

JEWISH CONNECTIONS

VAUDREUIL-SOULANGES HAS A RICH JEWISH TRADITION

By MIKE COHEN

The West Island Montreal communities of Vaudreuil-Soulanges continue to gain notice as cost efficient and a quality place to live. Located on Montreal's West Island, extending to the Ontario border, the Municipalité régionale de comté (MRC) de Vaudreuil-Soulanges has a population of nearly 140,000 people throughout its 23 municipalities.

JEWISH HISTORY: People might be surprised to learn about the area's fascinating Jewish history. Historian Elaine Steinberg has done extensive research on this subject. She recently shared her findings with the Jewish

Society of Montreal.

Forty years ago Steinberg moved her family across the Ile aux Torte Bridge and never looked back. Steinberg says she moved her family off-island to accommodate her lifestyle. "The Hudson area was well known for its horsey activities," she says. "I was a young mom with a stable of horses, a menagerie of dogs, a passion for gardens and was teaching half days at Jewish People's and Peretz Schools in Montreal."

For reasons unknown, Vaudreuil-Soulanges' Jewish history was left unattended, says Steinberg. "When I returned

to reclaim it, our history was in a strange state," she noted. "Sometimes other cultures had claimed it, or it was edited out; or it became a myth by virtue of unresolved facts."

Steinberg still lives in Vaudreuil West, on the doorstep of Hudson, where her children grew up. "Although Jewish homes are dotted throughout the region, I think the St. Lazare municipality is the new Jewish frontier," she says. "It has the highest density and a Chabad rabbi since 2010. Rabbi Nechum Labkowski."

JEWISH DEVELOPERS: Meanwhile, developments like Les Perles de la

Gare and Les Perles sur le Parc in Vaudreuil-Dorion are attracting a lot of interest. Project manager Ariel Yudelevich is a civil engineer from Israel who earned his degree at ORT in Tel Aviv. Partnering with Yudelevich, are experienced Jewish property developers Joe Levine and Amos Sochaczewski. Their Développement Diamant (<http://www.developpementdiamant.com>) already has two projects in place—Les Perles de la Gare and Les Perles Sur le Parc, with different phases both occupied and under construction.

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KOSHER CUISINE:
The five star Château Vaudreuil Hotel (www.chateauvaudreuil.ca) at 21700 Route Transcanadienne is extraordinary. It is not only a wonderful choice for tourists, but Montrealers should consider this place for an easy weekend getaway. Over the last few years, the Chateau Vaudreuil has become very popular for Jewish weddings. It has a kosher kitchen, partnerships with two prominent kosher caterers (Tradition/Romano Giorgi and Black Tie/Ernie) and hosts other Jewish functions and business meetings. The Villa d'Este Restaurant even goes the extra mile. Guests requiring kosher meals need only provide 24 hours notice. Breakfast will be brought to your room, with lunch and dinner served in the dining room. This option has

greatly increased the number of Jewish guests choosing the hotel, especially those coming by car from Ontario.

The Château Vaudreuil is presently marking its 25th anniversary.

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TRAVEL TALES

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City. We made a reservation at Mastro's Steakhouse (www.mastrosrestaurants.com) at 246 North Canon Drive in Beverly Hills, arriving at 8:30 p.m. on a weekday evening. The place was packed. Recognized as one of the top 10 steakhouses in the U.S., it is also known for its sumptuous seafood selections and one of the best desserts I have ever tasted in my life - the famous and irresistible warm butter cake. Mastro's was purchased last year by Landry's Inc. of Houston, which already owns the Mortons chain. Their Jewish chairman and chief executive is Mark Levy.

Mike Cohen's email address is info@mikecohen.ca. Follow his travels at www.sandboxworld.com/ travel and on Twitter @mikecohensl.

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