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July 2006

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Montrealers Discover a Love of Tea

*Regardless of the season,
tea is a drink to explore*

BY MICHAEL GORMAN

Hsu-Ping Kung's fingers dance and hover above three tiny saucers filled with tightly compressed tea leaves as his interpreter-son, Chin-Fu, explains exactly what is about to transpire: an intricate infusion of the purest flowers picked by hand and imported from the mountains of Taiwan.

Mountains of Tea

Not any mountains, mind you, but actually two sides of the same mountain. Such are the intricacies of good-quality

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Vivian Ma, Anny Liang and Sheryl Chiang (from left) enjoy a pot of fresh Oolong tea in the tearoom at Yuan.

Philly Stakes

Romantic Dinners at Il Cortile and Ginger

BY PHIL PRICE

Having recently enjoyed the fourth year of being married to my lovely wife I have decided to dedicate this installment to romantic dinners and where they can be enjoyed in Montreal. The romantic dinner is an elusive, mysterious thing. The image of the romantic meal is always some cinematic feast for two: the left bank of Paris, a candlelit table by the Seine as the last whispers of sunlight mingle with the starry sky. Sometimes it is being nestled by a fire

continued on page six

Maternally Yours

Camps, Berries and Baby Equipment

BY ANNIKA MELANSON

Montreal has so much going on for families, especially during the summer. Here goes: from July 13 to 23, The Just for Laughs Festival hosts the Lipton Just for Kids Zone in the Parc des Habitations Jeanne-Mance, located on de Maisonneuve between Sanguinet and St. Dominique. The Lipton Just For Kids Zone is open from 6:30 pm to 10 pm on weekdays and from 2 pm to 10 pm on weekends.

continued on page eight



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HAPPENINGS *Vivva Montreal's guide to what's on around the island.*

■ **Brian Jungen: Native Art Goes Pop**
A recipient of the 2002 Sobey Art Award – Canada's most remunerative prize for emerging artists – and with recent shows in New York, London and Berlin, Brian Jungen is one of Canada's hottest up-and-coming



artists. A touring exhibition collects for the first time the young artist's signature pieces: plastic lawn chairs refashioned as massive whale skeletons and Nike sneakers sculpted to suggest ceremonial First Nations masks. A member himself of the Dunne-za Nation of northern B.C., Jungen deftly interweaves the iconography of his ancestry with the seemingly contradictory vernacular of consumer culture – to create a body of work that owes as much to Warhol and Duchamp as to Native craft. Brian Jungen at Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal. Admission \$8 (\$4 for students), and free Wednesdays after 7 p.m. Call 514.847.6226 or go to www.macm.org. **Until September 4.**

■ **Festival International de Tango de Montreal**
www.festivaldetangodemontreal.qc.ca
514.527.5197 **July 8-16.**

■ **Bon Jovi / Nickelback** at Parc Jean-Drapeau for their only Canadian outdoor show. **July 13.**

■ **International Nuits d'Afrique Festival**
www.festivalnuitsdafrique.com
514.499.FINA. **July 13-23.**



■ **Sinatra sings Sinatra**
(an evening with Frank Sinatra Jr.).
Cabaret du Casino de Montreal
www.cabaretducasino.com
514.790.1245. **Until July 30.**



■ **FanTasia Turns Ten.** Montreal's most eclectic film festival might also be its most enduring. Despite the glut of prestigious – and under-attended – filmfests in the fall, FanTasia has developed a devoted following by championing cinema's most bizarre reaches. Focussing primarily on horror, fantasy and animation, FanTasia is the largest event of its kind in North America. This year's edition features spotlights on New Wave British horror and stop-motion animation, new works by Werner Herzog and Snoop Dogg, as well as free outdoor screenings in Parc de la Paix. The number one reason not to get a tan this summer. Concordia Hall

Theatre. Tickets \$7.50 each or 10 for \$65. Call 514.790.1245 or go to www.fantasiafestival.com. **July 6-24.**

■ **Marley Celebrated at Reggae Fest**
The Montreal International Reggae Festival is back for its third edition. For those unwilling to cough up the \$80 for a weekend pass, there will be free performances in the Old Port celebrating the life and music of Bob Marley, who died 25 years ago this year. The main stage features Marley's son, Ky-mani, alongside crossover stars Shaggy and Maxi Priest and veteran dancehall singer Barrington Levy. Montreal International Reggae Festival, at the Old Port. Mainstage shows \$20-\$50. Call 514.448.8383 or go to www.montrealreggaefestival.com. **July 14-16.**

■ **Top Women at Rogers Cup**
Montreal hosts the top five women players at Canada's premier tennis tournament. Number one seed Amelie Mauresmo will battle it out with incumbent champion Kim Clijsters of Belgium and teen marvel



Maria Sharapova – Russia's latest tennis star-cum-model – for a total pot of \$1.65 million. Free tickets are available to the qualifying rounds on Sunday August 13, to first-comers. Singles and doubles action begins in earnest on Monday August 14. Uniprix Stadium. For tickets call 1.866.338.2685 or go to www.rogerscup.com. **August 12-20.**

■ Have an event you know about or want to publicize for late August or early September? Send your idea in the above format to vivvamontreal@pricepatterson.com. If it fits in with *Vivva Montreal*, we'll publish it.

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TEA...*continued from page one*

tea. The particular strains of Oolong we're about to enjoy were both picked, dried and prepared by hand from Taiwan's A-Li San and Li San – both more or less one and the same. Li San is the higher part of the mountain, though, and its climate is therefore cooler. Hence, it produces a tea that is not at all the same as its more southern sister.

The ritual unfolds in the bright and spacious tearoom in the back of **Yuan**, a two-year-old Taiwanese restaurant on St. Denis Street just below Sherbrooke Street East, where Kung and his family have been introducing an increasingly curious North American clientele to the mysteries and benefits of one of the oldest beverages known to man.

The Tea Mood

'Tea is good for your health,' explains Kung's wife, Anny Liang. 'It helps to calm you.'

Though she acknowledges that business slows down somewhat in the summer, Liang stresses that the calming and cleansing effects of tea are good for both the body and spirit no matter the time of year. Tea and Montreal's burgeoning tea-room scene, if we can call it that, has been growing in popularity in recent years, due

in part, says Liang, to a sort of awakening – realizing the existence of good-quality, all-natural teas, as opposed to the 'tea dust' remnants of leaves contained in your typical store-bought tea bags.

Plus, she says, more and more people seek out the calming atmosphere and quiet social interaction of tea salons like Yuan. This is no eardrum-splitting nightclub – although the young Chin-Fu offers an interesting insight on that point.

'You know, you can get drunk on tea,' he says with a knowing smile. 'When you drink a lot of it, the caffeine is too much, so you can get dizzy.' Luckily, he offers the antidote: 'All you have to do is eat some sugar and you'll be fine.'

Tea Destinations

Another source of higher education in the world of tea is **Camellia Sinensis**, an airy, atmospheric salon near the Cinéma du Quartier Latin just off St. Denis. Currently closed until mid-month for the summer holiday, Camellia Sinensis (named for a type of tea) offers a broad selection of teas imported from Taiwan, China, Japan, India, South America and other locales.

A recent visit uncovered a world where lingering is expected and encouraged. The decor is decidedly Asian-influenced, almost Zen-like. A back room offers sofa

loungers, or you can opt instead to sink into oversized pillows on the floor by the front windows. Your server will likely give you a sweet smile, a menu and a tiny brass bell, which you will ring for service once you've made your choice from some 60 varieties of tea on the menu.

Teasalon, a newer venue also on St. Denis, places equal emphasis on the serenity of the tea-enjoying experience. If it seems that the tearooms of Montreal are all concentrated on St. Denis Street, perhaps it's because this particular part of the Plateau-Mont Royal tends to be home to a younger, hipper crowd that has been quick to embrace this new trend.

From the West End to the High End

West Enders who prefer to stick closer to home need go no farther than Monkland Avenue, where **Gryphon** and **Un Amour Des Thés** carry the flag for tea connoisseurs in NDG, offering a range of teas and tea accessories to purchase and try at home.

There's also **Cha Noir**, a small, dark, peaceful oasis on Wellington Street in Verdun that is kind of like the little sister to Camellia Sinensis: equally serene but serious about quality tea.

For a more occidental but no less exotic experience, meet some friends on the lush back patio at the Ritz Carlton Hotel

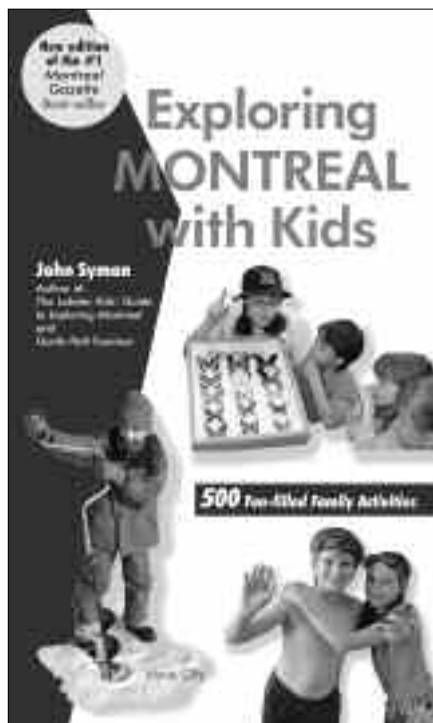
and let the time tick by on a sunny Sunday afternoon over a traditional English tea service. Tea at the Ritz comes replete with miniature crustless sandwiches, scones with jams and clotted cream, as well as assorted dainty desserts. Don't forget to extend your little finger as you sip (but heavens, don't slurp!) your Earl Grey.

The Ritual

At Yuan, the Kung family offers clients the option of pouring their own tea or of having the whole ritual painstakingly and lovingly acted out for them. For any serious lover of tea, there really is no option. At least the first time, let the Kungs look after you. You'll learn all about the correct water temperature, timing and tasks involved in brewing a proper cup of tea. You'll learn how to extract the essence of the leaves, to take in the aroma before the cup touches your lips, to discern the sometimes subtle differences between first and second infusions – and you'll be all the better for it.

And thus will begin a lifelong love affair with an age-old tradition steeped in history and lore but ultimately no more complex than a hot cup of tea on a drizzly day. What could be more comforting than that?

Michael Gorman is writer in Montreal.

AVAILABLE SOON

Book launch: Saturday July 22, 2006
from 3 pm to 4 pm at Babar en ville (1235A Greene Ave)

5½ Things that Vivva Montreal recommends you do in July

- 1** Athletic things first: dig out your croquet set or buy a new one. *Rediscover the civilized pleasure of recreational sports. The perfect excuse to enjoy Montreal's parkland.*
- 2** Have a Mojito at Cactus (4461 St. Denis just south of Mount Royal 514.849.0349). *This idea sells itself.*
- 3** Have a Cosmopolitan at Tribeca (5557 Monkland 514.223.1411). *This idea also sells itself.*
- 4** Bring your own wine. *Pack a picnic with a bottle of wine – a luxury legal only for Quebecers.*
- 5** Spend Happy Hour at Le Massillia (4543 Park Avenue 514.678.1862). *The only place in the city serving pastis for \$3 a round. Order it 'comme à la Marseille', with ice and filtered water.*
- 1½** Drink lots of water, have a cold shower or bath and stay home in the coolest room in your house. *Stay cool.* (Docked half a unit for lack of originality.)

Have 5½ Things to recommend for August?
Send your idea to vivvamontreal@pricepatterson.com

Volunteers around the World Build Library

BY COLIN ROBERTSON

Hugh McGuire is building a library.

But these books aren't kept in a building of brick and mortar. You'll find neither paper and typography nor binding and artwork, and no librarians shushing, either. The library is better known as Librivox.org, the books are all in audio format, and they can be downloaded to your personal computer anytime, for free.

McGuire, a Montreal writer, can't take all of the credit for a project he started that now has 100 completed books and 200 books in production in ten different languages (including Japanese, Finnish, and Old English). 1,500 volunteers from around the world have helped him build it, one word at a time.

'The Open Source model of software development has volunteers from around the world contribute to the making of a computer program that is then given away for free,' says McGuire. 'It's the many-hands-make-light-work principle. I launched this project, hoping to get some other people interested.'

It seems to have caught on, garnering press from such outlets as the *Los Angeles Times*, BBC Radio, NPR, CBC Radio, *USA Today* and *Wired.com*. But more important to McGuire is that the volunteers are having fun adding to the collection.

'I think many people are attracted to the idealism of the project. Our goal is lofty, ridiculous and very clear: to make all books in the public domain available, for free, in audio format on the Internet.'

The Public Domain

Books in the public domain are out of copyright. As Librivox.org is hosted in the U.S., any book published in the United States before 1923 can be recorded and added to the library.

McGuire started the project in August 2005, and after an initial spike of interest, growth has continued at a more manageable rate. Around 100 new volunteers

join every month. But McGuire is quick to allay fears that this project might be only for the geek literati.

'Some (of our volunteers) have experience with voice work, or are very technically savvy. Most are just regular folks who have never recorded anything before. Recording is pretty easy and can be done with most computers these days.

'Structurally, we've tried to organize things around our volunteers: we try to make it easy, and you can do as much or as little as you like, when you like. We accept any reader, and we have a friendly forum where people new to the process can get some help. We celebrate all voices and accents.'

Getting Started as a Performer ... or Listener

The project's first book was Joseph Conrad's *Secret Agent*. McGuire's favourite book in the project is Jack London's *Call of the Wild*. 'It was very well done,' McGuire says. Librivox and its volunteers now produce at a rate of two or three completed books a week.

With set-up costs at a minimum (a \$30 microphone and some free software will do), volunteers choose which books they will record. They can claim a chapter of a book already underway, re-record a favourite book, or start on a new solo project. The contribution can be a haiku or *War and Peace*.

But if you believe yourself plagued by a wobbly stage voice, or wish to remain in the audience for whatever reason, a gadget as common as an iPod allows you to download one of Librivox.org's books and listen to a classic work as you drive around town, run on the treadmill, or tune out on the bus.

Whatever your reason, if you love books, visit the world's most interactive library, a Montreal-born initiative, Librivox.org.

Colin Robertson is a Montreal writer.

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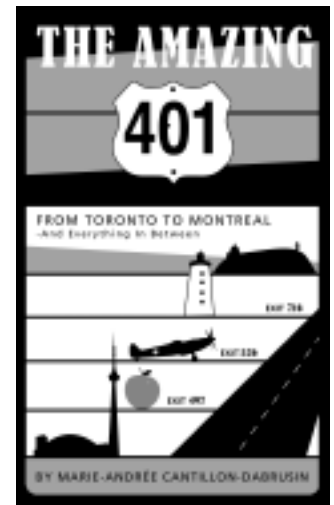
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BOOK REVIEW

My Friend James

BY CATHERINE MCKENZIE

A Million Little Pieces by James Frey ★★★★★

My Friend Leonard by James Frey ★★★★★

This is the truth: *A Million Little Pieces* is the best book I have read in the last five years. I could not get enough of this book. In fact, when I got to the last page, I turned back to the first page and read it again.

A Million Little Pieces

I read *Pieces* after the whole Oprah's Book Club / *Smoking Gun* investigation / *Larry King Live* back to *Oprah* for a public flogging incident (and by the way, shame on you, Oprah!). So I knew that there were elements of this book that had been invented, that had been changed, that might not be true. And I did not care. True or not, this is a great book. I read that James Frey set out to write the best book of his generation (his generation being that of Dave Eggers' of *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* fame) and I think he might have achieved it.

Addiction and Healing

For those of you who don't know, *Pieces* is about Frey's six-week stay in the early nineties at the Hazelden Treatment Center for drug and alcohol addiction. Frey arrives at the treatment center, at age 23, a physical and emotional mess. He leaves with an idea of how to become a whole person once again and how to leave his demons behind him. Along the way Frey makes some great friends, gets over

his old love, falls in love again, and repairs some of the central relationships in his life.

This is not an original story. What is original is the way the story is told. He does not glamourize himself, his addiction, his behaviour or the process he has to go through. His writing is as visceral as it can be. The purpose of his style is to bring you with him along the road he takes, to make you feel what he felt. And he succeeds. There is a scene in the movie *Payback* where Mel Gibson's character smokes a cigarette so hard that you can feel your own lungs hurt. Frey



achieves the same feeling with his words, with his phrasing, with the rhythm he uses to tell his story.

Twelve Steps (or Not)

What is also original is Frey's story of hope for those for whom the standard twelve-step programs, and their requirement of belief in a higher power, have not worked. Frey refuses to accept that there is only one way to get and stay sober. He refuses to be afraid of drugs and alcohol for the rest of his life. Instead he chooses to get better on his own terms.

If you want to know what is true and what is not, check out *The Smoking Gun*

website or search for 'million little lies' on Google. If you want to read a great book, read this one. It touched my heart.

My Friend Leonard

My Friend Leonard is Frey's follow-up to *Pieces*. Because nothing can be as intense as the experiences in *Pieces*, this book is not quite as good, but I still highly recommend it. Frey himself seems to recognize that the events following his leaving rehab are not as compelling as that earlier part of his life. In recognition, he has modified his style. The words are more loosely packed here, but they still deliver the emotions that he feels through the pages.

Sobriety and Friendship

The two central themes in this book are Frey's learning to cope with real life as a sober man, and his continuing friendship with Leonard, an older man who befriended him at the treatment centre. The stories weave around one another as Leonard helps Frey reconnect with the simple things in life. An apartment of his own. A job. Eating. Hanging out with his friends. Going on a date. The things we take for granted; the things Frey almost lost.

When Frey first tries more complicated emotions – falling in love, trying to decide

on a career – things get messier. Feeling too much was what led Frey to the treatment centre in the first place. He is afraid of feeling too much. Between the pages, he learns to overcome his fears.

Death and Persistence

This book is bookended by deaths. When the first death happens, we hold our breath waiting for Frey to fall. When the second happens, we know Frey is going to be OK. Between these two deaths is the beginning of a man's life. A life that he chose.

After spending so much time in James Frey's life, I feel as if I know the man. And I would be happy to.

Thank you for your words, James.

Catherine McKenzie is a lawyer in Montreal.

Vivva

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PHILLY STAKES... *continued from page one*

in some remote mountain lodge, feeding each other fondue. It also can be sucking back beer and hot dogs at a hockey game. Romantic dinners are never determined by a candlelit setting, but rather by the company you break bread with. Food always tastes better with someone you love.

The following spots are gentle suggestions for great spots for a romantic evening out. But please remember that regardless of the setting, the food or the atmosphere, romance is your responsibility.

Il Cortile ♥♥♥♥

514.843.8230
1442 Sherbrooke Street West

Italian for 'the courtyard', Il Cortile is a standby favourite of mine. My wife and I get giddy when we head for this romantic little spot, tucked neatly behind a row of buildings on Sherbrooke near the Museum of Fine Arts. We know the food will be great, the small tables intimate enough to share a secret or have a conversation without interruption. It's tranquil, romantic and relaxing. The surprise of this restaurant, a little discreet oasis in downtown Montreal, contributes greatly

to the wow factor. It's a great place for a first date.

**A Surprise ...
Even for Long-Time Montrealers**

I love recommending this restaurant because the reaction is always the same: people either can't believe that a restaurant exists in such a spot or that they had never heard of it. Either way, the moment you walk into the courtyard, you are greeted by a beautiful space: white tablecloths and elegantly set tables surrounded by an abundance of beautiful flowers pots, each loaded with brilliant white, purple, pink and red flowers of all kinds. It's a romantic, charming and easy spot to have a wonderful meal. The food echoes the beauty of Il Cortile's setting: straightforward, simple and perfectly executed dishes. The food is as simple as it can get: rustic Italian. The menu has never changed and I like that most about Il Cortile. In an industry where everyone is trying to be on the cutting edge, continually re-inventing themselves, Il Cortile remains a standout. It knows what it does best and has the integrity to stick to it. Every time I have been, the place has been packed. The simplicity of the menu and the beauty of the setting inspire that kind of consistent loyalty from its patrons.



Il Cortile

Tomato Sauce and Pasta

The food is great: simple flavours and top-notch ingredients. The best way to judge an Italian restaurant is by sampling the standard dishes. If these are done properly, you always know you are in great hands. The dishes that best reflect talent in the kitchen are always the simplest, e.g. linguine with tomato sauce. Tomato sauce is ground zero of Italian cooking. Without tomato sauce, Italian food would not exist. Everything springs from it and every region in Italy has its own version, all proclaimed to be the original Italian tomato sauce. Whatever the case, Il Cortile's tomato sauce is superb. Another great indicator of superb Italian food is pasta, or, more specifically, how well that pasta is cooked. If it is a clumpy mess of mush, you're in trouble. On the

other hand, if it is partly chewy and partly crunchy, you'll be equally disappointed. You will never have that problem at Il Cortile. The kitchen has serious pasta experience and they will always serve their pasta perfectly *al dente*.

Dishes

The menu is table d'hôte with a selection of appetizers and mains. I have tried almost everything and have never been disappointed. My favourites are the linguine with tomato sauce (a perfect example of Italian simplicity), gnocchi al gorgonzola – perfectly made pillows of potato bathed in an unctuous soup of gorgonzola cheese and shredded radicchio. Other surefire winners are the pappardelle con porcini. Wide ribbons of pasta served with porcini (the Italian version of cèpes mushrooms). The porcini are cooked simply, accompanied by garlic, a little white wine and veal stock. Starters are all good. I usually opt for prosciutto and parmesan, thinly sliced, simply served and absolutely delicious. My wife and I generally swap dishes and share it all as everything is so damn good.

- ♥♥♥♥♥ Culinary ecstasy (possibly life-changing)
- ♥♥♥♥ A great meal
- ♥♥♥ Moments of brilliance marred by missteps
- ♥♥ You could've done better at home
- ♥ The dumpster behind the restaurant would've provided a better meal



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Ginger

Dessert, Wine and Atmosphere

Tiramisu is the only dessert to have because it is so well made and delicious. Sometimes, I think it's the beauty and coziness of the setting that contributes to the taste of the food, but then I realize that the food would be incredible if it were served in an alley beside a dumpster, while getting your teeth drilled. Good food is good food regardless of setting. However, serving it in a great atmosphere always makes it better. Service is excellent. The waiters are amazing and should be the standard for all restaurants. The wine list is very good, has a great variety and suits every imaginable price range. Look for the private imports from Italy and take a risk on a bold Tuscan wine. The price for a meal at Il Cortile is absolutely reasonable and worth every penny. Il Cortile is, and will continue to be, a great place for a romantic dinner, a night out with friends or a great place to surprise locals who 'know all the great spots in town.' Reservations are recommended.

Ginger ♥♥♥♥

514.844.2121 – 16 Pine Avenue East

Tucked right off the Main on Pine Avenue is Ginger, a great little sushi restaurant that has been quietly packed since it opened. Ginger was the spot where I first spoke to my future wife. I was sitting in a booth, drinking a Tsing Tao beer, and this beautiful woman was introduced to me. We struck up a conversation and the rest, as they say, is history. Ginger will always be 'our place' and every year we make it out on our anniversary to rehash how we met and how we're doing. I love it at Ginger and urge you to try it out with someone you love. The place is serene. It looks like a waiting room in heaven. The cream-colored walls blend in with the comfy banquettes. A big plus is the fact that they only have booths in this restaurant; it sparks immediate intimacy and lends the feeling that each table is its own sort of bubble world. A long sleek bar in the tiny resto allows for a nice place to have a drink before taking your table.

The Menu

No great surprises on the menu. It's a solid mix of Asian cuisine with a standard, but great, sushi menu. Everything is well prepared and the ingredients are always fresh. Starters are all good; standards like miso soup, vegetable and shrimp tempura, spring rolls and dumplings are all great. Ordering off the chef's specials is also recommended.

For appetizers, most specifically, try the beef tataki. Its lightly seared slices of beef are dressed in a spicy ginger-soy sauce and served atop shredded daikon and carrot, with sliced celery and Thai basil. Delicious. Another surefire winner is the lobster salad. Chunks of lobster are paired up with papaya in a creamy dressing.

Main Dishes and Drinks

The sushi, sashimi and maki rolls are all pretty much standard quality and variety. The tiger eye is a great choice to mix it up. Asparagus is wrapped in salmon then seaweed and flash-fried and served

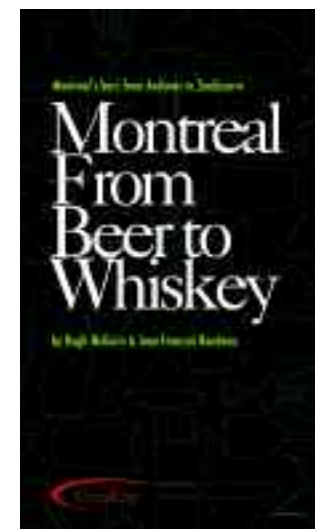
with a warm teriyaki dressing. Other solid dishes that hold few surprises are the filet mignon teriyaki, the phad thai and the tuna with noodles. The drink of choice at Ginger is the lychee martini, part vodka, part sake and spiked with lychee juice. Be warned these drinks go down very easily. Another classic Ginger drink is the sake bomb, a fun starter when out on a date. Sapporo beer is poured into a tumbler in which a small glass filled with warm sake is dropped. The cold beer mixes with the hot sake as you shoot it down your throat. Fun and delicious.

Service

The service at Ginger is perfectly suited for the environment. It's casual, non-intrusive and genuinely friendly without being cloying. The fact that the bulk of the waiters are also the owners makes a large difference. Ginger is a standard for a reason; it's a great mix of atmosphere, service and food, making it the perfect place to have a nice romantic meal.

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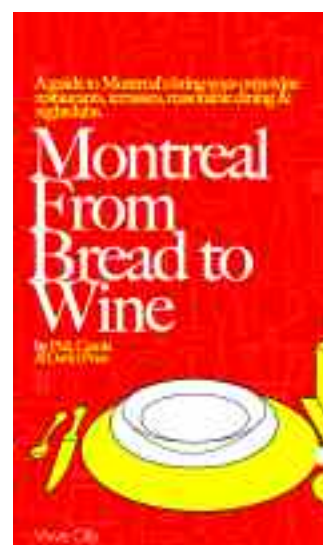


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MATERNALLY... *continued from page one*

It is a space devoted to children of all ages. Kids can enjoy a wide range of lively, educational and amusing workshops and activities, such as acrobatic performances, puppet shows, arts and crafts, as well as wading in a huge basin of water to cool off! All of these activities are completely free of charge and open to all.

Cooking Camp

If you are looking for a fun, different activity for your little one this summer, how about cooking camp? The Académie Culinaire offers week-long sessions until September to children ages 8-12 and teens ages 13-17. The younger age group learns practical cuisine from a highly qualified chef. Kids learn to bake, make desserts and how to prepare international cuisine (Asian cuisine like egg rolls and even sushi!). They will also be taught how to set a table properly and good table manners.

The older kids will learn basic cooking techniques and cooking methods and spend time with a nutritionist discussing the importance of proper nutrition. And the best part is that everyone gets to bring

their delicious masterpieces home! The Académie Culinaire is located at 360 Champ de Mars. For more information call 514.393.8111 or visit their website: www.academieculinaire.com.

Berry Picking

Another great activity for the whole family is raspberry and blueberry picking at Quinn Farm. Admission to the berry field is only \$1 per person and there is a \$5 minimum charge for berries. Be aware that it can get quite hot in the field, so do make sure that your children are wearing hats and are properly hydrated.

The farm has a new agriculture interpretation centre where children can feed and pet rabbits, horses, pigs, ducks, chickens and sheep. There is also a straw castle for kids to play in. There is no charge for these activities.

Quinn Farm is open seven days a week from 8 am to 4 pm. It's a good idea to call ahead if weather conditions are questionable. Quinn Farm is located at 2495 Perrot Boulevard in Notre Dame de l'Île Perrot, 514.453.1510, www.quinnfarm.qc.ca.

Pink at Pinki

Have you noticed the new store for girls that has opened on the corner of Sher-

brooke and Grosvenor? It's called Mademoiselle Pinki and it's a dream come true for all the girly-girls around town. My daughter Amel and I ventured into the store a couple of weeks ago and it was almost impossible to leave! The place is jam-packed with all things pink and frilly: fairy wands, stickers, purses, costumes, art supplies, dolls and much more.

But the *pièce de résistance* is the party room at the back of the store. It hosts a sundae bar (for party-goers to create and decorate their own ice cream sundaes), a dining room, a karaoke stage and a built-in fuchsia banquette. Mademoiselle Pinki will organize your child's party from beginning to end, including invitations, costumes, make-up, balloons, a birthday cake or a sundae bar, drinks, games, karaoke, and an animator (one animator per 5 children). I am actually thinking of throwing my own birthday party there! Of course I would need a little liquid encouragement before singing karaoke!

Mademoiselle Pinki is located at 4779 Sherbrooke Street West, 514.931.7465, www.mademoisellepink.com.

Finding (and Learning about) Baby Equipment

If you are expecting a baby and are anything like me when I was pregnant, you probably don't know whether you are coming or going when it comes to purchasing baby equipment. Car seats, strollers, highchairs, cribs ... which is the best and how do you find out?

Rose ou Bleu is a wonderful store that stocks all the baby stuff that you could possibly think of. But many stores do that, right? The reason I am mentioning Rose ou Bleu is because they also offer a free information session to parents every second Friday from 6 to 8 pm in the store. The person giving the session discusses consumer reports, safety-related issues and safety standards, as well as what to look for when selecting baby equipment. Questions are welcome and there is no obligation to buy. Reservations are necessary. Nicole Rougier, who is the owner of the store, believes that 'a well-informed client is a happy client.' Rose ou Bleu, 3520 St. Joseph Boulevard East, 514.949.3666.

Two other places to look for baby equipment, especially if you are on a budget, are Kijiji.com and Montreal Mommy Swap. Kijiji is a new website where people can post items for sale with no membership fee. The site is not exclusively devoted to baby and child equipment, but does often have kids' items, and it's easier than picking through the local garage sales!

Montreal Mommy Swap is basically what the name says. Parents can either exchange child-related items or buy

things at a fraction of the regular price. Definitely worth checking out. Montreal Mommy Swap, 514.685.6318, go to <http://ca.groups.yahoo.com/> and search for 'Montreal Mommy Swap'.

Fashion

Here's a little tidbit for mini-hipster fashionistas: Holt Renfrew has opened a children's clothing department for ages 0-6. It is on the third floor of the store and they carry all the exclusive lines such as Burberry, Dolce & Gabbana, Miss Sixty, Diesel and Ralph Lauren, to name a few. If you are looking for a special baby gift, Holts also carries Tiffany baby spoons, rattles, picture frames and jewelry and baby items by Links of London. And I was pleasantly surprised to discover that there are new baby change tables now located on the second floor!

Travel with Kids

Last but not least, here is a valuable piece of information for parents planning a trip this summer. If you plan to travel with your child alone (unaccompanied by the other parent), it is essential to have a letter authorizing you to do so, especially if you plan to leave the country. The letter must be witnessed, preferably by 'an official who has the authority to administer an oath or solemn declaration (i.e. a commissioner of oaths, lawyer, etc.)'. The letter must be specific to each trip and include the contact details and signature of the absent parent. For more information and a sample letter, go to http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/before/faq/children_travel-en.asp or call 1.800.387.3124. There have been many cases of children being kidnapped by parents and you may be asked for proof that you have consent of the other parent to travel with your child. If your child will be travelling with someone other than you or the child's legal guardian, the same applies. I have often been asked for documentation at US customs as well as when re-entering Canada when travelling alone with my daughter.

Enjoy the month of July with your children in Montreal!

Note: Last month I wrote about Enfants du Quartier Café Familial. Unfortunately, the restaurant upstairs has had a flood and there has been damage to the café. The owners plan to re-open in August.

Annika Melanson is the author of THE MONTREAL POCKET PARENT.

She was born and brought up in Montreal. In a past life, she spent most of her time travelling and working as a flight attendant. She now enjoys exploring parent- and child-friendly Montreal with her three-and-a-half year old daughter, Amel.

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WINE

Rosé Revealed

BY CAROLA PRICE

There is nothing more thirst-quenching than an ice-cold Pilsner on a balmy summer day in Montreal. A phenomenon known as the *terrasse* provides this much-needed refreshment. The *terrasse* is ideal for apartment dwellers (and now smokers) to enjoy from the final thaw to the changing of the colours. Terrasses in this city are mostly filled with scantily clad men and women looking cool while sipping refreshing beverages, dancing and chatting all night long.

The fact is that Montrealers would rather be out on a patio than in the office, turning a quick drink at the local watering hole into a memorable night. Knowing full well that winter will be upon us in a flash, we squeeze as much patio time out of spring, summer and fall as we can. As well we should: the weather is amazing from May to October and our food culture is conducive to enjoying the company of others during a meal.

So besides beer, margaritas and gin and tonic, what wines do we drink in the heat of the summer? No matter the excuse, Shiraz may not be the most enjoyable choice, but sparkling Shiraz sure does the trick from brunch to cocktail hour. Cabernet Sauvignon can numb the tongue and be too heavy for a scorching evening, but add mineral water and freshly cut citrus fruit and it becomes an enjoyable *terrasse* sipper. The warmer weather is the perfect time to enjoy different Beaujolais Villages and zippy whites like Vinho Verde from Portugal or Pacific Coast Riesling from the U.S. or Canada.

Rosé, Sex and Montreal

When the heat of summer finally arrives I find my meals and my refrigerator calling out for rosé. This type of wine has enjoyed a small revival in North America and should because it is versatile and a really delicious, easy-drinking thirst-quencher. Europeans of both sexes have long enjoyed rosé as a lunch accompaniment and as an aperitif with canapés to prepare their palates for dinner. Much like eating quiche or having pedicures, rosé is not enjoyed as much by men as by women here in Canada.

Montreal is ever the exception, however, and rosé is being purchased by both men and women for their drinking pleasure. Okay, gents, I know that the drink is

pink, but it can range from being light and sweet to quite bold and very dry, and there are a myriad of options on our SAQ shelves throughout the year. Think big pink drink with smoky barbeque and the stigma of girly drink may just vanish. As for the male wine personality, you ladies may want to look out for men buying rosé at the wine shop. A rosé man embraces new ideas, doesn't follow convention and likes pairing wine with ambiance. One may not find true love at the SAQ, but I've been known to start up a conversation with more than a few men while deciding on wine for dinner.

How it is Made

Rosé is made by harvesting red grapes and letting them sit on their skins for up to three days. They begin to ferment and as the skins pop they release the colour. The juice is then extracted from the skin and sent to the tanks or barrels for ageing. The bottle is then delivered to the consumer; young, fresh and ready to drink. So far, there are no rosés that are meant to be aged, which means: buy and drink at your leisure.

Finding the Right Rosé

Every country that makes red wine also makes rosé, which means a great deal of choice for the consumer. The simple rule of thumb is to go with what you know, relatively speaking. If you really like a plummy Merlot from Chile or a peppery Shiraz from Australia, chances are their rosé offering will lend much of the same flavour packet to your memory. I cannot stress enough, however, that experimentation is the key to a longer life and one should try all kinds of wine. If the rosé made from Shiraz pleases the palate, then try a similar grape or look for the same alcohol level on the bottle from another country. You might like a new wine even more to pair with the smoky flavour of your Asian-rub baby-back ribs or your Arabic-spice-marinated chicken legs.

Other Seasons

Rosé is not meant to be relegated to summer drinking. As we tend to shake snow off the barbeque in the middle of February, I suggest that you take pleasure in drinking rosé with that same meal. Of course, we must think of the balmy summer nights while drinking it, but don't



just let it gather dust on the SAQ shelf. The rule is to buy for all seasons and when there is a sale on your favourite rosé or a similar one from another country, scoop it up and have it in the cellar for drinking up to two years from vintage date. Now go and find your favourite flower-laden *terrasse*, park yourself in a comfortable spot, order your preferred summer beverage and enjoy what Montreal is all about. Cheers to summer and all its offerings...

Wine Choices for a balmy evening:

18/20 Marques de Caçeres, Rioja, Spain SAQ#10263242 \$13.75

This busy rosé is rounded and full of red berry and tobacco on the nose, is medium bodied in the mouth and matches well with grilled pork chops, Manchengo or other hard cheese with a certain earthiness. This is a wine for all seasons.



17.5/20 Vin Gris de Cigare, Bonny Doon, California, USA SAQ#10262979 \$17.10

A blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre, this wine is bone dry and has red written all over it. Smelling a bit of the lavender fields and olive groves of Provence, it tastes of rose petal and strawberry in the mouth and has a well balanced finish. A great match

to grilled fish, ratatouille and seafood platters.



16/20 Jacob's Creek, South Australia, SAQ#10384221 \$15.00

This Shiraz has lots of peppery and strawberry components in the nose and mouth. It is well balanced with fruit and acidity hitting the palate through to the long finish. Look for some coffee grounds, eucalyptus and plum character while enjoying this with a fat T-Bone and some heavier cheeses like Victor & Berthold or an Epoisses.

For those who travel, these are selections worth seeking out.



16/20 Bright Pink, Bright Brothers, Portugal LCBO#622159 \$11.95

This wine is in an aluminum bottle and the screw cap opens anywhere a picnic happens!

It is dry and refreshing with a nose of cherry and plum with a medium body and aftertaste. It matches well with pasta in garlic and herbs and with roasted chicken and grilled fennel.

Carola Price is a sommelier, chef and co-author of the bestselling MONTREAL FROM BREAD TO WINE. She is a member of the Canadian Association of Professional Sommeliers and The International Sommelier Guild. She can be reached at carola@ivvmontreal.com.

MOVIE REVIEW

Vaughniston, Coniston, Lilo and Me

The Break-Up



Rumor Has It



Prairie Home Companion



BY CATHERINE MCKENZIE

I know I will never be a big celebrity. I know this because my name does not easily translate into one of those combination couple monikers that have become ubiquitous among the *uber*-famous. I don't know who the gossip-column genius was who invented this new way of identifying these couples (though I believe 'Bennifer' was the first couple to achieve that status and hence the effort to come up with the name), but I take my hat off to her.

My assignment this month was to see not one, but three movies. Because I saw *The Break-Up* and *Rumor Has It* (both starring Jennifer Aniston, better known as the 'Iston' in super-couple Vaughniston), my original idea was to watch a third Iston movie, *Friends With Money* (original article title: 'And Aniston Makes Three'). However, that movie seems to have left the building and is not yet available on pay-per-view or DVD. So, I saw *Prairie Home Companion* instead.

The Break-Up

The Break-Up stars Vince Vaughn (the 'Vaughn' of the aforementioned super-couple) and Iston as a couple who, you guessed it, break up. The movie begins with their beginning. They meet at a baseball game. Vaughn (Gary) is with his best friend Johnny (well played by real-life best friend Jon Favreau, you know him best from the excellent *Swingers*). Iston (Brooke) is on a bad first date. Gary sees Brooke. Gary wants Brooke. Gary does something funny to get Brooke's attention. Though she seems annoyed, it apparently works, and we watch Gary and Brooke fall in love through a series of still shots (watch for the one with them in cow costumes!).

Now it is two years later. Gary and Brooke have a dinner party. Gary and

Brooke have a fight at the dinner party. Gary and Brooke break up. But Gary and Brooke have a very nice apartment in Chicago that neither wants to give up, so they engage in a turf war to force the other out. And because they are nice people, with nice clothes, their turf war is rather tame. Gary buys a pool table, Brooke walks around naked (this is supposed to get him to leave?). *War of the Roses* this is not.

Funny, Pretty but ...

Vaughn is very funny (as usual) and Iston is very pretty, very thin and very well dressed. Their apartment is very nice. I laughed frequently in this movie, and judging by the level of laughter of some of my seatmates, this was the funniest movie they had ever seen. There are good cameos from Joey Lauren Adams (*Chasing Amy*) and Vincent D'Onofrio (*Law & Order: Criminal Intent*).

My problem with the movie is that while we see, and believe, Brooke and Gary falling in love, we don't really see them falling out of love. The fight they have doesn't seem big enough to break this couple up. Maybe some day someone will write a great movie about a couple on the edge of falling apart and how they do or do not make it back to one another, but this isn't it. But it is very watchable, has a few very funny moments and Vaughniston is pretty to look at.

Rumor Has It

Rumor Has It has a great premise and a great first fifteen minutes. Iston (Sarah) is returning home for her younger sister's wedding. She is bringing her boyfriend



Jeff (very well played by Mark Ruffalo) with her. She is an unsuccessful journalist living in New York, which obviously makes her dark and unhappy and lost. She hales from Pasadena, California, where the sun always shines, and everyone is blond and plays tennis and is perky. Sarah has brown hair and hates tennis and is melancholy, so she has always felt like an alien in her family.

Then her grandmother, Katharine (an appropriately blowsy and sodden Shirley MacLaine) has a few too many at the rehearsal dinner and spills a family secret. Apparently Sarah's mother ran away for a week before she got married and had an affair. Something about the story rings a bell. Sarah does a little digging and learns that this same man also had an affair with Katharine. More bells ring. Kathy Bates, Sarah's dead mother's best friend, drops some more clues and after a trip to the video store Sarah becomes convinced that her family is the inspiration for the book and movie, *The Graduate*.

Searching for the Graduate

Sarah wants to understand her deep malaise. And she wants to know if her mother loved her father, so Sarah decides to go looking for the man who slept with her mother and grandmother. It doesn't take long to find him in San Francisco, a short plane ride away. She takes that plane rather than go back to New York with Jeff. And she meets him. His name is Beau Burroughs (played by Kevin Costner) and he confirms that he is what she is looking for. She is looking for other answers from this man too, but I will let you find out the answers to those questions if you decide to rent this movie.

Iston is trading water in this part. The real weakness is the writing: the interesting premise turns a little dark, a little gross, a little odd and then a little Hollywood. The weakness in the writing shows up in the lack of a plausible reason why Sarah has always felt so alien to her fam-

ily. Brown hair and tennis-hating are not enough to explain it. At least not for those who didn't grown up in Pasadena.

Costner is playing the role that he will apparently be playing for the rest of his fifties: an older ladies man keeping up appearances while he still has some hair on his head. I recommend seeing the better *Up Side of Anger* if you want to see Costner in this kind of role. It would have been interesting to see this film if it had been made with Dustin Hoffman and Anne Bancroft as originally planned. Maybe their skills could have overcome the plot weaknesses. Maybe.

A Prairie Home Companion

Finally, *A Prairie Home Companion*. Loosely based on Garrison Keillor's radio show of the same name (I think, I have never really listened to that show though it always seemed to be playing in the background as I grew up), it stars Garrison Keillor as GK. He is the host of an almost forgotten radio show that has ignored time. It is always 1955 in the little theatre where it is recorded. A big company has bought the station that owns the show, and an axeman (Tommy Lee Jones) has come to close it down.

GK is joined for the last show by the show regulars: the singing Johnson sisters (excellently played by Meryl Streep and Lily Tomlin); Dusty and Lefty the bad-joke-telling cowboys (a semi-stoned-looking Woody Harrelson and a deadpan John C. Reilly); Guy Noir, the show's head of security (Kevin Kline doing what he does best); and Meryl Streep's daughter, played by Lindsay Lohan (called Lola in this movie but a big enough star to be dubbed Lilo in real life).

The Last (Radio) Show

Everyone but GK seems to know that this is the last show. Or really, GK knows but doesn't want to acknowledge it. He just wants the show to go on as it always

.....
continued on the next page

PRACTICAL POINTS

Money and Markets: Charitable Giving

BY JOHN SMITH

So, Warren Buffet (the Sage of Omaha) is going to give a few billion to a foundation set up by Bill Gates (the Sage of Seattle). In combination the two wealthiest people in the reported world are creating a fund that has assets equal to the gross national product of a few countries. The total amount is, of course, a fluctuating number because of the securities gifted. Shares in Berkshire Hathaway and shares in Microsoft make up the bulk of the initial contributions of the two contributors, and both of these securities trade daily on the major exchanges in the US of A. But the thought is there and we have to admire these titans of commerce and their commitment to the common good.

Warren, Bill and You

Now how does this have a bearing upon your own good fortunes? My presumptions are as follows: 1) you are a generous soul and have knowledge of the needs in our community and the world around us; 2) you make contributions to the charities of your choice from your income on an annual basis; 3) you would like to do it on the most advantageous basis possible and 4) continue to let these charities receive donations after you shuffle off to the destination of your choice. Well, new provisions contained in the 2006 federal budget have come to your rescue. These new measures remove the capital gains tax on gifted securities to charity. Now you can contribute substantial amounts to your favourite cause providing you donate these securities directly to a registered Canadian public charity. What great tax relief for the philanthropist that resides within us!

Note, however, that the new rules do not apply to gifted securities to a private foundation. Let us consider the average contributor over the years. Each year he or she has earned income either from employment, or from retirement savings and pensions. He or she has made annual

contributions from this income to ten or fifteen charities dear to their heart. Tax receipts applied on their annual income tax filing have reduced the net cost of their generosity, but not as much as they could have under the new rules. Paying out to a



Warren Buffet



Bill Gates

charity from after-tax dollars is not the best route to go. It is better to gift to the eligible charity shares held by the taxpayer that have a very low cost base, thus allowing the contributor to avoid any capital gain taxation on those holdings. A full tax receipt is also supplied. Contributions can be carried forward for five years, if the taxpayer wishes.

Founding a Foundation

Most charities are set up to receive shares and dispose of them on behalf of the taxpayer. Some are not. But there is a way to create a method to handle all of your charitable desires for years to come: set up your own foundation! This method was always considered to be the preserve of the very wealthy, but now that community foundations have been set up in most cities and regions across Canada you can take advantage of this service. Community foundations are locally run foundations that build and manage endowment funds to support various charitable activities in their area. In Montreal, the Foundation of Greater Montreal (FGM) will assist you in setting up an endowment fund in your name that has all the advantages of a private foundation. You can designate your annual contributions in perpetuity and at no cost to you to set

up. The process is aided by the gifting of low-cost shares to create the foundation and then the professional management of your foundation is handled by the FGM. It is the simplest method of ensuring your long term assistance to those charities and causes that mean the most to you.

Hunting for Low-Cost Shares

Now here is where to look for those really low-cost shares in your portfolio: life insurance shares issued when Canada's main life insurance companies de-mutualized (read: went public) and distributed common shares to their policy holders. You may have been one of those beneficiaries and if you have not added to your original holdings, your cost base should be zero. These are perfect vehicles for the transformation of part of your portfolio into a long-term benefit for the many good causes you support. Sort of a mini-Buffet/Gates thing.

It is recommended that you consult with both your tax and investment advisor before undertaking this arrangement, but the opportunity is there and should be used while available.

John Smith is the nom de guerre of a retired investment executive. John has been a broker, investment banker and trader in Montreal and Toronto, as well as active in company management and the investment industry's self-regulatory agencies.

GO-KARTS...

continued from page 12

printouts recording our shame and ignominy, I realized the Golden Challenge Belt was mine after all. Despite my seemingly endless delay in the chicane, I'd recorded the best average lap time of 1:01.36, some ten seconds faster than Carolina.

You can be sure that I didn't revel in victory all the way home. Or the next day. Or the day after that. Or until it was pointed out to me that divorce lawyers appear before go-karting in most telephone directories.

ashley@church-of-texas-holdem.com
Ashley Cotter-Cairns is a freelance writer from England currently residing in Hudson. He has written for a number of publications, including IN CAMERA magazine, UK MAXIM, THE NET, INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLER, BUSINESS LIFE and EN ROUTE. In collaboration with his wife, Carolina Pla, he has also written and sold a screenplay, THE WITCH AND THE FAMOUS.

MOVIES... *continued from the previous page*

has, and maybe, just maybe there will be a next week or a week after that. So the show does go on. It goes on despite the death of a regular, and despite the myste-



rious presence of a woman in a white trench coat (Victoria Madsen from *Sideways*) who moves about the stage as if it were the backstage.

Able directed by Robert Altman (*M.A.S.H.*, *The Player*, *Gosford Park*), this movie gives us the feel of both watching and being on this radio show, because it moves seamlessly from the audience's perspective, to the players' perspective, to the perspective of the supporting players backstage.

There is a story here, but the real purpose seemed to me to get you to listen to the music of a time not so long ago, to really listen and appreciate the things that are disappearing around us, the things that might already be gone. A real surprise, and the standout of the movie, is GK's voice. It is strong and true, and can be soft and supporting. It is eminently listenable, and he has charisma and charm. As does this movie. My only complaint is that with all this singing, we don't get to hear Kevin Kline show his talents in this regard. Notwithstanding that, I definitely recommend this movie. It was the best of the bunch.

Catherine McKenzie is a lawyer in Montreal.

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MISSION MONTREAL

Chequered Flag

In which our man Ashley Cotter-Cairns burns rubber – and F1 dreams – on the go-kart tracks of the city

BY ASHLEY COTTER-CAIRNS

1992 was the year I came closest to soiling myself as an adult. I was slated for a three-lap drive in a Lamborghini Diablo

with a podgy, myopic marketing manager, closer to Michael Moore than Michael Schumacker.

Strapped into the bucket seat of the 500-horsepower beast, I could just see the second half of the speedometre: the first number visible was 240 kph. As we blasted down the back straight of Goodwood, a nasty, aged motor racing circuit, the driver bellowed: 'The only weak point of the Diablo is the brakes.' From the corner of one eye, I saw the speedometre swing towards 260 kph; in the other eye, a hairpin bend catapulted towards us in the gigantic windshield.

The brakes were equal to the task of slowing two tons of car, manager and flatulent journalist in time to make the corner. I vowed never to accept a ride around a racing circuit again. Happily, go-karts don't have passenger seats, so I was safe from everybody but myself for the mis-

sion ahead.

Montreal is a perfect place to experience go-karting. There are many open spaces and entrepreneurial types to develop them; within an hour's drive of the city are at least a dozen very different tracks.

Safety

All reputable centres will preach safety before you're allowed near a vehicle. Crash helmets are compulsory; some places insist on a bodysuit, too, though they're murder in the summer.

If you're worried about safety, you have good reason. While go-karts handle superbly and are difficult to get seriously out of shape, their friendly name is misleading. The average kart will be capable of 75 kph or more, depending on how fond you are of desserts, and accidents can happen. Pay attention during the safety briefing. Most places won't allow pre-teens to drive karts; some supply slower versions on a separate circuit for younger kids.

I sorted through the crash helmets, jammed one on my head and gritted my teeth for the challenge ahead.

The Challengers

Among the challengers to my self-proclaimed Golden Go-Kart Challenge Belt were a smattering of overweight adults, freed from their MPVs and harbouring dreams of F1 glory; their skinny, sharp-looking kids; and my wife, Carolina Pla.

Clearly, whatever else happened, I couldn't let Carolina beat me.

My first moment of alarm occurred when we chose our go-karts. The skinny kids raced to the front, their dads puffing behind them. By the time I reached the line-up, the empty karts were near the back.

A marshal explained that we were not racing for position. A computer would record our lap times and the fastest average three consecutive laps would win. Perhaps a shade disappointing, but I realized that this was a much fairer way to decide the outcome; grid position would become irrelevant within a minute or two. (Other tracks offer a choice of race types, including corporate days featuring a morning warm-up, lunch and then a



multi-driver marathon for the afternoon.)

Pole Position

Almost hearing TV commentary in my head, I waited for the green light, floored the accelerator and ... slowly gained speed. The explosion of power I'd anticipated didn't come. Even a Ford Focus will seem snappy compared to most go-karts, until you adjust your thinking.

Success in go-karting, like all forms of motor racing, has much to do with momentum. Any time you are accelerating, obviously you are not at cruising speed. The key is not to accelerate and brake all the time; the key is to keep your speed as high and as consistent as possible.

I began to plan my laps based on the mistakes I'd seen others make while waiting for my turn. The main straight ended in a hairpin. Most drivers left it far too late to brake and skidded around the hairpin, losing precious seconds and increasing their acceleration time from the sideways momentum. I planned the same slow-in, fast-out approach that worked on my slot-car racing set as a child.

At the other end of the circuit, a large hump raised the top corner. By using this hump, I was able to take the bend without braking and use the hill to help me accelerate down the straight. The rest of the time, I concentrated on not crashing and trying to overtake my wife.

Triumph and Tragedy

It was going so, so well. My plans at the tricky corners worked like a charm. Carolina piled into a tire wall and I sneaked past. And then – disaster! I spun in the chicane and couldn't free myself from the side wall. Eventually, a marshal ran over and pushed me out, but not before I taught anybody within earshot a few choice British swear words. I felt the Golden Go-Kart Challenge Belt slipping away.

The chequered flag was waved and I pulled into the pit lane, the bitter taste of defeat and visor sweat mingling on my lips. But as we left, with our computer

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Reg Morden

WHAT YOUR HOUSE IS WORTH?

There may be more than one reason why you want to sell your present home. Maybe you want a larger home in a better location. If your children have flown the nest, you may be considering the purchase of a condominium. Whatever the reason, one of the first questions is how much is your house worth?

You know what you paid for your house initially and how much money you've put into improvements over the years. You also know how much it has cost to maintain the house in good condition. There is also the "appreciation" factor. If your house is like most houses, it has probably appreciated in value because of continuing inflation and housing demand.

However, there are other factors to consider, such as what houses similar to yours are selling for. If you would like to sell your home, call me for an appointment so we can discuss the details and opportunities. You may be in for a pleasant surprise.

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