

For tours departing beyond 2010, itineraries may be subject to change. This will be confirmed by the publication of the 2011 brochure (issued in Oct 10).

2010  
Tour Dossier

# EXPLORE!

## CANADA Dossier Ref. DQ

# Dogsled Quebec

Amended 07 Jul 2010. Valid from 01 Jan 2010 to 31 Dec 2010  
Since first issue this dossier has been updated with amendments to the following sections: itinerary day 7; special highlights; itinerary days 2 - 8; accommodation day 2 & personal expenses

As our itineraries may be amended from time to time, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers, please ensure you have the most up-to-date copy of this dossier immediately before you travel. You can download the dossier from our website, [www.explore.co.uk](http://www.explore.co.uk). Of course we will notify you of any significant changes, but sometimes minor changes may simply be added to the tour dossier.

### JOINING TOUR ABROAD

8 days/7 nights Land Only  
Montreal to Montreal

Join Montreal (day 1)

End Montreal (day 8) Airport

Clients booked on 'Land Only' arrangements should make their own way to the joining point in Montreal. Please refer to separate 'Joining Instructions' for name and address of hotel and time of rendezvous with tour leader.

### GROUP TRAVEL FROM LONDON

9 days/8 nights Tour including  
Connecting Group Flights  
London-Montreal-London

Depart from London Heathrow Airport, to arrive in Montreal the same day (day 1 of Land Only itinerary).

Return from Montreal (day 8 of Land Only itinerary), arriving London Heathrow the following day.

Passengers with non-group flights booked through Explore should refer to their individual confirmation invoice for flight details. Transfers to and from the airport are not included unless purchased in addition to the tour package.

### SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Among the many highlights featured on this tour, we particularly mention:

- \* **QUEBEC** Colonial gems on the banks of the St. Lawrence River.
- \* **DOG SLEDDING** A chance to mush across the unspoilt landscapes of Eastern Quebec. Spectacular wilderness experiences.
- \* **ICEHOTEL** We visit this remarkable

### Carbon Offsets Included

As part of our responsible tourism policy we offset carbon emissions from all customer and staff flights booked by Explore. Our carbon offset partner is Climate Care. If you are making independent flight arrangements to join one of our tours, may we urge you to offset your carbon emissions through Climate Care, or a similar offsetting scheme.

structure and see it as it is being rebuilt which happens every year (usually completed mid January).

This exceptional adventure takes us deep into the winter wilderness of Eastern Canada. Travelling through the Mauricie region of Quebec on husky drawn sleds, we traverse a pristine landscape of forest covered mountains, frozen lakes and serene splendour, where the only noise is the sound of our dogs as we dash through the snow-covered vistas. Piloting your own team of huskies this is an exhilarating journey into some of the country's most picturesque wilderness. Our journey begins in the city of Montreal on the banks of the St. Lawrence River, before we head off to meet our dog teams. We then have a half day of training, 3 spectacular days on safari, crossing landscapes of boreal forests and snow-blanketed hills to nightly camps log cabins. Enjoying the exhilaration of days mushing across the open landscapes, we go in search of some of the winter wildlife in the region. Our evenings are then spent looking after the dogs and enjoying the serene tranquillity of our wilderness location. During our last afternoon on site we will have the chance to explore the area by snowshoeing, cross-country skiing or enjoy sliding on the snow and skating on the ice. On our way to Quebec City, we stop at the beautiful Icehotel, we then head to Quebec City itself, one of the oldest cities in North America and a captivating fusion of colonial charm, Gallic eccentricity and vibrant culture. There will be time to explore something of its myriad of delights or indulge in some more adrenaline filled activities, with snowmobiles or skis on offer for those with a hankering for more excitement. Journey's end sees us returning to Montreal once more, to reflect on a truly thrilling adventure.

### LAND ONLY ITINERARY

**Be Prepared:** While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day route as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built into the itinerary. Places visited and routes may vary depending on local weather and trail conditions and on the decision of our mushing guides. Nightstops may also vary depending on our route and this will determine the number of

### Earth Matters

#### • The Travel Foundation

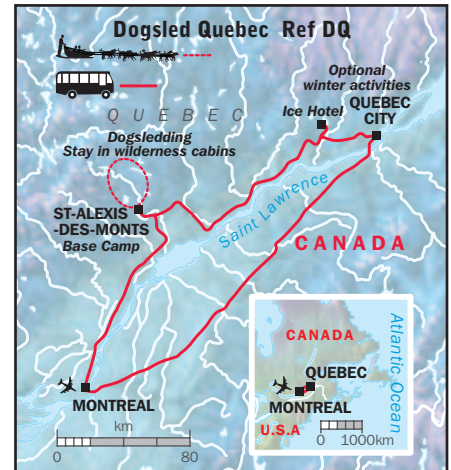
Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website [www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk](http://www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk)

#### • Tourism Concern

Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group [www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk)

- Limiting the group size on this tour enables us to limit our input on the environment.
- Please ensure you dispose of rubbish carefully in order not to damage the environment.

- For further information on responsible travel go to <http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/>



km per day during the safari. A flexible attitude, good level of fitness and an appreciation of Mother Nature are key to getting the most from this adventure.

**Accommodation and Included Meals:** Please find the key to our accommodation ratings overleaf, and note that included meals are indicated in the itinerary below and are shown on the day they are provided (B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner).

#### Day 1. Join tour Montreal

Our journey begins in Montreal, the largest city in the Quebec Province, the second largest in the country and, after Paris, the second largest French speaking city in the western world. The French arrived in the area during the middle years of the 16th century, claiming the St Lawrence Valley for their own, a move that resulted in bloody conflict between settlers and the indigenous Iroquois that was to last over a century. The city itself began life as a trading post on the St Lawrence River in 1611, becoming a proper settlement some 30 years later and going on to become a vital inland port and railway hub with the opening of the Lachine Canal in the 19th century. Today it is a vibrant, modern city with a passionate belief in its cultural identity. After checking into our hotel today, there should be some free time to enjoy something of its Gallic charms before a tour briefing later this afternoon. **Overnight Hotel H+.**

#### Day 2. Dogsledding training

We start today with a brief visit to Montreal before we transfer to our dogsledding base camp in the heart of Mauricie region (150km, 2h). On arrival we meet our guides and our dogs for the coming adventure ahead and learn the important intricacies of guiding our own sleigh. Our first afternoon will be spent getting used to our new modes of transport. After this half day of dogsledding training, we will settle in our lodge near a wonderful lake and enjoy our evening meal. **Overnight basic cabin H (included meals: B, D).**

#### Days 3, 4 & 5. Dogsledding in the Canadian wilderness

It will then be time to prepare ourselves for departure and harness up the dogs (no mean feat when dealing with an excited pack of Huskies, Alaskans and Malamuths), pack luggage and food as we head out into the Canadian wilderness towards our first night in a log cabin. These 3 days we will relish the

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exhilarating experiences of mushing through the snow, crossing boreal forests and enjoying the sounds of our dog teams as we take in the wilds of eastern Canada's winter landscapes, taking in vistas that have probably changed little since the arrival of the first settlers. Our days will see us rising early to enjoy breakfast and prepare the dogs for the journey ahead. We will then propose to do some 20-30km each day (or 4 hours), stopping for lunch along the trail for a BBQ lunch, before moving on to our next night stop. There may also be an opportunity to discover the landscapes and wildlife around isolated rivers and lakes. Nearly 70% of Quebec's land area is covered in forests, with huge swathes of spruce, pine and fir occupying the southern regions, along with maple, oak and elm along the southern slopes of the Laurentian Mountains. These verdant landscapes provide a haven for a myriad of wildlife, including wolf, black bear, deer and moose and, as we travel across these breathtaking landscapes, we may spot some of the more elusive members of these untouched wilds. **3 nights rustic wilderness cabins (included meals: Bx3, Lx3, Dx3).**

#### Day 6. Day sledding, winter activities

Today will see us making one final dash across the snow, enjoying the rich beauty of the Mauricie region for the last time as we make our way back towards base and the end of our incredible journey into the pristine wilderness of eastern Quebec. On arrival back at base camp we will say goodbye to our guides and our dogs and then after a short journey we settle in at our lodge/chalet. In the afternoon, we will have the chance to try one or two activities on site: snowshoeing or cross-country skiing in forest along one the trail, sliding on snow from a short hill or skating on the lake. All these activities are included and equipment are provide on site. **Overnight lodge H+ (included meals: B, L).**

#### Day 7. Ice Hotel and Quebec City (200 km, 2h30)

Today we transfer to Quebec City and make a quick stop at the Icehotel (open only from mid-January). In December and early January we plan to watch the Icehotel's fascinating construction, and from mid-January onwards we plan to see the finished rooms. Reconstructed each year, this remarkable structure is crafted from nearly 5,000 tons of snow and ice, its walls, floors, furniture and even the glasses in the bar all being sculpted from ice! From here we then transfer to Quebec City, the heartland of French culture in North America. Situated along the St Lawrence River, Quebec is one of the oldest European settlements in North America and its only fortified city north of Mexico. Beginning life as a fur trading settlement in 1608 it grew to become a major centre of trade and commerce and a highly valued prized during the conflicts of the 17th and 18th centuries. In 1759 it fell to the British during the Seven Years War, becoming a part of the British colonies. Today its historic

heart is designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site and from the top of the city ramparts the outlook across the labyrinthine alleyways and sloping city roofs of the old city makes for a quite enchanting viewpoint. The afternoon has been left free for you to explore some more of this captivating city at your leisure. **Overnight hotel H+ (included meals: B).**

#### Day 8. Tour ends Montreal Airport

This afternoon we will drive to Montreal (XL flight departure time). **(Included meals: B).**

## PERSONAL EXPENSES

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

### Foreign Exchange

**Local Currency:** Canadian Dollars.

**Recommended Currency for Exchange:** We recommend you take GBP or USD.

**Where to Exchange:** Banks or 'Forex' offices in main towns/cities. Your tour leader will advise you on arrival.

**ATM Availability:** Available at a number of outlets. Your tour leader will be able to advise you.

**Credit Card Acceptance:** Widely accepted just about everywhere.

**Travellers Cheques:** Travellers Cheques can be used just about everywhere. Canadian or US\$ Travellers Cheques are obviously the most convenient.

Up-to-date information re: global exchange rates can be obtained at <https://www.currency-express.com/explore/>

### Meal Plan

**Local Food and Drink:** 7 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 4 dinners are included on this trip; please be prepared to pay for all other meals. Prices quoted are correct as of the date this dossier was originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location and the prices below are given as an average guide only.

	UK	Canada
Coffee/tea	£1.20	\$1.70
Soft drink	0.80	1.70
Bottle of Beer	2.50	5.20
Bottle of wine	10.00	20.00
2 Course Meal*	10.00	30.00
3 Course Meal**	18.00	20.00

\*Cheap local fare in a small cafe or restaurant.

\*\*Typical food in a simple, reasonably comfortable mid-range restaurant.

### Tipping

**Local Staff:** Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services

provided. A minimum of 15% tipping is expected in restaurants and bars. Please allow CAN\$45 for tipping.

**Tour Leader:** At your discretion you might also consider tipping your tour leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Other Sightseeing

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date this dossier was originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

**QUEBEC CITY** Snowmobiling CAD\$180 (for 3 hours), Snowshoeing CAD\$20 (2hours), Cross-country Skiing CAD\$20 + equipment (25\$) (for 2 hours), Spa CAD\$45 (with access to hotpools, steam bath and sauna), Massage CAD\$90, Downhill Skiing CAD\$50 (full day), CAD\$40 (half day), equipment CAD\$35.

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Seasonal Climate

Around the Great Lakes and along the St Lawrence River the climate is generally characterised by warm summers and long, cold winters, with the temperatures being moderated by the surrounding water. Many areas can receive up to 300cm of snow and winter temperatures in this region tend to average between -5°C to -15°C during the day, dropping to -20°C to -30°C at night – although more extreme temperatures are possible.

Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at <http://www.explore.co.uk/weather>. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

### Visa Requirements

Visas are not required by UK, AUS, NZ, USA, or CAN citizens. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

## Booking a Single Room

All of our tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. On this particular tour we are pleased to be able to offer customers the option of pre-booking a guaranteed single room. Due to the variety of accommodation used on this tour, single rooms are available for a majority of the nightstays, however it would still mean sharing whilst on dogsledding safari.

**ACCOMMODATION:** An important feature of many Explore tours is the wide range of accommodation used, and since the beginning our philosophy has been to select accommodation to suit the itinerary - not the other way round. To help gauge the comfort level on your chosen tour, we have graded the accommodation standards at all night-stops using the rating guide below. Please keep in mind however that standards can vary from one trip to the next, and occasionally we may need to change a night-stop without advance warning. Please note descriptions are only intended as guidelines in order to give a flavour of the type of accommodation to expect. We cannot guarantee the use of particular properties. Facilities and characteristics may vary from those described.

#### Hotels / lodges / guesthouses - or similar

**H+ :** Standard hotels, lodges or guesthouses, usually with twin or single rooms and en suite facilities. These are generally standard, no-frills hotels with adequate amenities and service standards. Whilst comfort levels are perfectly acceptable to most, please don't expect too much! These are often small, family run establishments.

**H :** Basic hotels, lodges or guesthouses (also village houses, mountain huts, hotels etc often come into this category). Accommodation may be communal or dorm-style, and WC / washing facilities are usually shared. Running hot and cold water may be unreliable or even unavailable. These can be the most rewarding and memorable places to stay, but comfort levels are low.

#### Camping

**C :** Basic camping in wild camps where facilities / amenities may be limited or non-existent. Generally there is no running water, and we dig a temporary bush toilet. Two person tents are often used, but occasionally we sleep under the stars. Participation normally required and sleeping bags usually not provided.

Accommodation and service levels in Canada are, as would be expected, high. We generally steer clear of the larger hotel chains, although this is not always possible. We use a mixture of hotels and motels, which provide a comfortable base for a night or two but on the whole do not boast additional facilities such as restaurants, pools etc. Meals are normally eaten out at local restaurants and diners.

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**Please note:** Please note that flights on the tour **may** transit through the USA. According to US law, passengers may have to disembark, collect luggage and clear immigration before re-boarding for the onward flight.

Holders of the UK, AUS, NZ, CAN and several EU country passports can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) if they hold a machine readable passport. They must also be entering the country by sea or air on a carrier participating in the visa waiver scheme, holding a return/onward ticket. As well as being machine readable, if your passport was issued on or after 26 October 2005, it must contain both a digital photograph of the holder and also an integrated circuit chip that stores biographic information.

From 12 January 2009 all passengers travelling to the USA under the Visa Waiver Programme must provide their details online no later than 72 hours prior to travel. British travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be detained and sent home. In addition to passport information, you must also supply the full address of your first night's accommodation in the USA. This information can be obtained from your joining instructions which are sent out approximately 3 weeks before travel.

For more information, and to apply online, please visit the following website at <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. Once obtained, the application will be valid for a period of two years, or for the validity of your passport (whichever is shorter). At present, US authorities do not propose to levy a charge for this service, although they have reserved the right to consider doing so in the future.

For more information about who is eligible for the VWP, or any other questions you may have regarding your eligibility, or machine readable passports, please contact your local consular office, or visit [www.usembassy.org.uk](http://www.usembassy.org.uk)

Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate. All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

## Vaccinations & Protection

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio.

**Special Note:** Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

## Electric Supply and Plugs

For comprehensive information regarding voltages and plug types in use in the countries visited, follow the relevant link at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Traveladvice/>

## Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all bookings. You must take your policy document with you on tour, as your tour leader will ask to see this at the start of the trip. Your documentation must state in writing that you are the named policyholder and that the cover is valid for your period of travel. Your policy document must also indicate that you have medical expenses and emergency repatriation cover and a 24-hour contact telephone number for your Insurance Company must be shown on your documentation in case of emergency.

**If you are unable to provide all this information at the start of the trip you will not be allowed to join the trip.** If you have purchased Explore Insurance you should carry the Master Certificate leaflet with you, which outlines the conditions of the policy together with a copy of your Confirmation Invoice, which is your proof of purchase of insurance. Explore Worldwide are an Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited, who is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services authority.

## Know Before You Go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination including safety and security, local laws and customs, entry requirements and health. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Traveladvice/>

## PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP

A complete list of clothing and personal gear is contained in Explore's '**General Information Booklet**', available only after a booking has been accepted. Here we make a few specific recommendations with regard to your tour.

**Luggage:** No hard suitcases. Bring only the bare essentials—one backpack or holdall plus a smaller holdall for personal items carried with you inside the sled. Bring a smaller soft bag for your cloth during the safari (other city cloth will stay on your luggage at the lodge). Bring plastic bags to keep things dry. Total allowance: **44lbs/20kgs**. The total luggage limit during the dogsledding safari is 10kgs per person – additional clothing and kit can be left at base camp while we are on the safari.

**Clothing:** Pack for '**All Tours**' plus '**Cold Conditions**'. You are best to bring in multiple layers of clothes that can be added or removed according to your level of activity. 2 sets of thermal underwear are essential, as are warm jogging bottoms or similar, fleece jacket, woollen jumper, ski pants and a warm, wind and waterproof ski-type jacket and a change of clothes for the cabins. Also bring good quality gloves/mits, warm hat and a snood (fleece pullover for your neck) and several pairs of woollen socks. Winter clothing (consisting of thermo-overalls and boots) will be provided locally for the duration of the safari and is recommended.

**Footwear:** Hiking boots or winter boots (if you have them). Bring comfortable shoes for relaxing in. Winter boots are provided locally.

**Equipment:** We recommend taking a thermos flask, high factor sun cream (oil-based rather than water based) and good quality sunglasses or goggles. A torch is also recommended. Please note that a normal driving licence is required for the snowmobiles, so please remember to bring one with you if you wish to partake in the snowmobiling in Quebec. All dogsledding equipment, sleeping bag and liner are provided locally.

## Need help on clothing or equipment?

Then we suggest you contact Nomad Travel, our equipment partner, who specialise in kitting people out for adventurous travel. You receive a special 10% discount in-store or online. Visit one of their stores, phone 0845 260 0044, or visit their website [www.nomadtravel.co.uk/explore](http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk/explore) for further information.

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

**Area:** 9,984,670 sq km.

**Population:** 33.39 million.

**Language:** English, French and 53 native languages.

**Religion:** Roman Catholic 43%, Protestant 23% and minorities from most of the world's major religions.

**Local Time:** GMT -5.

**Electric Supply & Plugs:** 110v. North American style plugs.

**Recommended Books:** Lonely Planet: Montreal & Quebec City, Insight Guide: Montreal & Quebec City, Rene Chartrand: Quebec, 1759, Matthew C. Ward: The Battle for Quebec 1759.

