

TRAVEL

Thursday's Travel News and Tips

In Transit

By SHIVANI VORA JUNE 25, 2015

JUNE 25, 2015

In Transit

By SHIVANI VORA



Our weekday morning digest that includes consumer news, deals, tips and anything else that travelers may want to know.

JAZZ ON THE TRACKS

Train Hôtel, a Montreal-based train company, is celebrating the Montreal International Jazz Festival, running from June 25 to July 6, by offering round-trip rides between Penn Station in New York City and Central Station in Montreal in a **Jazz Railcar**. The car, attached to an Amtrak train, can accommodate 36 passengers and features three hours of jazz entertainment during parts of the 11-hour trip by Mari Sild, a pianist-singer from Montreal, and Marie Michèle, a singer with Oh La La!, a New York City jazz band. Three multi-course meals prepared by the train's chef are included in the cost, and the picturesque scenery along the way includes the Hudson River Valley and Lake Champlain. The company ran three of the same round-trips on the jazz car during the Easter season, but it's the first time it is doing so for the festival. \$240 one-way and \$320 round-trip.



words

Emma Tuccillo

images

Emma Tuccillo

From NY To Montreal By Jazz Railcar

On June 25th, our [Design Director](#) Tim and I were lucky enough to board the inaugural [Jazz Train](#) from New York City to Montreal, a trip conceived by [Francois Rebello](#) and sponsored by [The Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers](#). The idea behind this excursion, set in a vintage railcar attached to an [Amtrak](#) train, was to offer an interactive and unique experience to guests through music, food, and a classic setting. “Traveling to Montreal or NYC should not be just reaching the destination,” Francois explains. “It is also an occasion to discover the beautiful northern part of NY State and to enjoy listening to live music and eating fine local food.”

As we boarded the train at Penn Station, we were filled with the kind of excitement that can only accompany a new adventure. We were ushered into a lounge car, equipped with sweeping windows, beautifully upholstered seating, wooden shutters, and a small kitchen. It was, in a word, elegant. As we rode along the varied and beautiful landscape of NY State, we were serenaded by French jazz singer [Marie Michelle](#), whose Cole Porter and Edith Piaff songs blended perfectly with the dreamy views outside.

In the end, it was the voyage itself that we will remember. The overwhelming blue of Lake Champlain, the regional food, the wonderful company, and the lulling music that filled the car. Thank you to our hosts for showing us hidden parts of New York that we may never have had the chance to explore otherwise.



^ Formerly a congressional car that ran between NYC and Washington DC, our 1960's railcar had an old-fashioned style that reminded us of being in an old movie.



^ If we turned our heads for only a second, the landscape outside the window was bound to change drastically. Seeing New York from this perspective felt so rare and special.



^ Marie Michelle, a New York City based French Jazz singer, performed two sets during our eight hour journey to Montreal. She gracefully steadied herself and her piano as the train swayed back and forth, singing captivatingly sweet songs about heartbreak and love.



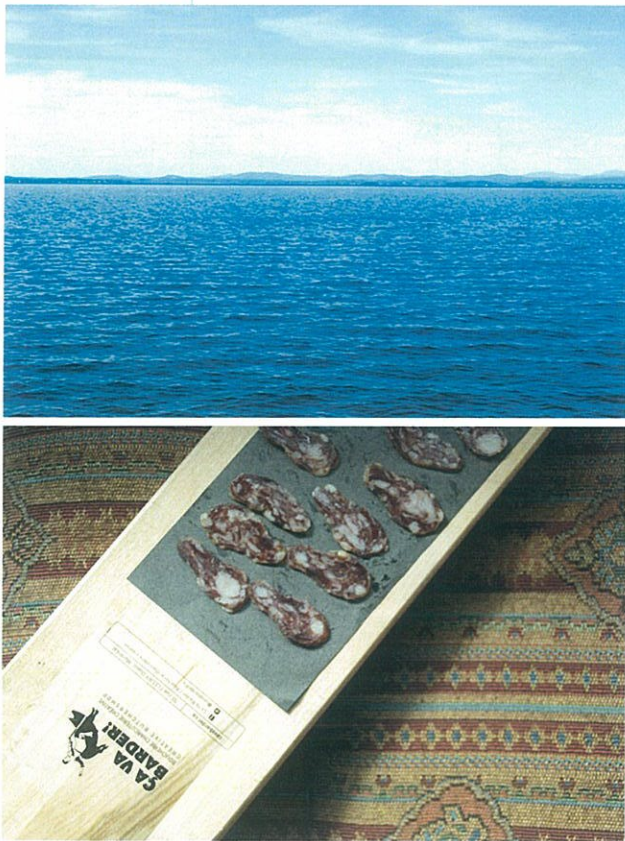
^ We were lucky enough to be joined by Andre Pollander, maker of award winning maple syrup La Cabane du Pic Bois. His exquisite syrup was incorporated into certain dishes served aboard the train.



^ Our host, Francois Rebello, wore many hats aboard the train, including chef. He sees the jazz railcar as the first step towards creating an overnight experiential train between Montreal and NYC.



^ Turning the corner to discover Lake Champlain was a highlight of the voyage. Our attention was captivated as we travelled alongside the vividly blue lake for many miles.



^ It is important to Francois that the food served on the train represented the culture and talent found in Montreal. Ca Va Barder, a creative Montreal based butcher shop, served delicious cured meats and cheeses throughout the trip.



^ When we arrived in Montreal, we stayed in the beautiful Hôtel Le Germain Montréal. The next day, we explored the historical streets of the city, happily stumbling upon the charming cafe Olive + Gourmande where we had a quick bite before returning to the train.



^ Thank you to our wonderful hosts Francois Rebello and The Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers for inviting Tim and I on this journey.





Kick-off Montreal's International Jazz Festival on a four-day musical journey from New York City.

Montreal's annual International Jazz Festival is nearly upon us (June 26-July 5). To celebrate, Canada's Train Hotel is hosting a number of round-trip journeys from New York to take in the sounds. Starting from New York-Penn Station, passengers aboard the Piano-Bar Wagon will feast on gourmet meals while being serenaded by Ohlala's Marie Michele.

ADVERTISING

Over each leg of the rides—each journey is four days long—passengers get a front row seat to three hours of live jazz music and stunning views of the Hudson River Valley, Mettawee River, Lake Champlain, and downtown Montreal. For travelers looking for a little more luxury, the Train Hotel is also offering [Exclusive Jazz Railcar](#) packages, which include four nights accommodation for the festival, three tickets for one of the festival's concerts, daily breakfast, and priority to the Open House and Nightcap Heineken series at the International Jazz Fest.

You can book a ride to the festival (spanning June 25-29), from the festival back to New York (July 2-6), or in the fall from October 2-18. Round-trip tickets start at \$350 per person. You can also enter to win a trip for four to Montreal ([details here](#)). For more information, check out the [Train Hotel website](#).