



Familiar features from the hotel's previous life include a spa, fine dining bistro and burger pub. PHOTOS: ESPACE 4 SAISONS

MONT ORFORD CONDO-HOTEL GROWS BIGGER AND BETTER

Espace 4 Saisons adds studios, suites, party terrasses, gym and indoor parking



ROCHELLE LASH
Checking In

“Wow.” That was my reaction when I drove up to the newly expanded condo-hotel, Espace 4 Saisons, at the foot of Mont Orford.

The cosy Auberge aux 4 Saisons d’Orford has relaunched, bigger and better, as a sleek contemporary condo-hotel with lots of appealing new features.

Highlights include a new wing of snazzy studios and suites, dramatic party terrasses for summer, an impressive gym and a most welcome indoor parking garage.

The new indoor-outdoor heated pool and hot tub are sized for dipping and lounging, not big enough for swimming.

Familiar features from the hotel’s previous life are three independent partners: Dôme de Morphée Centre de Beauté for spa life, Bistro 4 Saisons for fine dining, and the funky Burger Pub.

Espace 4 Saisons is value at its best. The hotel offers a third

night at half-price, discounts on Sundays and Mondays, and 15 to 25 per cent off on bookings paid 15 to 30 days in advance.

Skiers and snowboarders can save with Mont Orford packages, and the Bistro 4 Saisons offers wine at SAQ prices on Tuesdays, for lunch and dinner.

OVERVIEW

The new facilities — the rooftop gym, the pools and the party areas — are exceptionally bright, with large windows and views of mountains or woods.

A new section with 54 sharp condos has been added, for a total of 82 rooms and suites.

The 28 rooms in the original wing have been renovated with new mattresses, furniture and decor, and many have bathtubs, which are getting harder and harder to find in hotels.

Many of the units have kitchenettes or full kitchens, gas fireplaces and glass balconies.

Designer Karine Touzel of Camdi in Montreal hit the right note with a streamlined, modular and understated look of modern furniture, white duvets and materials like slate, natural wood, white marble for the bathrooms and linen-inspired walls. It’s fresh, youthful and inviting, with glam accents like shimmery gauze curtains.

We’re in the country, so the smart, urban look is offset with rustic touches like wildlife prints by Palit as well as colour-

ful designs stencilled on large wooden palettes by Mathieu Bories, a.k.a. Mateo.

FOOD AND DRINK

Owned by manager Thierry Navette and chef Antoine Rheault, Bistro 4 Saisons is one of the most popular lunch and dinner spots in Magog-Orford. Specialties include calves’ liver, mac ‘n’ cheese, flank steak, seafood risotto, beef tartar, blood pudding, duck confit salad, braised beef and mussels, prepared several ways.

This is the heart of the Eastern Townships’ Wine Route, so the Bistro stocks some treasures in its cellar, including Alsace-type whites from Grange Hatley, a small-production winery.

For more casual fare, the Burger Pub is a tiny, vintage diner festooned with sports memorabilia. It is popular for beer on tap, shooters (four for \$10) as well as lunch, après-ski nachos and supper. The daytime menu includes burgers with brie or cheddar, fish ‘n’ chips, duck confit and goat cheese sandwiches. At night, it adds steaks, mussels and pasta.



The rooms are understated, youthful and inviting. Many units have kitchenettes or full kitchens, gas fireplaces and balconies.

THE FOUR SEASONS

The Eastern Townships’ Wine Route is a year-round attraction, and among the vineyards near Mont Orford are Au Vignoble d’Orford and Le Cep d’Argent.

In winter, Espace 4 Saisons is the only ski-in, ski-out lodging at Mont Orford (not quite next door — it’s about 300 metres to the lift at Mont Giroux), and the hotel is less than five kilometres from the superb cross-country and snowshoe trails at Parc National du Mont-Orford.

In spring, Espace 4 Saisons is perfect for spa life. The in-house Dôme de Morphée offers a full roster of beauty and body

treatments, from anti-aging face treatments to massages and mani-pedis.

In summer, the beautiful near-wilderness of the park also serves as a mountain paradise for golf and hiking.

The Orford Express tourist train and Escapades Memphrémagog — both owned by the same company that owns the hotel — are great Townships’ experiences for boat cruising and sightseeing.

In autumn, La Flambée des couleurs, which takes place over four weekends, presents panoramic leaf-peeping from the ski lifts at Mont Orford as well as festivities in Orford and downtown Magog.

IF YOU GO

The municipality of Orford is a one-hour, 15-minute drive from Montreal via Autoroute 10 to exit 115 and Route 141 north.

Espace 4 Saisons: 877-768-1110, 819-868-1110, espace4saisons.com, 4940 chemin du Parc, Orford.

Price: Ranging from approximately \$128 for two, without meals, to \$228 for two for a suite with a living room, full kitchen, fireplace, jet tub, balcony and mountain or forest view. Rates include in-room coffee, game room/arcade, outdoor-indoor pool, outdoor hot tub, fitness room, guest computer, indoor parking, lockers for skis/bicycles. Packages available with meals, spa, Mont Orford.

Bistro 4 Saisons: 819-847-2555, open daily for buffet breakfast (\$15) and Tues.-Sun. for lunch and dinner.

Burger Pub: 819-847-4936, burger-pub.com; from 11:30 a.m., Mon.-Sun.

Dôme de Morphée: 819-847-0505, domedemorphée.com.

Mont Orford: 866-orford1 (866-673-6731), 819-843-6548, orford.com. Online tickets cost about \$30 for adults on Tuesdays through Thursdays; three-hour blocks and multi-day tickets are available.

Parc National du Mont-Orford: 819-843-9855, sepaq.com or parcsquebec.com.

Eastern Townships tourism: 800-355-5755, easterntownships.org.

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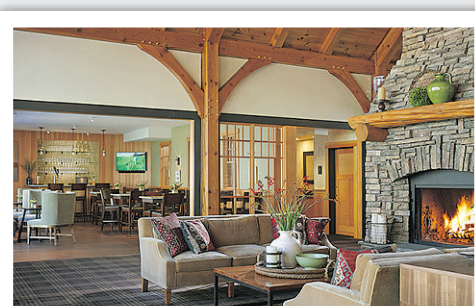
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