

Chinese, kosher, cheese, chicken, or a crepe?

► MONTREAL Continued from Page M1

had never tasted the poutine topped with duck leg confit created by Le Canard Libéré. It's called La Canardine and one serving is enough for two people. This Montreal outlet of Canards du Lac Brome — the Eastern Townships duck farm that celebrates its centenary in 2012 — promotes all things ducky. Most people are sold at their first taste of a french fry cooked in duck fat. They are so addictive that the shop should give away the first one free. 4396 boulevard Saint-Laurent, 514-286-1286, www.bromelakeducks.com, La Canardine \$11.07

Restaurant Noodle Factory

Chinatown dates from the era when Chinese laborers built the Canadian rail system. The district here is small, and increasingly Thai and Cambodian, but retains a Chinese identity. On a chilly day the line streams out the door at this pocket-sized Shanghai-style noodle shop. It's mesmerizing to watch the cooks make the noodles — rolling and slapping the dough to make it separate into strands. It's even more satisfying to tuck into a spicy bowl of pork, vegetables, and chewy fresh noodles in meat broth. Chicken or smoked fish variations are also available. 1018 rue Saint-Urbain, 514-868-9738, soup \$6.69

La Maison du Cheddar

Artisanal cheesemaking has swept Quebec in the last two decades, and this modest shop in Outremont stocks about 300 Quebec cheeses, of which, despite the name, only a few are cheddars. At lunchtime, La Maison du Cheddar serves grilled cheese sandwiches, including a sandwich of the week that pairs a Quebec cheese with a complementary spread. One of our favorites is Le Douanier (a washed-rind cheese with a hazelnut tang) on whole wheat with a confit of onions, apple, cinnamon, and white wine. It's a world apart from Velveeta on Wonder Bread. 1311 avenue Van Horne, 514-904-0011, www.maisonducheddar.com, sandwiches \$4.76-\$7.22

St-Viateur Bagel Mont-Royal



PHOTOS BY DAVID LYON FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Wilensky's Light Lunch in Montreal's Mile End has nine stools and an aura from the '30s, when it was established; below right, La Binerie has been a fixture on the Plateau since 1938; Claude Postel is a shop and self-service bistro.



Montreal is equally famous for its bagels cooked in wood-fired ovens, and debate rages over which of the Mile End institutions, Fairmount Bagel or St-Viateur Bagel, makes the best. We are agnostic, but St-Viateur does have a cafe on the Plateau where you can get lunch, so they win by default. Two good under-\$10 options include a bowl of the soup of the day with a fresh bagel and a slab of cream cheese, or the A la Coque Deluxe Sandwich, which stacks a small omelet, a piece of

grilled ham, and lettuce and tomato on a split toasted bagel. 1127 avenue Mont-Royal est, 514-528-6361, www.stviauteurba.com, soup with bagel and cream cheese \$8.42, A la Coque sandwich \$6.69

Schwartz's

A fixture along The Main (as English-speaking immigrants called boulevard St-Laurent back in Mordecai Richler's day), Schwartz's seems an obvious choice. But nobody should leave



Montreal without trying the city's famous smoked meat: brisket marinated with herbs and spices for 10 days before smoking and steaming. While some aficionados may quibble, we think Schwartz's does smoked meat best. To keep the tab under \$10, you will have to compromise on sides that accompany the smoked meat sandwich. Traditionalists will opt for a fat half-sour pickle and a black cherry cola ("the house wine"), but a lot of folks prefer fries. Just don't ask

for cheese. This deli keeps kosher. 3895 boulevard Saint-Laurent, 514-842-4813, www.schwartzsdeli.com, smoked meat sandwich \$5.92, pickle \$1.73, fries \$2.69, black cherry cola \$1.83

Wilensky's Light Lunch

Established in 1932 when Mile End was a neighborhood of Eastern European Jewish immigrants, this nine-stool lunch counter persists as much for its nostalgic appeal as its culinary

expertise. The de rigeur order is The Special — a sandwich with a slice of beef salami, a slice of beef bologna, and yellow mustard on a white roll. The only options are the addition of a slice of Swiss or cheddar cheese and a sour or half-sour pickle. It's so cheap that you can wash it down with a vanilla or chocolate egg cream (no egg, no cream) and still get change from a \$10 bill. 35 avenue Fairmount ouest, 514-271-0247, closed Sunday, The Special \$4.28, egg cream \$1.68

Rôtisserie Romados

Montrealers love their rotisserie chicken, and Romados is our favorite of the Portuguese chicken places, even if it does look like a dry cleaner from the outside. The standard under-\$10 order here is a quarter chicken with fries and salad, which the cooks unceremoniously dump into a styrofoam box. The fries and salad are so generous that a couple is best off placing a single order and getting another unadorned quarter chicken. Be sure to order before 2 p.m. if you want the free dessert — a small egg custard tart. 115 rue Rachel est, 514-849-1803, quarter chicken with fries and salad \$7.65 for thigh quarter or \$8.62 for breast quarter; meat only \$4.76/\$5.73

Le Pêché Glacé

The name means "frozen sin," a reference to the shop's sinfully rich ice cream and sorbet. But this Internet cafe hangout also has savory crêpes along with its various sweets. Order a Parisienne (a crepe filled with asparagus, ham, Emmental, and béchamel). It comes with a little side of carrot salad and you can finish the meal with an espresso and a raspberry macaron glacé — sorbet between two airy macarons — if you are willing to go 70 cents over budget. 2001 avenue Mont-Royal est, 514-525-5768, Parisienne \$6.69, macaron glacé \$1.68, espresso \$2.40

Patricia Harris and David Lyon, authors of "Food Lovers' Guide to Montreal: Best Local Specialties, Markets, Recipes, Restaurants & Events" (Globe Pequot Press), can be reached at harris.lyon@verizon.net.