

Stellar attractions in the Eastern Townships!

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Sherbrooke, July 24, 2025 – Astrotourism is a niche market within the travel industry and it so happens that the Eastern Townships is a prime area for studying the stars! It's home to two "Dark Sky Preserves" (territories with no light pollution) – the only region designated as such in the entire province.

Mont Mégantic and its surroundings were appointed as the first International Dark Sky Reserve in the world, in 2007. That was followed in 2018 by Au Diable Vert, designated as a Dark Sky Reserve by the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC). Those designations, along with the total solar eclipse of 2004 brought astrotourism into the spotlight (quite literally!). The rare solar eclipse attracted droves of visitors to the Townships to experience this wonder of nature for themselves...

2025: Another active year for auroras!

The polar auroras (Northern Lights and Southern Lights) – curtains of flickering colour caused by solar magnetic storms - are among the many other extraordinary gifts of nature. On May 10, 2024, they were very active around the province (and elsewhere). This phenomenon of frequently-appearing auroras, which happens only once every decade or so, is also being observed in 2025. Learn more about the auroras at the [Mont Mégantic ASTROLab](#).

The "ASTROLab evenings" include a presentation about the universe in general and the auroras in particular. Entitled [Auroras](#), the show delves into the science behind these extraordinary stellar events, such as where do auroras come from? Can their appearance be predicted? How best can one observe them?

Nature's fireworks display

Mid-August is when the Perseids are at their most active (they start manifesting in July) - especially in the region in and around Lac Mégantic. These meteor showers swoosh through the sky like a fireworks display of nature's making and they can be observed, hour after hour, during the [Perseids Evenings](#) organized by ASTROLab (August 11-14). Stargazers can also go for an evening hike (free of charge, weather permitting) under the starry sky.

Also during the period of the Perseids is the Festival Colline held in Lac Mégantic. Now in its fifth year, this festival, which takes place in the open air, is all about slowing down, gazing at the stars and connecting with Mother Nature....The lineup includes big-name performers such as Cœur de Pirate, Marjo and Claude Dubois (August 7-9).

Outdoor activities lit by the heavens

The next full moon will be on August 9 and hikers can walk along trails [lit by the heavens](#) on that particular evening at the Parc d'environnement naturel de Sutton. Hikers have the choice of two routes – Lac Spruce and Round Top.

Zenderfull is an organization that specializes in [astrotourism](#), primarily in the Mégantic region. From July 18-20 it will be running an evening retreat, combining trail running with astronomy. Throughout the year, Zenderfull also organizes a number of night hiking events featuring astrophotography workshops.

And for a very different “starry” experience, head to [Au Diable Vert](#) in Glen Sutton and book an “ObservÉtoiles” experience. Through the magic of technology, you can don an augmented reality (AR) headset, which enables you to see the actual night sky at the same time, with digital overlays displaying the names of planets, stars and constellations (August 17 and August 21).

The Mont Megantic Popular Astronomy Festival has been running for over four decades. Established in 1982, it's held over three weekends in July. The highlight is being able to observe the heavens through the 60-inch telescope at the Mont Megantic Observatory, normally accessible only to researchers. This year's edition is already sold out (the Festival launched on July 10) but some of the same festival activities are on offer at other times throughout the summer – lectures, exhibitions, observation sessions and the like – and, of course, the Auroras show!

Check out accommodations in the Eastern Townships that offer prime opportunities for stargazing, in the [heart of the Dark Sky Reserves](#).



The starry sky in Notre-Dame-des-Bois. Photo credit : Charles Dion

About Tourism Eastern Townships

Tourisme Cantons-de-l'Est (Tourism Eastern Townships) is one of Quebec's 21 regional tourism associations (ATR) and the official representative of Quebec's Ministry of Tourism in the region. Since 1978, TCE's mission has been to foster the region's tourism development, promote, coordinate, support and represent the entire tourism sector, while focusing on the quality of the visitor experience. TCE brings together nearly 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 region in Quebec, with volumes reaching 10 million visitors annually, accounting for 6.5 million overnight stays and a tourism spend of more than \$900 million per year. Tourism in the region generates over 20,000 jobs, making it the region's fifth largest employment sector among all tourism regions.

- 30 -

Source :

Titouan Bussière

Media relations coordinator

Cellphone : 819-238-9375 | Email : tbussiere@atrce.com