

In the footsteps of our ancestors at Woonsocket



LISE GIGUÈRE

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Woonsocket, Rhode Island. All Quebecers whose ancestors have emigrated to the United States to work in textile factories must absolutely take the direction of this small town and its extraordinary Museum of Work and Culture.

Located on the Place du Marché Historique, in a red brick building, this museum revisits the history of men, women and children from rural Quebec who, from the 19th century, left their farm and escaped misery to find work in the factories that flourished along the Blackstone River.



A moving visit

Quebecers who settled in Woonsocket came mainly from the regions of Trois-Rivières, Saint-Hyacinthe and small villages in the area. The visit is therefore moving in front of the paintings recalling the hard work on a farm, the new life in a new country, the style of housing, the work of the whole family (even children), education, religion and hobbies.

Run by the Rhode Island Historical Society (rihs.org), the museum also features films, interactive audio presentations, photographs, and games that inspire you to see how this hard work has gone! We come out upset.



A jewel preserved

Another exciting step is the visit of the St. Ann Arts and Cultural Center. This is a beautiful church abandoned by the clergy. Fortunately, Mr. Doiron (the former beadle) and his son Dominique, an opera singer, formed (with several former parishioners) a non-profit organization to save this wonder that was once nicknamed the "Sistine Chapel". from North America. It is to the incredible frescoes of the painter Guido Ninchiri that we owe this comparison with the famous Roman monument. This artist, who undoubtedly produced the greatest number of religious works in Canada during the 20th century, lived in Montreal. He was even nicknamed the *Michelangelo of Montreal* !

Today, the former St. Anne's Church is open to the public for concerts, special events, receptions and guided tours. Do not go sulking these last, you would miss a lot of tasty anecdotes.

In search of his roots

Finally, the last step on the road to our roots, the American-French Genealogical Society (afgs.org/site/), where enthusiasts help Americans of French-Canadian descent (more than 10 million) to trace their Francophone origins . But Quebec visitors wishing to find their ancestors are also welcome in this library which contains one of the most important collections of French-Canadian genealogical and historical research.

- Even today, the French heritage is alive and well in this charming little town and French is even the second spoken language!
- Woonsocket is part of the Blackstone River Valley National Historic Corridor, a major natural heritage site in the United States. Different routes (water rides and bike paths) crisscross this great historic site protected for over 30 years.