

A ferris wheel lights up Old Montreal.

A FRISSON OF french

Where better to embrace the chill in the air than in a snow village? Until the end of March, Montreal's **Parc Jean-Drapeau** makes its debut as the backdrop for a 30-room hotel, polar igloos with "hightechnology" sleeping bags, a 60-seat restaurant, heated outdoor spas, a bar with an outdoor terrace for 250 and a wedding-ready chapel — all made from snow and ice. Famous local buildings, such as St. Joseph's Oratory of Mount Royal, are also part of a replica of La Belle Ville fashioned from the cold stuff (snowvillagecanada.com).

If a toasty abode is more your style, **Hôtel Le Germain Montréal** will wave a magic wand over your suite and poof! the door opens to a vase of six long-stem red roses and a bed scattered with

petals. Or enter to a luxurious bubble bath and a half-bottle of Veuve Clicquot with two flutes. Include a late checkout — on the house. Should you miss the day Cupid casts a long shadow, romance can be arranged year-round (germainmontreal.com).

If you're in town Feb. 16 to 26, **Montréal en Lumière** warms up the city with food and drink as well as dozens of exhibits and concerts ranging from DJ performances to classical opera. For 11 days, you can dance under the stars to free live music or warm the cockles of your heart with wine and sweets from street vendors. On the 25th, **Nuit blanche** à Montréal features 170 mostly free activities spread across the city, accessible via the all-night-long metro and free shuttle buses (montrealenlumiere.com).



BREAKING THE ICE

Rekindling the romance in a private gondola kitted out with champagne, candles and mood music as it ascends the mountains is just part of Valentine's Day at Big White Ski Resort in Kelowna, B.C. Maybe a horse-drawn sleigh winding through an Okanagan forest with the *de rigueur* bubbly, chocolate-covered strawberries and a woolly blanket is more likely to ignite a blaze? Why not throw in a dinner specially tailored for lovers at the resort's Kettle Valley Steakhouse? Top off the evening with all-you-can-eat chocolate for \$10 at Big White's Moose Lounge. And don't worry if you're skiing solo — you can meet your match on the mountain during the Bullet Speed Dating affair, which pairs skiers and snowboarders, then sends them off into the distance on a chairlift speed date (bigwhite.com).

FROM PARIS WITH LOVE

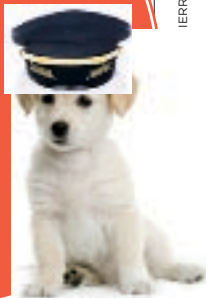
Marlene Dietrich — she of "Falling in Love Again" fame, countless paramours and enduring affection for Paris — lived in the Hotel Lancaster for three years. The diva's swish suite still overlooks a Zen garden, boasts decor in her favourite colour (lilac) and fabric (damask), and is decked out with two marble fireplaces and a Louis XV desk, where you can pen your own love poems with a Mont Blanc pen (the company once created a commemorative edition of the stylus in honour of Dietrich). The Hotel Lancaster's romance package (Feb. 1 to 25) includes a lavish breakfast, pink champagne, chocolates or pe-



tits fours and a *cade-nas d'amour* (love padlock) to join thousands of others on the Pont des Arts. Located off the Champs Élysées, it's no wonder the 57-room, art- and antique-filled hotel, built in 1889, was also a destination for such bygone stars as Grace Kelly and Greta Garbo (hotel-lancaster.fr).

ANIMAL INSTINCT

If you can't bear the thought of leaving behind the one closest to you, Porter now allows pets in the cabin. What could be more loving than travelling with Fido or Fluffy? (flyporter.com)



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