



What It's Really Like to Stay at Hôtel de Glace in Quebec

History of Hôtel de Glace

Hôtel de Glace was inspired by Sweden's legendary IceHotel, which first opened in 1989 as the first ice hotel in the world. Over the years, a few more ice hotels have popped up in various locations, including Finland and Norway.

In 2001, Hôtel de Glace opened as the first and only ice hotel to operate in North America. It was originally constructed near Montmorency Falls before moving locations several times and eventually settling permanently at Village Vacances Valcartier.

The 32,000 square foot hotel is made entirely of snow and ice and is reconstructed every single winter. It truly is a masterpiece and a labor of love. It takes about 6 weeks, 40,000 tons of snow, and 50 crew members to bring this hotel to life each year.

How Do You Get to Hôtel de Glace?

Hôtel de Glace is located about 25 minutes northwest of Quebec City at Village Vacances Valcartier Resort.

We rented a car during our trip to Quebec and appreciated the flexibility. However, if you don't have a car, you can [book a shuttle](#) through the resort that connects directly to Old Town Quebec City.

Is Hôtel de Glace Open Year-Round?

Unlike IceHotel 365 at the Swedish IceHotel, Hôtel de Glace is only open seasonally. The exact dates vary, but it generally opens the first week of January and closes the last week of March.

The hotel opens in phases and is usually fully complete by mid-January. This [map](#) shows the different phases of opening when we visited in 2026. I recommend planning your visit once it is fully completed so you can experience all of the features of the hotel.

Can I Tour the Ice Hotel if I'm Not Spending the Night?

If you're unsure about spending the night in sub-zero temps, Hôtel de Glace is open for tours during the day. At the time of our visit, tours were \$31.99 CAD at the door and \$24.99 CAD if you [booked online](#) in advance.

If you don't have a car, it's a great option to [book a tour](#) through a third-party company. This includes transportation to and from Old Town Quebec City, as well as a ticket to tour the hotel.

The hotel is open for tours daily from 10 am until 8 pm. It is only reserved for overnight guests outside those hours.

What Are the Main Highlights of Hôtel de Glace?

We were blown away by the intricate sculptures and architectural details of the ice hotel. It is a true work of art!

Grand Hall

As soon as you walk through the door, you'll enter the Grand Hall where you'll be greeted with impressive sculptures and an ice chandelier hanging from the 21-foot high ceiling.

Grand Slide

If you continue straight through the Grand Hall, you'll come to a room with a slide made entirely of ice.

It was so much fun to go down! We learned that you'll go faster if you take your jacket off and sit on it.

Restaurant

The Hôtel de Glace Restaurant is one of the most unique dining experiences imaginable!

The ice restaurant is in partnership with the Fairmont Le Château Frontenac Hotel in Old Town Quebec City. Guests can book a [special package](#) that includes transportation from Fairmont Le Château Frontenac, a guided tour of the ice hotel, a welcome cocktail, and a 3-course gourmet meal.

Ice Bar

While the restaurant is an exclusive experience, the Ice Bar is open to all guests, and it is a vibe!

It features neon lights, music, a fireplace, an ice lounge, and drinks served in hand-carved ice glasses. Overnight guests receive a complimentary welcome drink, and some tour packages include it as well. If you don't drink alcohol, they also serve mocktails, soda, and juice.

Chapel

If you're looking for a unique wedding venue, the chapel at Hôtel de Glace will make all your *Frozen*-inspired fairytale dreams come true!

The chapel is open for guests to tour as well, and it's one of the coolest (literally) chapels we've ever visited!

Ice Suites

The hotel features 30 uniquely designed [ice suites](#) ranging from simple rooms to elaborate themed masterpieces. They even have suites with a fireplace and a private hot tub & sauna.

When booking a room, you don't get to choose a specific themed room, only the type of room.

The largest suites have 3 beds, which would be perfect for families or splitting the cost with friends.

Each year, the themed rooms are different, and it's so cool to see how creative the artists are!

What it's Like to Sleep in an Ice Hotel

I was equally excited and nervous to spend the night in an ice hotel. During our stay, it was 11°F outside, but the inside of the hotel was about 25°F due to the insulation. But trust me, it was still cold!

The base of the bed is made of ice, but it has a mattress on top that is covered in blankets. Guests are also provided with an arctic sleeping bag that is designed to keep you warm in temperatures as low as -22°F.

While you may be tempted to dress in layers to sleep, it's actually recommended to only sleep in a synthetic thermal or wool base layer (not cotton). This is to avoid sweating, which will actually make you colder. We did sleep with beanies, gloves, and wool socks, and that helped.

I was surprised how warm it actually was in the sleeping bag. The problem is getting out of the sleeping bag! If you have to use the restroom at night, there are heated porta-potties outside the hotel. It's not fun bundling up and walking out in the cold in the middle of the night, so try not to drink a lot of liquids before bed.

Besides the obvious challenge of sleeping in the cold, we also had a hard time sleeping due to the lights staying on all night. The lights give off a cozy glow, and honestly, it would be a bit scary sleeping in complete darkness. However, as someone who prefers sleeping in the pitch black at home, it was hard to fall asleep in a bright room.

Also, keep in mind that the ice hotel doesn't have any electric outlets, and there is only a curtain covering the door, so there are no privacy locks.

But the good news is that when you book a stay at the ice hotel, you actually get keys for a second room at the Hôtel Valcartier, a modern 4-star hotel next to the ice hotel.

It's nice to have a regular hotel room to store your luggage, charge your devices, and take a hot shower. It's also a good backup plan if you want to experience sleeping in an ice hotel without sacrificing a good night's sleep! We actually ended up going up to the hotel room a little after midnight. It was fun to experience what it's like to sleep in an ice hotel, but still enjoyed a warm, cozy bed!

Overnight guests also enjoy exclusive access to the Nordic area with 3 hot tubs and a sauna. They are available from 8 pm until 10 am outside the public tour hours.

It was cold getting in and out, but it was absolute bliss to sit in a steaming hot tub surrounded by snow.

Another advantage of spending the night is that you can experience the ice hotel without all of the crowds. When we arrived earlier in the day, it was packed with visitors taking day tours. At night, it felt magical to experience the hotel with only a handful of other overnight guests.

Other Activities at Village Vacances Valcartier

We were impressed by how much there is to do at the village resort. The [Winter Playground](#) includes 4 different snow tube slides and a 1 km ice skating path. Access to the ice skating path is actually included for overnight guests at the ice hotel, but skate rentals are an additional charge.

They also have a fun [indoor waterpark](#), as well as a few restaurants, a cute little sugar shack, shops, and a spa.

We ate dinner at the Le Capitaine restaurant, and it was just ok. The pizza at the Villagio Restaurant might be a better choice, or just eat before you arrive.

Is it Worth Staying at Hôtel de Glace?

Am I glad I stayed in an ice hotel?

A million times yes! It was such a unique bucket list experience.

Would I stay there again?

Probably not. It's one of those one-and-done experiences for me, but I am grateful we had a chance to visit!

The hotel is more expensive than your typical stay, but it is also not just any typical hotel stay. We paid \$678 USD for one night in a one-bed themed suite at the time of our visit.

However, I think it's worth it considering how much work goes into creating this hotel every single year. Keep in mind, the room rate also includes a room at the Valcartier Hotel as well, so it's 2 rooms for the price of one.

So would you pay hundreds of dollars to sleep in below freezing temps, or would you stick with a day tour? Either way, it's well worth visiting Hôtel de Glace if you're visiting Quebec in the winter!