

The National Battlefields Park

WALKING TOUR ON THE BATTLES

The Battle of the Plains of Abraham, September 13th 1759 (3.6 km)
The Battle of Sainte-Foy, April 28th 1760 (1 km)

Total distance of the tour : approximately 4.6 km

The National Battlefields Park

Created a little more than a century ago, the National Battlefields Park groups together, among other things, the Plains of Abraham and Des Braves Park.

It was the scene of clashes between the French and British Empires in search for the world hegemony. The famous battle of 1759, which changed the fate of North America, took place on the Plains of Abraham. A few months later in 1760, the fighting between the two powers went on a little further west (Des Braves Park) during the Battle of Sainte-Foy.

Nowadays, the National Battlefields Commission has the mandate to conserve and develop this majestic urban park that counts among the world's most prestigious public parks.

Starting point of the visit : **Discovery Pavilion of the Plains of Abraham,
835 Wilfrid-Laurier Avenue, Level 0**

Visit the exhibition

“Odyssey : A journey through history on the Plains of Abraham ”

Duration : around 75 minutes

Plunge into the turmoil of the great battles of Quebec City with the Marquis de Montcalm and James Wolfe. Admire the accurate reproductions of period uniforms and discover the 1759-60 military lifestyle : more than 20 dazzling regimental costumes exhibiting the soldiers' finery.

THE BATTLE OF THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM, SEPTEMBER 13 1759

Points of interest : (consult the map if necessary)

1. Monument dedicated to Montcalm

(General Montcalm Yard west of Leows Le Concorde Hotel)

This monument which represents General Montcalm dying while being supported by an angel is a replica of Vestric-Candiac's in Vauvert, France, the birthplace of the Marquis de Montcalm. The monument was a present given by a French committee to Quebec City in 1911.

2. Monument dedicated to Joan of Arc

(Interpretation panel facing the monument on the upper part of the Joan of Arc Garden)

This monument of Joan of Arc was unveiled in 1937 and symbolises the patriotism and courage of the heroes of 1759 and 1760. It was given to the National Battlefields Commission in 1937 by a couple from New York who fell under the spell of Quebec City.

You will get more details by reading the interpretation panel.

The legend of the horse : legend has it that when one front leg of the horse is up, it means that the horseman died for his country, when both front legs are up, it means that the horseman died for his country while fighting. When all four legs are down, the horseman died of natural causes.

3. General Montcalm mortally wounded

(Commemorative plaque, left of the beginning of the footpath leading to Martello Tower 1)

General Montcalm was apparently mortally wounded on this spot during the battle of the Plains of Abraham on September 13 1759. He was carried to Chemin Saint-Louis inside the city walls where he died the morning after at dawn. His church service was held at the chapel of the Ursulines where he was buried.

4. The Memorial dedicated to the civilian and military combatants of 1759 and 1760

(Backtrack to George VI Avenue and take it westward)

You are now standing at the centre of one the reasons why the National Battlefields Park exists: the site of the battle of the Plains of Abraham. You are setting foot on the very ground where the armies of the Marquis de Montcalm and General Wolfe fought in a clash that resulted as a historical turning point for the continent.

The battle lines covered almost all of the promontory, from the cliff facing the St. Lawrence River to the Sainte-Geneviève Hillside surmounting the Saint-Charles River.

A memorial, made up of a stela and three interpretation panels and dedicated to the combatants who took part in the battles of the Plains of Abraham and Sainte-Foy, was unveiled on September 13 2009 to commemorate the 250th anniversary of these famous confrontations.

(Numbers 4 to 11 inclusive will take you to the heart of the Battles of the Plains of Abraham. The line joining points 5 and 6 fairly represents the formation of the French lines whereas the line going through points 7,8 and 11 evokes the positioning of the British lines). The battle lines naturally exceeded the present-day park limits and stretched all over the promontory.

5. The Royal Roussillon Regiment

(Commemorative plaque at the junction of Garneau-est and George VI)

The Royal Roussillon was the first French regiment to attack and the last one to withdraw on September 13 1759.

6. General Wolfe mortally wounded

(Commemorative plaque at the Garneau-ouest and George VI junction)

This is where Wolfe was mortally wounded. His men carried him behind the battle lines (on the site of the monument dedicated to him) where he died shortly afterwards. His body was transported to Portsmouth in England and interred in the small church of Greenwich.

The Cemetery

After the battle, the British hastened to set up camp on the very site where the battle occurred, which was one kilometre away from the city walls. They buried their dead in a communal grave right there.

7. Bragg's 28th Regiment of Foot

(Commemorative plaque on the north side of George VI Avenue)

Positioning of Bragg's 28th Regiment of Foot during the battle of September 13 1759.

8. Brigadier Fontbonne

(Commemorative plaque down below the Garneau-est and Garneau-ouest junction on Garneau-est)

The British Otway's 35th Regiment of Foot diverted the attack of the ambushed militiamen commanded by Fontbonne.

9. Monckton

(Commemorative plaque south of the Centennial Fountain)

The French left flank tried to encircle the British right flank. Monckton was second in command of the British troops.

10. The Louisbourg Grenadiers Regiment

(Commemorative plaque at the top of Garneau-est and Garneau-ouest junction, on Garneau-ouest)

Positioning of the British regiment of the Louisbourg Grenadiers.

11. Monument dedicated to Wolfe

(Right in front of the main entrance of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec)

This monument is the fifth one to be erected to the memory of Wolfe on this spot. It appears that the first one was a stone rolled by devoted soldiers to the place where Wolfe died. It seems that this stone was the oldest monument in Quebec. In 1790, Major Samuel Holland, surveyor general of the province, identified the site with a geodetic mark. Then, a column was erected and replaced later on. The helmet and ancient-style sword were added at its top.

12. The Wolfe Well

(North-east of the Wolfe Monument)

The well where water was extracted and given to dying General Wolfe.

13. The Price Collection Guns

(Commemorative plaque facing the Grey Terrace)

Some of these cannons were souvenirs from the Battle of the Plains of Abraham or previous confrontations, such as the capture of Louisbourg's fortress in Cape Breton the year before.

Reading the plaquettes will give you more details on these unique collector's items.

14. Review of the Tercentenary

(Commemorative plaque facing the Grey Terrace)

More than 25,000 soldiers and sailors (Canadians, French, British and Americans) participated in this impressive military pageant that was part of the programme of the Quebec City's Tercentenary Celebrations in 1908 organised by the National Battlefields Commission to commemorate the 1759 and 1760 battles.

Before leaving the terrace, you must take time to admire the view of the St. Lawrence River from the terrace itself. Try to imagine the presence of nearly 200 ships moored alongside Quebec City, awaiting General Wolfe's orders on the eve of September 13 1759.

To get to the next point, expect a walk of about 25 minutes, there and back.

16. DeLaune Avenue

(Take Gilmour Hill down to the DeLaune Avenue junction)

Captaine William DeLaune commanded a detachment of volunteers of the British light infantry that had to storm the cliff through Anse aux Foulons on the morning of September 13 1759.

17. Landing of the British Troops

(Commemorative plaque: walk past the George VI and DeLaune junction, at the beginning of Gilmour Hill)

It is in this area that the British troops of General Wolfe climbed the cliff with two campaign cannons to take the French troops of General Montcalm by surprise on the Plains of Abraham on the morning of September 13 1759.

THE BATTLE OF SAINTE-FOY, APRIL 28 1760

Points of interest: consult the map if necessary

18. The Wolfe Redoubt

(Baillairgé Pavilion of the *Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec*)

The museum's Baillairgé Pavilion is partly located on the emplacement of the Wolfe Redoubt whose construction by the British began the next day of their September 13 1759 victory. They wanted to reinforce their position in case of a counter-attack by the French. The construction work was stopped as winter approached because the frozen soil became too difficult to dig.

The day after the battle, James Murray, who succeeded Wolfe as head of the British army, ordered the building of several blockhouses one of which on Cap Diamant where the territory's protection seemed weaker. Entirely built with wood, the blockhouse was integrated into the complex of the temporary citadel later on.

(For more information, you may visit the site of Murray's Blockhouse on Cap Diamant where digs have been carried out for the fourth consecutive year).

19. Bougainville Avenue

(At the extreme west of the park, across Chemin Saint-Louis, Montcalm Avenue becomes Bougainville Avenue)

This avenue was named after a French officer. Stationed in Cap-Rouge with his men, he did not participate in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, but took part in the Battle of Sainte-Foy.

20. Murray Avenue

(First street on the right-hand side when going westward on Chemin Saint-Louis)

This avenue was named after the general who commanded the British troops during the battle of Sainte-Foy. It stretches from south to north and is west of the

British troops' 1760 lines. James Murray became the first Governor of Canada after the Conquest.

21. A French Victory

(Commemorative plaque at the Chemin Saint-Louis and Des Braves junction)

The French encircled the British left flank when pushing it back and forced Murray to withdraw.

22. Des Braves Avenue

(Take Des Braves Avenue northward)

Des Braves Avenue, one of the most beautiful streets of Quebec City, is located a bit further east of the battle line adopted by the French for the April 28 1760 clash that raged across the whole promontory. This avenue links the two battlefields: the Plains of Abraham and Des Braves Park. In fact, the National Battlefields Commission owns and looks after the streetlights, jardinières, sidewalks and street.

23. A French Victory

(Commemorative plaque at the Des Braves Avenue and Chemin Saint-Louis junction)

The French were held in check to allow Murray to withdraw.

24. The Dumont Mill

(Commemorative plaque west of the Des Braves Monument)

Near here, the fiercest fight of the Battle of Sainte-Foy took place. The mill was very damaged during this clash that proved to be more murderous than the 1759 one.

25. Des Braves Park

(Interpretation panel, in the middle of the balustrade)

The reading of this interpretation panel will give you information about this space dedicated to the brave fighters.

26. Des Braves Monument

The Des Braves Monument is a symbol of reconciliation and peace since here lie British and French, side by side and without distinction, victors and defeated.

End of the walking tour.

On your way back, you may notice certain street names such as **de Lévis, Boulamaque, Moncton, Fraser, Saunders**, etc. They were named after persons who distinguished themselves during the battles of Québec.

We do hope that you have enjoyed the tour.

Thank you!