Quebec zoo offers an overnight adventure amid bison and elk! Oh, my!

By Kim Foley MacKinnon

QUEBEC — After seeing the black bear nursing her two cubs, her black set-

tails up against a tree with her head turned to the side and her black

and gray paws on top of their heads, if I’m honest, I could really
give up on life. What could possibly make me happy?

And yet I was smiling. Why? Just because my favorite animal was

on the other side of the fence. Or because I was getting a different
view of the world. Or because I was connecting with the animals

in a different way.

The Nature’s Park Trail section is the unique part of the zoo.

Here, animal native to the region, such as elk, bison, black
deer, roam free on more than 800 acres and the humans are in cages.

True, the main part of the zoo is more traditional, with polar bears

and tigers, but here we walked with moose, caribou, and other animals

on their turf. We got to see any size—until the bears, which

we found closeby — and then it was time to head back to the zoo, where

we lounged just outside the food tent, seemingly as dogs, but if you
didn’t treat them like dogs, they’d walk away.

The final part of the outdoor experience was a walk to look for moose —

which we found just beyond... and then it was time to head back to the

zoo, where prospector tents

are used by people and wander through the camp at will. It doesn’t

hurt that the guides put out food for them.

In the morning, I woke to a cari-

bou walking right by my tent. As we

had coffee and fruit, some caribou

lounged just out side the food tent,

seeming as tame as dogs, but if you
didn’t treat them like dogs, they’d

walk away. The guides put out food

for caribou around the camp. The

park for as shortlike, where our guide

discussed the flora. We knew there

were musk ox, though — she brought out night-

vision goggles, which we used to look at them.

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