

Siggi and Nargis Gercke's Montreal

Pack your My World bag and e-travel with AA Retiree host Siggi Gercke and his beautiful wife Nargis to Montreal, Canada, in this first My World, My American Airlines - Retiree Edition.



Nargis and Siggi Gercke

Tell us where did you two meet

Siggi: I met Nargis in her hometown of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. She was working for TWA as an Administrative Assistant. We were married in 1970 and began traveling the world before moving to Montréal.

What would you say makes Montreal unique?

Siggi: Montreal is a multifaceted city justly proud of its contrasts. It is the world's second-largest French-speaking city after Paris, with 1.7 million residents. Some call it a melting pot of cultures from around-the-world.

Nargis: It is a lively town with a rich architectural heritage spanning four centuries of history from the French Regime to the modern era. An island that's anything but narrow-minded, a remarkable town that's always in the mood to celebrate something.

What's the best time of the year to visit?

Siggi: For me, I would say the summer months or somewhere between May through September. If you want to enjoy the changing of the seasons, plan a visit in the Fall. This time of year is just spectacular. Nargis: Here's a travel tip, you can find special foliage cruises that depart from Montreal to New York or Florida.



What are the best places to visit?

Siggi: Ladies first ...

Nargis: O.K. Take in the sound of horse-drawn carriages on Old Montreal's narrow cobblestone streets. You might consider an introduction to the city's rich history by visiting Pointe-à-Callière, the Montréal Museum of Archaeology and History, which, together with the Musée Marguerite-Bourgeoys breathes life into Montreal's 350-year-old past.

Siggi: I suggest visiting the Mont Royal where you can see an incomparable view of the city. Besides enjoying the magnificent park, the mountain is also home to the impressive Saint Joseph's Oratory.

Nargis: The view from the atop the Olympic Park stadium mast is great. It was designed for the 1976 Olympic summer games. I like the enchanting setting of the Botanical Gardens too, with its remarkable collection of plant species, as well as the Insectarium. Siggi: Nargis, don't forget Riverside Montréal, this old port offers visitors a wide-range of wonderful river excursions.



What fun things can I do with my family?

Nargis: If you're visiting in the summertime, Montréal has a vast network of bicycle paths. In the winter, singles or families can enjoy skating or cross-country skiing in the city parks. For those preferring the indoor activities, the "underground city" a subterranean network comprised of office buildings, residential complexes, shopping malls, hotels, cinemas and restaurants is a neat place to visit.

Can a tourist get around easily?

Siggi: Yes, you can use the Metro to get around many parts of the city quite easily.



What hotels do you recommend?

Siggi: There are a variety of nice hotels, it just depends on your taste. The Le Meridien Montreal is close to the Guy-Concordia Metro station and not far from McGill University. It is also very close to the Musee de Beaux Arts and shopping along Sherbrook. The "W" is more ultramodern trendy; the Fairmont Queen Elizabeth on Rene Leveque is a bit more historic. Jetnet is also a great source to secure great deals on hotel stays.

What are your favorite restaurant picks?

Nargis: Siggi and I love the Le Jardin Nelson. The restaurant is located in a 1812 building and offers a unique dining experience. It has a large open air section and live music. Boccacinos is another favorite of ours.



What's your best travel tip for the area?

Siggi: Take the train to Quebec City and visit the famous Chateau Frontenac hotel. Walk through the lobby and visit the shops or take a carriage ride.

How has American Airlines influenced your life post retirement?

Siggi: I have many American Airlines friends who are actively working in leading positions with AA that I stay in touch with. Nargis and I also recommend and book our clients for travel on AA all the time.

American currently offers non-stop service to Montreal from Dallas/Fort Worth and Miami. American Eagle rounds out service to Montreal from Chicago O'Hare and New York's LaGuardia and JFK airports.
