

Bonjour, Montreal

Karen in America

By Karen Zhang

Karen最近来到位于加拿大魁北克省的蒙特利尔市，展开一段为期三天的旅程。蒙特利尔市是加拿大第二大城市，是典型的英法双语城市。第一次来到蒙特利尔的Karen会经历怎样的culture shock呢？这里与美国的城市有着怎样的区别呢？



I don't speak French but when I visited Montreal for the first time this summer I was completely immersed^[沉浸] in a French speaking environment. I couldn't tell between tourists or local people because the only language I captured on the street was French. Just like its language, so foreign to me, Montreal's cityscape^[城市风光] is European-like. From the old sandstone^[砂岩] churches, Victorian buildings and storefront^[临街的] patio^[露天的] restaurants, I was dazzled by the differences in Montreal compared with the American cities I have been to.

To many Americans, Canada is another state bordering the U.S. rather than a foreign country. Canadian students who study in the U.S. don't consider themselves international students. For me, as a first-time traveler to Canada, I see lots of dissimilarities^[不同点].

Perhaps I was in the French-speaking Quebec province, so the Canadians in this province are unique. They are proud of their French heritage^[传统]. Many places are named after saints. So the road names in Quebec in

general are very long. If I didn't look Asian, the waitresses or the cashiers wouldn't have spoken to me in accented English.

Montreal is a biker-friendly city. Many Montrealers ride bikes instead of driving cars. In Montreal, you can borrow bikes right on the street from the public bike racks which are all digitally programmed. Once you start the rental, the digital timer also begins. All the bikes have a global positioning^[定位] system. So it's easy

to locate the lost bike. You can return the bike anywhere in the city. I heard this bike rental system is similar to that in France. No matter subway or buses, Montreal provides very good public transportation. I think this is what the American cities lack.

Perhaps because more people choose to ride bikes or walk, Montrealers are quite fit. During my three-day visit, I hardly ever saw overweight or senior people on the street. There were lots of young people in Montreal, thanks to several big universities like McGill^[麦吉尔大学] and Concordia^[肯考迪亚大学] in the city. The nightlife flourished in summertime with visitors from everywhere.

Montreal is like a little Paris in North America during summer. All kinds of festivals are held one after another. While I was there, the Comedy Festival was on. Street performers played music and told jokes in public. Some even entertained the passersby through games. It was so much fun. I think I will return to Montreal for a long stay next time. ④