

CYLING IN THE SPOTLIGHT DURING THE MONTH OF MAY!

Sherbrooke, May 3, 2024 – Now that May is here, the Eastern Townships is celebrating the start of the cycling season with lots of new activities and attractions! Due to its vast network of diverse cycle trails and routes, the region has long been the destination of choice for those who like to spend time in the saddle and this season, in particular, promises lots of adventures and discoveries. As well, a new regional alliance has been established for mountain biking, to showcase this fast-growing sport and widen the choice of places where aficionados can practise their favourite activity.

A prime destination for biking

The Eastern Townships is the most popular biking destination in the province of Quebec. That isn't surprising given that the region boasts 350 kilometres of designated bike trails, more than 2,500 kilometres of circuits (on asphalt and gravel roads), four of Canada's most challenging hilly rides and 12 venues to practise mountain biking. Added to those are numerous bike-themed events, the Centre national de cyclisme de Bromont (Bromont's National Cycling Centre) and VéloVolant (a type of "flying bike") – a multitude of reasons to explore the region on two wheels!

"Throughout the month of May, Tourisme Cantons-de-l'Est (Tourism Eastern Townships) is showcasing the many bike-friendly features that draw so many cyclists to our region," says Isabelle Charlebois, General Manager of Tourisme Cantons-de-l'Est (TCE). "We have a variety of offerings geared to all levels of ability and we are constantly developing new projects to enhance the cycling experience."

This summer, the regions of Megantic and Des Source are both signing on to the [Fièrement Vélo!](#) program and a number of establishments, restaurants and tourist attractions bearing this logo, will be welcoming cyclists, offering information and making suggestions about local cycling routes, as well as supplying repair kits so that cyclists are able to mend their bikes on the spot – a useful service indeed!

A new strategic alliance for mountain biking

The newly-established Regroupement vélo de montagne des Cantons (RVMC) is a grouping of key players involved in the sport of mountain biking in the Eastern Townships. This strategic alliance brings together seven mountain bike centres and two founding partners – TCE and the Conseil Sport Loisir de l'Estrie (the regional sports council) – as well as a manager who has been hired to oversee the initiative. The goal of RVMC is to position the Townships as THE destination of choice for mountain biking.

The region has a network 350 kilometres of diverse, high-quality trails and routes on a variety of terrains, designed with respect for the environment and aimed at every level of ability. Venues such as [Bromont, montagne d'expériences](#), [Centre national de cyclisme de Bromont](#) (the National Cycling

Centre in Bromont), [Parc de la Gorge de Coaticook](#), [Parc des Sommets](#), [Mont Orford National Park](#), [Plein air Sutton](#) outdoor centre and [Sentiers vélo de montagne des Cantons](#) offer a memorable biking experience, along with a multitude of services catering to this specialized segment of the market.

An upcoming issue of *Racines Magazine* will highlight TCE's commitment to developing the Eastern Townships as a premier destination for cycling, with a special feature on mountain biking.

The Véloroute Gourmande is back for a 3rd season!

Some additions have been made to the 235-km bike route between Montreal and Sherbrooke. There are now 275 stops to explore along the way – gourmet food outlets, tourist attractions, accommodations...In the “Inspirations” section of the Velouroute Gourmande website, cyclists can also find suggestions about places to stay and itineraries suggested by those who have already covered the route (or sections of the route).

As part of the celebrations of the “Bike month”, around 20 cyclists will have the opportunity to enjoy a V.I.P. day (Saturday, May 18, 2024) along the [Véloroute Gourmande](#), offered by RAVITO. The tour includes four stops at local producers to visit their facilities, taste their delicious goodies and stock up on supplies.

What's new for cyclists – Summer 2024

The biking network throughout the region of Memphremagog is adding a **new route - La Frontalière**, an 87-kilometre loop linking Ayer's Cliff to Newport, Vermont. This circuit crosses the Tomifobia Nature Trail and the Stanstead Trail (among others) and it opens on June 22 during the [cyclo-gourmand](#) event organized by the Memphrémagog MRC (Regional County Municipality). For an overview of the entire network of bike routes in the region, consult the online map: [Carte vélo Memphrémagog](#).

This summer, Bromont will be the venue for a **new gravel biking event - Gravelooza**. An initiative of the Centre national de cyclisme de Bromont (the National Cycling Centre), it runs during the weekend of June 7-9. Activities include a gravel bike race (at a competitive or amateur level) and a program of outdoor festivities.

The [Centre national de cyclisme de Bromont](#) has also opened a “freestyle zone” in the **Vélodrome Sylvan Adams**. Dotted mainly with wooden obstacles, this area of the Velodrome has been designed for BMX enthusiasts who like performing tricks and those who love dirt jumping and mountain biking.

[Bromont, montagne d'expériences](#) is upgrading its ski lifts to cater to cyclists (among other outdoor lovers). The **L'Express du Village** can now carry six bikes and a mechanical clutch allows for fast, efficient unloading. From the start of the summer season (May 17), another lift - L'Express du Lac - will be in operation until 6pm.

The [Val-Saint-François](#) region is tailor-made for those who like gravel biking. It has **eight new routes** (for a total of nine gravel circuits) covering close to 426 kilometres of picturesque countryside with pretty lakes, rolling valleys and stunning landscapes.

[Mont SUTTON](#) is offering a **new rustic and technical hybrid mountain bike descent**, bringing the total number of mountain bike trails to 43. The *Sans gluten* (Gluten-free) and *Zen* trails have been upgraded and a “double drop” has been added to the *Kouiki* Trail.

In Granby, the **Circuit des Trois Lacs** connects the [l’Estrade](#) bike trail to the region of Brome-Missisquoi - a distance of 74 kilometres (round trip). Along the way, cyclists can enjoy views of lakes Boivin, Waterloo and Brome and if they get tired after all that pedalling, they can take a refreshing break at the Douglass Municipal Beach, which is just outside Knowlton.

Starting June 1, Olivier Louissaint (aka TV Chef Oli) who lives at La Terre Bowker in Warden, close to the La Campagnarde cycle trail in Haute-Yamaska, is offering a gastronomic bike tour - the [Road Trip Gourmand Signé Chef Oli!](#) Cyclists stop at a microbrewery, a pastry shop and Chef Oli’s own property – an ideal opportunity to sample the local fare!

A challenging start to the summer season!

The [défi du Mois du vélo](#) organized by the Vélo Québec, the province’s cycling association, is back again! The “Bike Month Challenge” encourages cyclists to choose this healthy, active mode of transportation by covering as many kilometres as possible throughout the month of May. In the Eastern Townships, you can log your progress on the Geovelo app. The resulting data will give us feedback to suggest better routes (how to avoid a dangerous stretch of road, for example) for the region’s cycling community.

For more information about cycling in the Eastern Townships, check out [Circuits vélo et pistes cyclables | Cantons-de-l'Est \(Estrie\) \(cantonsdelest.com\)](#).

About Tourism Eastern Townships

Tourisme Cantons-de-l'Est (Tourism Eastern Townships) is one of 21 tourism associations (ATRs) in Quebec and the official representative of Quebec's Ministry of Tourism in the Eastern Townships. Since 1978, the TCE's mission has been to promote tourism development, marketing the region within Quebec and internationally. TCE brings together more than 600 members representing more than 1,000 tourism offerings throughout the 9 regional county municipalities (MRCs) and in all sectors of the tourism industry: accommodation, restaurants, attractions, activities and events.

The Eastern Townships is the fourth most popular tourist destination in Quebec. The region attracts some 10 million visitors every year, accounting for 6.5 million overnight stays and a tourism spend of more than \$900 million annually. Tourism in the region also generates more than 20,000 jobs.

Source : Shanny Hallé

Media Relations Coordinator | Tourism Eastern Townships

Cell : (819) 821-1220

E-mail: shalle@atrce.com