

# Gens du pays

"**Gens du pays**" has been called the unofficial national anthem of Quebec. Written by poet, songwriter, and avowed Quebec nationalist Gilles Vigneault (with music co-written by Gaston Rochon), it was first performed by Vigneault on June 24, 1975 during a concert on Montreal's Mount Royal at that year's Fête nationale du Québec ceremony. It quickly became a folk classic, and it has been played frequently at Fête nationale ceremonies since then. The chorus is by far the most famous part of the song: *Gens du pays, c'est votre tour / De vous laisser parler d'amour*, which, translated, says, "countrymen and countrywomen, it's your turn to let yourselves speak of love."

The song is also associated with the Quebec sovereignty movement and the sovereigntist Parti Québécois, which use it as a sort of anthem. A famous instance of this took place at René Lévesque's concession speech after the citizens of the province rejected independence in the 1980 Quebec referendum. At the end of Lévesque's speech, the crowd assembled to hear him speak stood up at the end of the speech and sang "Gens du pays", which Lévesque called "the most beautiful Québécois song in the minds of all Quebecers."

## Birthday adaptation

In Quebec, a modified version of the chorus is often sung to celebrate a person, for example on a birthday (in the specific case of the birthday, the idea was explicitly introduced by Gilles Vigneault in 1975):

***Mon cher ami\* (or Ma chère amie\*), c'est à ton  
tour  
De te laisser parler d'amour.***

("My dear friend, it's your turn / To let yourself talk of love.")

\*Alternatively, "ami(e)" is replaced with the name of the person being celebrated.



# Gens du pays

- 1 -

Le temps qu'on a pris pour dire: je \_\_\_\_\_  
C'est le seul qui reste au bout de nos jours  
Les voeux que l'on fait, les  
\_\_\_\_\_ que l'on sème,  
Chacun les récolte en soi-même  
Au beau \_\_\_\_\_ du temps qui court.

## Refrain

\_\_\_\_\_ du \_\_\_\_\_, c'est votre tour  
De vous laisser parler d' \_\_\_\_\_  
Gens du pays, c'est votre \_\_\_\_\_  
De vous laisser parler d'amour.

- 2 -

Le temps de s'aimer, le jour de le dire  
Fond comme la neige aux doigts du  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Fêtons de nos joies, fêtons de nos rires  
Ces \_\_\_\_\_ où nos regards se mirent  
C'est demain que j'avais \_\_\_\_\_ ans.

- 3 -

Le ruisseau des jours aujourd'hui s'arrête  
Et forme un étang où chacun peut voir  
Comme en un miroir l' \_\_\_\_\_ qu'il reflète  
Pour ces coeurs à qui je souhaite  
Le \_\_\_\_\_ de vivre nos espoirs.

Gens	vingt	t'aime	tour
yeux	printemps	jardin	amour
pays	temps	amour	fleurs