

Robb Report

LUXURY RESORTS

PREMIERE ISSUE

THE 100 BEST PLACES TO STAY IN 2006

THE MOST EXCLUSIVE ACCOMMODATIONS IN ANGIUILLA • ASPEN
LAS VEGAS • LOS CABOS • MALDIVES • MARBELLA • MARRAKECH
PORTOFINO • SANTA BARBARA • SANTORINI • ST. MORITZ
MORE

Hôtel Quintessence Named
Among the Top 100 in the World

SUMMER 2006

In Your Element

Ignis, aer, terra, and aqua are inscribed on the stained-glass window in the soaring foyer of Hôtel Quintessence. The Latin words describe the four elements—fire, air, earth, and water—but a fifth element, quintessence, was equally important in ancient philosophy. Defined as the substance that filled all space, quintessence was known more commonly as ether. However, as Quintessence's owners no doubt determined, the latter term would fall short as a descriptor for this essential mountain chalet near Quebec's Mont-Tremblant.

Stone facades, turrets, and cathedral ceilings provide an elaborate frame for the casual après-ski atmosphere within Quintessence. Although relaxed, the environment inside does not lack for sophistication; it is as if the Canadian wilds have been tamed for your comfort. The ground floor opens onto an outdoor, all-season hot tub and infinity pool that appears to be spilling into Lac Tremblant. On winter evenings, an ethereal blue glow surrounds the tub as steam envelops bathers who take in the view: giant evergreens with boughs straining under the fresh snowfall,

a frozen lake, lights twinkling from the chalets across the way.

Just behind the pool area is the Spa Sans Sabots, a wee facility good for hot-stone or four-hand massages. Therapists also offer treatments in Quintessence's spacious suites, where open-concept bathrooms include claw-foot tubs, separate rain showers, and heated marble floors.

A "wood concierge" is on hand to help you with your suite's hearth, even if you already have undertaken the task yourself. "You did a good job," he may encourage, "but maybe . . ." He takes the poker, flips a log, turns the other on its end, and suddenly you have a raging fire. Then he sweeps off the stone slab and turns to a nearby table, replacing the empty silver ice bucket with a fresh one. He straightens his green vest, insists that you have a nice evening, and shuts the door silently behind him. And he never once mentions the soot on your nose.

Hôtel Quintessence, 866.425.3400,
www.hotelquintessence.com



LOCATION

About 80 miles northwest of Montreal in Quebec's Laurentian Mountains, a snowball's throw from the jelly bean-colored resort town of Mont-Tremblant.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The château-style boutique hotel contains 30 suites that range from 700 to 1,726 square feet, all with balconies overlooking Lac Tremblant.

RECREATION

Mont-Tremblant offers some of the best skiing in the East each winter; spring is the season to visit the nearby La Cabane à Sucre Millette for the annual sugaring of the maple sap; summer is for fly-fishing and golf (at Le Geant and Le Diable); and autumn's leaves provide a colorful backdrop for hiking the paths around the lake.

DINING

French technique with Quebecois flair at Restaurant la Quintessence, where a snack may consist of local cheeses paired with duck confit, pâté, figs, and dates. The wine bar has a 5,000-bottle cellar and a tasting room.

WORTHY DIVERSION

Explore Lac Tremblant in the hotel's circa-1910, 33-foot Layare motorboat and take a swim in the pristine mountain waters.

RATES

From \$240 to \$1,840.

