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FRENCH QUARTER ITINERARY

HALF DAY

St. Boniface, Winnipeg's French Quarter, is the birthplace of the province and home to the oldest building in the city, **Le Musee de St. Boniface**. The past and the present merge in this lively and historic neighbourhood just east of downtown over the **Provencher Bridge**.

Start your French Quarter adventure with a towering waffle piled high with strawberries, bananas and kiwi at **Chez Cora**. Located on Provencher Boulevard inside the **Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain**, Cora is a busy breakfast and lunch spot that serves all the classic daytime fare. After your meal, check out the latest art or photography exhibition at **La Galerie** inside the CCFM.

Across the street, explore the contemporary sculpture garden on the grounds of **La Maison des Artistes Visuels Francophones**.

FULL DAY

Walk south on Tache Avenue along the river pathway. Soon you'll spot the intersection of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, or **The Forks**, a meeting place for aboriginals starting an estimated 6,000 years ago.

You also can't miss the imposing and dramatic stone facade of the **St. Boniface Cathedral-Basilica and cemetery**, resting place of Louis Riel. The original cathedral was built in 1908 but burned in a massive fire in 1968. The picturesque grounds are a favourite spot for travelers and locals alike. On summer weekends, the historic site is also a popular location for wedding photos.

Walk the boulevard and explore the independent shops and boutiques along the thoroughfare. Make a pit stop at **Bijou** and pick up a one-of-a-kind, made-in-Winnipeg ring, necklace or just about any gemstone sparkler imaginable. Artist/co-owner Léonie Coulson uses precious and semi-precious stones and metals to make her imaginative and playful pieces.

Next stop is **Wayne Arthur Gallery**, a locally owned mixed media gallery featuring 130 Manitoba artists. Pick up an art card, print or an original canvas or piece of pottery from this eclectic space. Introduce yourself to owner and artist Bev Morton, who is knowledgeable and charming ambassador for local art and artists.

Lunch calls at **Resto Gare**, where diners can savour fine French fare in a restored railcar.

Down the street, visit Winnipeg's oldest building, **Le Musee de St. Boniface** and the former home of the Grey Nuns, who arrived in the Red River Colony in 1844. Today the sprawling three-storey white-board building recalls the history of francophones and the Métis in Manitoba. An exhibit also highlights Métis hero Louis Riel's contributions to the history of the province and the country. The mature neighbourhood also boasts some of the most beautiful oak and elm-lined streets in the city.

History buffs will also love **Fort Gibraltar**, a replica of a circa 1810 North West Company fur-trading post. Set on the



banks of the Red River, the fort hosts many weddings and events throughout the year and is open for tours throughout the summer. Costumed interpreters recreate fort life in the early 1800s inside the wooden fort and buildings. The site is also home to the annual Festival du Voyageur, a celebration of franco-manitobain culture held every February.

With shopping and sightseeing done, make trails to one of many outstanding restaurants in the neighbourhood.

In **Ferno's Bistro** on nearby Des Meurons serves modern French cuisine dished up in a comfortable yet polished setting of a converted two-storey home. Manitoba regional

cuisine like pickerel and bison are also prominent on the menu. Take a seat on one of the city's most popular patios (weather permitting).

For more casual eats, head to **Le Garage Café** on Provencher for inspired pub grub and live music most nights.

If pizza is your vice, **Pizza Hotline** and its sister restaurant **Café 22** have it covered. Grab a tropical chicken pizza pie loaded with chunks of sweet pineapple, hickory bacon, tangy feta and mozzarella on Bull's Eye barbecue sauce.