

# FJORD SAGUENAY, THE HEART OF QUEBEC UNDER SAIL

Exceptional nature awaits you in Quebec, for a different kind of cruise.

Far from the overpopulated West Indies, or the Cote d'Azur in summer, Quebec offers wild, protected scenery in the heart of the Saguenay National Park. Pure excitement guaranteed!

## LOGBOOK

Many French people dream of Canada and Quebec. The association of these landscapes with winter, the world of woods and hunting is partly the responsibility of Jack London! In summer, the Saint Lawrence estuary is a huge, semi-sheltered cruising area, where there is a concentration of landscapes of a rare beauty. The low population density does the rest: anchorages on the edge of the forest, whales coming to feed 'en masse', exploration by kayak from the

boat and walks on the wild paths in the Saguenay National Park. Fantastic wanderings in the heart of an animal life sanctuary.

## TYPICAL ITINERARY

The east of Quebec is certainly the nearest place to Europe for discovering Canada (7½ hrs flight from Paris). The routes which allow you to enjoy Quebec (the town) as well as the wilder scenery on the coast take between 8 and 10 days. Here is a typical itinerary offered by the specialist in cruising under sail: Croisière Terre &

Mer (present in Quebec, Iceland, Scotland, Ireland, Corsica...). Catamarans and trimarans are their usual supports, particularly a Nautitech 47, for this nice trip in Quebec.

**Day 1:** Embarkation on the boat from the old port in Quebec. Departure with the tide, on the majestic Saint Lawrence River. We leave the town to sail along the much more pastoral banks of the Ile d'Orléans. After St. Lawrence village, the river widens. Depending on the departure time, we stop on the north or south bank, at Cap à l'Aigle or St. Jean Port Joy, for example.

**Day 2:** Early departure with the tide. As far as possible, we take the north channel, at the foot of the Charlevoix mountains. The scenery here is wild and spectacular. First whales and belugas on our route. We anchor at Tadoussac, at the entrance to fjord Saguenay. The town here is beautiful and very lively.

**Day 3:** We leave Tadoussac for Sainte Marguerite bay, the bay of the belugas. We enter the fjord. The scenery here is



Quebec aboard a boat means leaving to discover nature which is still wild... A unique adventure!

unique, the boat slips between the steep, wooded banks. We anchor for lunch in the cove with the small islands 'lost' in the middle of the forest. Then a 2-hour walk on the banks. We spend the afternoon in low gear in front of Sainte Marguerite bay and its large beluga population, before anchoring for the night in the Anse Gagnon.

**Day 4:** Very short sail to the Anse St. Jean, before a horse ride in the northern forest. For those who don't ride, a walk above the cove and the village. The site is very beautiful and you can see whales passing from the coastal footpath.

**Day 5:** We leave the Anse St. Jean for a short sail to Eternité bay (1 to 2 hours). This deep bay at the foot of



Departure from the very beautiful town of Quebec, before losing yourself in the natural vastness.



Under sail, off Quebec, at the departure...

The Fjord du Saguenay in all its splendour.

the fjord's cliffs is the most spectacular in the Saguenay National Park. We then take kayaks, accompanied by a park guide. The trip on the water lasts for 2 to 3 hours. Whales, belugas and seals can be seen.

**Day 6:** Non-sailing day, but a long walk above the fjord. We walk in the heart of the National Park to Cap Trinité and its absolutely exceptional scenery. No houses, no villages, no roads. The path runs above the fjord and we discover the wild, protected Canadian forest. Lunch in the forest.

**Day 7:** Depending on the time of the tide, a sail to Cap à l'Est, then return to Tadoussac. We come back to the mouth of the Saguenay, with a bit of luck, under spinaker. Lunch at the anchorage off the Ile St. Louis. In



The village of St Jean offers a pastoral stop.



the afternoon, we tie up at Tadoussac.

**Day 8:** We leave Tadoussac and join the Saint Lawrence again, to head for Quebec. The day is devoted entirely to sailing (60 miles to cover). Depending on the winds and tides, we prefer to sail towards the Ile aux Coudres, and continue along the north bank at the foot of the most beautiful scenery: mountains, forests, cliffs. The island was discovered on 6th September 1535, by Jacques Cartier.

**Day 9:** 5 to 7-hour sail. We continue westwards.

Stopover at the Ile d'Orléans, the cradle of Quebec. This huge island, part of whose original habitat is protected, offers some very beautiful scenery. Late afternoon walk from one of the ports (Saint François or Saint Laurent).

**Day 10:** 2 to 4-hour sail (20 miles to cover). We pass between the Ile d'Orléans and the south bank and arrive in the town of Quebec. Disembarkation in the old port in Quebec and visit to the town.

## Practical Quebec

**Formalities:** Valid passport.

**Weather:** In winter, the Fjord sleeps under 0.5 to 1 m of ice...to awaken to tourism in May. The weather here is continental, very close to our summer: temperatures of between 18 and 28°C during the day, sometimes cool at night (10 to 15°), long sunny moments, sea breezes. In the narrowest parts of the fjord, the wind sometimes feels like a light Mediterranean breeze. This is rarely the case on the St. Lawrence, which is wide and powerful once you leave Quebec, with occasional strong westerly winds.

**Sailing conditions:** The Saint Lawrence and the entrance to Fjord Saguenay are not without their dangers: the currents and the shallows, the powerful winds, the bars which form at certain times of the tide (for example at the entrance to the fjord) don't make sailing easy. Navigation is 100% on sight, in scenery to take your breath away. The fjord is deep, very enclosed and relatively safe – a little bit of current, occasionally some strong winds, channelled by the mountains, but there are a lot of places to shelter. Don't sail here on your own if you don't know the area.

**Buoyage:** From Quebec to Tadoussac, the boat must follow one of the two channels on the Saint Lawrence. The north one is deep and follows the very beautiful Charlevoix mountains. The maritime traffic is concentrated in it; the buoyage is very good.

**Fauna:** The Saguenay Fjord and the Saint Lawrence concentrate an extraordinary quantity of marine mammals: whales, belugas, common dolphins, seals, piebald dolphins, sometimes killer whales. Not a quarter of an hour goes by without seeing these wonderful animals on the surface. Certain bays even concentrate large numbers of belugas. The regulations in force are strict, with speeds and safe distances to be respected. Ashore, in the Saguenay National Park, there are all the animals of the north Canadian forests: bears, wolves, moose, etc...

**Getting there:** Quebec airport. Daily flights from Paris, Nantes... Air France, Air Canada, Air Transat, etc ...

**Languages spoken:** French and English.

**Money:** Canadian dollar. 1.4 to 1.6 dollars for 1 euro.

**Some local charter companies:** Croisières Terre & Mer, Voile Mercator, VPY, Blanchons, Damacha

## NEWS FROM THE CHARTER COMPANIES

### MALAYSIA

We presented a wonderful destination in our last edition, Malaysia. We omitted to point out that Sunsail also has a base here... The company's base is on Langkawi, the biggest of the 99 islands in this cruising area. With its natural, white sand beaches, its lush jungle and its mountain summits, this island is considered to be the best-kept secret in Malaysia... the cruising area is studded with islands and offers fantastic tropical scenery. Although there are a few 5-star holiday centres here and you can make duty-free purchases, it's an ideal place to get away from the worries of daily life. Not to be missed!

[www.sunsail.com](http://www.sunsail.com)

### NEW MOORINGS SITE

To celebrate its fortieth anniversary, the Moorings web site has been completely revised, and is offering new services. You can thus discover new itineraries, photos and videos, as well as a lot of information about the stopovers. An undeniable plus for organising your cruises.

And as the icing on the cake, Moorings is offering a visit to the boats you can charter, with 360° animation...

Final advantage: you will (very) soon be able to book your cruise directly on-line.

[www.moorings.com](http://www.moorings.com)

### DISCOVERY AND FISHING CRUISE IN SENEGAL

Aboard the 25m maxi-catamaran 'Etoile Magique' you can be lucky enough to discover Senegal and the Bijagos archipelago this winter. Destinations which are not very well-known by sailors, rich in beaches, estuaries and mangroves, whose stopovers will be the opportunity to meet the warm, welcoming population, and a mixture of tradition and maritime culture, oriented towards fishing. With a tropical climate, the winter is the dry season, and the trade winds blow invariably.

[www.etoile-marine.com](http://www.etoile-marine.com)

### LAGOON 400 IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Those of you who dream about testing the latest from Lagoon, the already famous 400, can go and discover the Iles d'Or near Hyères, or cross to Corsica, leaving from Apaca's base, aboard it. The company is situated in Hyères, on the Cote d'Azur, and is offering the 400 for charter from 3,200 euros...

Information:

[www.location-de-catamaran.com](http://www.location-de-catamaran.com)



It is impossible to sail between St. Lawrence and Saguenay without seeing the Tadoussac whales...