

MAISON SAINT-GABRIEL

Museum and Historic Site

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

THE GARDENS OF HISTORY... 1608-1760

Until December 21st, 2008

Montreal, September 2008 – Until December 21st, Maison Saint-Gabriel presents its temporary exhibit entitled **The Gardens of History... 1608-1760**. This history of gardens started in a period when botanical knowledge was flourishing. The inhabitants of the St. Lawrence valley discovered another nature, rich in unfamiliar plants, but with a harsh climate. They brought their plants, their seeds and their know-how with them. It was a conflict between two worlds, with the settlers' need to feed and care for themselves in the background.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, in New France, gardens were essentially utilitarian. Vegetables, herbs, berries and fruit trees accounted for most of the plants cultivated during this period. There was a significant difference between the gardens of nobles, convents and farms. In fact, in addition to the presence of ornamental plants, the variety of vegetables planted arose out of a desire for refinement. Thus, asparagus as well as several sorts of lettuce, both sought after vegetables, could be found on tables.



Herb gardens were above all utilitarian and could be found everywhere. Herbs were an essential part of every-day life. They were used to add flavor to foods and as perfumes for people and homes; they also provided better treatments than most physicians at the time.

Through this exhibit, which has been prepared in cooperation with Ethnobotanist **Daniel Fortin**, who created the vegetable garden at Maison Saint-Gabriel, you will

explore the gardens of farmhouses, convents, apothecaries, nobles and colonists from 1608 to 1760, at which time the French Regime came to an end.

And all those who prefer to see on the various species discussed during the exhibit can simply step outside to admire them, decked out in their fall colours, in the farmhouse garden, recreated in the spirit of the 17th century..

Maison Saint-Gabriel is located at 2146 Place Dublin in Point St. Charles, a few steps from Marguerite-Bourgeoys Park, and close to the Charlevoix metro station (Bus 57). Guided tours with reservations, from Tuesday through Friday, until April 13.

The Gardens of History... 1608-1760, until December 21, 2008
Information: 514 935-8136 www.maisonsaint-gabriel.qc.ca

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