



# **REFERENCE STYLE GUIDE (for writers)**

**TOURISME /  
MONTREAL**

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# 1. Brand content

## 1.1 *The brand*

You don't visit Montreal. You live it. You feel the city's unique energy expressed through the openness of people and the creativity that infuses everything we do. Montrealers see their city as a giant playground where anything is possible. No matter what our age, we feel optimistic and creative. And where others see a blank wall, we see a canvas and an opportunity to create a one-of-a-kind experience. From this state of mind comes a rich and diverse tourist offer that is never conventional and always inspiring.

## 1.2 *Personality*

A vivacious city, Montréal charms visitors with its boldness, effervescent culture, and its residents. Its boundless creativity is what makes it so unique. Always on the move, the city reinvents itself through the seasons and years. Its optimistic nature and *joie de vivre* are infectious. Festive, surprising and eclectic, it offers interesting and colourful strolls and outings. It is open and warm, even in winter.

## 1.3 *Writing tone*

The brand is expressed in a laid-back, playful way, sometimes a little mischievous, but always maintaining a friendly, respectful and positive tone. Moments are warm, personal and inviting. Messages must be clear without unnecessary details or verbiage.

## 1.4 **YES**

- Unpretentious
- Mischievous
- Friendly
- Pleasant
- Respectful
- Positive
- Clear and concise
- Standard language
- Everyday vocabulary
- Positive adjectives

## 1.5 **NO**

- Formal language
- Overly informal language
- Slang
- Superlatives
- Overuse of exclamation points
- Advertising style
- Sarcasm and rudeness

## 2. General

- Texts for Tourisme Montréal should be informative, yet light and fun. Short texts with short sentences work best.
- Include an engaging title with a maximum of around 60 characters (including spaces).
- Avoid superlatives if you are not presenting a fact.

*e.g.*

**YES:** The Festival International de Jazz de Montréal is the biggest jazz festival in the world.

**NO:** Chez Lévesque is the best French restaurant in Montréal. (This is not a fact.)

- Avoid the first person (“I”). Stick to the third person (impersonal style).

*e.g.*

**YES:** The café offers an impressive selection of teas.

**NO:** I was impressed by the selection of teas they have.

- Use **gender-inclusive language**. See examples and guidelines in the sources below:

[TERMIUM](#)

[UN gender-inclusive language guide](#)

### 3. Specific points

#### 3.1 Titles

- Please use down style for writing titles. In down style, the only words capitalized are the first word of the title and any proper nouns that appear in the title.

*e.g.*

**YES:** Things to do in Montréal: October 8 to 15

**NO:** Things to Do in Montréal: October 8 to 15

**YES:** What's on now in Montréal galleries

**NO:** What's On Now in Montréal Galleries

- Avoid superlatives in a title if you are not presenting a fact.

*e.g.*

**YES:** 10 fabulous family restaurants to try

**NO:** Top 10 family restaurants

#### 3.2 Translation of French names

- **Montréal and Québec**
  - **Montréal** and **Québec** are always written with an “accent aigu” in English.
  - **Montrealer** is written without an accent.
  - **Québécois, Québécois, Quebecer:** *All three are accepted forms, however, we have decided to stick with Quebecer to follow the same logic as for “Montrealer”.*

**OBS –** *The inhabitant of Montréal is a “Montrealer” (since 1919), man or woman. The name of the city always takes an accent while the demonym, taking an English form with the addition of an English suffix, is written without the accent.*

(Source: TERMIUM).

**Exceptions:** Don't add the accent if an official corporate name is written without it.

*e.g.* Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

- **Saint/Sainte**

*With the exception of names of pan-Canadian significance and some alternate forms approved by provincial authorities, the specific is not translated. (Source: The Canadian Style )*

*e.g.*

- La rue Sainte-Catherine → Sainte-Catherine Street
- La rivière Saint-Augustin → Saint-Augustin River

**BUT**

Le fleuve Saint-Laurent → St. Lawrence River (name of Pan-Canadian significance)

- **Métro**

Write “metro” in English.

- **Terrasse**

Write “terrace” in English.

- **Corporate names**

Some corporate/event/government names have no equivalent in English. In this case, leave the name in French. You may add an English translation in brackets for more clarity.

*e.g.*

- Palais des congrès de Montréal (Montréal’s convention centre)
- Ministère de la Culture et des Communications
- MONTRÉAL EN LUMIÈRE

(Sources: Our [Website](#), [TERMIUM](#), the [OQLF](#), event sites)

### **3.3 Spelling**

- The Canadian spelling of words prevails.

e.g. neighbourhood, colour, favourite, travelller, travellling

Reference: *The Canadian Oxford*

### 3.4 Punctuation

- There is no space before the exclamation/question mark or the semicolon.
- Avoid using exclamation marks.
- Add a non-breaking space (Ctrl+Shift+space bar) after a number, in dates, in names, etc.

e.g.

- 15 shops
- December 22, 2025
- Rafael Payare

### 3.5 Phone numbers

- Add a non-breaking space (instead of a hyphen) after the area code.

e.g.

- 514 444-5555
- 1 800 444-5555

### 3.6 Addresses

- Write street/avenue/boulevard names in full, observing the French spelling.

e.g.

- Sainte-Catherine Street East
- Saint-Laurent Boulevard
- Bernard Avenue West

Note: The words “saint” and “sainte” in the name of streets are written in full, unless there are space restrictions. In this case, “Ste” for “Sainte” and “St” for “Saint” would be used.

### 3.7 Time

- Write the time followed by “a.m.” or “p.m.” (Add a non-breaking space after the number (Ctrl+Shift+space bar.)
- If there are no minutes, do not add “00.”

*e.g.*

- 11 a.m.
- 12:30 p.m.

Source : [The Canadian Style](#)

### 3.8 Dates

- We do not use ordinals in dates.

*e.g.*

- March 15, 2024  
(NOT March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024)

Source : [The Canadian Style](#)

### 3.9 Sums of money and Canadian dollar symbol

- Sums of money are preceded by the dollar sign, without any space in between.

*e.g.*

- \$5.95

- Use the abbreviation CAN\$ to indicate Canadian dollars. (There is no space before or after the dollar sign.)

*e.g.*

- CAN\$125.60

Source : [TERMIUM](#), [Translation Bureau](#)

### 3.10 *Names of events*

- Please pay close attention to the names of events. Some are very particular (i.e., written all in caps, or partly in caps, for example). These are the ones that are the most often written incorrectly:

MONTRÉAL COMPLÈTEMENT CIRQUE, MONTRÉAL EN LUMIÈRE, Festival International de Jazz de Montréal (the official name is French).

Sources: Our [Website](#), [TERMIUM](#), the [OQLF](#), official event sites

### 3.11 *Ordinals*

- Do not use superscript for ordinals. You should use the last two letters on the words “first” (st), “second” (nd), “third” (rd), “fourth” (th), etc. as it would be if you wrote out the whole word. Sho use the last two letters on the word as it would be if you wrote out the whole word."

*e.g.*

- Montréal takes 2nd place as a leading science city in Canada.

Sources: [The Canadian Style](#)

### 3.12 *Names of exhibitions, plays, works*

- Italicize the names of exhibitions, plays, films or works.

*e.g.*

- *The Adventures of a Girl in Search of God*
- *Montréal Through the Eyes of Vittorio: 50 years of city Life and Graphic Design*
- *Mommy*

### 3.13 And / &

- Use “and” instead of the ampersand (“&”).
- The ampersand (&) is properly used only when it forms part of a corporate name.

(Ref. : [The Canadian Style](#))

### 3.14 Hyperlinks

- Embed hyperlinks directly into the body of the text.

e.g.

- “Now everyone can discover the wealth of works of art that adorn our sidewalks and building with the launch of the **Art public Montréal** Website.”

### 3.15 Bibliographic references

- Use the APA format for bibliographical references.

e.g.

- Byrne, B. (1998). The foundation of literacy. Sussex, England: Psychology Press.

For more examples with different types of documents:

<https://www.mcgill.ca/library/files/library/APA.pdf>

Source: McGill University

## 4. Writing about Indigenous Peoples

- Pay close attention to your choice of words when writing about Indigenous Peoples.
- Use the reclaimed names:

*e.g.*

The Kanyen'kehà:ka instead of the Mohawk.

- You can add the exonym in parentheses once in the text.

*e.g.*

The Kanyen'kehà:ka (Mohawk) are the easternmost member of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

- Always capitalize Indigenous, First Nation, Inuit, Métis, etc.
- Refer to the sources below.

Sources:

*12 Ways To Better Choose Our Words*

*When We Write About Indigenous Peoples* (Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada)  
[Indigenous Peoples Terminology: Guidelines for Usage](#) (Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.)

## 5. Sustainable destination

- Beware of greenwashing!

- “When federal Bill C-59 was introduced, new provisions regarding greenwashing were added to the Competition Act. Businesses making environmental claims must now prove that those claims have been tested and are verifiable.” (Business Development Bank of Canada)
- Use words like “green,” “sustainable,” “ecofriendly,” etc. only if there is proof of how the action/product is considered as such. (Note: More detailed guide to follow.)

Sources:

[Bill C-59](#), Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC)

[Sustainability Glossary](#) (Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto)

[Sustainable development](#) (Tourisme Montréal)

## 6. Writing about the LGBTQ+ community

- Tourisme Montréal has chosen to use the term “**LGBTQ+**,” following the recommendations of the National Lesbian Gay Journalist Association.
- It reflects the many identities the community is comprised of.
- The term “queer” is acceptable when used by people from the community, but when speaking on behalf of Tourisme Montréal, or when the author is not a member of the community, the appropriate term is LGBTQ+.
- To find out more about the terminology used to write about diversity, please consult the sources below.
- In a **survey**, these are the terms we should use as answers to the question, “What gender do you associate with?”:
  - Man
  - Woman
  - Non-binary
  - Agender person
  - Two-spirit
  - Questioning
  - Prefer not to answer

**Sources:**

[Stylebook](#) (The Association of LGBTQ+ Journalists)

[Naviguer la diversité et l'inclusion des personnes LGBTQ+ : Glossaire des Termes](#)

(Chambre de commerce LGBTQ+ du Canada – CGLCC)

## **7. Writing about accessibility**

Here are a few notions and terms to keep in mind when writing about accessibility.

- **Disability**

A functional limitation or restriction of an individual's ability to perform an activity. The word "disabled" is an adjective, not a noun. People are not conditions. It is therefore preferable not to use the term "the disabled" but rather "people with disabilities."

- **Accessibility**

The combination of aspects that influence a person's ability to function within an environment.

**Sources:**

[Accessibility Glossary](#) (Government of Canada)

[A Way with Words and Images: Suggestions for the portrayal of people with disabilities](#)

(Government of Canada)

**If you have any questions or comments regarding any of these points, please don't hesitate to ask us.**