

Le déchainé



Sunny with
dispersed clouds
22°C - feels 26°C

Le Grand Tour | Tuesday August 6, 2024

Together

Par Jonathan B. Roy

I stopped less than 4 km after the start to make friends with a group of 5... or rather almost 6, since Isabelle is 35 weeks pregnant. She - and her partner Michaël - have joined her twin sister Ève-Marie for the day, and she's with us all week. She also convinced her parents to do the three days. "I don't bike!" laughs father Robert. "But it's wonderful here, and I come for the family spirit.



Tandems are too rare not to stop when I see one. "Give me one advantage and one disadvantage," I ask the couple. "We're always together," Michel replies. For precision, that's the advantage. "We used to give each other a lot of space on two bikes, now we talk all day long," says Isabelle enthusiastically. "But it's also a lot slower," concludes Michel, returning to my original question. Unusually, their tandem comes apart in pieces, allowing them to put it in two boxes on the plane and ride to Italy with Vélo Québec Voyages.

In the heart of Gatineau Park, another chat, this time with the family of Renée and Gaby, and their daughters Ariel and Romy. "We've done 16 Petites Aventures," says Renée, apparently erroneously. "Mom, it's 17," says Romy, who keeps the tally. She now prefers the Grand Tour. "There are more climbs and the longer distances are a better

challenge."

Speaking of which, there's no reason why a hill should be harder than riding on the flat... provided you have the right gear ratio. That is, small chainrings at the front and a larger cassette at the rear. This change is often possible on the bike you already own. I invite you to listen to my podcast, *Encycliques*, for more details (and for other technical questions and destinations).

New family on the same climb: Isabelle and Didier, accompanied by Alexis and Justin. When it comes to hills, 18-year-old Alexis is already wise: "when the climbs are too easy, the descents don't taste as good."

Not a family, but almost, the French trio of Deathroy, Max and Toto. These are the nicknames on the plates on the back of their saddles, which also feature drawings of a forest, pixelated Pokemons and elvish

writing from *The Lord of the Rings*, respectively. Reminiscent of Frodo heading for Mordor, Toto added a Day 0 to his 5th Grand Tour, pedaling from Montreal to Plantagenet before the official start.

After the belvedere, the descent to lunch was trickling but car-free. Since the pandemic, these lanes in the Gatineau park have been closed to vehicles, except on Wednesdays and two weekend afternoons. I raise my helmet high.

When you arrive in Papineauville, settle in, take a shower and put on your best t-shirt so we can all get together at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium. I'll be telling you all about my 4-year bicycle trip around the world, which resulted in two volumes of *Histoires à dormir dehors*. And because I didn't want to risk some of you hearing the same story twice, I've even prepared an almost entirely new and exclusive show for you.

Photo caption: Michel and Isabelle



GRAND TOUR

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On the road

Regular route (88 km)

Leaving Gatineau, you can enjoy the tranquility of section #1 of the Route verte one last time, before turning north and then east, on beautiful country roads that allow you to appreciate the region's rich agricultural heritage, all the way to the second village on this Grand Tour in Papineauville..

Rest stop : at km 24, in Perkins and at km 74, in Plaisance.

Rest stop, km 44, Buckingham

After a lovely morning on the road, grab a bite to eat in Buckingham at the École du Boisé before heading off for a lovely afternoon of cycling! Aste the cheese of the day, courtesy of **Fromages d'ici** : Cheddar

de l'Isle-aux-Grues

Shortcut route (73 km)

This shortcut will get you to the Buckingham lunch stop more quickly, and will also take you along the banks of the Ottawa River between Thurso and Plaisance, instead of following the regular route north. **ATTENTION:** This route does not pass through the second rest stop in Plaisance.

Option 1 (+32 km)

This morning's optional route takes you into the agricultural heartland of the region, near Val-des-Monts. On this 32 km route, you'll ride along the shores of pretty Lake McGregor, before rejoining the regular route at the first ravito stop in Perkins.

Option 2 (+8 km)

If we suggest an extra Mayo... you'd think we were talking about adding a condiment to your meal, but we're not! This optional route allows you to explore the small village of Mayo, a pretty little town surrounded by greenery, before returning to the regular route just before arriving in Thurso, the birthplace of a certain... Guy Lafleur!



At the Papineauville village

Discover the world of wild mushrooms!

At 6:30 p.m. in classroom E-240, learn more about wild mushroom picking with Jean-Paul Blais, marshall and true icon of the Grand Tour!

Around the world by bike with Jonathan B. Roy

At 7:30 p.m., we move to the auditorium for a talk by Jonathan B. Roy, who will look back on his travels around the world and share previously unpublished anecdotes.

A rocking evening!

We end the evening at the bistro by letting loose to the frenzied rock of The Rock Show from 8:30 to 10:30 p.m.!

Décathlon play area

From 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., come try out several outdoor games (spikeball, badminton, archery and Finnish bowling) supplied by Décathlon!

Escape Café

Need a caffeine fix before or after your ride? Escape Café will

be open in the village from 6:30 to 10 a.m., and again during the afternoon.

The perfect recovery drink!

When you arrive in Papineauville, enjoy a delicious chocolate milk, the ideal drink to help you recover after a day of cycling!

Sports therapy

Are your muscles sore and in need of some physio or taping? Drop by the sports therapy booth between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Massage therapy

Réserve your massage therapy session in advance by texting Djilali Aïcha at (514) 991-1822 with your choice of time slot.

***** Want to have lunch in the village tomorrow? Mention it to the person in charge when you're in line to pick up your dinner, or at the Info booth before 9 p.m.**



Services

Info booth and boutique

From 6:30 to 10:00 a.m. in Gatineau

From 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. in Papineauville

Mechanical booth

From 6:30 to 10:00 a.m. in Gatineau

From 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. in Papineauville

First aid

From 7 to 10 a.m. and from 2 to 10 p.m.

Massage therapy

From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - lunch stop

From 2 h to 10 p.m. - Papineauville



On the menu

Your breakfast - from 6 to 9 a.m.

- > Omelette with cheese, ham and bacon beans, vegan omelette, bacon-free beans
- > Slice of Bridgehead lemon and cherry bread, homemade potatoes

Your meal at the lunch stop - from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

- > Meal bowl of marinated salmon or cauliflower and sunflower nuggets
- > Veggie basket and homemade hummus, Isle-aux-Grues cheddar cheese
- > Banana, walnut and chocolate cake, fresh fruit

Your dinner - from 5 to 9 p.m.

- > A choice of salads
- > Marinated pork skewer cooked on the BBQ, squash curry, tempeh skewer
- > Vanilla strip, sugar and cream coulis, fresh fruit



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en partenariat avec

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DECATHLON

SIBOIRE
MICROBRASSERIE

Le Grand Tour,
un voyage-événement de

Vélo Québec
VOYAGES