Quebec Winter Carnival Essay, Research Paper

Quebec City held its first winter carnival in 1894. It was an elaborate

celebration that provided people with relief from the cold harsh winter. In the

sixty years that followed these winter carnivals were organized periodically. It

wasn’t until 1955 that a group of local businessmen decided that an annual

carnival would be a good way to stimulate the economy during the long winter

months. The Quebec Carnival grew to become Quebec City’s third-largest industry,

far surpassing its organizers dreams. The Carnival?s activities reflect the

character and the tastes of the modern-day people. They also include many of

Quebec?s most famous traditions. Beautiful snow sculptures as well as the

traditional canoe race across the mighty St. Lawrence River are as spectacular

and as popular as ever. Since 1955, the Quebec Winter Carnival was recognized as

the World’s biggest winter celebration, and is the third largest carnival, after

those in Rio and New Orleans. Today Quebec City’s historic streets are filled

with people of all ages, anxious to experience the joys of winter at the

world-famous Quebec Carnival. The Quebec Carnival offers a wide variety of

sporting events. The legendary International Canoe Race, a popular tradition

since the very first Carnival, is a true test of courage and determination.

Teams from around the world attempt to cross the mighty St. Lawrence River

between Quebec City and Levis must battle ice floes, treacherous currents, and

freezing temperatures. There’s also something called the Roll in the snow, for

participants dressed only in a bathing suit. The provincial dogsled racing

Championship called " La Grande viree ", the Soapbox Derby, the Car

Race on ice and the Cross Country skiing " Classic " of the Quebec

Winter Carnival are just some of the activities at the Quebec Winter Carnival.

The Carnival has brightly-lit night parades which are the most colorful part of

its program. Each year, more than 500,000 spectators bundle up to attend the

exciting event which features fabulous floats, smartly dressed marching bands,

and clowns. Elaborate parades also wind through the streets of City, with music

and enchantment. The International Snow Sculpture is one of the Carnival’s most

popular activities and essentially its finest art exhibit. This event has

attracted sculptors from around the globe, who have created splendid and

imaginative works. In 1998, 21 countries took part in the International

category. Despite its severe northern climate, Quebec City is a popular winter

tourist destination. Hundreds of Thousands people participate in the

Carnival?s activities each year. Of these, 60 000 come from outside Quebec

province, thereby providing sizeable revenue for local hotels and restaurants.

The Carnival is a driving force in Quebec’s tourist industry. A 1997 study

conducted by Le Groupe Leger et Leger indicated that the economic impact of the

Quebec Winter Carnival could be evaluated at $48 millions. The Quebec Winter

Carnival has many activities for all ages. Activities range from simple exhibits

to spectacular exhibits of ice sculptures. You can take part in games and enjoy

outside sports and cultural events with yours friends and family.