

Park Journal



PARC NATIONAL des Monts-Valin

2007-2008 Edition



Welcome to the frontier of the North!

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N.B.

Please note that the prices indicated in this magazine may be changed without notice. Taxes are not included in the prices. Lodging rates are given per person per night. Park admission is not included in these prices.



The Parc national des Monts-Valin was founded in September 1996 to protect a representative area of the Mont Valin massif, which covers a total area of nearly 7,000 square kilometres!

The park has a lot to offer as a four-season ecotourism destination with 154 square kilometres of area and fifteen or so peaks reaching more than 800 metres in altitude, including the 980-metre Pic Dubuc (Peak).

The Parc national des Monts-Valin is already at the top of the list for winter hiking in Eastern Canada, thanks to the magical Vallée des Fantômes – (Ghost Valley), among others. The exceptional snow conditions from December to April and the mountainous terrain of the park are a source of absolute pleasure for enthusiasts of winter activities in a mountain environment.

Summer and fall visitors are not to be left out, however, as they will marvel at the discovery of so many natural treasures. The Étang Bélanger (Pond) peat bog is just one example of the exceptional biological diversity. Or, for breathtaking viewpoints over our great region, the Pic de la Hutte is unbeatable.

The mission of Parcs Québec

With a view to achieving harmonious development at the cultural, social, economic and regional levels, Parcs Québec is responsible for the conservation and development of territories that are representative of Québec's 43 natural regions or exceptional sites, while ensuring that they are accessible for educational and outdoor use.

All of Québec's national parks were created in accordance with World Conservation Union standards. The criteria are defined as follows:

- A relatively vast area that represents one or more ecosystems that are moderately or not at all transformed by exploitation;

Since the fall of 2005, we have begun the establishment of a wide-ranging development plan aiming to substantially increase the promotional value of the Parc national des Monts-Valin: reconditioning of the roads, installation of interpretative signs, development of a long-distance hiking trail, as well as the construction of cottages, shelters, and relay stations. These improvements are meant to increase the satisfaction of a growing clientele.

Overall, nearly 3 million dollars will be invested until the fall of 2008 to complete the initial stage of the development plan, aiming to make the parc national des Monts-Valin a protected area of international repute.

Whatever the season, you are invited to explore and discover this exceptional site, all the while contributing to its conservation for future generations.

From all the park personnel, have a most enjoyable time at the frontier of the North!

François Guillot
Director, Parc national des Monts-Valin

- Where animal and plant species, geomorphological sites and habitats are of particular interest from a scientific, educational or recreational viewpoint, and that offers scenery of great beauty;
- In which the highest competent authority of the country has taken measures to eliminate exploitation and to instil respect for the ecological, geomorphological and aesthetic aspects, on the whole;
- Where a visit is authorized, under certain conditions, for educational, cultural or recreational purposes.

Access Fees

Price per	Daily Access	Annual pass, park	Annual pass, network
Adult (18 and over)	\$3.50	\$16.50	\$30.00
Family (1 adult with children)	\$5.00	\$25.00	\$45.00
Family (2 adults with children)	\$7.00	\$35.00	\$70.00
Youth (6 - 17)	\$1.50	\$7.50	\$15.00



Vallée des Fantômes – Ghost Valley:

The mysteries of a snowy valley

The outstanding quality of its winter season is the reason why the reputation of the *Parc national des Monts-Valin* has spread well beyond regional borders. An ever-growing number of park visitors come to discover the *Vallée des Fantômes*, where the evergreens wear such a thick coat of snow that they look like ghosts! Ghosts and mummies are fascinating climatic phenomena, to the enchantment of winter outdoors enthusiasts. The ghosts haunt the valley, 800 metres in altitude and near the open summits, where the trees are protected from the winds and receive considerable precipitation of powdery snow from the surrounding peaks, up to 5.5 metres annually. The evergreens end up completely covered with a camouflage of soft snow: they are the ghosts. For their part, the mummies inhabit exposed summits and are completely exposed to wind and humidity, 900 metres in altitude. Low clouds, made up of tiny water droplets, cover these summits for periods ranging from a few hours to a few days. The droplets freeze upon contact with the shriv-

elled trees. The milky ice coating builds up on the windward side of the trees and shapes are created to the whim of Mother Nature.

The *Vallée des Fantômes* can be accessed via a network of trails or using the shuttle service, the *Fantôme Express*, which covers the 14 kilometres between the Discovery and Service Centre and the foot of the valley, where a 3-km, intermediate-level circuit takes you to the summit of the *Pic Dubuc*, 320 metres above. From that point, the hills of the *Piedmont* and *Mont Valin*, as well as the Saguenay lowlands, seem to go on forever. Hikers will find shelter and a great place to have lunch at a relay-station 2 km from the starting point of the trail. The ghosts are waiting for you, it is up to you to go and meet them on their territory. A perfect way to get reconciled with winter and snow!

The Fantôme Express, Shuttle Service



An easy way to get to the “*Vallée des Fantômes*” and to the mountain shelters is to climb aboard the shuttle. Four departures are scheduled daily from the Discovery and Service Centre. The number of places is limited to 13 passengers, so we recommend that you reserve ahead of time.

Rates starting at		
One-way shuttle trip	Adult	\$30.50
	Child	\$22.82
Return shuttle trip	Adult	\$43.44
	Child	\$32.69
Family packages (2 adults / 2 children)		\$119.57
<i>Upon reservation only</i>		

Schedule	Monday to Thursday	Friday to Sunday Holiday season Mid-term Break
Departures from Discovery and Service Center	8:30 a.m. / 10:30 a.m. / 14:30 p.m.	8:00 a.m. / 10:15 a.m. / 1:15 p.m. / 3:45 p.m.
Return trip from the Vallée des Fantômes	9:30 a.m. / 11:45 a.m. / 3:30 p.m.	9:00 a.m. / 11:30 a.m. / 2:30 p.m. / 4:45 p.m.
* At certain times and depending on weather, the service may be modified, reduced or even cancelled.		

Phantom Package

- Includes:
- shuttle transport
 - snowshoe rental
 - lunch

\$58⁴⁹ / adult

\$42⁴⁹ / child



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Backcountry skiing & Snowshoeing...

The Long Excursion

You can choose from a variety of short or long excursions. Sixty kilometers of marked trails are accessible for either skiing or snowshoeing enthusiasts. Backpackers will plan their two- to five-day itinerary according to the availability of the mountain shelters. A list of suggested equipment, as well as customized itineraries, are available on our Web site. A luggage transport service and passenger and supply shuttles are also available to make your multi-day outing a most enjoyable experience. For more information, ask the staff at the park reception desk or at the reservation office.

Recommendations to excursionists

The staff at the Parc national des Monts-Valin wishes to remind you to act with safety in mind and to heed the following safety regulations:

- You are required to register at the Discovery and Service Center before starting on your trip and upon your return;
- Your equipment must be able to withstand extreme climate conditions;
- You must travel only by daylight and always be in the company of others;
- At least one member of your party must be familiar with topographic map reading and the use of a compass or GPS;

- Your skis must be appropriate for backcountry conditions, you must have climbing skins and your snowshoes must be equipped with spikes.
- You are expected to cooperate in a friendly manner with others staying in the shelters and to share the provided equipment fairly;
- You are also responsible for the cleanliness of the huts. Bring your waste and bottles back with you;
- When planning your trip, take the topography and the heavy snowfalls into consideration.
- Your cell phones will only operate from a few spots in the park, generally from the highest peaks.
- Outdoor fires are not permitted during the winter season, except in the firepit at the igloo site.
- Surface water is not drinkable, it is recommended that you boil it 5 min. before use.

Park management reserves the right to refuse departure to any person or group not respecting the basic safety rules.

We recommend that you read the "Prudent de nature" pamphlet to enjoy your activities in total safety!

AirMédic air ambulance
www.airmedicquebec.net
 1 877 999-3322

Short Winter Excursions

	Backcountry Skiing	Snowshoeing	Length (km)	Level
Le Pic-de-la-Tête-de-Chien		X	3.5	Difficult
Le Pic-de-la-Hutte		X	7	Difficult
Le Mirador		X	1.5	Easy
Le Lac Des Pères	X	X	1.5	Easy
Le Pic-du-Grand-Corbeau		X	5.5	Difficult
L'Ulysse	X	X	5.5	Intermediate
La vallée des Fantômes*	X	X	3	Intermediate

* Shuttle service to trail entrance available

Special delivery!

- Luggage transport starting at \$10.00 per 5 km, one piece, one way only. Maximum weight: 20 kg / 45 lbs.
- Supplies starting from \$44.50 by box including storage services.

All Geared up for Fun Equipment Rental Service

	day
Mountain snowshoes, adult	\$14.69
Mountain snowshoes, child	\$10.53
Telescopic poles	\$9.21
Backcountry skins	\$4.61
Winter sleeping bag	\$13.82
Ground mattresses	\$9.21
Camping stove	\$4.61
Mess kit	\$4.61



Get in Touch with Nature!

Choose from several types of accommodation available in the park during the wintertime: total comfort, rustic cabin or northern adventure...

Total Comfort Cabins

The cabins offer all the comfort of a cozy nest. Fully equipped kitchens, complete bathrooms, bedrooms and spacious living rooms with woodstove.

STARTING AT \$43.50 PER PERSON.

Important notice: The Martin-Valin Lake cottages are not accessible by car during winter, a shuttle service is available. Moreover, these cottages do not have running water in winter; outhouses only.

Shelters

Located along the 50 km of trails, our shelters can be accessed on backcountry skis or snowshoes. They are equipped with woodstoves and supplies of firewood, and can accommodate up to 8 people. Beds and mattresses are supplied. Note that there is no lighting system in this type of accommodation.

THE FEES FOR ONE NIGHT IN A HUT ARE \$22.00 PER ADULT AND \$16.50 PER CHILD ACCOMPANIED BY A PARENT.

Northern Adventure in an Igloo

Enjoy an unforgettable experience in the cozy atmosphere of our igloos (snow shelters). Sleeping bags, sleeping pads and snowshoes may be rented. The site is located about 500 m from the Discovery and Service Centre and has a fire pit.

RENTALS START AT \$24.50 PER ADULT AND \$18.40 PER CHILD ACCOMPANIED BY A PARENT.

Winter Camping

Winter camping is only permitted at the Eau-vive group campsite. Please note that it is forbidden to camp along the backpacking trails, even close to the shelters.

► See the Cottages and Rustic Camps table on page 7 of the summer section

Igloo Package

Includes:

- 1 night in an igloo
 - winter camping equipment
 - Mountain snowshoes
- For 1 day (maximum 2 persons)

49⁹⁹\$ per adult 41⁹⁹\$ per child

Winter Relaxation Package

Includes:

- Exclusive cottage lodgings at Martin-Valin Lake
- Shuttle transport (minimum 4 persons)

2 nights from 82⁹⁹\$ per adult 42⁹⁹\$ per child
 3 nights from 106⁹⁹\$ per adult 50⁹⁹\$ per child





9 Blueberries for a Pie!

Commonly called blueberries by the Québécois and very common to Northern North America, *Vaccinium* (whortleberry) type plants produce tiny, round, blue-coloured fruits. These berries have been known and used for a long time. They were dried and powdered by North American Indians, who were the first to make use of them by adding them to corn, honey and water to make what they called *Sautautbig*. Blueberries were also mixed with meat and smoked to make winter preserves. Dried blueberries are an excellent source of vitamins A and C, potassium, phosphorus and calcium, and can be used to fight diarrhoea. Be careful however, heavy consumption of these berries can have laxative effects! Moreover, blueberries contain antioxidants called anthocyanins, which are of great interest to researchers as anti-cancer and anti-aging agents. It is also noteworthy to mention that the harvesting of blueberries is practically free of pesticides and chemical fertilizers.

A point of interest, North-eastern North America contributes 90% of the world's blueberry production and exports to more than 20 countries. In 2002, Canada exported 34,816 tonnes of deep-frozen wild blueberries, thus generating 85.5 million dollars. In the Lac-Saint-Jean region alone, 160 blueberry producers generate over 20 million dollars annually. Little wonder the region is associated with the blueberry!

A shrub of generally small size, the blueberry bush grows in acid soils and often takes root in post-fire forests. Ten species have been inventoried in the Province of Quebec until today, 9 of which are found in the Parc national des Monts-Valin (Table 1). The two most common species are the *Vaccinium angustifolium* (lowbush blueberry) and *Vaccinium myrtilloides* (velvet-leaf blueberry). The first is characterised by its serrated leaves and hair-striated glandulous shoots and the second, by its smooth leaves and velvety shoots. Moreover, two species of arctic alpine blueberries are found in the park. As opposed to the other species of plants, these are able to grow on the summits due to their ability to withstand high-altitude climatic conditions. They are the *Vaccinium cespitosum* (dwarf huckleberry), a semi-prostrate shrub reaching only 10 cm with finely serrated leaves, and *Vaccinium uliginosum* (bog blueberry), noted for its whole leaves with arched veins.

In 1996, when the Parc national des Monts-Valin was created, Mr. Robert Gauthier, botanist and curator of the Louis-Marie Herbarium at Laval University, was called upon to carry out a floristic inventory. Exploration of the territory, initially concentrated on the most specific areas, or most likely to have developed, revealed a number of pleasant surprises, among which several species of blueberries (blue-fruit *vaccinium*) in the heath-lands of *Mont Valin's* summits and white birch plantations located above 700 m in altitude.

These intriguing results led to further research during the summer of 2002, which revealed that the Parc national des Monts-Valin is inhabited by every known species, hybrids and varieties of blueberries found in the Province of Quebec, except for the *Vaccinium corymbosum*, a species found around Canada's southern border.

Among the species, hybrids, and varieties inventoried in the Mont Valin area and shown in Table 1, the *Vaccinium ovalifolium* and its hybrid *Vaccinium X nubigenum* are considered rare in Quebec; other species, such as *V. cespitosum*, *V. gaultherioides* and *V. uliginosum*, are listed among sub-arctic or sub-alpine species living in habitats similar to those found on the summits and escarpments of *Mont Valin*.

If the natural value of a given environment can be measured according to the variety of its habitats and species, the Parc national des Monts-Valin can be considered a remarkable genetic reservoir for the *Vaccinium* genus. Could it have been otherwise in "Blueberry Country"?

Each of the 9 blueberry species found in the park has a different taste. Some are sweet, others less so. Some taste strong, others are somewhat reminiscent of the pear. Furthermore, taste can also be modified by the growth environment. So, to get a better idea, visit the park at the beginning of August and try our various species of blueberries.

Group I Sepal Blueberries

- Vaccinium angustifolium*
 - Serrated leaves
 - Hair-striated glandulous shoots
- Vaccinium angustifolium var. nigrum*
 - Sea-green whole leaves, elongated and finely serrated
 - Large, black berries without bloom
- Vaccinium boreale (v. angustifolium var. boreale)*
 - Very small (10 cm), leaves 3-5 mm
 - Thin, finely serrated leaves 3-5 mm
- Vaccinium angustifolium X myrtilloides*
 - Hybrid
- Vaccinium myrtilloides*
 - Whole leaves with cilia, ± pubescent
 - Smooth shoots all around

Group II Sepal-less Blueberries

- Vaccinium ovalifolium*
 - 60-cm shrub
 - Oval leaves, sometimes serrated at base
- Vaccinium cespitosum*
 - Small, lush, leafy
 - Thin, finely serrated leaves
- Vaccinium X nubigenum*
 - Hybrid
 - 30 cm high
 - Oval leaves, irregularly serrated even at high altitudes

Group III Pistil Blueberries

- Vaccinium uliginosum (upright)*
 - Forms dense patches with strong upright shoots
 - Sea-green whole leaves with arched veins
- Vaccinium uliginosum (prostrated form)*
 - Low to the ground with very small leaves
- Vaccinium uliginosum (thin-leaf form)*
 - Summit east of the Pic de la Puce de Chien (Peak)

At the Frontier of the North Discoveries of the Year



Winter Activities

"Phantombusters" Rally

Come and experience a complete change of scene in the "Vallée des Fantômes" (Valley of the Phantoms). Answer the questions in the rally and learn a lot about the wonderful world of winter. Do you know what a "krumholz" is? Ask the park warden on your way up.

Schedule: From the Christmas holidays to the end of March, Saturdays and Sundays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Duration: Variable

Departure: "Vallée des Fantômes"

Admission: Free

To Sleep? To Leave? To Stay?

Even if each season has its own way of revealing the natural beauties of the Parc national des Monts-Valin, winter reigns over the territory with unparalleled majesty. Six months of the year, from November to April, wildlife lives according to the rhythm of the cold season. Perfectly adapted to their habitat, the wild animals use different strategies to survive until spring. Come and discover how the park fauna gets through winter.

Schedule: From the Christmas Holidays to the end of March, depending on availabilities.

Duration: 30 minutes

Departure: Discovery and Service Centre

Admission: Free

A Realm at Night

The Pic de la Hutte is an ideal place for watching the night sky. If you would love to experience a winter night under the stars, you are invited to take part in a snowshoe excursion that will take you all the way to the summit. The deep black of the night sky around Mount Valin makes the stars even brighter!

Schedule: Upon reservation, minimum 8 people

Duration: From 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Departure: Discovery and Service Centre

Admission: Upon request

Snowshoeing under a Torch-Lit Sky

After a night of torch-lit snowshoeing, let yourself be taken by the unique country flavours of our tasty regional products. Come savor our delicate cheeses, fine chocolate and fieldberry liquor.

Schedule: January 5, February 9, and March 8, 2008

Duration: 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Departure: Discovery and Service Centre

Admission: Adults - \$19.95

Four-season Activities

At the Frontier of the North

When you visit the Discovery and Service Center, see our permanent exhibit, "*Aux frontières du nord*". It shows the main characteristics of the natural area protected and developed by the park. The scale model of the Monts Valin, the herbarium and the multimedia presentations will inspire you to head off into the park and discover its natural riches for yourself. The permanent exhibit is accessible during regular Discovery and Service Center hours.

Schedule: Every day

Duration: Variable but generally 30 minutes

Departure: Discovery and Service Centre

Admission: Free



THE GREAT OUTDOORS AND CONSERVATION - THE 7 PRINCIPLES OF *Leave No Trace Canada*

Because its role encompasses more than conservation alone, Parcs Québec wants to use every possible occasion to foster support among visitors to its national parks for the adoption of ecologically responsible practices in outdoor activities. This is the reason Parcs Québec is proud to have chosen to promote the principles of *Sans trace*, the french version of the popular American *Leave No Trace* program. This code of outdoor ethics is based on the following seven principles:

- Plan Ahead and Prepare
- Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Leave What You Find
- Minimise Campfire Impacts
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Considerate of Other Visitors



These principles are of course inherent in the regulatory framework that governs our national parks.

At the same time, awareness and application of *Leave No Trace* values in every single one of our outdoor activities, even the most unnoteworthy among them, can help reduce their impact on our natural environment.

To learn how you can best play your part inside Québec's national parks, you can consult www.parksquebec.com, and click on the *Conservation Mission* tab.

To find out more about *Leave No Trace*, go to www.aventure-ecotourisme.qc.ca, choose English, then click on the *Leave No Trace* tab.



Cross-country skiing and ice climbing

The Ingredients That Make for a Good Winter

The Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region has a continental-type climate marked by relatively cool summers. However, the high altitudes of a goodly part of the Parc national des Monts-Valin lend it certain climatic particularities.

First factor: Altitude cools temperatures at a rate of 0.6°C per 100 metres of elevation. With several peaks above 800 metres in altitude, the average temperature at Mont Valin is lower than that at the level of the Saguenay River.

Second factor: The Mountain itself creates a barrier for humid air masses and forces them upwards. As a consequence, the water vapour cools and transforms into rain, or snow, depending on the season. Since the cold season is longer, most of the precipitation falls in the form of snow. Snowfalls are therefore more frequent and heavier.

How Much Snow ???

During winter, the *Mont Valin* receives an average snowfall of 5.5 metres. In the *Vallée des Fantômes* sector, snowfall totalling more than 7 metres in one winter has been recorded!!! Each year, these extreme snowfalls mean that in the deep of winter, the snow cover on the ground can reach 3 metres. At the end of winter, this great white coat takes a lot of time to melt away, which delays spring for several weeks. On June 1st 2004, there was still one metre of snow on the ground at *Pic Bellevue*!!!

Ice climbing

Ice climbing is permitted in the *Rivière Sainte-Marguerite* sector under certain conditions. Please contact the Park Reception Center at (418) 674-1200 for further information.



Yours to discover... On skis!

At the foot of the imposing Mont Valin massif, our network of groomed cross-country ski trails offers circuits of 2 to 20 km for classic- and free-style skiers. The trails will take you past a parade of lakes and mountains, through snowy landscapes, and along bare rock cliffs. Find your way to the Piedmont camp where you can enjoy a well deserved rest.

Trail grooming is guaranteed during the high season only, as follows: Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, and every day during the Holiday Season and March break.

Cross-country ski rates

Day pass (taxes included)
Adults : \$8.50
Children : \$4.25
Families (1 adult) : \$11.75
Families (2 adults) : \$19.75

Group rates available
 Season passes available
 Park admission extra

See our Web site for snow conditions, updated daily from the very first snowfall.

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I, J.-É.-A. Dubuc, personally invite you!

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Information : (418) 673-6455
 1 866 260-8254
 www.valinouet.qc.ca

tour du mont Valin

The “Tour du Mont-Valin” on skis, an event not to be missed!

Each year on the third Saturday of March, the 15th in 2008, for one day, the mountain is taken over by cross-country skiers. This popular, friendly competition has four circuits to offer, 12, 20, 38 and 50 km, freestyle or classic. The longest routes go all the way around the mountain. Five supply points are set up along the way. Celebrate the arrival of spring with this weekend of activities on March 17.

For more information, consult our Web site www.tourmontvalin.com.



Accommodations nearby...

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Mariko Watanabe Richard Lapointe
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 mariko@auxbonsjardins.com
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 - **Reception room**
- 50, boul. Tadoussac, Saint-Fulgence. Tél. : (418) 674-2811

Recycle! It's important...

Glass... Metal... And plastic...

...are recyclable. Thank you for contributing to the protection of the environment by putting your containers in the tubs provided for this purpose, in all national parks in the Parcs Québec network.

General Map of the Parc national des Monts-Valin



Respect the Natural Environment

Be one of our partners! With your cooperation, we will offer you tranquility, assure your safety and, above all, ensure that the natural environment is preserved for today's visitors as well as tomorrow's.

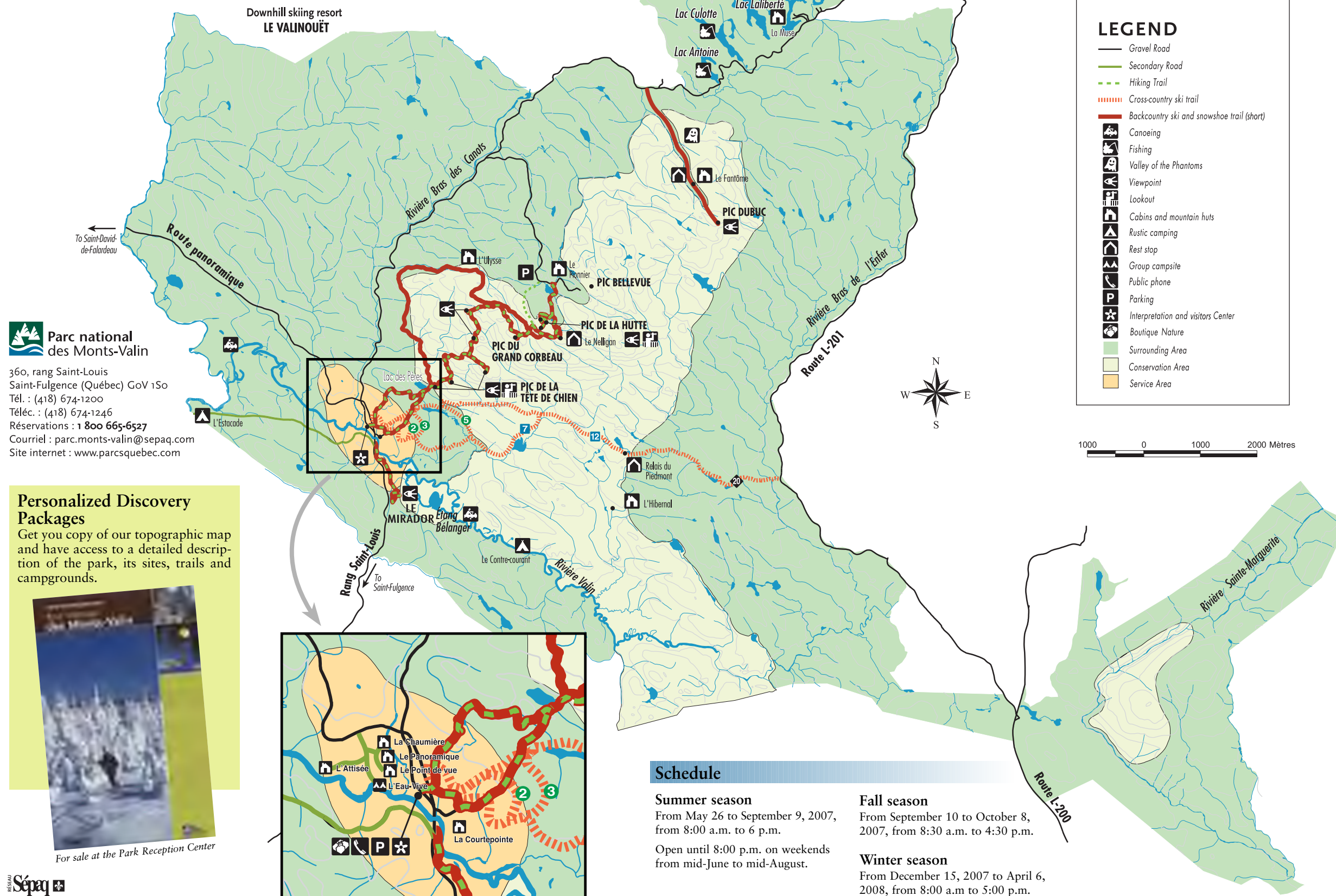
Conservation in Quebec's national parks involves everybody. We ask all our visitors to respect the environment. Please note that it is forbidden to:

- Introduce animals, except in the case of guide-dogs, on duty or in training;
- Kill, capture, injure, stress, feed or try to tame an animal;
- Throw litter elsewhere than in the waste bins, or burn garbage in fire pits;
- Cut, harm, take away or introduce a tree, shrub or plant or any part thereof;
- Collect firewood;
- Leave dishes or food lying about. Out of respect for wildlife and for your own safety, it is important that you put your food away in your car or in tightly closed containers;
- Light open fires when the fire hazard index is high.

Parks are natural wilderness areas, that is why safety should always be an integral part of the planning and practice of every activity.

The park directors and staff have developed a safety and risk management plan to deploy in case of emergency. However, visitors are responsible for own safety. Being adequately prepared and obeying basic safety rules constitute the first steps in your enjoyment of pleasant and safe activities. Please pick up a free copy of the basic safety measures to follow at park reception.

The Parc national des Monts-Valin team wishes you many unforgettable outdoor experiences and invites you to be careful- Naturally!



Parc national des Monts-Valin
 360, rang Saint-Louis
 Saint-Fulgence (Québec) G0V 1S0
 Tél. : (418) 674-1200
 Téléc. : (418) 674-1246
 Réservations : 1 800 665-6527
 Courriel : parc.monts-valin@sepaq.com
 Site internet : www.parcquebec.com

Personalized Discovery Packages
 Get you copy of our topographic map and have access to a detailed description of the park, its sites, trails and campgrounds.

For sale at the Park Reception Center

Schedule	
Summer season From May 26 to September 9, 2007, from 8:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. Open until 8:00 p.m. on weekends from mid-June to mid-August.	Fall season From September 10 to October 8, 2007, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
	Winter season From December 15, 2007 to April 6, 2008, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.