



The Beille family is very happy to have made it through the red tape and now be comfortably settled in the Yukon.  
*Courtesy photo*

# Patrick and Lauren Beille, Tenacious Entrepreneurs

When Patrick Beille suggested to his girlfriend Lauren that they visit the Yukon, she didn't even know where it was on the map. She agreed because it was her man's dream, not because she was particularly enthralled with the idea.

They came to the Yukon for three months, from late December to early April 2010. "Lauren only stayed for the first 15 days because she absolutely wanted to see where I was going to die... I lived in a cabin without water or electricity on Kluane Lake," said Patrick, who spent two and a half months there alone.

"For me, the Yukon has always been mythical, ever since I was very little," Patrick confided. "I learned about in Jack London's books." For as long as he can remember, he has been fascinated by wild and sparsely populated places.

## From project to project...

Lauren Beille hails from Baltimore and Patrick, from Narbonne in the south of France. They met in France when Lauren was working for a bike tour company. Patrick was running a sheep farm and a seasonal restaurant. One day, Lauren was

looking for a place to take her customers for lunch. "I didn't find a restaurant, I found a guy," she said, laughing.

The young couple lived in France for four years. "We decided to sell everything to embark on a new adventure," said Patrick. "We left for the United States, Chicago, where I managed the American subsidiary of a French firm. After two years, we had the idea of starting up a brewery in Baltimore." Neither had any beer making experience. "Oh, that wouldn't have stopped us!" said Lauren. In the meantime, there was a welcome addition to the family: a baby girl, Kluane.

... all the way to the Yukon

"I was really unhappy working in Baltimore. It wasn't our lifestyle at all: the big city, the politics, the priorities of the people around us. It was nothing like what we were looking for," Lauren explained.

Patrick sold the brewery and Lauren resigned. Then the Beille family spent summer 2015 in the Yukon. "The first three weeks were like a honeymoon," said Patrick. "The next two and a half months, it was work. How could we come to live in the Yukon? We thought it would be much easier than it actually is," he admitted.

The couple then applied themselves to meeting people, informing themselves about the rules to live by as non-Canadians and looked for employers who would participate in the Nominee Program, but without success. "We knocked on lots of doors but seldom with good results," said Patrick. "I sent out hundreds of applications with my CV and got all of two responses." One

employer said he would like to hire Patrick. With joyous hearts, the couple boarded a plane for France because their visa had expired. On their arrival, Patrick learned that the employer had withdrawn his offer.

## A bumpy ride

"To enter Canada as a foreigner, you either have to be someone exceptional, loaded with diplomas, or accept a job Canadians do not want," bemoaned Lauren. "Our resume is in the middle. Employers are not interested in hiring a contractor to be an assistance cook."

Patrick and Lauren acknowledged that they had received little help in navigating the administrative maze. "We were pretty much left to our own devices," Patrick told us. But a week before leaving, they met a Francophone who worked for the government. "It's people like you we need in the Yukon. Even if you were a little lost in the trappings of the system, don't despair, if you are able find work, I'll explain what you need to do," she assured them.

From France, Patrick continued his job search and finally received a positive response from an employer willing to undertake the Nominee Program process. Since last March, he has been working at the Inn on the Lake at Marsh Lake.

"I'm very grateful that he took those steps," Patrick said of his boss. "In my search, he was the only one I found. So I make a point of ensuring that he is satisfied with my work. It's thanks to him that we're here."

## Very positive adjustment

Today, Patrick, Lauren and Kluane Beille live in a house outside Whitehorse. The little girl goes to the Jardin d'Émilie kindergarten. "Every day, we count our blessings to have Kluane attending Jardin d'Émilie," Patrick exclaimed, with Lauren adding: "We're super impressed with this school, and with Whitehorse too... it's really a perfect city for young families. Never in my life have I met such simple, friendly and level-headed people as I have here. If we ever had to leave, I would really miss the people and the environment, as well as the way of life," Lauren concluded.