

## A Vegan Guide to Montreal

By [Emma DeBono](#) | July 31, 2017



Vegan soft serve, vinyl records, and plant-based pastries make Montreal a must-see.

Just an hour's flight from [New York City](#) can land you in [Montreal](#), Canada, one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Nicknamed "[Paris](#) on a budget," [Montreal](#) offers the allure and romance of [France](#) with the hospitality for which Canadian culture is known. From the uproar of French being spoken to the gothic architecture and cobblestone streets, you'll feel as though you've been transported across the pond. What many people don't realize is how vegan-friendly this city is. There are dozen of végétalien spots and many more that have great vegan options. With this in mind, we've highlighted some of our favorite cruelty-free eats and activities in [Montreal](#).

### Where to dine -

If you're looking to grab a quick, delicious breakfast, [Leaves Cafe](#) is the first place to stop. This small vegan storefront sells great coffee and espresso drinks, flakey vegan pastries, and a selection of plants and succulents to take home. If you're looking for a lighter meal or a smoothie to fuel your sightseeing, [Copper Branch](#) is where you want to be thanks to a menu punctuated with bowls and smoothies (and heavier dishes such as [burgers](#), soups, and all-day breakfast).

For lunch, head to **Lola Rosa**, which specializes in vegetarian and vegan comfort. The eatery offers different specials at its three locations, such as vegan lasagna at Park Avenue, yellow **curry** at Milton Street, and a burrito at William Street. Make sure to specify you want to “veganize” your burrito, and opt for the homemade vegan queso. There’s also **Crudessence**, which is 100-percent vegan and serves raw, organic and gluten-free options such as a raw BLAT made with dehydrated **eggplant** bacon; vegan lime tarté topped with avocado mousse on a coconut and macadamia nut crust; and an un-cheesecake made with fermented miso cashew nut cheese, blueberries, Brazil nuts pavé, and figs.

For dinner, visit Aux Vivres on Saint Laurent Boulevard, which Aux Vivres provides international dishes in a diner-style setting. From Mexican platters to Asian-inspired bowls, American-style burgers, **soul food**, and vegan Greek **gyros**, there is something for everyone to enjoy. Even better? Aux Vivres also serves weekend brunch from 10am to 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays!

### **What to do -**

In addition to flavorful vegan fare, Montreal is also a mecca for art and breathtaking architecture. **Montreal Museum of Fine Arts** (MMFA) includes a variety of classic and modern works from artists of all eras. As Montreal's largest museum, MMFA is among the most prominent in Canada and is spread across five pavilions. After the museum, another must-visit is **Notre-Dame Basilica of Montréal**, located in the historic district of Old Montreal. Built to replicate **Notre-Dame de Paris**, the church is decorated with paintings, sculptures, and stained-glass windows that illustrate Biblical passages and centuries of parish history. While Montreal emulates **Paris** in many ways, in order to get an authentic feel for the city, head to the lookout near **Chalet du Mont Royal**. While the walk takes approximately one hour, the hike is an uphill battle (literally) and might require a stop or two (depending on the person). However, the view at the top is well worth breaking a sweat. Once at the top, you can see the skyline of the city and, in the far distance, get a glimpse of the rolling mountains that inhabit Quebec. The site might be buzzing with tourists, but there is something quiet and calming about the experience. There is also a piano at the top where visitors can sit and show off their pianist skills.

### **Treat yourself -**

For music and book treats, stopping by Montreal’s first used-record store, **Cheap Thrills**, is essential. Located on the second floor above the Italian restaurant MKT, the shop sells used CDs and vinyl records with genres ranging from jazz and rock to pop from well-known artists. On the other side of the store, you’ll find shelves upon shelves of used books. If sweets are your idea of treating yourself, consider visiting ice cream parlor **Hoche Glacé** located in Montreal’s Hochelaga-Maisonneuve district, where the soy soft serve is a vegan dream!

*Emma DeBono is a freelance journalist, vegan, and avid traveler currently based in New York City.*

<http://vegnews.com/articles/page.do?pageId=9826&catId=4>