



présente

# MONTREAL EN LUMIERE

en collaboration avec

Banque Scotia

# MONTREAL EN LUMIERE



25 YEARS OF LIGHT FROM  
YESTERDAY TO TOMORROW

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# SHOWCASING LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL CUISINE FOR 25 YEARS



Montréal en Lumière, in collaboration with *Caribou* magazine, who did the research and writing for this press kit.

Born of a desire to encourage people to get out of the house in the middle of February, energize the downtown core and fill Montréal's restaurants after Valentine's Day, Montréal en Lumière may have seemed a bit far-fetched at first. Twenty-five years later, it's clear that festival founder Alain Simard's idea of bringing performances together with culinary arts wasn't all that crazy after all! Montréal en Lumière has helped unify the city's culinary scene and raised its international profile. But most of all, it has given Montrealers a chance to embrace northern life by having fun outdoors in the heart of winter.

Thanks to all its other activities (indoor shows, a vibrant and festive outdoor site and the not-to-be-missed Nuit Blanche), Montréal en Lumière brings a special warmth to downtown, even when the mercury dips low.

Not just at the forefront of Quebec's culinary culture, the Festival is also an active participant in its evolution. In its very first year, Montréal en Lumière scored big when it welcomed Paul Bocuse as its first honorary president. In the years since, the Festival has welcomed some of the most influential names in cuisine from around the world: Alain Passard, Charlie Trotter, Anne-Sophie Pic and Romain Meder, to name but a few. Nearly 700 chefs from over 20 countries have been invited to take part in Montréal en Lumière. They all enjoyed Quebecers' warm welcome and left with a better idea of what Quebec gastronomy really is: an independent and creative cuisine prepared according to professional standards and featuring local products.

Local chefs have learned from these talented guest chefs and enriched their own visions of cuisine. Thanks to acquaintances made during Montréal en Lumière, several up-and-coming chefs have had the chance to perfect their skills in some of the finest establishments in France and beyond. Many friendships have been made—and continue to grow—during the Festival.

Montréal en Lumière is a place where connections are made, and as such it has been a fertile ground for the careers of many of Quebec's culinary stars. The Festival created a way for Quebec products to be known and embraced by local and international chefs, as well as by foodies who discovered them at the Finest Tables dinner events and the Festival's many other activities: conferences, demonstrations, culinary tours, family activities, Quartier Gourmand and more. With a deep-seated desire to make gastronomy accessible, Montréal en Lumière has multiplied its initiatives to invite the whole city to the party.

Constantly evolving, Quebec cuisine and the Festival have gradually abandoned the white tablecloths and the traditional toque hat. Looking through the menus of the thousands of meals that have been served over the past 25 years, we see the history of our cuisine unfold. We note a growing pride in putting our best products forward and our know-how on the plate.

And of course, good food and good products go hand in hand with good wine. The wine community has always been part of the Festival. Over the years, renowned winemakers and sommeliers have broadened our horizons with their delicious wines.

Montréal en Lumière has also given a voice to groups who don't benefit from as much media visibility as others. For instance, the 2010 edition was dedicated to women in gastronomy, the Le brunch des femmes en gastronomie event was held in 2020, networking with Indigenous chefs was part of the 2022 edition, and days dedicated to First Nations cuisine was launched at the Quartier Gourmand in 2023.

Montréal en Lumière has always been on the lookout for new culinary trends. As early as 2002, the Festival presented a conference on organic cuisine and, in 2003, one of its Finest Tables events presented a natural wine fair.

Since 2000, gastronomy has given Montréal en Lumière the opportunity to take festival goers on a journey and meet some interesting people. Food has the great power of bringing people together.

This press kit showcases the highlights of 25 years of Montréal en Lumière, set against the backdrop of the recent history of Quebec's culinary culture, thanks in part to the testimonials of people who have experienced it. It also features the cultural events that have marked the artistic and outdoor offerings, as well as some behind-the-scenes secrets of this great Montréal festival.

Enjoy the trip back in time!



2000 - 2004



### MAJOR TRENDS

- While white tablecloths and more formal service were still very much the norm, “bistronomy” was increasingly gaining enthusiasts.
- European chefs invited to the *Finest Tables* event came up with the idea of tasting menus, a rarity in Montréal at the time.
- Products that would become chef favourites began appearing on menus: Boileau venison, cheeses from *Maison d’affinage Maurice Dufour* (now *Famille Migneron de Charlevoix*), *Gaspor* pork, honey from *Ferme apicole Desrochers* (now *Miels d’Anicet*) and rabbit from *Stanstead*.
- Quebec cheeses began appearing on the menus of fine Montréal restaurants.

### FOODS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Still heavily influenced by French gastronomy, many Quebec chefs included truffles and foie gras on their menus. In 2003, 2004 and 2005, the ITHQ offered two workshops on foie gras as part of its demonstrations for the general public.

### SAMPLE DISH

Duck foie gras in a chaud-froid sauce in wrapped in spices and served with wedges of candied grapefruit and fig, and beet compote  
 –Dish served at the dinner for the honorary president, Georges Blanc, on Thursday, February 19, 2004, in the Grand Salon of the Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth

### POPULAR SONGS AT THE TIME

“Juste Pour Voir le Monde” - La Chicane  
 “La Désise” - Daniel Boucher

### MEANWHILE, IN QUEBEC’S CULINARY SCENE

- 2000** The TV program “*Les Pieds Dans les Plats*” with Daniel Pinard presented Quebec food producers and ways to use their products (2000-2002).
- 2001** Opening of *Au Pied de Cochon*, with its open kitchen, a non-smoking dining room and no tablecloths
- 2002** A big year for food on Quebec TV, with the debuts of “*Ricardo*,” “*À la di Stasio*” and “*L’Épicerie*”
- 2003** Smoking in restaurants was banned.  
 The vegan restaurant *Aux Vivres* opened on Saint-Laurent Boulevard and *Les Chèvres* set up in Outremont, both putting vegetables front and centre.  
*Toqué!* celebrated its 10th anniversary and moved to Place Jean-Paul-Riopelle.
- 2004** *Pullman*, Montréal’s first wine bar, opened.  
 Facebook gradually arrived in our lives. Over the next few years, we would start sharing photos of the dishes we prepared and identifying the restaurants where we ate.

### ARTS SECTION

- 2003** The dance company *La La La Human Steps* opened with their show “*Amelia*.” The *Buena Vista Social Club* and the *Les Misérables* musical were on the program.
- 2004** During the first *Nuit Blanche*, the *Nuit de l’Humour* presented popular comedians François Massicotte, Les Denis Drolet, Mike Ward, Michaël Rancourt and *Crampe en Masse*.

### OUTDOOR EVENTS

- 2002** Nearly half a million festival-goers were expected, including 400,000 on the outdoor site for the *Fête de la Lumière* and the fireworks.
- 2004** The first *Nuit Blanche* attracted 100,000 night owls.



“Even though Montréal en Lumière was originally created for Montréalers, for us chefs, it was truly a celebration. The Festival came at a time when media coverage of chefs was just beginning. This was before social media, so we didn’t have access to the international chefs we idolized, whose books we read and whose work we admired. But it was as if Montréal en Lumière gave us the chance to do a cooking internship in a Michelin-starred restaurant right here. It was really a new way of doing things, inviting a chef to cook in our kitchen with our crew.”

“Of all the events I attended during Montréal en Lumière, the one that made the biggest impression on me was Charlie Trotter’s dinner at Toqué! in 2000. It was the first time he had been to Canada. I had all his books. All of culinary Montréal wanted to be there. It was almost impossible to get seats, but I managed to get in because I’d worked at Toqué! The atmosphere was intense. I remember the mushroom consommé with cockscomb, under a flaky, crust with a touch of alcohol, and the radish terrine with miniature radishes in a layered presentation. It was really unique! There was so much work on each plate!”

–Stelio Perombelon, former chef who took part in several editions of Montréal en Lumière and now teaches at the ITHQ



“I took Paul Bocuse to Northern Quebec when he was here for Montréal en Lumière. We introduced him to Arctic char, whale and smoked seal.”

“Montréal en Lumière was an instant success. We got a few big names straight away. It was amazing in the kitchen. The chefs really adapted. They showed us their cuisine, and we showed them our culture.”

–Jean-Paul Grappe, former chef, teacher at the ITHQ for over 20 years and culinary advisor for the Festival

“I covered the Festival right from the start. It was really exciting. The events were spectacular. People were fighting to get tickets. They were selling out really fast!”

–Lesley Chesterman, author, columnist and former food critic

“At first, I wasn’t really so sure about the festival concept. It seemed kind of ridiculous. I never thought people would want to go out and be festive in February! But I was wrong!”

“The second time Bocuse came to the Festival, in 2001, I had the chance to chat with him for at least an hour and a half. He was super nice. I remember asking him, ‘You are a living legend. What’s your sense of gastronomy? Where is it going?’ He answered, ‘I’m not a clairvoyant, but I think that in a few years’ time, when people go to restaurants, they’ll want to know where the food on their plates comes from. The best restaurants are going to limit their menu so they can identify the origin of every ingredient they put on the plate.’ At the time, I thought he was kind of crazy!”

“All the chefs were really impressed with the produce we had in February and even that we have vineyards here. I remember the amazement of Christophe Michalak [from Hôtel Plaza Athénée], France’s top pastry chef who came in 2003, over our ice wine.”

–Jean-Philippe Tastet, former gastronomy columnist and namesake critic at Tastet

## HIGHLIGHTS

The first edition of Montréal en Lumière was held under the honorary presidency of the great chef Paul Bocuse. Many of the restaurants that took part in the first edition continued to participate in the Festival over the years. Like Micheline Delbuguet, one of Quebec's first female chefs; La Chronique; Toqué! and Au Petit Extra. Several chefs who have left their mark on Montréal's culinary scene were also on hand: Martin Picard (Le Club des Pins), David McMillan (Globe), Claude Pelletier (Mediterraneo) and Junichi Ikematsu (Soto). The first edition attracted 200,000 festival-goers.

Paul Bocuse returned to the Festival to host a public event at the Complexe Desjardins, where he served his renowned pot-au-feu. Sommelier François Chartier presented his wine club. Caribou and smoked fish were served as part of a Nordic brunch at La Bourgade. A workshop on Quebec foie gras and regional cuisine highlighted many local products. Up-and-coming chefs Ian Perreault and Laurent Godbout joined Montréal en Lumière with their new establishments, Area and Chez L'Épicier, respectively.

Quebec chefs took centre stage at the Dîner des Grands Chefs Québécois held at the Café des Beaux-Arts. The four evenings showcased eight chefs from other regions of Quebec, including Yvan Lebrun of the Québec City restaurant Initiale. Chefs from the Relais & Châteaux restaurants were also featured at the Relais Gourmands restaurant's Dîner des Grands Chefs, with Anne Desjardins (L'Eau à la Bouche) and Alain Labrie (Auberge Hatley), among others. Conferences on vegetarian delights and organic foods gave a glimpse of these growing trends.

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Paul Bocuse - The "pope of French gastronomy"

### FEATURED CITY

Lyon

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEF

Charlie Trotter, USA - The guest (and idol) of Normand Laprise

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Charlie Trotter - A renowned chef from Chicago

### FEATURED CITY

Chicago

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Charlie Trotter, USA - The guest (and idol) of Normand Laprise

Giuliano Bugialli, Italy - A master of Italian cuisine

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Serge Dansereau - A Quebec chef living in Australia

### FEATURED COUNTRY

Australia

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Gordon Bailey, Canada - A Manitoban chef working in Prince Edward Island

Rob Feenie, Canada - A legend on the Vancouver culinary scene

Tadashi Ono, United States - A proud representative of Japanese cuisine in New York

The Le Québec à la Table event series put local products and chefs in the spotlight. Richard Bastien of Café des Beaux-Arts organized the Soirée gastronomique de la relève with up-and-coming chefs Ian Perreault (Area), Alexandre Loiseau (La Bastide), Jean-François Vachon (Les continents), Patrice Demers (Leméac) and Stelio Perombelon (Leméac). The Salon des Vins Naturels was held at Le Cube with Chef Claude Pelletier and wine importers Groupe Rézin and Aux Trois Sommeliers. They promised to introduce "what's chic in Paris right now." A certain Graziella Battista, who would become a Festival regular, made her first appearance with her restaurant Il Sole.

For the fifth edition of Montréal en Lumière, the Nuit Blanche, which would become a flagship Festival event, was launched. Lyon was featured, thanks to the "bouchon lyonnais" dinner and a "mâchon lyonnais" organized by Martin Picard, who welcomed chefs from the capital of French gastronomy. At Les Chèvres, Stelio Perombelon proposed a meal with Chef Rob Feenie, from the Vancouver restaurant Lumière, where vegetables were the stars of the plate. Les Infidèles organized a dinner focussed on Quebec cheeses. The iconic Moishes also took part in this edition.

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Santi Santamaria - A proud starred chef of Catalan cuisine

### FEATURED CITIES

Catalonia, San Francisco

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Xavier Pellicer, Spain - A Michelin-starred chef and forerunner of healthy cuisine

Régis Marcon, France - A three-starred chef

Nancy Oakes, United States - A pioneering West Coast chef

Masaharu Morimoto, USA - A Japanese chef with a TV show called "The Iron Chef," his nickname

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Georges Blanc, chef français triplement étoilé et dont le restaurant est le plus vieil établissement à avoir reçu une étoile Michelin

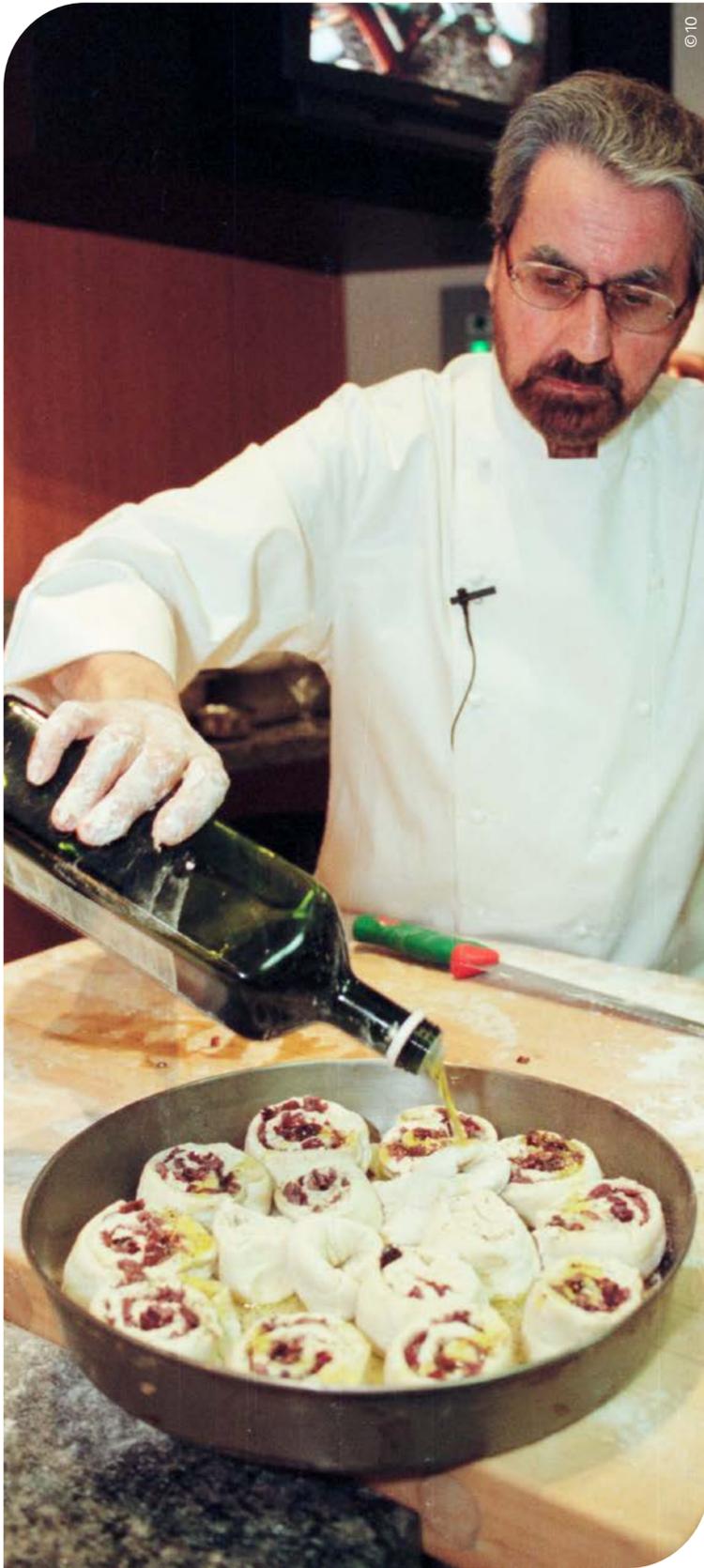
### FEATURED REGION AND CITIES

Rhône-Alpes, Lyon, Boston

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Rob Feenie, Canada - A legend on the Vancouver culinary scene

Masaharu Morimoto, USA - A Japanese chef with a TV show called "The Iron Chef," his nickname



# THE YEARS 2000–2004 ACCORDING TO MARC DE CANCK (LA CHRONIQUE)

## SHOWCASING MONTRÉAL CUISINE AROUND THE WORLD

Marc De Canck opened La Chronique restaurant on Laurier Street West in 1995. Five years later, he was at the very first Montréal en Lumière, and he hasn't missed an edition since. In 2023, he celebrated his 25th year participating in the event. For the occasion, this chef with 50 years' experience in the kitchen takes a trip down memory lane.

## In 2000, what led you to agree to take part in a brand-new festival with no track record?

Right from the start, I thought the festival concept was innovative. I had already done four-handed cooking with international chefs at various events. I'd even been invited to Vietnam and found it very exciting and rewarding. I knew the set-up was interesting, so I thought, "Why not?"

## Do you remember what cuisine was like in those days?

One thing I could say about the 2000s in particular is that chefs from elsewhere still thought we didn't eat anything interesting [in Quebec]. I think that opinion changed only four or five years ago. Before that, they thought that foods weren't readily available in Quebec. I wanted to tell them, "You know, we do eat in Quebec, and we eat well!" It was just prejudice. In North America, we're very open to the rest of the world, but I've noticed that in Europe, as soon as there's a body of water between them and others, they're less interested. What also amazed the visiting chefs at the time was our way of working. In the kitchen, we're friendly, we don't yell, and it's okay to make mistakes.

## Do you have any specific memories of the first edition of Montréal en Lumière?

In 2000, I was struck that Paul Bocuse was the there as the guest of honour. That was a big deal! No one missed the press conference; all the chefs in Montréal wanted to hear him speak. Everyone was impressed! For the occasion, he was interviewed by Françoise Kayler, the food critic who either killed restaurants or kept them alive.

## You haven't missed a single edition since 2000. Why?

Honestly, it's so much fun! I love the sense of collaboration it creates. At La Chronique, we've never wanted to follow trends, but we've always been part of the movement to promote Montréal cuisine. That's why I think it's so important to show chefs from all over the world what we can do here. In fact, before the Festival, I often went to visit the chefs we were going to welcome in their home countries. I do it of my own free will and at my own expense, because I think it's a way to reach out and start that initial meeting with the chef, so they understand that we can easily get all the ingredients they need, and to show them that Montréal cuisine is serious business.

## Have you kept in touch with some of the chefs you've been paired with?

In 25 years, I've worked with perhaps 30 chefs! I've kept in touch with most of them. In Paris, I was hosted by a chef who had been our guest in Montréal, and we went out together. If I went to Belgium tomorrow, I'd go and eat at Alexandre [Dionisio]'s, who has come to us twice as part of the Festival. In Argentina, in Portugal, almost anywhere we know chefs who have come to Montréal en Lumière, we're welcome.

## Have any of them left more of an impression on you than others?

Everyone leaves their mark. I've been in the business for 50 years and I'm always keen to learn and try new things. So I learn from everyone. And we never copy a recipe, but some people tell us that we can remake something after they've left; in this case, we use techniques we've learned.

## What do you like to showcase about Montréal to visiting chefs?

We take really good care of them! We take them out to lunch and dinner, and sometimes even after the meal. Olivier de Montigny, my business partner, is younger than me and he takes our guests out to bars. In deciding where to go out, I ask them about their interests. If they talk about smoked meat, I take them to a place that's not in the guidebooks. If they've heard of Toqué! we call Normand and set it up. If they feel more like fast food, we eat fast food. It's important, and it's our pleasure to do it!

Sometimes, when we get along well with people, on the last evening or Sunday morning for brunch, we'll take a big table at the restaurant and we'll all eat together. We call other chefs and get a whole big group together.

Most of the chefs who have visited during Montréal en Lumière want to come back. Honestly, if we give them a call to invite them back, many of them will already have packed their knives and be at the door in no time!

## Do you have any stories about taking guests out?

I once asked French chef Ghislaine Arabian [of Pavillon Ledoyen in Paris] what she liked in life apart from cooking. When she told me she had a real thing about bonsais, I took four hours to take her to Bonsai Gros-Bec in the Lanaudière. Montréal en Lumière sometimes gets us out of the kitchen!

On another occasion, a chef asked if we could go and see Niagara Falls between courses. I had to explain to him that it wouldn't be possible!





2005-2009



### MAJOR TRENDS

- In 2005, a number of local chefs were still wearing the iconic toque hat, as can be seen from the photos of the chefs in the Festival programs. By 2008, this trend was already falling out of fashion.
- Molecular cuisine had spread to North America, with many chefs incorporating espuma into their dishes.
- Trendy restaurants prided themselves on their market cuisine.
- Port wine was enjoying its heyday in Quebec.
- The term farm-to-table, a trend popularized by Dan Barber, was beginning to enter the vocabulary.

### FOODS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Foie gras was still very much on the menu, as was Boileau venison. Risotto made its grand entrance, and scallops were all the rage. Asian flavours and exotic fruits were very popular.

### SAMPLE DISH

Duo of Norwegian Arctic char and marinated foie gras, quail egg, kimono leaf, with a hint of ponzu and black truffles, and black pearls

–Dish served in 2008 at Laloux with Chef Marc Thuet of Toronto’s Thuet Bistro Bakery

### POPULAR SONGS AT THE TIME

“Les étoiles filantes” - Les Cowboys Fringants

“Embarque ma belle” - Kaïn

“Dégénération” - Mes Aïeux

### MEANWHILE, IN QUEBEC’S CULINARY SCENE

**2005** Joe Beef and Le Club Chasse et Pêche restaurants opened.

**2006** Anthony Bourdain visited Montréal and Chef Martin Picard at his restaurant Au Pied de Cochon for an episode of *No Reservations*.

**2007** The first season of *Curieux Bégin* aired.

*Du cœur au ventre*, with Daniel Pinard, went on air (2007-2009).

**2008** La Buvette chez Simone wine bar opened.

### ARTS SECTION

**2005** Daniele Finzi Pasca and Ginette Laurin were named honorary co-presidents. Cirque Éloize presented “Nomade: La Nuit, Le Ciel Le Plus Grand.” Concerts by M, Jean-Pierre Ferland and Lambert Wilson

**2006** Marie Chouinard and Arielle Dombasle were named honorary co-presidents. Dave St-Pierre presented “La Pornographie des Âmes.” Performances by Pink Martini, Michel Louvain and Sophie Milman

**2007** Angèle Dubeau, celebrating 30 years in the music business, was named honorary co president along with Johnny Clegg. Yann Perreau presented his show “Perreau et la Lune,” and renowned singer Barbara Hendricks returned to the Festival.

**2008** Jane Birkin, Bobby McFerrin and Michel Fugain put on concerts.

**2009** Éric-Emmanuel Schmitt was honorary president and presented “Ma Vie avec Mozart.” Pierre Lapointe presented the concept show “Mutantès” and the Compagnie Marie Chouinard premiered “Orphée de Eurydice.” Catherine Major and Alexandre Désilets performed in concert.

### OUTDOOR EVENTS

**2005** Fête du Montréal Intérieur et Souterrain: a running race through the city’s underground network Milk Urban Slide, daily pyrotechnics show, Hydro-Québec dome

**2006** The High Lights Festival moved from Sainte-Catherine Street to the Old Port.

**2007** The Festival organized the very first grand opening event in its history: a free outdoor concert with DJ Champion and Éric Lapointe.

“In my opinion, the 2008 edition, with Toronto as the featured city, was a big deal because it bridged the two solitudes. There was great camaraderie among the chefs, and you could sense that the Toronto chefs were out to make a lasting impression!”

“When French chef Christian Constant came in 2009, he was truly impressed by the Montréal culinary scene. He said to me, ‘If I were young, I would build my career here.’”

-Lesley Chesterman, author, columnist and former food critic

“During the Festival, I brought a chef from Strasbourg, who had three Michelin stars at the time, to La Montée de Lait, run by Ségué Lepage and Martin Juneau. He said to me, ‘It wouldn’t be possible to have a restaurant like this in France. There’s too big a gap between the quality on the plates and the super relaxed, cool atmosphere. Back home, you’d find these dishes in places with crystal and silverware. In our neighbourhood bistros, we don’t serve this kind of cuisine.’”

-Jean-Philippe Tastet, former gastronomy columnist and assistant at Tastet

“It was fascinating: the chefs arrived with a totally different idea of what our cuisine was. They thought we were American. I had to give them a crash course in history on our Indigenous, French and Anglo-Saxon heritage, and the impact of Expo 67 on our cuisine... It was my goal during the Festival to change their perception of Quebec gastronomy. What really made me proud was knowing that I was opening their eyes to our products and culinary culture.”

“At the beginning of the Festival, foreign chefs were cooking with a lot of truffle. It cost a fortune. After seven or eight years, we ‘forced’ them to use our local ingredients!”

-Jean-Paul Grappe, former chef, teacher at the ITHQ for over 20 years and culinary advisor for the Festival



“The visit of the renowned chef Gualtiero Marchesi in 2005 was a real crowd-puller as he’s an icon in Italian cuisine who had never set foot in Canada. Heading the ALMA Italian culinary school, he came to sign a partnership with the ITHQ for a new advanced training program in Italian cuisine. We were the first school in Canada he partnered with. At the honorary president’s dinners held at the ITHQ, he served his famous saffron risotto, covered in gold leaf, and insisted that no wine be served alongside it. He wanted people to fully savour his dish.”

-Paul Caccia, Senior Director of Communications and Business Development at the ITHQ

## HIGHLIGHTS

Carlo Petrini, founder of the slow food movement, returned to the Festival after taking part in the first edition. Philippe Mollé took over from Sister Angèle as host of the Semaine des Saveurs at Complexe Desjardins. Funny photos of participating chefs posing with props or ingredients made their debut in the program. We also saw the first restaurant websites. The ITHQ offered two workshops on risotto, a dish that was relatively uncommon here.

This marked the first edition of the Festival's indoor and underground element (Fête du Montréal Intérieur et Souterrain). Yvan Lebrun, from Initiale in Québec City, was the guest chef at Les Chèvres restaurant. The Festival of Quebec Cheeses kicked off at the Complexe Desjardins, and there was plenty going on at the Jean-Talon market. Au Petit Extra hosted an evening to celebrate women chefs, featuring the flavours of the Bas-Saint-Laurent region with Marie-Josée Fradette and Monique Vallerand. At Europea, Jérôme Ferrer welcomed Alsatian chef Franck Mischler and young sommelier Élyse Lambert. Junichi Ikematsu took part in the Festival for the first time with his restaurant Juni.

Eighteen chefs from the Big Apple attended the Festival with the most New Yorker of French chefs, Daniel Boulud. In a nod to the Big Apple, Europea attempted to concoct the world's largest applesauce in front of a live audience. At the Beaver Club, the Quand les Femmes Orchestrent evening was hosted by Chef Hetta van Deventer, from the famous South African restaurant Laborie, in Paarl. Alain Pignard headed up the event, and oenologist Tania Joubert from KWV in South Africa also worked her magic. Alexandre Loiseau took part for the first time with his restaurant Cocagne.

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Gualtiero Marchesi - The first Italian restaurateur to be awarded three stars, considered the father of contemporary Italian cuisine

### FEATURED REGION, COUNTRY AND CITY

Emilia-Romagna, Italy, Chicago

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEF

Jean-Luc Boulay, Canada - A chef and owner of Saint-Amour, a genuine gastronomic institution in Québec City

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Émile Jung - France's youngest Michelin-starred chef and the last Strasbourg chef to have been awarded three stars

### FEATURED REGION AND CITY

Alsace, Vancouver

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEF

Melissa Craig, Canada - A prominent figure in Canadian cuisine, executive chef at Bearfoot Bistro in Whistler

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Daniel Boulud - The Lyon-born American chef who built a culinary empire and opened his restaurant Maison Boulud at the Ritz-Carlton in 2012

### FEATURED COUNTRY AND CITIES

South Africa, New York, Gaspésie

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Dan Barber, United States - A chef at the highly acclaimed Blue Hill in Manhattan and Blue Hill at Stone Barns, and pioneer of the farm-to-table concept

Edward Tuson, Canada - An avid locavore and chef for 15 years at the Sooke Harbour House restaurant, on the southern tip of Vancouver Island

The Festival celebrated Québec City's 400th anniversary by inviting top chefs from the Capitale-Nationale region: François Blais, Yves Chrétien, Yvan Lebrun, Stéphane Modat, Marie-Chantal Lepage and Daniel Vézina. Since starting, Montréal en Lumière had now hosted 245 culinary figures. The Festival of Quebec Cheeses introduced La Grande Raclette event, giving everyone a chance to feast before the much-anticipated Nuit Blanche. Jean-Paul Grappe gave a talk on the importance of buying local, a concept still finding its footing at the time. Leading food critic Françoise Kayler also delivered a lecture. At this time, Chef Marc-André Jetté and pastry chef Patrice Demers were at Laloux. Stelio Perombelon moved to Les Cons Servent. Martin Juneau and Ségué Lepage celebrated the fourth anniversary of La Montée de Lait restaurant during the Festival.

The Festival celebrated its 10th edition with the 10 Étoiles Pour le 10e evening, featuring chefs with a total of 10 Michelin stars, including the 2009 honorary president, Alain Passard. A Slow Food Montréal and Ark of Taste evening was held at Decca77. Derek Dammann and Alex Cruz's restaurant DNA made its Festival debut, with an evening highlighting Canadian gastronomy, featuring sommelier Michel Phaneuf, farmers Bernard Petit and Pierre-André Daignault, as well as Canadian winemakers including Léon Courville, then of Domaine Les Brome. Daniel Vézina, who opened Laurie Raphaël in Montréal, presented an all-truffle feast. At Portus Calle, Chef Helena Loureiro hosted an evening where she put a Portuguese spin on Quebec ingredients. A lecture was given on the history of ice cider, a Quebec success story.

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Susur Lee - The renowned Toronto-based chef and pioneer of Chinese French fusion cuisine, who was a guest chef in 2005

### FEATURED COUNTRY AND CITY

Chile, Toronto

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Thierry Marx, France - A committed Michelin-starred chef whose work is inspired by molecular cuisine

Jamie Kennedy, Canada - A renowned Toronto chef based in Sandbanks, where he serves the best poutine in Ontario

Guillermo Rodriguez, Chile - A chef deeply invested in his country's gastronomy

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Alain Passard - The three-star chef and owner of the Arpège restaurant in Paris

### FEATURED CITY

Paris

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEF

William Ledeuil, France - A chef in three restaurants in Paris, including the Michelin-starred Ze Kitchen Galerie, considered a key figure in the vegetable renaissance in cuisine, along with Alain Passard



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# THE YEARS 2005–2009 ACCORDING TO PATRICE DEMERS



©20

“For me, it’s much more exciting to have a very creative dish with a carrot than a classic dish with truffle or foie gras. I think it’s easier to cook luxury products, but for me, personally, I prefer to cook simpler products in a creative way.”

## A GROWING SENSE OF PRIDE IN OUR CUISINE

Chef Patrice Demers, now co-owner of the Sabayon restaurant with his wife, sommelier Marie-Josée Beaudoin, has been helping shape the Montréal food scene for nearly 20 years. In the mid-2000s, he was at the start of his career, working alongside Stelio Perombelon at Les Chèvres restaurant. In 2007, he moved to Le Laloux, where he began working with the two people who still accompany him today: Marie-Josée and chef Marc-André Jetté. Quebec’s most popular pastry chef looks back on a pivotal period for both Quebec’s culinary culture and his own career.

## What was the Montréal culinary scene like in the mid-2000s?

The chefs in all Montréal restaurants had worked with either Normand Laprise or Nicolas Jongleux [owner of the restaurant Les Caprices de Nicolas, who died in 2000]. These two had influenced many fine tables in town. We saw a host of new restaurants emerging, the first wine bars opening. There was a lot happening. It was also getting easier to find quality products, thanks in part to Normand Laprise, who was one of the first to put producers’ names on his menus.

## Would you say that, at that time, Montréal and Quebec cuisine was still being defined?

It was starting, yes, but there were still things we weren’t as proud of. I’m thinking in particular of the use of wild products from Quebec. There were plenty of chefs who had started using them, like Anne Desjardins, for example, who worked a lot with François Brouillard from Les Jardins sauvages. But people still associated them with the idea of “regional cuisine.” I admit, I was a little ashamed to put that kind of product on my menu. I was more excited by exotic ingredients, like kumquats. Pride in using local products is something that has gradually changed.

As for the popularization of maple syrup in cooking, we owe that to Martin Picard. We’ve always had maple syrup in Quebec, but it was confined to the sugar shack or homemade desserts. We weren’t proud to use it in a gourmet restaurant dessert. Back then, I preferred to use demerara sugar. Today, maple is the product I use most and am proudest to showcase.

## It’s as if we hadn’t yet realized the full potential and richness of our products...

Exactly. And I discovered this when travelling. What I was looking for in the countries I visited were products that were typical of those corners of the world, products that couldn’t be found elsewhere.

## Looking back, how would you describe your style of cuisine then?

At Les Chèvres, it was easy because the restaurant already had a very strong identity focused on plant-based cooking. When I think back, the restaurant was ahead of its time, and that’s probably why it was a financial disaster! [Laughs] On the other hand, all the critics were behind us, and we had a great

following. This vision of cooking has greatly influenced my pastry-making. I started using a lot of fruit in my desserts, but nothing too sweet, based on what’s in season. These are the foundations that have stayed with me throughout my career.

## What were the key restaurants around at the time?

Le Toqué, of course, and Au Pied de Cochon. Joe Beef, which opened in 2005, made its mark and created a new style. I remember other places, unfortunately closed, that made a big impression on me, including La Montée de lait, where chef Martin Juneau took an incredibly creative approach.

## Do you remember your first experiences at Montréal en Lumière?

I took part for the first time with Les Chèvres restaurant. For two evenings, we had Rob Feenie as a guest chef. He was a huge star at the time. He was the chef at Lumière and at a Relais & Châteaux in Vancouver, and he had his own show on the Food Network. As soon as it was announced, the meals sold out within minutes.

At Le Laloux, my fondest memory of the Festival was in 2009, when we welcomed chefs Christophe Pelé and Giuliano Sperandio. They were then at La Bigarrade, a small 18-seat restaurant in the 17th arrondissement of Paris. There was quite a buzz around that restaurant, which had just been awarded its first Michelin star. They were two of the best restaurant evenings of my life. Two of the most intense, too! Giuliano made risotto to order—I’d never seen anything like it in my life! He had five stoves rolling at the same time. When they found out that there was a pastry team at Le Laloux, they decided to make four small desserts for each customer, served one after the other. There wasn’t a dull moment for me those two evenings! We kept in touch with them. A few years later, I ate at La Bigarrade and more recently at Le Taillevent, where Giuliano now works.

## What do you gain from taking part in Montréal en Lumière?

Learning new techniques, seeing completely different ways of working. It’s motivating and encourages us to work at more than 100% of our capacity!

## This year, MEL celebrates its 25th anniversary. What has changed most in the last 25 years on the Montréal culinary scene?

I think it’s the pride we take in showcasing our cuisine. There was a time when we were trying to do classic French cuisine, but now I think everyone knows that our Quebec cuisine really has its own identity; it’s a little more relaxed and has its own style. We offer something quite unique, and now we’re very proud of it!



2010 - 2014



### MAJOR TRENDS

- Restaurants offering fine cuisine in a relaxed atmosphere and a wine list filled with natural wines—such as Le Comptoir charcuteries et vins, La Salle à Manger and Lili. Co, Hôtel Herman, and Les Trois Petits Bouchons—were very popular.
- Tasting menus of little dishes to share were becoming increasingly popular. Many restaurants in the city recommended “two to three plates per person.”
- Offal also featured more prominently on the menu, ensuring no part of the animal, such as veal tongue, horse heart and lamb kidneys, went to waste.
- More and more restaurants were listing the origin of their ingredients on their menu.
- Orange wines were starting to find a place on Montréal restaurant menus.
- Quebec’s boreal products were also more prominent.
- Cocktail culture and mixology made their mark in Montréal.
- This was the golden age of “bring your own wine” restaurants.

### FOODS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Sliders were all the rage, along with various types of tartare. Ravioli were made in an array of styles. While pineapple and mango were still common, menus increasingly showcased local ingredients, such as black garlic puree and milkweed shoots.

### SAMPLE DISH

Grilled mackerel fillet, beluga lentils, fall rye, leek confit, green alder, and buckwheat  
—Served in 2012 at La Fabrique restaurant, with guest chef Nicolas Darnauguilhem of Le Neptune in Geneva

### POPULAR SONGS OF THE TIME

“On va s’aimer encore” - Vincent Vallières  
“J’aime ta grand-mère” - Les Trois Accords

### MEANWHILE, IN QUEBEC’S CULINARY SCENE

- 2010** Specialty channel Zeste went on air, along with the shows “Les Chefs!” and “Un Souper Presque Parfait”  
Instagram was launched  
Le Noma was named the best restaurant in the world by the World’s Best 50 Restaurants ranking (2010-2014).  
The launch of Pâtisserie Rhubarbe and Patrice Pâtissier brought a new dynamic to the Quebec pastry scene (2010 and 2014).
- 2011** Anthony Bourdain returns to Montréal. For his TV show “The Layover,” he once again visited his friend Martin Picard, who guided him and Normand Laprise on a 24-hour tour of the city.
- 2012** First of five editions of the Omnivore food festival in Montréal
- 2013** *Time* magazine caused a stir with its front-page headline “Gods of Food,” featuring chefs David Chang, René Redzepi and Alex Atala.  
The first season of the TV show “Un Chef à la Cabane” aired.  
The media brand Eater Montreal was launched online.
- 2014** *Caribou*, a magazine on Quebec culinary culture, was launched.

### ARTS SECTION

- 2010** 40 performances. Dominic Champagne and Misia were honorary co-presidents.
- 2011** Carole Bouquet and Marie-Josée Lord were honorary co-presidents. In concert: Vanessa Paradis, Carole Bouquet, Marie-Josée Lord, Florence K and Natalie Choquette and Morcheeba. Exhibition by artist Corno.
- 2012** Toots Thielemans and Luc De Larochellière were honorary co-presidents. Carlos Saura presented “Flamenco Hoy.” The lineup included Stromae, Cœur de Pirate, Brigitte Boisjoli, Catherine Major, The Barr Brothers and Arthur H.
- 2013** Alain Lefèvre and Daniel Piazzolla were honorary co-presidents. Elisapie, M, Diana Krall and Dany Placard were on the program.
- 2014** Régine Chassagne of the band Arcade Fire and Joshua Bell were honorary co-presidents. The lineup included Michel Rivard, Pierre Lapointe, Dan Bigras, Kevin Parent, Thomas Fersen, Zachary Richard and Juliette Greco.

### OUTDOOR EVENTS

- 2011** Shows by Manu Militari and Vincent Vallières
- 2012** After a few years in Old Port, Montréal en Lumière permanently established its free outdoor site in the Quartier des Spectacles, on the Place des Festivals and its surroundings. Bran Van 3000 put on a spectacular outdoor show.
- 2013** 10th anniversary of Nuit Blanche with performances by Dumas, Grimskunk, Boogât, Qualité Motel and David Usher.
- 2014** The unprecedented sound and the light event “185 Bravos” was presented to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, the 50th anniversary of Place des Arts, the 40th anniversary of Duceppe, and the 15th anniversary of Montréal en Lumière. There were performances by Louis-Jean Cormier, Dead Obies, Jimmy Hunt and Jason Bajada.

“ I have fond memories of my appearances as a guest chef at Montréal en Lumière events. What stands out to me was the vibrant atmosphere, wonderful encounters with chefs and kitchen crews, and the events that challenged me as a chef and broadened my perspectives on cooking.”

–Anne Desjardins, former chef at L'eau à la Bouche in Sainte-Adèle, and Festival guest in 2002, 2003 and 2011



“ Montréal en Lumière really put Montréal on the global culinary map. It's invaluable having chefs and journalists from around the world discussing the cuisine of our city.”

–Lesley Chesterman, author, columnist and former food critic



“ I'm still in touch with many chefs. I've visited several. I introduced Patrick Bertrand (Le Relais Bernard Loiseau) and Gilles Tournadre (Restaurant Gill) to cattail hearts and daisy buds. Many chefs have brought local ingredients into their kitchens. Every year, I send fiddleheads to Jacques Chibois, who attended the Festival in 2001 and 2014.”

–Jean-Paul Grappe, former chef, teacher at the ITHQ for over 20 years and culinary advisor for the Festival



## HIGHLIGHTS

The Festival welcomed 39 chefs and winemakers from Portugal, the largest delegation ever! Danny St-Pierre, the dynamic chef of Sherbrooke's restaurant, was the guest chef at La Fabrique. La Chronique celebrated its 15th anniversary. Activities at the Jean-Talon market featured several Quebec winemakers. The Complexe Desjardins hosted Le Carrefour des Saveurs event, featuring local producers and processors.

This edition of the Festival put women front and centre, with French chef Anne-Sophie Pic becoming the first female honorary president of Montréal en Lumière. In addition to the international heavyweights, several Quebec chefs took part in this year's edition: Colombe St-Pierre, Chloé Gervais-Fredette, Marie-Chantal Lepage and Emmanuelle Leftick (who was then working out of San Francisco). Twenty-five women wine producers also participated. It marked the debut for Accords restaurant, Brasserie T!, and F Bar, located in the Place des Festivals.

This year, the spotlight was on Belgium. Bistro Le Répertoire offered a Tintin-themed evening, while restaurant DNA welcomed Quebec producers of Belgian origin Gérard Mathar (Gaspésie Sauvage) and Bernard Petit (Ferme Benchris). The Festival marked the first-ever 100% Quebec wine pairing, and Oregon wines shone bright thanks to vintner David Millman. Graziella hosted an evening on natural Italian wines with renowned Belgian chef Jacques Marit. Honorary president Yves Mattagne cooked with the crew at Toqué! and La Chronique's Belgian-born chef, Marc De Canck. The 25th anniversary of Laloux was celebrated with Jonathan Lapierre-Réhayem, guest chef Alex Malaise, Founder Philippe Laloux, and a lineup of former chefs, including André Besson, Danny St-Pierre, Marc-André Jetté, Seth Gabrielse, Patrice Demers, and Michelle Marek. Laurie Raphaël organized an evening highlighting Quebec's wild game, with Luxembourg chef Clément Petitjean. At Le Contemporain, Antonin Mousseau-Rivard offered a groundbreaking evening, called "L'Automatisme, du Pinceau à la Table."

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Fausto Airoldi - A master of contemporary Portuguese cuisine and key player in Lisbon's culinary revival

### FEATURED COUNTRY, CITY AND REGION

Portugal, New Orleans, Eastern Townships

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

José Avillez, Portugal - One of Portugal's most renowned chefs

Albano Lourenço, Portugal - The first Portuguese chef to be awarded a Michelin star

Joachim Koerper, Portugal - The chef of Lisbon's only Michelin-starred restaurant

Sergi Arola, Spain - The chef considered to be one of the maestros of Spanish gastronomy

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Anne-Sophie Pic - The most decorated Michelin-starred woman chef in the world

### FEATURED THEME AND REGION

Celebrating Women, Charlevoix

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Elizabeth Falkner, United States - A San Francisco pastry chef and media personality

Cristina Bowerman, Italy - Rome's only Michelin-starred female chef

Dominique Crenn, United States - A French chef based in San Francisco, first woman in the United States to earn three Michelin stars

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Yves Mattagne - The most talked about chef in French-speaking Belgium

### FEATURED REGIONS AND CITY

Wallonia-Brussels, Outaouais, Seattle

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Thierry Rautureau, United States - Infamous chef at Rover's in Seattle, nicknamed "the Chef in the Hat"

Tjaco van Eijken, Netherlands - A Dutch chef, known for his time at Alain Ducasse's Spoon restaurant in Hong Kong.

As we celebrated Argentina, Chez L'Épicier welcomed Chef Gonzalo Aramburu for an evening of molecular cuisine. Patagonian wines were given pride of place. Laloux offered a vegetarian evening with chefs from Vedge restaurant in Philadelphia and featured a natural wine pairing. Globe hosted an event with the organic and biodynamic wines from the Argentine family vineyard Bodega Cecchin. Maison Boulud, which opened its doors in spring 2012, participated in the Festival for the first time. Chefs Riccardo Bertolino and Daniel Boulud welcomed Italian-Argentinian chef Mauro Colagreco, whose three-Michelin-starred restaurant, Le Mirazur, would be crowned the best restaurant in the world in 2019.

To mark its 15th edition, Montréal en Lumière invited 65 prestigious guests to focus on a more local theme. To bring a fresh perspective, it also revamped its gastronomic programming by launching nine new series. For example, the Amitiés Gourmandes series invited a Montréal chef to host a colleague with whom they had formed a friendship during a previous edition. Jérôme Ferrer hosted French chef Jacques Chibois. As part of the Planète Gourmande series, Montréal chefs hosted well-known personalities. For example, Chez Lévêque hosted Jean-Pierre Ferland. The Esprits Libres series offered original and unique events. For example, the La Paryse restaurant (a Montréal institution that closed in 2012) returned for just one night at Pullman. Toqué! welcomed veterans Hugue Dufour, Mehdi Brunet-Benkritly, Cheryl Johnson, Guillaume Sylvestre for its Veterans' Dinner. After 14 years, Charles-Antoine Crête made his final appearance. Chez L'Épicier hosted a tribute to classic dishes by Montréal chefs with Ian Perreault, Danny St Pierre and Patrice Demers. Graziella celebrated 20 years in the kitchen. Antonin Mousseau-Rivard organized an evening of food and music, called Bouffe et Tounes, with his father, Michel Rivard. The Accords restaurant served an orange wine and food pairing. The finalists of the 2013 edition of "Les Chefs!," including Isabelle Deschamps-Plante, presented their best recipes with Fromages d'ici local cheeses at a special event.

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Francis Mallmann - An eminent Argentine chef known for his rustic open-fire cooking, featured in the first season of the TV series *Chef's Table* in 2015

### FEATURED COUNTRY AND CITIES

Argentina (Buenos Aires), Philadelphia, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEF

Martin Molteni, Argentina - A chef highlighting pre-Columbian cuisine

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Pierre-André Ayer - A Michelin-starred chef based in Fribourg, named Swiss Romand Chef of the Year by the renowned Gault & Millau guide in 2014

### FEATURED THEME, CITY AND REGION

Spotlight on Montréal, San Francisco, Laurentides

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEF

Michael Tusk, United States - A celebrity chef based in San Francisco

# THE YEARS 2010–2014 ACCORDING TO GRAZIELLA BATTISTA



## **A CULINARY WORLD TOUR**

Graziella Battista opened her namesake restaurant in Old Montréal in 2008. Today, she is recognized as one of the city's most talented chefs. She's been serving her customers quality Italian cuisine at Graziella for 15 years, but she's also been acquiring culinary knowledge from around the world for over 20 years, thanks to Montréal en Lumière.

## **You opened Graziella in 2008, but you have been participating in Montréal en Lumière since 2003, when you were at your first restaurant, Il Sole. Do you remember your first years at the Festival?**

Yes. At the time, there were around 40 participating restaurants. Right from the start, I fell in love with the Festival. I've always found the concept to be perfectly in line with what we do as restaurateurs: we develop relationships with suppliers and customers. During the Festival, it's even better because we get to do it with a friend—a guest chef!

When you think about it, it was really daring at the time to pair up chefs, in the middle of winter, as a way to bring more activity into the city. It's really special for restaurant-goers to have access to international chefs. The same goes for the restaurant crew—it's such a great learning experience!

## **So for you it's cooking with someone else that is attractive about the Montréal en Lumière concept?**

Yes, but I also like to create a special atmosphere for food lovers. Since the guest chefs come from afar, I do everything I can to make our guests feel like they have travelled without having to take a plane. And the encounters between chefs and customers are often really great. How many times have I heard that foodies who spent evenings at the Festival have gone on to visit the chefs in their establishments around the world?

## **You've hosted chefs from all over the world over the years?**

Yes! From Italy, of course, but also from New York, France, Portugal, Argentina, Belgium... In my opinion, the Festival really represents the particularity of Quebec cuisine blending influences from around the world.

## **Were some visits more memorable than others?**

They were all noteworthy, but I've hosted Italian chef Vincenzo Cammerucci twice. I also went to see him in Italy. He was so generous! I love his work ethic and his plating style. His vision of things speaks to me. I identify with it. For me, he has almost become a mentor.

## **How do chefs react when they visit Montréal?**

They love coming to Montréal! They are amazed by our products. Also, guest chefs are always on hand to chat with customers, and the comment we always hear is that we're lucky to have such curious supporters who appreciate the chefs' work.

## **How would you describe the cuisine of 2010 to 2014?**

For me, cooking is an expression of the person who does it. I don't see it in terms of trends. I think every chef needs to find their own style. Which chefs can stand the test of time? The ones with their own signature style.

## **Do you remember the guest chefs invited to Graziella in those years?**

Yes! In 2010, I hosted Chef Rita Chagas and Winemaker Sandra Tavares da Silva from Portugal, two extraordinary women. In 2011, it was Cristina Bowerman from Rome, who has a Michelin-starred restaurant and whom I admire enormously, among other things, for her commitment to promoting sustainable cuisine. I've often gone to see her in Italy! In 2012, I hosted Jacques Marit and his wife from Belgium. In 2013, we had visitors from Argentina: Chef Natalia Machado and Chef Guido Tassi, a passionate young man who really took us on a journey with his spice blends. It was extraordinary. Then, in 2014, I was keen to invite Vincenzo Cammerucci back to mark my 20th anniversary in the kitchen.

## **It seems you have kept in touch with many of them, haven't you?**

With all the chefs and winemakers who have visited, yes! These experiences are so enriching! We're always learning new techniques and discovering new ingredients. I still make a black olive purée with cod inspired by the Argentinian chefs, and I still remember Jacques Marit's stuffed quail.

## **After 20 editions of Montréal en Lumière, you must have many memories?**

Yes, I have fond memories of taking our guests around town. We go out together. We organize parties, we go to restaurants. We want them to discover Montréal, but also Quebec. I even went dog-sledding with a chef in the Mauricie region.

And I have a vivid memory that made me so proud with Chef Giovanni Grasso from Turin. I took him to eat at my favourite sushi restaurant in Montréal. When we were at the table, he turned and said, "I can't believe it. I feel like I'm in Japan!" I thought that was really touching!



2015 - 2019



### MAJOR TRENDS

- In this age of celebrity chefs, producers also rose to stardom and were featured prominently on the menus of many restaurants and at events.
- The influence of Scandinavian cuisine could be felt in Montréal kitchens.
- There was less talk about Quebec's *terroir* local products and more emphasis on Quebec culinary culture.
- People started taking interest in the conditions of farmed animals and in using all parts of the animal to reduce waste. Several butchers embracing the "nose-to-tail" philosophy began making their mark in Montréal (Ça va barder!, Boucherie Lawrence and Pascal le boucher).
- Vegetables were highlighted on the plate.
- Responsible cooking started gaining traction.

### FOODS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Rabbit from Stanstead and pork from the Gaspot farm were featured on several menus. Nordic berries, such as shadbush and sea buckthorn, were also featured in dishes.

### SAMPLE DISH

Sweet and sour brill with sea buckthorn and maple, served with wild rice, white turnip and camelina  
 –Served from February 24-27, 2016, at Les 400 Coups

### POPULAR SONGS AT THE TIME

"Paradis City" - Jean Leloup  
 "Fille de personne II" - Hubert Lenoir

### MEANWHILE, IN QUEBEC'S CULINARY SCENE

- 2015** First season of the Netflix series "Chef's Table"  
 Opening of Mousso and Candide  
 Release of the book *Montréal Cooks* by Tays Spencer and Jonathan Cheung, owner of the bookshop Appetite for Books  
 For the first time in the history of top 100 ranking by The World's 50 Best, a Quebec restaurant, Joe Beef, was listed in 81st position.  
 Toqué! was named Best Restaurant in Canada by Canada's 100 Best (2015 and 2016)
- 2016** L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon opened at the Casino de Montréal
- 2018** First edition of the Gala des Lauriers de la Gastronomie Québécoise  
 Women with Knives at the PHI Centre, a series of socio-culinary events with Ana Roš discussing the role of female chefs in the world's top kitchens  
 Vin Mon Lapin restaurant opened.

### ARTS SECTION

- 2015** Stephan Eicher and Bobby Bazini served as honorary co-presidents. Performances by Christine and the Queens, The Tragically Hip and Marie-Pierre Arthur.
- 2016** Zaz and Betty Bonifassi were the honorary co-presidents. Lineup included Lou Doillon, Radio Radio, The Seasons, Tanya Tagaq and AaRon.
- 2017** Daniel Lavoie was honorary president. Concerts by Alain Lefèvre, Alex Nevsky, Peter Peter, Matt Holubowski, Bruno Pelletier and Valaire.
- 2018** Isabelle Boulay was honorary president. The lineup included Patrice Michaud, Stacey Kent, Vieux Farka Touré, Geoffroy, Random Recipe and The Franklin Electric.
- 2019** Performances by Dominique Fils-Aimé, Soran and Whitehorse.

### OUTDOOR EVENTS

- 2015** A zip-line soared above Sainte-Catherine Street. There were shows by Pierre Kwenders, Elisapie, Random Recipe, Misteur Valaire and CRI.
- 2016** Launch of Illuminart, a circuit of 25 artworks combining art, light and technology over 3.6 kilometres. Shows by Rymz and Lisa Leblanc.

“Every year, Montréal en Lumière gives us the opportunity to gather chefs from Canada and around the world. One of my best memories is being able to bring my former cooks, Thomas Haas, Dale MacKay, Patrick Kriss and Riccardo Bertolino, together for the 2018 edition. During a dinner they called La Réunion, they each paid tribute to me by creating a dish inspired by their journey and the cuisine we shared during their time in my restaurants. It was a friendly, inspiring and creative event that also reflected the spirit of the Festival.”

–Daniel Boulud, chef and owner of several establishments around the world, honorary president of the 2007 edition and guest chef in 2018 and 2019



“I remember, in 2019, how Chef Dany Bolduc from H4C put five chefs on his wish list, including Amélie Darvas, who had just opened her restaurant Äponem. She said yes, but then I didn’t hear from her again until January. I was really stressing out because we’d already announced that she’d be there. In my speech during the December 2018 press conference, I mentioned, “I’ll bet there’s a shining star on her horizon.” In January 2019, she was awarded her first Michelin star... and she did end up coming to the Festival.”

–Julie Martel, Festival Programming Manager, since 2017

## HIGHLIGHTS

The Festival welcomed Paolo Basso, who won the title of World's Best Sommelier in 2013, taking the crown from Véronique Rivest. In addition to conducting a workshop, he selected the wines served at the Dîners du Président d'Honneur events. During a sensory conference on oil, there was talk of camelina oil, a new local product. At H4C, Chef Dany Bolduc hosted 100% vegan evenings. Produce picked by François Brouillard of Les Jardins Sauvages was showcased at an Apéro Sauvage event and during an evening at Les 400 Coups restaurant with Chef Guillaume Cantin. The worlds of music and food blended as the group Misteur Valaire was invited to dine at Au Cinquième Pêché. The Festival formed an alliance with La Tablée des Chefs and organized the Salon du Livre Gourmand at the Complexe Desjardins. UNESCO selected Montréal en Lumière as a featured event for its International Year of Light.

Local spirits stole the show with several new events: the Mondial des Cidres at the Complexe Desjardins, the Apérofest (winter aperitifs, maple alcohol, mixology tours, evenings at Le Lab) and a first-ever event on Quebec micro-distilleries held at the Société des Arts Technologiques. Montréal chefs played musical chairs in the Planète Montréal series: Hakim Chajar at La Fabrique and Patrice Demers at Accords. At Chez L'Épicier, Laurent Godbout curated a retrospective evening on his 15 years taking part in Montréal en Lumière. At Le Hambar, the Du Musée à la Queue evening was organized in collaboration with Porc de Beauvillage. At Hôtel Herman, homage was paid to Mon Nan, a restaurant in Montréal's Chinatown beloved to chefs. The duo of the Milk & Bone band ate at Lili Co.

The Festival paid homage as Montréal celebrated its 375th anniversary. Thanks to the Délice Network, chefs from Sweden, Finland, Turkey, Mexico, Latvia, Belgium and South Africa attended the Festival. Le Balmoral was transformed into a "bouchon lyonnais" by Chef Joseph Viola (who offered free soup on the Festival's outdoor site). Local wines were featured with a VIP Québec wine and dine evening at Bistro Laurentien La Coupole. Norwegian gastronomy was front and centre at Chez Victoire. Le Laloux hosted the Le Cœur des Forêts du Québec et de la Lettonie event, which explored boreal products.

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Anthony Dong - A renowned chef at Futian Shangri-La in Shenzhen

### FEATURED COUNTRY, CITY AND REGION

Switzerland, Washington, Lanaudière

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Jérôme Bocuse, the proud heir to Paul Bocuse, and Christophe Muller, head chef at Bocuse's restaurant in Lyon

### FEATURED CITIES AND COUNTRY

Shenzhen, China, Boston, Laval

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEF

Lydia Shire, United States - A renowned Boston chef and restaurateur

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

Institut de tourisme et d'hôtellerie du Québec (ITHQ) - A specialized training institute for the tourism, hotel and restaurant industry founded in 1968

### FEATURED CITIES AND COUNTRY

Lyon, France, Montréal

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Joseph Viola, France (also in 2008) - Named the Meilleur Ouvrier de France and known as the King of Lyon's infamous "bouchon" restaurants

Filip Langhoff, Finland - An up-and-coming Michelin-starred chef and proud representative of Nordic cuisine

To mark the 50th anniversary of the ITHQ, eight prestigious hotel schools were invited to join the Festival. Former students Marie-Fleur St-Pierre, Danny St Pierre, Martin Juneau, Ann-Rika Martin and Jonathan Lapierre-Réhayem gave culinary tours. The general manager of the ITHQ, Liza Frulla, co-hosted an evening of Italian cuisine with Sister Angèle. For the first time in Montréal, the Festival welcomed Michael Bom Frost, from the Nordic Food Lab in Copenhagen, for a lecture. Gérald Le Gal and Ariane Paré-Le Gal, from Gourmet Sauvage, served a meal of wild foods at Au Petit Extra. Beaver Hall revisited the great classics of the *Grand Larousse Gastronomique*. Quebec's wild game was spotlighted at Quartier Général and Blumenthal during an evening of boreal tasting with Algonquin chef Martin Brisson from the Côte-Nord region. At Portus 360, eight students from the Waswanipi school in the Nord-du-Québec region cooked with Chef Helena Loureiro.

Montréal en Lumière celebrated its 20th edition and took new photos of the chefs for its program. At the brand-new Quartier Gourmand, several events were organized for the general public, including a conversation with Josée di Stasio, a lecture on critiquing with Jean-Philippe Tastet, a workshop on Instagram-foodies' preferred communication tool—and a workshop on latte art. Other new features to celebrate the two decades included a Nuit Gourmande, Tastet gourmet tours and expert tours featuring sommeliers, microbreweries and mixologists. The Festival paid tribute to Jean-Paul Grappe for his significant contribution to Quebec gastronomy. At the Kitchen Galerie, 20 dishes that have left their mark on the Festival were revisited during the 20 Ans, 20 Services event, in the company of founding president Alain Simard. Le Petit Extra celebrated 20 years of taking part in the Festival. The Cadet Roussel farm was invited to Candide. Quebec producers were celebrated at Chose. Sommelier Pier-Alexis Soulière, just crowned Best Sommelier of the Americas, made an appearance at La Chronique. Leméac hosted winemakers Benoit Fouassier and Damien Coquelet, while Domaine du Nival and Vignoble Ste-Pétronille participated in a winter barbecue with Ferme Gaspor at Le Local. Joël Robuchon, the world's most Michelin-starred chef who died in 2018, was honoured by the Casino de Montréal's restaurant L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon.

### FEATURED THEME AND REGION

Celebrating Know-how, Côte-Nord

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Joseph Viola, France (also in 2008) - Named the Meilleur Ouvrier de France and known as the King of Lyon's infamous "bouchon" restaurants

Hakim Chajar, Canada - A Moroccan-born chef, winner of the "Les Chefs! La Revanche" show in 2014

Jean-Sébastien Sicard, Canada - The chef of the renowned Chez Mathilde restaurant in Tadoussac

### FEATURED THEMES

The World; Our World; Journeying into the Heart of the World

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Uri Jeremias, Israel - The infamous Israeli chef known for his long, white beard and love of fish

Justa Nobre, Portugal - An ambassador of traditional Portuguese cuisine

Arnaud Marchand, Canada - The chef and co-owner of Chez Boulay, in Québec City, and finalist in the first season of "Les Chefs!"

Mike Bagale, United States - A chef renowned for his creativity and longtime head cook at the three-Michelin-starred Alinea restaurant in Chicago

Jouvens Jean, United States (also in 2014 and 2020) - A chef who makes the cuisine of his native Haiti shine



©37

# THE YEARS 2015–2019 ACCORDING TO ANTONIN MOUSSEAU-RIVARD



## **INSTAGRAM, SCANDINAVIAN INFLUENCE AND MODERN CUISINE**

Antonin Mousseau-Rivard has been a regular at Montréal en Lumière since 2012. During his time at Le Contemporain (the restaurant at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal), elements of his style were already coming through, for example with his evenings themed around different art movements, such as L'Automatisme, du Pinceau à la Table (2012) or Bouffe et Tounes (2013), with his father, Michel Rivard. In 2015, he opened his own restaurant, Le Mousso, where he has continued to create unique experiences for his clients and the guest chefs who have visited over the years. We look back at a time of great change for this innovative chef.

### **What do the years 2015 to 2019 represent in your career?**

They were the best! It was the end of Le Contemporain and the beginning of Le Mousso. My Instagram account was very popular at that time. Those were the years when I had the most fun at Montréal en Lumière. That was, of course, before COVID. During that period, we met some wonderful people with whom we developed great relationships. We created successful events that were really out of the ordinary.

### **What influence has Instagram had on your career?**

My experience with Instagram has been just wild. I named the account @lemouso because I already knew that would be the name of my future restaurant. Every day, I experimented at Le Contemporain and published my photos. Some of them were picked up by major platforms like *Bon Appétit*. I got given things as if I were an influencer. When accounts like @GastroArt or @TheArtOfPlating shared one of my photos, I gained 5,000 to 10,000 followers. My account has reached many chefs, and I've been able to discuss cooking techniques with many of them. The aim of my account was really for research and development, and to show what I was going to serve at Le Mousso. Because nobody really understood what I wanted to do: a unique menu, dishes that were out of the ordinary, new techniques, a mix of savoury and sweet, cuisine without borders...

### **What was the Montréal culinary scene like back then?**

Gastronomy was a bit dead. I'm not saying no one was doing it, but it was less "fine dining" and more "bon vivant." When Lesley Chesterman reviewed Le Mousso, she pointed out that it was a big move to return to gastronomy at a time when Montréal's culinary scene was mostly made up of places where you could eat a lot. With Le Mousso, we really wanted to bring gastronomy back to the forefront and work with local produce—as many were already doing—but with a little more technical flair.

### **Would you say you were influenced by Scandinavian cuisine, which was a very strong trend at the time?**

Yes. My father gave me the Noma book in 2011 or 2012. For me, it was like the ring from *Lord of the Rings*. I'd open it and get anxious just seeing how good it all was—and because that's what I wanted to do. At the same time, I didn't want to be influenced by what I saw. I've worked for a long time not to let myself be influenced by others, to try to have my own colour, my own techniques, my own flavours.

Of course, we've had to come to terms with being influenced, given the rise of social media. One really positive influence of Scandinavian cuisine was the research and development aspect, which wasn't such a big thing in Montréal at the time. At Le Mousso, we came in with techniques such as fermentation, which were less mainstream then, but we were also working with grains.

### **What does Montréal en Lumière mean to you?**

What I appreciated about my first experiences with Montréal en Lumière at Le Contemporain was that they let me develop my own ideas. I was invited to sit on a committee to help develop a new series with Jean-Pierre Curtat. We created the Esprits libres series, which allowed us to explore a concept that wasn't necessarily related to each year's featured destination. It gave me the chance to experiment and flourish. So, for example, we created an Automatist meal where the paintings were edible and the dishes were works of art, all in a museum setting. And at Le Mousso, we continued to develop completely out-there concepts where people didn't know what they were eating, where there were just colours written on the menu, or 25-course meals with guest chefs. For me, Montréal en Lumière means creativity, lots of good memories and great encounters—both past and future!

### **What's your favourite Montréal en Lumière anecdote?**

In 2018, with Matt Lambert, the only chef who was able to stay for dinner with me after the event with chefs Atsushi Tanaka from Paris and Sean MacDonald from Toronto. I asked him where he wanted to eat and he replied, "At Au Pied de Cochon or at Joe Beef." I said, "Let's do both!" I called Au Pied de Cochon and told them, "We're coming from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., but we don't want to eat too much because we're going to Joe Beef afterwards." And I called Joe Beef and told them, "We'll come and eat from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., but we'll be coming from Pied de Cochon, so we won't want to eat too much." Big mistake—I shouldn't have told them! We arrived at Au Pied de Cochon, and there was a mountain of food on the table. Same scenario at Joe Beef. I'd never eaten and drunk so much in my life, and neither had he! It was a memorable evening!



2020 - 2023



### MAJOR TRENDS

- Quebec wines are catching on and increasingly featured on Montréal restaurant menus.
- With the prolonged and repeated closures of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ensuing labour shortages and high inflation, restaurants are having to reinvent themselves. Various changes can be observed: some restaurants are changing their opening hours, while others have instituted tip sharing or have raised their prices.
- Everyone is talking about buying local. Foodies are increasingly concerned about where their food comes from, both when dining in and out.
- Local fish and seafood are popular and featured on menus. More restaurants are getting “Fourchette Bleue” certification.

### FOODS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Local and boreal foods are the norm on menus. Long-forgotten vegetables, like turnips and Jerusalem artichokes, are back in the limelight.

### SAMPLE DISH

Rack of venison, Jerusalem artichokes, parsnips and jus of morel mushroom  
- Dish served at the État-Major during the 2023 edition of Montréal en Lumière

### POPULAR SONGS AT THE TIME

- “Copilote” - FouKi (with Jay Scott)
- “Coton ouaté” - Bleu Jeans Bleu

### MEANWHILE, IN QUEBEC’S CULINARY SCENE

- 2020** Restaurants are forced to close (March 22)  
Montréal en Lumière won the Distinction Award - Gastronomy from Tourisme Montréal.
- 2021** Radio-Canada’s cooking platform “Mordu” was launched.  
In recognition of their resilience during the pandemic, the Lauriers de la Gastronomie Québécoise awarded a collective prize to Quebec restaurateurs.
- 2022** On January 31, 2022, restaurants were allowed to reopen for the fourth time in two years. Over the two years of the pandemic, they were forced to close for almost 11 months.  
Simon Mathys’ Mastard was named the second Best New Restaurant by Air Canada’s enRoute magazine.  
The Canadian team of Samuel Sirois, Gilles Herzog and Léandre Legault-Vigneau finished eleventh in the Bocuse d’Or final in Lyon, France.
- 2023** Vin Mon Lapin was named Best Restaurant in Canada in the annual Canada’s 100 Best ranking.  
Prime Video presented the documentary series “Pendant Ce Temps en Cuisine,” which followed six Quebec chefs, including Antonin Mousseau-Rivard from Mousso, and Maria-José and Zoya de Frias from Virunga, over the course of a year.  
Ricardo announced his departure from his namesake show, which had been on the air since 2002. He was replaced in September 2023 by his sidekick Isabelle Deschamps-Plante.

### ARTS SECTION

- 2020** The Franklin Electric, Shay Lia, Jon Vinyl and 070 Shake were on the program.
- 2021** A virtual edition of the Nuit Blanche with the “Cabaret de la Nuit Blanche” was hosted by Arnaud Soly and featured Klô Pelgag, Katherine Levac, Antonin Mousseau-Rivard and many others.
- 2022** Pierre Lapointe, Le Couleur, AHI and Alicia Moffet performed.
- 2023** Celebration of 20 years of the Nuit Blanche with Claudia Bouvette, Valaire, Choses Sauvages and Kid Koala. The “20 Ans Déjà” show celebrated 20-year anniversary of the *Triplettes de Belleville* movie and soundtrack. The “1969 Live” concert featured Half Moon Run, Les sœurs Boulay and Safia Nolin. “Riopelle Symphonique,” a musical work created for the centenary of Jean-Paul Riopelle’s birth, was performed. Bedouin Soundclash and Bon Entendeur were also on the program.

### OUTDOOR EVENTS

- 2020** Voltigo RBC” featured Canadian diver Lysanne Richard and others in a swimming pool. “Dynamo” combined circus arts, trampoline and choreography to create a high-wire act.
- 2022** The Festival inaugurated the Sentier de Patin, a 300-metre illuminated, elevated skating trail that winds its way through the Place des Festivals, as well as a new rink on the Esplanade Tranquille, where the group Les 7 Doigts performed their “Cadence” skating show.
- 2023** The skating trail was back.



“It’s been an incredible week! We cooked a lot. I wanted to learn. We’d start cooking in the morning and finish late at night. I was really in apprentice mode: I wanted to absorb everything. I learned techniques I still use. What I took away from the experience was all the discussions and the knowledge I acquired. It was magical!”

–Simon Mathys, chef at Le Mastard, who, in 2023, hosted Romain Meder, formerly chef at the legendary Plaza Athénée, Paris, and now at the equally prestigious Les Chemins, Domaine de Primard, a Relais & Châteaux in Eure-et-Loir, France



## HIGHLIGHTS

Montréal en Lumière came out with a new format for its print program in collaboration with *Caribou* magazine, featuring more in-depth articles on gastronomic trends (living wines, vegan food and chef-farmer connections). The Festival paid tribute to Sister Angèle’s contribution to Quebec cuisine at the Brunch des Femmes en Gastronomie, which was prepared by women chefs. The brunch featured the Canadian premiere of the documentary *À la Recherche des Femmes Chefs*, followed by a round-table discussion with documentary filmmakers Estérelle Payany and Vérane Frédiani, Chef Colombe St-Pierre and others. In the Quartier Gourmand, you could taste local products from the Îles-de-la-Madeleine region, while farther along at L’Astral, you could sample products from Japan. The restaurant La Chronique celebrated its 25th anniversary. Kim Côté, from Côté Est, was welcomed at Leméac with winemakers from Les Pervenches. Jean Soulard was Europea’s guest. Quebec wineries Pigeon Hill and Rivière du Chêne were featured at Au Petit Extra. We organized an evening for the Canadian Bocuse d’Or team at Le Beau Mont. L’Atelier de Joël Robuchon hosted the Michelin-starred chef Christophe Bellanca. At Rosély’s, we paid tribute to the great women of Quebec’s culinary arts. Sommelier Michelle Bouffard was interviewed before a live audience with a wine tasting.

The Festival had to go online when, starting in March 2020, the pandemic forced restaurants to close. Montréal en Lumière launched the J’adore Mon Resto campaign, designed to support Quebec gastronomy by encouraging people to order take-out meals from Montréal restaurants. Marina Orsini was its spokeswoman. Foodies could fall back on the French-language web series “Autour de la Table Avec...,” “La Brigade Découverte,” “Chef en Ébullition” and “C’est l’Heure de l’Apéro.” The Festival also presented its first podcast, “Du monde en cuisine,” featuring inspiring public figures whose social gastronomy initiatives have created change. In a video recorded near the Place des Festivals and broadcast on social media, Luce Dufault performed “Quand les Hommes Vivront d’Amour” by Raymond Lévesque, in memory of COVID-19 victims. The “Couette & Gastronomie” series was created to boost the hotel sector and enable foodies to enjoy an in-room dining experience while restaurants were closed.

### FEATURED REGION AND THEME

Îles de la Madeleine,  
Journey into the Heart of Flavour

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Guga Rocha, Brazil - Brazil’s star chef

João Dias, Portugal - The protégé of Portuguese chef José Avillez

Martin Olsen, Denmark - The chef at Marv & Ben in Copenhagen

Clément Vergeat, France - Up-and-coming French chef and “Top Chef” contestant

Cortney Burns, United States - The chef at San Francisco’s infamous Bar Tartine

Daniel Burns, United States - Nova Scotia-born chef, pastry chef and sous-chef at Noma

Michael Anthony, United States - The chef of the renowned Gramercy Tavern in New York

Alvin Leung, Canada - A Michelin-starred chef, nicknamed the “Demon Chef,” and a judge on “Master Chef Canada”

Emmanuel Pilon, France - The former assistant chef to Alain Ducasse at Plaza Athénée and the chef at Louis XV

### FEATURED THEME

J’adore mon resto, virtual edition

Instead of pairing chefs from around the world with their peers in Montréal, the Festival invited five Indigenous chefs living across Quebec to showcase the flavours and traditions of their cuisine in Montréal restaurants. Abenaki chef Lysanne O’Bomsawin was hosted in the kitchens at Virunga. Restaurant H3 welcomed Innu chef Sylvestre Hervieux-Pinette. Anishinaabe chef Shawn Adler was hosted at Kamuy. And Wolastoqiyik chef Maxime Lizotte was a guest at État-Major. Finally, non-Indigenous chef Martin Gagné, whose cuisine is inspired by the First Nations, was hosted at the ITHQ. Because of the public health restrictions, the Quartier gourmand was replaced by a series of six web capsules in which Chef Jérémie Jean-Baptiste showed viewers how to cook six local products. Auberge Saint-Gabriel welcomed the Parcelles’ Dominic Labelle, and Simon Mathys invited the Faux Bergers crew from Baie-Saint-Paul into the kitchen at Mastard.

About 40 Montréal restaurants and establishments welcomed chefs and farmers from here and abroad. Five Scandinavian chefs were in the spotlight. The Vin Mon Lapin welcomed Jeremy Charles, from the Merchant Tavern in St. John’s and Deirdre Heekin, from La Garagista winery in Vermont. Chefs John Horne and Ron McKinlay from Canoe, a Toronto restaurant, came to the Monarque. The team from Menu Extra welcomed French winemaker Julien Labet. The Festival presented a third symposium on Quebec culinary identity and featured a collaboration between Toqué! and the Fondation Jean-Paul Riopelle to mark the 100th anniversary of the Quebec painter’s birth. Antoni Porowski, known for the “Queer Eye” series, performed his show “Antoni: Let’s Do Dinner.” In the Quartier Gourmand, workshops and talks on sustainable food, Indigenous culinary traditions, vegan pastries and Asian vegetables were on the program. The Festival welcomed several specialized French written media, including *Food & Sens* and *Fine Dining Lovers*.

### FEATURED THEME

Savouring Our Northern-ness

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEF

Nick Liu, Canada - The chef of DaiLo, a new Asian cuisine restaurant in Toronto

### FEATURED THEME

The Best of Wintertime Montréal!, The City Hosts

### DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHEFS

Benoît Neusy, Belgium - One of Belgium’s most renowned Michelin-starred chefs

Ina Niiniketo, Finland - An up-and-coming Finnish chef who trained in Stockholm’s top establishments

Timothy Charles, Canada - The chef at Fogo Island Inn

Romain Meder, France - The former chef of the Plaza Athénée and the chef of the Michelin-starred Les Chemins



# THE YEARS 2020–2023 ACCORDING TO MARIA-JOSÉ DE FRIAS



## GETTING THROUGH TRIALS TOGETHER

In 2016, Maria-José de Frias, originally from the Congo, opened Le Virunga, where she showcases the flavours of sub-Saharan Africa. Chef de Frias works in the kitchen while her daughter, Zoya, supervises the dining room. Le Virunga has taken part in Montréal en Lumière since 2020. Maria-José looks back on this period marked by the pandemic. She believes the Festival played a key role during this time.

### How did it feel in 2020 to know that Montréal en Lumière was going to include you in its programming?

Oh, my God! It was a great honour for little old me! No, I was really honoured! Montréal en Lumière is a big family. It's not a small event. I was impressed and, at the same time, stressed. When someone has trusted you, you don't want to disappoint. My biggest fear was that I was showing up with a completely different and little-known African cuisine, at a time when people were unfamiliar with ethnic gourmet cooking. I wanted to break down the clichés around African cuisine and use my dishes to bring everyone together. Even though I've participated several times, each time it feels like my first.

### Do you feel your participation has led to a change in others' perception?

Yes, it made a surprising difference! Quebecers are curious. If they come to see you and you don't disappoint, they're loyal. I've already managed to build up a solid clientele. I think Montréal en Lumière broke down barriers and gave me access to even more people, the media and critics who saw that it's possible to offer fine African cuisine.

### Is it a challenge to work with local products when you're serving cuisine from elsewhere?

For me, working with local products has been important since day one. I ran with the idea that if I were in my own country, the Congo, I would use local products. I'm in Quebec and I want to do the same. It was harder to find my goat and sheep producers because these products are less popular here, but I managed. I work with some extraordinary producers. Of course, I've had to adapt a few dishes but, in the end, I always manage to find good alternatives.

### How did you cope with the pandemic that really characterized the last few years?

As it was for everyone else, it wasn't easy to live with the uncertainty. But the good thing was that events like Montréal en Lumière carried on, though they took a different form. It kept our spirits up and let our customers know that we were still here, that we weren't giving up. It was different, but it was important. Personally, it really helped me to feel supported as a restaurateur.

### Have the pairings with other chefs as part of Montréal en Lumière stimulated your creativity?

Absolutely! Last year, we were with Émilie Bégin from Foodlab. The year before, Lysanne O'Bomsawin, from Traiteur Québécois, was with us. I've always been paired with women, and it's wonderful! I always look for our common traits and what brings us together, and then we build on that. It's very creative and rewarding!

### We hear you've even put Lysanne's smoked fish recipe on your menu. Why?

Yes, we sometimes offer the dish. Smoking is something her culture and ours have in common. It's a system of food preservation that we both know. So I thought this recipe brought us together. We have a good relationship and we'll certainly be working together again.

### If you had to choose just one word to describe the Festival, what would it be?

Love. Because Montréal en Lumière is a time when we share our love of cooking with everyone, and we share our love for a job that's not always easy.

### What do you think the Festival brings to Montreal's culinary scene?

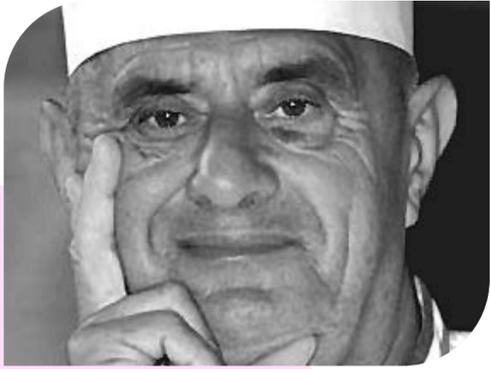
Without a doubt, the event is a place to showcase our chefs' expertise. It put me—and my kitchen—in the spotlight!

### How do you see the future of the restaurant business?

I'm someone who always sees the glass as half full. The current environment is not easy, but there's a saying in my country, "A bad situation is not baldness!" It means that, as long as all is not completely lost, there's always something you can do to keep things going.

### And what does the future hold for Le Virunga?

Like everyone else, we're currently struggling to make up for what we lost in recent years. We're fighting to stay open. But I hope to continue to develop and make my cuisine even better known. We're rolling up our sleeves and moving onward!



**Paul Bocuse, 2000**



**Charlie Trotter, 2001**



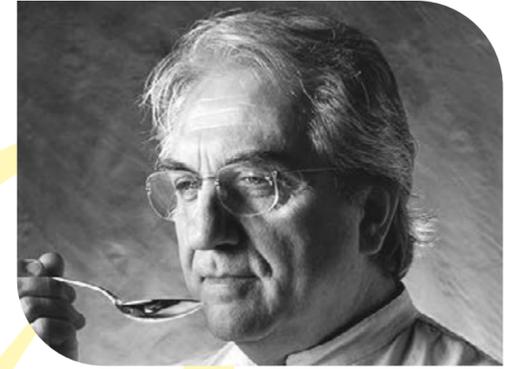
**Serge Dansereau, 2002**



**Santi Santamaria, 2003**



**Georges Blanc, 2004**



**Gualtiero Marchesi, 2005**



**Émile Jung, 2006**



**Daniel Boulud, 2007**



**Susur Lee, 2008**



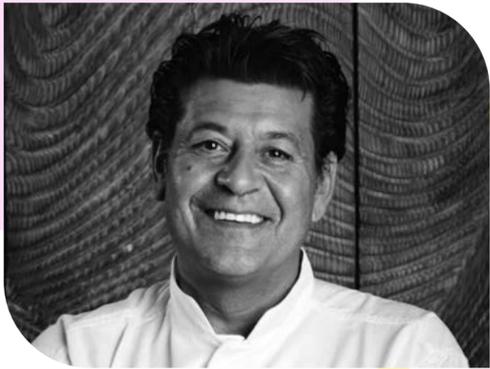
**Alain Passard, 2009**



**Fausto Airoldi, 2010**



**Anne-Sophie Pic, 2011**



**Yves Mattagne, 2012**



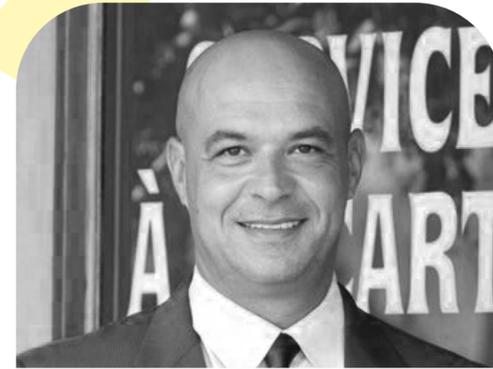
**Francis Mallmann, 2013**



**Pierre-André Ayer, 2015**



**Anthony Dong, 2016**



**Jérôme Bocuse, 2017**



**Christophe Muller, 2017**



# MONTRÉAL EN LUMIÈRE IN A FEW FIGURES

2000

Founded by Alain Simard, the festival Montréal en Lumière was launched in 2000 with the aim of putting some energy back into winter in the city. With Paul Bocuse as honorary president, the first edition attracted 200,000 people.

100,000

The number of visitors recorded during the first Nuit Blanche, in 2004.



6

Six restaurants have taken part in the Festival 20 times or more. Two have been in every edition of Montréal en Lumière: La Chronique and Au Petit Extra. Whether with Toqué!, Brasserie T! or Beau Mont, the team of chefs Normand Laprise and Christine Lamarche have also participated in every edition.

225

Since 2000, 225 restaurants have taken part in Montréal en Lumière's Finest Tables event, offering themed meals by a guest chef.



# 30

Together, the 18 honorary presidents who served in succession until 2017 (the last year the Festival had an honorary presidency) boast more than 30 Michelin stars!

# 700

Some 700 guest chefs from 5 continents have taken part in Montréal en Lumière.



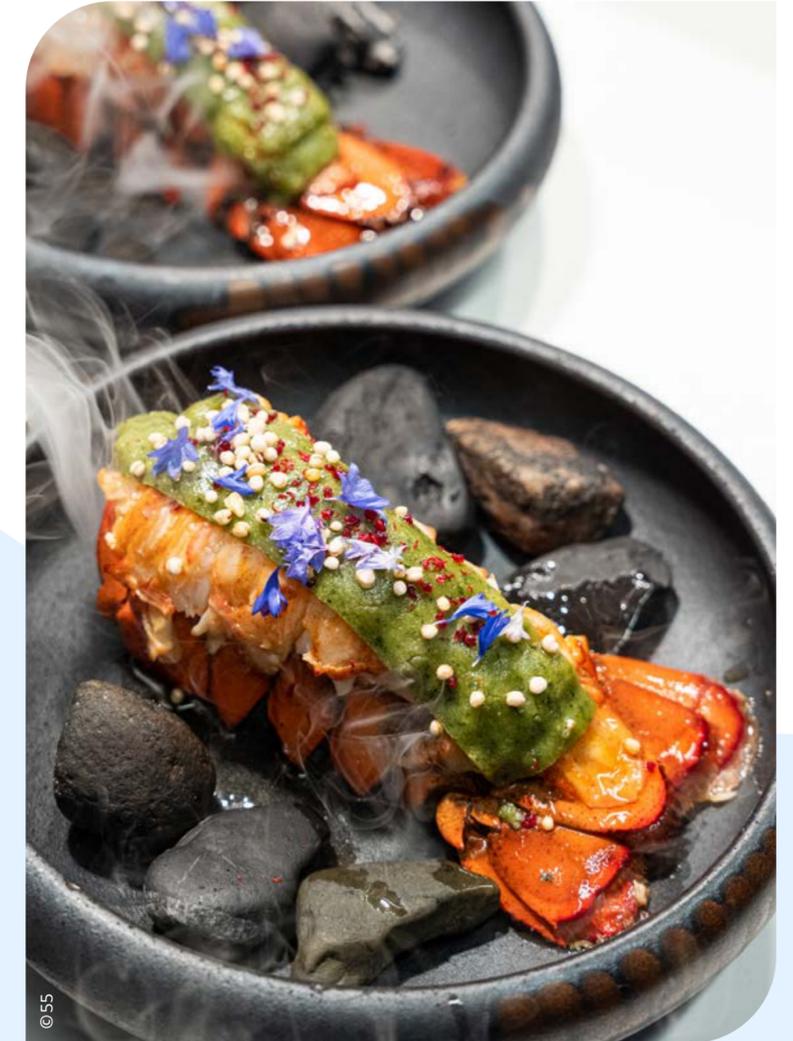
# 2018

In 2018, the Festival received the title of Gastronomic Event of the Year at the Lauriers de la Gastronomie Québécoise gala.



# 2005 VS. 2015

In 2005, the vast majority of chefs (over 85%) wore a traditional toque in the Montréal en Lumière official photo, but 10 years later, only one was still sporting it.



# 50

Since 2018, La Tablée des Chefs has sent 50 apprentice chefs to work at Montréal en Lumière events.

# + 47%

Inflation also affects the restaurant business. In 2013, a tasting menu cost about \$150 (with wine, before tax and tip) at a high-end restaurant in Montréal. In 2023, foodies had to shell out \$220 to visit the same Finest Table during the Festival. An increase of 47% in just one decade.

# 1,000,000

In 2014, the Festival crossed the landmark of one million visitors.



J'ADORE  
MON  
RESTO

J'ADORE  
MON  
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1001 AVENUE MONTRÉAL EN LUMIÈRE

ÉTAT MAJOR

ÉTAT MAJOR  
*Suzi Victor*

ÉTAT MAJOR  
etatr... 905-8288  
*Suzi Catherine*

# BEHIND THE SCENES AT MONTRÉAL EN LUMIÈRE



Organizing a festival like Montréal en Lumière is no small feat. Just ask Julie Martel, who has been the Festival's programming manager since 2017 and works with her team of three to ensure that all guest chefs arrive safely. She's going to take us behind the scenes to show how the Festival comes together.

## How are chefs and restaurants paired?

Before 2017, the programming team chose all the guest chefs based on the countries, regions or cities being featured. The Festival would sign agreements with tourism organizations in these places. We'd then pair the chefs with the various host restaurants in Montréal.

But social media changed all that, as chefs the world over began connecting with each other online. There weren't as many ways of communicating in the Festival's early days, so it was mostly when travelling that chefs met and developed friendships. Now, Quebec chefs can chat on social media with like-minded colleagues from other parts of the world, forming digital friendships and extending and receiving invitations to visit each other. Chefs also move around and travel more now.

Today, there are two ways of pairing chefs and restaurants: either a local chef asks the programming team if a pairing can be arranged with a chef they already know, or we invite a chef and match them for the Finest Tables.

## Is organizing these pairings complicated?

Sometimes we send out five invitations and none bears fruit. It doesn't always work. I personally find this step of the process really exciting. As long as I don't get a no for an answer, I stay optimistic about it!

Sometimes, chefs who want to come have to decline our invitation because they're too short-staffed to leave. This makes us realize that we all have the same challenges! Other chefs can't come because they can't get a visa.

I remember, in 2019, how Chef Dany Bolduc from H4C put five chefs on his wish list, including Amélie Darvas, who had just opened her restaurant Àponem. She said yes, but then I didn't hear from her again until January. I was really stressing out because we'd already announced that she'd be there. In January 2019, she was awarded her first Michelin star... and she did end up coming to the Festival!

## What does Montréal en Lumière do before the chefs come to Montréal?

Once a chef has agreed to come, we start by booking their plane ticket. This can be challenging since we have to find a flight that suits them. Sometimes, the person doesn't live in a big city. They have to take a train or a domestic flight first. There's also the issue of the actual aircraft. For example, the craft distiller Laurent Cazottes, who came in 2023, is 6'5" tall, so we needed to get him a business-class ticket or at least a seat with enough legroom.

Some chefs have even had to catch four or five connections! Other times, we help them apply for a visa. We support them all the way through the process. We stay in touch with them.

Then, there are those chefs who want to bring a lot of luggage. Sometimes we have to pay the fees for extra baggage. Each time, we have to find out if they're allowed to bring this or that ingredient to Canada. Sometimes people have actually slipped things into their suitcases without telling us!

The chefs' transportation-related requests are handled one by one, since each chef has different requirements. The same goes for hotel reservations. Back in the day, there were smoking and non-smoking rooms. And perhaps one wants a suite or a room with a view, while another is anxious about a fire so doesn't want to be on a high floor.

Looking after our guest chefs is a full-time job from October until the end of the Festival. You should see the spreadsheet in which our coordinator, Hector Poblete, keeps track of all the travel and accommodations. It's really quite something! It's really very important that every detail is perfectly coordinated.

## And what about once the chefs arrive in Montréal? What's left to do then?

When the chefs land in Montréal, our drivers pick them up at the airport. Hector and his team have a daily schedule, with everyone's arrivals and departures. Some chefs have no problem hopping into a seven-passenger vehicle, while others prefer to be driven privately. We bring all the chefs back to their respective hotels, according to their arrival times.

Then, the host restaurateur takes over, driving their guest chef from the hotel to the restaurant for set-up, pre-production and the event days. They work out that part themselves. In general, we don't usually hear from the guest chefs once they're in Montréal. The host restaurateurs take them out on the town.

We do, however, take care of special requests, like if they want to change their hotel room or airplane ticket.



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For departure, we pick them up from their hotel and take them to the airport three hours before their flight. As we all know, Montréal chefs love to party, and I can tell you that many of our guest chefs enjoy this to the max and have almost missed their planes because of it!

There are also years when bad weather causes a lot of cancelled flights. We then have to reorganize our entire transportation system.

### THE CHEFS' GALA

“From the very first edition and for the 19 subsequent years, I was a culinary advisor for the Festival. I helped recruit chefs from all over the world. And while they were here, I took care of them. I needed to know the chefs here and abroad well enough to pair them. It took some sensitivity and attention. We welcomed 528 chefs while I was there. With Jean Garon and Germaine Salois, we were a hotshot programming team.”

“I always took the guest chefs around on the same circuit. I'd bring them to the Jean-Talon market, to introduce them to our boreal products; to the La Mer fish market; to Omega Park; and to the Fairmont Le Château Montebello. They were always pretty impressed.”

“I taught at the ITHQ while consulting for Montréal en Lumière, and I got my students work during the Festival's main events. They really learned a lot by working with top chefs. What's more, thanks to the connections I made with the chefs, I was able to find my students internships. That was a direct result of Montréal en Lumière.”

- Jean-Paul Grappe, former chef, teacher at the ITHQ for over 20 years and culinary advisor for the Festival

“In 2007 and 2008, I did some consulting to pair chefs from Toronto. I was really impressed to see a team of five pulling together a festival on this scale. Hats off to the then director of gastronomy Germaine Salois.”

“The Festival often started on a Thursday and on the Friday all the people from the restaurants would meet at Pullman after their events. Chefs from near and far would gather. It was a real party.”

- Stelio Perombelon, former chef who took part in several editions of Montréal en Lumière and now teaches at the ITHQ

“When we welcome chefs, we always take them out to our favourite places to show them just how dynamic Montréal really is. We take them to the market and show them the finest products you can find. Sharing the experience is really fun. After that, keeping up the friendships and seeing the chefs again but in their home settings is really great!”

-Patrice Demers, chef and co-owner of Sabayon

“The Montréal hosts take really good care of their guest chefs. They take them out snowmobiling and playing hockey. We're talking really fun times and sharing between chefs.”

-Lesley Chesterman, author, columnist and former food critic

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