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Exploring the Trails of Gorgeous Gaspésie, Québec

by Eric Hanson | Nov 4, 2019 | ADVENTURE, EPIC TRAILS, TRIP REPORT, VARIETY PACK



I recently returned from an absolutely epic 30-day film shoot in the beautiful province of [Québec, Canada](#). I hiked, and backpacked, and mountain biked, and climbed, and ran, and star gazed, and ate, and paddled, and Via Ferrata 'ed my way through six diverse regions in Québec all showcasing mind-blowing fall colors. The Epic Trails episodes that will come out of this adventure will air next year, however I'm excited to share a glimpse into my time in "la belle province" by way of this blog.

My journey through Québec began in the [Maritimes](#) by landing at sunset in Mont-Joli, a tiny town with an even tinier airport in the beautiful coastal region of [Gaspésie](#). The road to my first destination wound its way along the St. Lawrence River and the sky was set fire with color, letting me know that good things were in store for this trip.

I didn't have much time to settle in. I knew that in less than 12 hours after my arrival, I would be in [Parc national de la Gaspésie](#) participating in the autumn course of [Les Traversées de la Gaspésie](#)—an event series of week-long running/hiking/skiing/snowshoeing adventures along Gaspésie's coast and mountains. The leg I was to experience was a 15-mile traverse through the mountains with about 100 other participants. I had never run more than ten miles before, so running more than a half marathon on a muddy, rocky, technical trail with over 2,000 feet of elevation gain was going to be a huge challenge for me.



It was crisp and windy as we started. Fall was just setting in and you could feel the cold change that was coming.

About six miles in, I had my first wave of surprise—a “holy-crap-Québec-looks-like-this?!” moment. A cascade poured down a granite face and into a beautiful lake below surrounded in early fall yellow. It was breathtaking.

By mile eight, I was starting to hurt. My muscles in my right leg were not cooperating and I think they were trying to let me know I'm getting old.

At mile 12, I met with a crew of women who were there to encourage participants' progress by offering shots of some sort of Québécois liquor. With a belly full of fire, I continued on to complete the last three miles down the mountain to the finish line.

These last three miles were hard. Really hard. I'd never run that far before and my body was protesting my choices. But I kept going. When I finally made it a wave of relief and pride washed over me.



After leaving Gaspésie, the *Epic Trails* team and I headed for [Parc national du Bic](#), a small park in the [Bas-Saint-Laurent](#) region of Québec with opportunity for big adventure. The park has a funky section of coastline that sticks out into the St. Lawrence River with some out-of-this-world geological features that make you feel like you are scrambling along the bones of a prehistoric dragon.



The hiking here was great. But, keen for the chance to rest my feet and see the area from a different perspective, I was most excited to get out on the water and kayak. That day, the conditions were windy which made the water tricky to kayak but we made good progress along the coast and were rewarded with beautiful landscapes. We even saw a few seals hanging out in the nutrient rich waters.



After a whirlwind two days in Parc national du Bic, it was time to make way to my next Québécois destination. And so, I hopped on the ferry and headed north to Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean...

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