

MAISON SAINT-GABRIEL

Museum and Historic Site

PRESS RELEASE

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BREATHING IN HISTORY IN THE GARDENS OF MAISON SAINT-GABRIEL

Montreal, April 10, 2008 – A visit to Maison Saint-Gabriel, a museum dedicated to the history of New France, includes a sensory experience. The **Farmhouse Garden** and its vegetable patch, recreated in the spirit of the 17th century, as well as the glade and the **Poetry Path**, plunge visitors into the perfumes and actions of days gone by.

An old-fashioned vegetable garden

Purchased by Marguerite Bourgeoys in 1688, Maison Saint-Gabriel watched over the destiny of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame for more than 300 years. In 1664, grains, peas, hemp and flax, as well as vegetables such as turnips, beets, carrots, onions, leeks and chicory were grown here. Herbs such as garlic, parsley, savory, chervil and burnet could also be found there. Some of these species have disappeared today, but several others, hybrids, can still be found in the Maison Saint-Gabriel garden.

Growing knowledge too

As was common in the countryside, the **Farmhouse Garden** included flowers, herbs and vegetables. Thus, aromatic herbs grew side by side with magnificent, old-style roses that amazed visitors with their perfumes and colors. To learn more about the plants and flowers of this period, visitors can also attend **horticultural lectures** every Sunday during the summer as well as take part in **guided tours**, offered at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. The afternoon is also filled with activities with artisans, musicians and the performers of the Théâtre Catherine-Crolo.

The root of words

In the heart of downtown, the site of Maison Saint-Gabriel shelters a glade typical of the Montreal plain. This circuit connects with the **Poetry Path**, which gives visitors an opportunity to stroll through greenery and time, while honoring the French-speaking and English-speaking poets who both left their mark on the history of poetry and were inspired by the luxurious beauty of nature.

When history blooms again

This year, Maison Saint-Gabriel gives visitors an opportunity to pursue their discoveries, plunging them into the heart of the gardens of the St. Lawrence Valley at the end of the French Regime. The new temporary exhibit, ***The Gardens of History... 1608-1760***, presented from May 15 to December 21, 2008, was produced in cooperation with **Daniel Fortin**, the ethnobotanist who created the Farmhouse Garden. It traces the history of these old-time gardens, essentially utilitarian, which satisfied the needs of the settlers in New France in the 17th and 18th centuries, as they sought to feed and care for themselves.

Maison Saint-Gabriel is located at 2146 Place Dublin, in Pointe-Saint-Charles, near Marguerite-Bourgeoys park (Wellington St.), less than five minutes by car from Vieux-Montréal and close to the Charlevoix metro station (Bus 57 east). Guided tours are offered in French and English, Tuesday through Sunday, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., from April 13 to June 21, 2008 as well as from September 9 to December 21, 2008, and from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., from June 22 to September 7, 2008. The museum is closed on Monday.

Information: 514 935-8136 www.maisonsaint-gabriel.qc.ca

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