jasper's early morning wake-up calls were taking their toll. It was time to get on with my mission: grab \$200 of the government's money, or go broke in the attempt.

The Takedown

It was obvious that \$200 wasn't much of a stake. I'd already blown a hole in it with transport and alcohol and was tempted to put my remaining \$170 on



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BOOK REVIEW

BY DAVID PRICE

The Carbon War
by Jeremy Leggett
State of Fear
by Michael Crichton
The Ingenuity Gap
by Thomas Homer-Dixon



Here are three books with a common theme: the threat of global catastrophe(s). *The Carbon War* chronicles the adventures and misadventures of Jeremy Leggett during his quest to warn the world about the perils of global warming and his even more challenging task of moving policy makers into action. *The Ingenuity Gap* by Thomas Homer-Dixon is less directly on topic. Homer-Dixon's thesis is that there may be a greater *demand* for creative solutions to the world's problems (environmental, financial, political, technical) than there is a *supply*. The possible results? Starvation, water shortages, financial meltdown, fighting in the streets. *State of Fear*, a novel by *ER* and *Jurassic Park* creator Michael Crichton, spins a classic thriller yarn (perfect for an airplane read). More interestingly and uniquely (to my knowledge) for a novel of this genre, it takes a critical (footnoted!) look at the science behind global warming.

Each book has strengths and is worth reading.

The Carbon War is undoubtedly the driest of the three. Beginning in the late 1980s, former oil executive Leggett travels back and forth across the globe (leaving – one can't help but notice – lots of carbon in his wake) in order to attend an endless number of endless conferences about climate change culminating with the Kyoto protocol. He explains how his nemeses, members of the 'carbon club' (oil company employees or consultants; think black hats), try to foil his every move: watering down the language of conference resolutions, funding naysaying research, getting to policy makers and media before his Greenpeace colleagues (think white hats) can. His is a Manichean worldview: 'Most of all, I wished I could find a way to stop them [the carbon clubbers] being so effective in their evil work' (p. 143).

He makes some good points: most scientists do seem to believe in global warming and, because it includes so many disparate players, 'business' can't be unequivocally on one side of the debate. For instance, insurers will care about

what happens to shoreline properties and lenders will care about exposure to potentially affected assets. Some of his points, though, are pure PR puffery. Every natural disaster that takes place during his narrative (and he moves around from continent to continent and so comments on US hurricanes, European flooding and Australian fires, to name a few) is linked back to global warming – great cover page material, but all of these phenomena existed well before any alleged global warming.

Homer-Dixon's *Ingenuity Gap* is the most wide ranging of the three books and



an ambitious attempt to chart out a new discipline: to date, no one has been measuring world levels of 'ingenuity'. Of course, given the difficulties (impossibilities?) of doing so, it is no surprise and Homer-Dixon's main point crashes hard into this wall. How can his contention be tested? Along the way, however, he makes some great points. For instance, complexity theory explains that as systems increase in overall *performance* they also grow more *specialized* to the point that they become vulnerable and weak.

Consider a car: fixable by teenagers in the 1950s, requiring computers to even assess basic problems today. Consider financial markets: they began as markets for stocks and bonds, but are now a trading forum for umpteen instruments (options, futures, swaps etc...). Both can be affected or even brought down by problems that couldn't even have existed 50 years ago. At least in the case of the financial system, what Homer-Dixon misses, is the hidden robustness within even complex systems. He frets that no one person really understands the global financial system at any one time (true). Nevertheless, because of the number of actors contained within it, there are always people betting against any given trend. For instance, when there is a meltdown, there are immediate winners (e.g. short sellers) and longer term ones (individuals who were on the sidelines with cash at that moment in time). Even if hard-to-understand instruments triggered the meltdown and impossible-to-understand

interconnectedness allowed the meltdown to gain momentum, there is thus robustness within the system. The same may be true of other systems that concern Homer-Dixon. Take political ones: very complex, interconnected and vulnerable at first blush, but as a complex and rich one faces a real crisis (bird flu, serious terrorist threats, war, environmental degradation), think of how much it can simplify its structure and objectives in order to simply survive. Maybe this resilience is even true of weather (another of Homer-Dixon's concerns)...

State of Fear is the most iconoclastic book considered here and, if you are a contrarian who likes to bait environmental types, you should read this book. (For the sake of a full review, the guns-and-ammo thriller plot can stand on its own and is a B+ paperback with lots of action and romance.) On the intellectual plane, the book poses some interesting questions about all sorts of environmental sacred cows. Crichton takes a real strip off Hollywood types (throughout the novel 'an actor who played the president on a television series' bumbles around saying and doing stupid things) and the sanctimonious platitudes they spout (for example, talking about 'primeval' forests that are only 6,000 years old – max! – and that Crichton contends are the result of native American intervention in the environment).

He also poses some more important and damning questions. Specifically, if carbon dioxide levels are causing warming and have been rising steadily since 1880, why did world temperature *decrease* between 1940 and 1970? In the 1930-2000 period, why did temperature increase in certain cities (e.g. New York) and decrease in others (e.g. nearby Albany)? Why do some people talk so much about increased hurricane strikes when their number was lower in the 1990-99 period than in others (1910-19, 1940-49)? These and a host of other questions and points (there are 167,000 glaciers in the world, only a few of which have been studied carefully; the temperature in Antarctica has actually been *decreasing*) challenge recent claims about global warming and 'extreme' weather repeatedly and to the core. If half of Crichton's claims are true, we have been hearing some real pap in the media for decades.

The future of the planet, we are told, is at stake. Too bad the waters are so muddied.

David Price is a publisher in Montreal.

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PHILLY STAKES... *continued from page one*

Larousse Gastronomique (the quintessential foodie bible) *beside* my bed and I read it before I go to bed (I am on *gastrique*: a classic French sauce consisting of vinegar, wine and sugar). I am a decent cook, and descend from a long line of equally decent cooks and lovers of food. This is my culinary pedigree.

I don't get paid for writing this article: my expenses are almost covered (as my tastes tend to be slightly expensive). My aim is to bring a different perspective on eating out and although this article doesn't support me, it does support my passion for food. The places I visit are varied and are chosen at my discretion. They will vary in budget, culinary style and location. For my premier article, I have chosen to write about some of the hip restaurants that garner 'buzz' in Montreal. Some were great surprises, others severe disappointments. I do know how to distinguish good from great when it comes to restaurants. I have high standards when I splash out for a meal, but I am not a food snob with ridiculous criteria in rating restaurants. I know chefs chase perfection daily and try to deliver it with each plate they hand over for the waiters to deliver to their patrons. When I eat a meal, I expect each dish to reflect its creator. I expect heart, pride and love. This culinary holy trinity is the real standard. A big effort, flush with love and creativity, will always win over something that is merely executed well without any heart.

The rating of each restaurant is measured by a heart count reflecting the mix of passion, execution, creativity, originality, service, setting and love. A restaurant is an extension of the chef and owners' philosophy of food and life. Their love of food is on display with each dish.

- ♥♥♥♥♥ Culinary ecstasy (possibly life-changing)
- ♥♥♥♥ A great meal
- ♥♥♥ Moments of brilliance marred by missteps
- ♥♥ You could've done better at home
- ♥ The dumpster behind the restaurant would've provided a better meal

Brontë Restaurant ♥♥♥♥

1800 Sherbrooke St. West
514.934.1801

Last year's winner of *enRoute* magazine's best Canadian restaurant, Brontë is deserving of the accolade. The setting is sleek and modern without being overly hip. Sitting in one of the gigantic booths is the only way to go. I have been to this restaurant on three separate occasions in the past two months and each time the experience was flawless.

The food is definitely hip, a mixture of culinary styles, relying heavily on all the 'in' ingredients, but executed with such precision and fun that you don't feel like you're eating the *Mona Lisa*. The chef and his staff are obviously having a lot of fun pumping out interesting plates. The menu is a good read on its own, rife with culinary buzzwords like foam, *sous-vide*, emulsions, etc., and each dish my friends and I tried delivered big time.

After taking your order, the kitchen gives an *amuse bouche*, a sort of warm-up dish that gives a taste of things to come. One was a tiny scallop ceviche that was incredible, light to eat with great mouth feel. The other was a single oyster, with veal and asparagus. These little dishes show a severe amount of thought and care. It serves as the culinary handshake from the chef. I couldn't wait for the next round of dishes. I had limoncello cured salmon with salmon *tartare* – stunning to eat. The plates are beautifully arranged and so damn gorgeous you hesitate to ruin them, save for the fact that you can't help throw them down. The rabbit *papardelle* appetizer is the out-and-out winner: toothsome chunks of rabbit, expertly cooked in a stew-like sauce, with porcini mushrooms and wide ribbon pasta topped with a *foie gras* foam. Wow. Other standouts were the *foie gras* starters, which varied with each visit, and the venison *tartare*. Whatever you order off the appetizer menu, you can't go wrong.

Mains were all great. The tuna with artichokes, vegetable ragout and a barley risotto was a knockout. Expertly cooked rare, the slabs of tuna were perfectly accented with the vegetables and the barley risotto speaks volumes of the chef's



Brontë Restaurant

originality. The oxtail raviolis were another heartbreaker. Like eating beef-flavoured velvet, the raviolis are so good that they just leave you wanting so much more. Another standout was the lobster risotto paired with yellow beets. The risotto was expertly executed with the requisite creaminess, chunks of lobster swimming within, and the sharp bite of the yellow beets was offset by a small dollop of *crème fraîche*. Kobe short ribs, which were pricey, were good, but paled in comparison to the fish and seafood. The chef is a wizard with all things from the sea. The meat offerings all played second fiddle to their sea-bound brethren.

Desserts expressed Brontë's sense of fun. Sake infused *crème brûlée*, beer and gorgonzola sorbets, chocolate soup with spiced donuts and chocolate marshmallows are just some of the offerings. All were great.

Service was above average, although sometimes a little too fawning, and also not quick enough at delivering the final bill. Nevertheless, the effort was there. Brontë is a standout restaurant, brimming with real culinary talent, and a clear

idea of what it does and how to deliver that vision. It is an expensive meal, however your money is well earned by chef and owner.

Restaurant Garçon ♥♥

1112 Sherbrooke St. West
514.843.4000

Garçon is this year's winner of *enRoute*'s best restaurant. My wife and I walked into the restaurant and were greeted smoothly by a hostess. The room is handsome, comfortable and gives an immediate sense of ease. The setting is perfect and was a solid indication that we were in good hands. We ordered drinks, gin and tonics in heavy tumblers, which is usually a great sign. Our appetizers were poor; they ruined my *foie gras* and my wife's scallops were completely murdered. The mains came out. My filet mignon, ordered rare, arrived medium. My wife's sea bass was mummified. Much like the experience, this review ends abruptly. We didn't even order dessert. Maybe the chef was having an off-night, but whatever the case, this was an over-hyped production that failed to

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Restaurant Garçon

deliver anything remotely entertaining. The experience was like seeing a movie you've been dying to see. Your favourite actors are in it, the story seems compelling, the trailer wowed you, and the setting is gorgeous. Soon after the opening credits roll, you get antsy, pissed that your expectations were so high. You feel had by the producers, betrayed by the actors, the director, and the critics generating 'thumbs up' propaganda. Two thumbs down, way down.

Joe Beef ♥♥♥♥½

2491 Notre Dame St. West
514-935.6504

Tucked between the antique shops of Notre Dame, you'll find Joe Beef. A cozy little hot spot, pumping out some of the best food this city has seen in years. The chef-owners are clever; their food is rife with a sense of humour and cheekiness that I personally haven't ever experienced while eating out. The menu merely serves

as a map. The chefs, David Macmillan and Fred Morin, are in the driver's seat, and will drive off a cliff on a whim. The dishes are so bloody good it's easy to understand that this is one of the harder places to get a table.

I started with oysters, expertly served, with all the right accompaniments. We then shared a smoked salmon plate dressed with horseradish, sliced gherkin, and slabs of toast that was perfection. The night's out-and-out winner was smoked duck with asparagus, fiddleheads, shaved radish and a single poached-then-flash-fried egg. I will never think of any of those separate ingredients again without thinking of how expertly that dish was executed. I could have walked out of that restaurant and died happy. It was an unbelievable dish and our table agreed it was the best of the evening. Everything else that came after it was amazing, but with each bite I took of steak, of rib, of lobster, I tried with all my might to will it into that smoked duck and asparagus appetizer. The menu is playful and fun and full of surprises. There is also a hidden menu, spurred by the chef's inspiration, like Irish stew that had massive chunks of lobster swimming in it and steak and eggs with *lardons*. A friend's steak came 'pimped' with slabs of *foie gras*, crab and lobster crowded on top of a massive sirloin.

Everything about this place is amazing. The setting, the homey décor, the excellent service, the incredibly original approach, and the overall kindness and love of the owners for their little joint make it one of the most memorable food experiences I have had. It is expensive, but well worth the experience. It's nice to go to a



Joe Beef

restaurant and feel like you're a part of it, sharing a joke with the chefs. Joe Beef is almost an anti-restaurant, not guided by rules of service, menu descriptions or etiquette, but rather by heart, by its own sense of fun and playfulness. I'll forever be haunted by that beautiful appetizer and I hope that if you go for a visit, you'll

beg for the smoked duck starter. I know I will.

Phil Price is a filmmaker, founder of Philms Pictures Inc. and food connoisseur. His feature film credits include Summer and Hatley High. He has finished two seasons of television series, The Festival and The Business.



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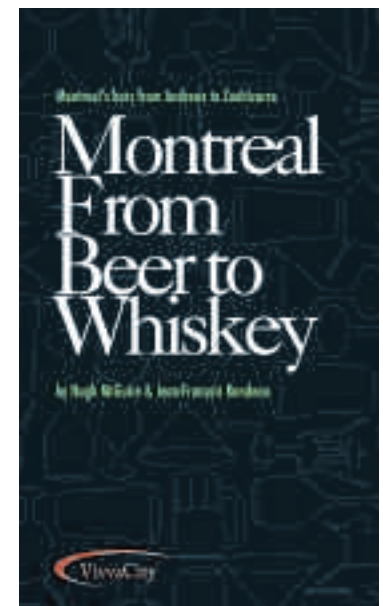
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WINE

BY CAROLA PRICE

As a sommelier I am constantly asked about wine for the future. From cellar selections to wine for investment purposes, I can research for weeks before coming up with wines based on the client's needs and storage facilities; but to hold on to wine for ten or twenty years can sometimes be a lesson in futility. After dragging around that special bottle destined for drinking on your ten-year anniversary, making a fabulously decadent meal to pair with the wine, decanting this special treasure into an heirloom never used until this very moment and releasing the cork – only to find moldy bits and that unforgettable smell of cooked fruit, cardboard and perhaps the extraordinary finish of wet dog. Ah yes, that is cork taint, my friends, and it doesn't make for good drinking. Well, you can return your cherished beauty to the SAQ of course, providing you bought it in Quebec, and get a replacement wine, but remember that you will not get the same vintage year or (more often than not) the same label (i.e. producer).

Alpenhaus

*A touch of Switzerland
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Alpenhaus is located between downtown Montreal and Westmount in Shaughnessy Village. The restaurant recently celebrated its 38th anniversary. Alpenhaus is a romantic restaurant that offers authentic fondues, as well as other excellent European dishes.

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To Cell or Not to Cell

Is it worth cellaring anything at all? A fair number of my clients agree that when on vacation and picking up a few bottles to remember a trip by, some wines can be worth the effort of cellaring. When opening a wine that has reached its maturity level – not all hit their peak at the exact same moment – and finding it in perfect condition for enjoying with a lovingly prepared meal, one realizes why we collect wine. So, is it better to have a cellar and only buy wines for future special occasions or do those shelves need to be filled with bottles that can be taken eagerly and without hesitation when someone pops by for a drink? I suppose the answer lies somewhere in between. As a person who immerses herself in research and who buys a fair bit of wine, my real passion is wine for the moment. Naturally I want some wines in my cellar to be aged and experimented with, but my house is in a constant state of *va et vient*, so I need wines that can match the mood of an impromptu dinner party or just casual drinks on the deck at dusk.

The secret of my self-proclaimed cellar success is that I buy wines for each season every time I go to the liquor store. I like to take advantage of new arrivals and am always on the lookout for a bargain, no matter the time of year. For example, the incredible discounts on Champagne and sparkling wine in January lead to rampant opening of bottles on an impromptu Tuesday night in August. The clearance of Shiraz in June helps fatten the cellar when I need to pair wine with my braised lamb shanks and polenta in February. The addition of a bottle or two hardly makes a difference to your wallet and yet the reward is that you have wine any time you may need it.

Enclosures and You

Wine for the moment is great for experimentation. 90% of all wines produced are made to be consumed within five years of their release. This has led to the enclosure revolution, with many wine producers eagerly embracing anything but cork. It may shock you to know that screw cap bottles contain quality products nowadays. It's not the plonk of yesteryear, when even the boxed wine was a step up from the screw cap. Producers are so much more aware of the state of their wine and its ageing ability. A fresh and delightfully young wine can be the perfect beginning to a dinner party or a relaxing drink to end a long day. The good thing about wine under this enclosure is that it



can be consumed with no flaws and variation for six months to five years. Go ahead, enjoy the revolution and drink young. Remember that experimentation is the key to wine knowledge. What a great way to practise a craft. Cheers!

Wine Review

I am unsure of which rating system to use in *Vivva Montreal*. If I don't give a score, those of you who read other reviewers will think I'm a hack. I will therefore score on a twenty point system that I used when studying to become a sommelier. Be sure to pay careful attention to my comments as they will help you make a more informed decision of what you may want to taste when purchasing a bottle or two. Every palate is unique and my suggestions and tastes may not be yours. I wouldn't worry, however, because there is more wine out there than can ever be consumed in a lifetime. Leave it to me and I'm sure I'll find some wine that will suit everyone eventually. After all, practice makes perfect!

Wines for the Moment

17.5/20 Big House Red, Ca' del Solo, California, U.S.A. SAQ#00308999. \$18.45

This juicy red is a blend of grapes not always seen together. It is a great way to start the summer because it screams out for BBQ. The tannins are present but fall into a well balanced fruit and alcohol finish. There are loads of juicy red fruit on the nose that stay with you in the mouth

until the last drop. Drink or hold.

16/20 Sauvignon Blanc, Kim Crawford, New Zealand. SAQ#10327701. \$17.20

The nose is grassy and filled with citrus fruit and minerals. The grapefruit and grassy nose come back in the mouth, yet the acidity keeps this wine from becoming dull. Wonderfully balanced and persistent gooseberry finish. Drink or hold.

18.5/20 Cabernet Merlot, Sumac Ridge, British Columbia, Canada. SAQ#00551911. \$15.00

This is a Canadian gem. Well balanced black currant with a slight chocolate nose lead to mouth filling flavours such as blueberry, baking spices and caramel. The tannin is there, but let it open in a large wine glass for five minutes and you'll be rewarded with a softer fruit and spice finish. Drink or hold.

17/20 Chenin Blanc, Paarl Heights, South Africa. SAQ#00586198. \$12.25


The zippy citrus fruit and mineral component in the mouth is an excellent match for food of all kinds. This is a wine for any season. The nose is a bit closed, but once in the mouth, it crashes in with straw, gooseberry and lime peel flavours. A medium finish makes it easy to keep drinking. Drink now to one year.

Carola Price is a sommelier and chef. She is a member of the Canadian Association of Professional Sommeliers and The International Sommelier Guild. She can be reached at carola@ivvmontreal.com.

MOVIE REVIEW

Your Mission... is to See this Movie

BY CATHERINE MCKENZIE

 (Three boxes of popcorn out of four)

If you see one movie this summer, there are probably better ones to see. But if you see two movies this summer, then see *Mission: Impossible III*.

Whether you've seen the first two *Mission: Impossible* movies (the first one good, the second mediocre) or not, this movie is definitely worth a few hours of your time this summer. It is what summer action blockbusters are supposed to be: fun!

The movie begins with our constant hero, Ethan Hunt (Tom Cruise, craziness



well in check), at his engagement party, enjoying life. We learn that Hunt, whose fiancée, Julia (well played by Katie Holmes look-alike Michelle Monahan), believes he works in the transportation field, has become an instructor for the Impossible Mission Force and no longer does field work.

Hunt is contacted by his superior Musgrave (a vaguely geeky Billy Crudup) at the party. He is needed to go into the field once again because one of his protégés (Keri Russell, best known for her work on *Felicity*), the first that he has certified as ready for fieldwork, has gone missing on

her maiden assignment. Hunt initially turns down, then reluctantly agrees to accept the mission, as of course he must in order for there to be a movie.

Hunt puts together his mission force, made up of the ever-present Ving Rhames (still dry and sardonic), Jonathan Rhys-Myers (the up-and-coming actor who shone bright in *Match Point*, an excellent film) and the designated babe, Zhen Lei. Together they find and extract Russell, and this sets up the plot points for the next two acts.

The plot from this point centres on bringing the architect of Russell's kidnapping (an excellent post-*Capote* Philip Seymour Hoffman, clearly relishing playing a villain) to justice and his revenge on Hunt for doing so. I'll leave the details of the plot for you to discover. It's main purpose, as with any good action movie, is to serve as the lynchpin for some truly awesome stunts; some witty banter; a fake face-mask or two (a signature of these films); conflict with a seemingly malevolent higher-up (played by Laurence Fishburne) and at least one twist which I saw coming only 10 minutes before it was revealed.

This is not a perfect film, but it isn't meant to be. Rather, it is a way to spend an enjoyable few hours. The movie, well-directed by first-time big screen director J.J. Abrams (creator of the aforementioned *Felicity* and the addictive *Lost*, among others), moves along at a good pace, and makes us believe most of the action sequences (at least while we are watching them). See also if you can spot the visual reference to one of Cruise's best films, *Top Gun*.

At the centre of the film is Cruise, who despite the impossible-not-to-mention oddness of the last year, is still doing what he does best: saving the world. There is a reason that Cruise is the massive movie star that he is. He is charismatic and believable in his roles. You want him to succeed and believe that he can. And most of all he makes what he does for a living look fun, which makes his movies, and in particular this one, fun to watch.

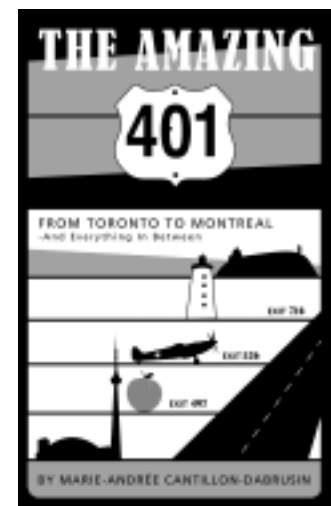
So do; I definitely recommend it.

Catherine McKenzie is a lawyer in Montreal.



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MATERNALLY... *continued from page one*

those poor parents were going through and am happy to share this valuable information with Montreal parents: a new café has opened for babies, children and parents! It is called **Enfants du quartier café familial** and is located at 5588A Sherbrooke St. West (corner of Marcil), just across the street from Girouard Park. I had heard about the café through the grapevine and decided to go and check it out with my three year old daughter, Amel. The place is spotless and bright, and divided into two sections: a closed-off play area for kids, accessible through baby gates, and a comfortable seating area to sit and have a cup of coffee, eat something or read. There is an espresso machine on-site (heaven!) and inexpensive, tasty homemade food such as soups and sandwiches. There is also a small children's menu featuring such goodies as cheese sticks, quesadillas, mini-muffins and grilled cheese sandwiches, with prices ranging from \$0.75 to \$3. The play area has soft foam tiles on the floor, a slide and a variety of toys and books. High chairs are available, as well as a baby changing station equipped with diapers and hand sanitizer. The spic-and-span bathroom hosts a potty seat for

those of us going through the joys of toilet training our little ones. What more could a parent ask for?

The owners of this new café are Maria and Rob, parents of a two-year-old and a four-year-old. Ever since they became parents themselves, they had been looking for a low-stress place to go with their kids. When they couldn't find it, they decided to build it! The café's slogan is, 'Where children can be children and adults can be adults' – a slight variation on my old one, and it makes perfect sense! Access to the play area is \$2.50/child and \$4.50/child on weekends and holidays. The family café has been open since November 2005. Their hours of operation are Tuesday-Saturday from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm and Sundays from 11 am to 5 pm. At the moment, I would say that the children's area is geared for ages newborn to five, but workshops and activities for older children are also available. When you go in, give Maria your e-mail address and you will be contacted when there are special events going on, such as seasonal festivities, song and dance animation and arts and crafts. You will also be informed by e-mail of any changes in business hours during the holidays.

During the summer months, the café is air-conditioned. The owners are working on outdoor seating and will be serving ice cream too. Activities such as playdough, painting and collage will be offered. The goal is to provide some structure for kids through the summer. Wednesdays and

Fridays will be the café's activity mornings and there will also be some Saturday fun across the street in NDG Park.

So now you can sit back and sip your cappuccino while your little angel is entertained. This new hot spot for families was just too good for me to keep to myself!

Sun Protection

On another note, now that the hazy days of summer are drawing near, it's time to think about slathering on the SPF-protection and getting the sunhats out. For those of you with babies under the age of six months, you probably already know that sunscreen lotions are not recommended. I used to have one of those parasol-type umbrellas that snap onto the stroller to protect my daughter from the sun's harmful rays. Of course every time I rounded a corner or crossed the street, I was constantly re-positioning it! Apart from all of the recommendations that we all know about – such as not exposing your infant under six months to direct sun and avoiding sun exposure between 10 am and 4 pm altogether – another great option in sun protection is sun protective clothing. It's basically clothing with built-in sun protection in the fabric! These garments have a listing on the label stating their Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF). A garment with a UPF reading of less than 15 should not be identified as 'sun protective'. There are hats, blankets, bathing suits and clothing available for all ages on the following websites: www.suntogs.com (they carry gear for all ages, including adults) and www.cheekymonkey.ca (click on 'Sun & Swim Wear'). On the Cheeky Monkey website, there is even a UV stroller cover available, which is a breathable net with sun protection builtin. So much more practical than my old parasol! These garments are hard to come by in Montreal, but I have recently found sunhats (for girls and boys) at Oink! Oink!, located at 1343 Greene Ave. in Westmount. They are made by a company called Puffin Gear, have a UPF 40-50+ rating, cost about \$20 and are adorable. Once your child is past the age of six months, the sunscreen

most recommended by dermatologists and paediatricians is the kind that contains a 'physical' barrier, such as zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. Look for these ingredients when purchasing a sunscreen for your child over the age of six months. It goes on thick and opaque and always made my daughter look ghostly white, but is recommended as the best protection against the sun's damaging rays. And of course, don't forget to ensure that your child is wearing his/her sunglasses that give both UVA and UVB protection (keeping them on your child is easier said than done, right?). The ideal shades are ones that fit close to the face and have large lenses for maximum protection... think 'Jackie-O'!

Architecture and Kids

Last but not least, I was pleasantly surprised to discover that the Canadian Centre for Architecture offers family activities on weekends. Every Sunday until August 27 (excluding June 25 and July 2), workshops related to one of the architects currently being showcased, Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, will be offered to children ages 5-12. Following a visit to the exhibition 'Cornelia Hahn Oberlander: Ecological Landscapes', children will learn about sustainable development and rooftop gardens by building their own model roof garden with soil, seeds and plants. There are two sessions per day: 10:15 am and 2 pm. The sessions last about two hours. The cost is \$4/child and \$6/adult (children must be accompanied by an adult). Reservations are necessary. The Canadian Centre for Architecture is located at 1920 Baile Street, south of the Faubourg St. Catherine. Call (514) 939-7026 for information and reservations, or check out their website: www.cca.qc.ca. Enjoy the month of June with your child in Montreal!

Annika Melanson was born and brought up in Montreal. In a past life, she spent most of her time travelling and working as a flight attendant. She now enjoys exploring parent- and child-friendly Montreal with her three-and-a-half year old daughter, Amel.

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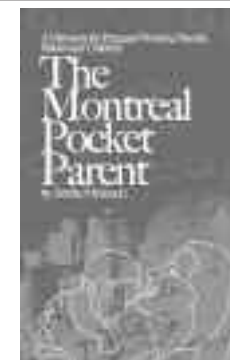
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Father's Day Feast

BY ANTHEA DAWSON

With Mother's Day now firmly behind us, we are now broaching on the second Hallmark holiday of early summer, the day saluting our dear sweet dads. Instead of the last minute CDs and DVDs more suited for you than your old man, come June 18, why not surprise him with something he'll truly cherish? Here's everything you need to know to prepare an elegant dinner that will take you less than an hour of your time (but he doesn't need to know that!).

When it comes to summer, nothing beats the BBQ for popular dinners at home – and usually it's Dad who is master of the grill. To get him to relinquish the tongs, set him up with a good cold beer with the promise of a gourmet dinner to come. The best thing about barbecue fare is not only the quick and easy preparation, but also how impressive the final results can be.

Barbequing is a great time to show off Montreal's fresh summer ingredients. Many believe that only burgers and chicken are suited for the grill, yet practically anything you find down at the Atwater Market can be whipped up on the BBQ. From potatoes to grilled garlic bread to corn on the cob rubbed with olive oil, the barbecue is one of the quickest cooking tools that also imparts incredible flavour. A great menu item on a hot summer night is the grilled vegetable salad, a shamefully simple dish that is also gorgeous to look at.

We are very lucky in Montreal to be blessed with locally grown produce. Our growing season may be a lot shorter than more southern climates, but the summer is the perfect time to buy locally and to try out what Quebec has to offer. From the fiddleheads of spring to the beautiful, thin asparagus in July to the sweet corn of Labour Day, we have all grown up cherishing the summer growing season, for we all know how short it is, and that the imported stuff just doesn't taste as good or as fresh. The grilled salad is a great way to showcase the local veggies of summer, and you can change up the ingredient list with whatever may be in season at the time.

When it comes to grilling meat, most of our dads are probably the experts. Yet there are many ways to change up a simple steak or chicken breast by adding lots of flavour with a spice rub. While imparting an excellent kick to your meat, it also works to create a great sear on the grill,

allowing the meat to caramelize on the outside skin while remaining juicy on the inside. There's no greater crime than a dried-out steak, so by using the rub you are not only imparting flavour, but also protecting your dinner from the dangers of high heat grilling. The recipe that follows highlights grilled halibut fillets or chicken breasts, but any meat of your choice would work just as well, from rib-eye steak to pork tenderloin. The accompanying salsa is another great way to highlight seasonal veggies, jazzing up your dinner with a little more colour and also keeping it nice and juicy.

And finally, dessert. No menu is complete without a touch of sweetness, and dessert is another avenue for incorporating some local fruit and berries into your dinner. Cobbler is an old family favourite, and is one of the simplest desserts to prepare. Wild blueberries are just incredible over the summer season in Montreal, but the following recipe works just as well with fresh peaches, strawberries or raspberries.

So there you go... a simple Father's Day dinner that won't have you prepping and chopping for hours, but will taste and look like you have. Give your old dad a gift he'll really remember.

Mediterranean Grilled Vegetable Salad

1 lb. medium asparagus, trimmed
2 corn cobs, husked
1 red pepper, cored & halved
1 yellow pepper, cored & halved
1 fennel bulb, cored & quartered
1 small red onion, thickly sliced
3 portabella mushrooms, wiped clean and stems removed
2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
2 Tbsp. good quality balsamic vinegar
salt and pepper to taste
3 Tbsp. feta cheese, crumbled
3 Tbsp. basil, roughly torn

Set the grill to medium-high heat. Drizzle the prepared vegetables with olive oil. Grill the asparagus until lightly charred and tender but not overdone – remove from grill and set aside. Grill the whole corn cobs until kernels look lightly charred and corn is tender when pricked with a fork, and set aside. Grill the peppers until the skins are charred and start to pull away from the flesh, and set aside. Add fennel, onions and mushrooms, making sure not to lose too many through the cracks. Grill until browned, and set aside.

Once cooled, slice the asparagus on the bias (i.e. diagonally) and add to a large



bowl. With a serrated knife, shave off the corn kernels and add to the asparagus. Slice the peppers into thick pieces, as well as the fennel, mushrooms and onions, and add to the salad. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar, and toss with salt and pepper. Add torn basil and toss again, seasoning to taste. Transfer the salad to a large serving platter and garnish with crumbled feta. Serves 4 – 6

Grilled Halibut or Chicken with Spiced Rub and Cherry Tomato-Caper Salsa

4 6 oz. halibut fillets, skin removed, or
4 6 oz. chicken breasts
2 tsp. brown sugar
2 tsp. ground fennel seed
1 tsp. sweet paprika
1 tsp. finely chopped garlic
1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1 tsp. kosher salt
1 pint cherry tomatoes, quartered
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 Tbsp. small capers, drained
2 scallions (green onions), thinly sliced
3 Tbsp. pitted Kalamata olives, roughly chopped
juice and zest of 1 lemon
3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
salt and pepper to taste
2 Tbsp. finely chopped flat-leaf Italian parsley
2 Tbsp. roughly chopped basil

To make the salsa: in a medium-sized bowl, fold together cherry tomatoes, minced garlic, capers, scallions, olives and zest. Add lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper, parsley and basil. Season to taste.

Set the grill to medium-high heat. Pat halibut fillets or chicken breasts dry with paper towel. In a bowl, mix together spices, then spread evenly over the fish or chicken, and let stand for 30 minutes. Place on grill and cook until one side is firmly set, about 4 – 5 minutes. Using a

spatula and tongs, delicately turn the fish or chicken and grill until it's cooked through. (Fish should be white and flaky, chicken should register at 160°F with a meat thermometer.)

Transfer to a serving platter and spoon salsa over chicken or fish. Serve immediately with the Mediterranean Grilled Vegetable Salad. Serves 4

Fresh Blueberry Cobbler

6 Tbsp. unsalted butter
1 cup all-purpose flour
2 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. ground nutmeg
1 cup sugar
⅔ cup 2% milk
2 cups fresh (or frozen) blueberries

Preheat oven to 375°F. Melt the butter in an 8-inch square baking dish. In a bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, salt and nutmeg. Stir until well combined. Add milk and stir batter until it is just combined.

Pour batter into melted butter, but do not stir. Pour the berries into the centre of the batter; again, do not stir. Bake the cobbler in the middle rack of the oven for 40 minutes, or until top is golden and berries exude their juices. Serve warm or at room temperature with vanilla ice cream. Serves 4 – 6

Anthea Dawson grew up in Montreal and studied film at the University of Toronto.

After toiling in the film world, she found her calling while studying in Florence. She subsequently completed the professional chef's degree at the Cambridge School of Culinary Arts in Cambridge, Mass. and went to work at the Sel de la Terre, a provincial French bistro in Boston. She is currently the executive chef at Simply Wonderful, a catering firm that specializes in everything from small dinner parties to weddings and cooking classes.

MISSION MONTREAL

Casino (MONT) Royal

In which our correspondent goes for double or quits at the Montreal Casino

BY ASHLEY COTTER-CAIRNS

It seemed like an innocent idea at the time. 'Write something about the casino,' requested publisher David Price. 'But I need an angle.'



Reg Morden

WHAT YOUR HOUSE IS WORTH?

There may be more than one reason why you want to sell your present home. Maybe you want a larger home in a better location. If your children have flown the nest, you may be considering the purchase of a condominium. Whatever the reason, one of the first questions is how much is your house worth?

You know what you paid for your house initially and how much money you've put into improvements over the years. You also know how much it has cost to maintain the house in good condition. There is also the "appreciation" factor. If your house is like most houses, it has probably appreciated in value because of continuing inflation and housing demand.

However, there are other factors to consider, such as what houses similar to yours are selling for. If you would like to sell your home, call me for an appointment so we can discuss the details and opportunities. You may be in for a pleasant surprise.

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'What if I take the money you're going to pay me and try to double it?'

Quite possibly the dumbest assignment since Oscar Wilde agreed to write a think-piece on the gay scene of Edwardian London. There was the chance to make a killing – and a much greater chance of ending up with nothing but a smidgen of infamy to show for my efforts. Faced with the possibility of a miserable evening pissing away money I didn't even have yet, I called on some rugby friends capable of making a night of it.

Our efforts to recreate *Ocean's Eleven* fell short of the mark by a few hardy souls, but seven is a lucky-sounding number. I decided that incidentals would come out of my \$200 budget, and prior to leaving, bought a case of Guinness to ensure I'd have something, if only a hangover and a Guinness toque, to show

for my pains.

The gang and I donned suits, downed beers and put on our coolest-of-cool fronts before leaving for our date with glory. (Or misery.)

Ocean's Seven

With five Westmount Rugby Football Club players and two additional helpers, our team of seven was the perfect blend for the mission at hand.

- Michael Trivino as George Clooney: suave and sophisticated, team chef 'Iron' Mike was hoping to cook up some action.
- Adrian Fitzpatrick as Brad Pitt: despite some competition for this role, 'Sick Note' Fitzpatrick's blond locks and recent success with the ladies won him the accolade.
- Elkim Polat as Julia Roberts: sadly no dress made of gold beads, but 'El Soprano' still brightened up a dowdy bunch of drunks.
- Mike Hogan as Scott Caan: the evening would not have been the same without 'Hulk' Hogan. He's never far from the party.
- Jean-Louis Bourke as Matt Damon: both born in the 1970s. 'J-Lo' also likes a game of Poker, which is all right by me.
- Alexis Boivin as Shaobo Qin: neither Asian nor acrobat, but 'Bandy' Boivin is a very flexible friend.
- Ashley Cotter-Cairns, your correspondent, as Andy Garcia: because we look a bit alike. 'Ash the Cash' was the oldest guy there.

Stash Café

A Glimpse of Poland in Montreal.

Stash Café is located in the heart of Old Montreal. The menu is typically Polish and includes meals from all parts of the country. All the dishes are prepared in the traditional Polish manner.

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Ashley as Andy Garcia

We were later joined by our friend Danilo and his wife. But the casino doesn't allow cameras to be used on the premises, and I don't remember much that happened after midnight...

The Location

Every good heist movie has a glittering jewel waiting to be plucked.

Montreal's government-owned-and-operated casino is located on the water. It certainly sparkles at night – the tawdry, neon-clad multicoloured costume brooch in our city's semi-precious skyline. Advertisements for the place are rather Catholic, combining frolics among the glamorously under-dressed with fire-and-brimstone warnings about addiction.

On arrival, you'll find the relaxed atmosphere typical of North American



Jean-Louis as Matt Damon

gaming. Europeans will probably wonder what happened to the Monte Carlo spirit. There is a dress code, but I doubt if you'll notice. Gang members and personal fitness trainers will have to change out of their work clothes, but everybody else, even rugby players in cheap suits, will feel right at home.

Punters are faced with a huge choice of ways to fritter away their RRSP contributions. Tables and slots sprawl across sev-

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