

My journey

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I check into a hotel at midnight. Next day, I get up early and I start talking to myself. "Wow! My dream is coming true: I am in a new country, a new city. How exciting!" Suddenly, I realize that my excitement is melting away slowly because no matter how many smiling faces and new colours surround me I can't enjoy anything. Truth be told: I am hungry. What is even worse is that I have to stay in the hotel for the next 12 days missing my favourite food. And all this will happen because I cannot speak the language and I cannot find my traditional food. I am really hungry and I have to find someone who could help me. I search for maps of the city. Go out, come back, hang around and walk, walk, walk. Nobody speaks my language.

I walk along the streets around the hotel. Come back to the hotel with the same and even stronger hunger not only in my stomach but also in my brain. Walk again and pass by a grocery store. I go inside hopeful to recognize at least one of my traditional vegetables and all of a sudden I feel like being on cloud nine. Am I dreaming? One more step and another one to get closer to an Asian face. Can you speak Chinese? The most victorious "Yes" caresses my ears. Where are you from? Tianjin! The lady replies. It's my city. The local accent melts my heart. Thank God!

I can buy some veggies and cook them later in the hotel. Just looking at the vegetables I forget about my brain hunger and start talking. In the same local accent, the lady tells me useful things about the city where I have to spend the next 12 days. The right person at the right time, eh! I was lucky to meet this lady who helped me enjoy my first day in a new country and a new city. It was after finding the grocery store full of my traditional food when I understood the meaning of those three words: Welcome to Montreal!