

## STORM THE FORTRESS & SAIL ON



*Welcome to Cape Breton's rolling heartland, where the highlands meet the lowlands along the shores of the island's beautiful inland sea - the Bras d'Or Lake. The charming village of Baddeck is a favourite stop for sailors and those looking for tranquil beauty in the heart of the island. It's the reason why its most famous resident was Alexander Graham Bell, who built two homes on his estate he called "Beinn Bhreagh", Scottish Gaelic for "Beautiful Mountain". In addition to being credited as the inventor of the telephone, Bell worked on many other world achievements while in Baddeck, including a hydrofoil that set a long-lasting speed record for watercraft and the first manned flight of an airplane in the British Commonwealth. Move along to the island's historical capital, Sydney – a perfect mix of metropolitan charm and down home hospitality. Get your photo taken beside the world's largest fiddle, before traveling further down the road to step back to the 18th century at the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, the largest reconstruction of its kind in North America. Along the way are many other treasures to discover, from exploring centuries-old Acadian villages to descending to the deeps on a coal mine tour a mile beneath the ocean floor.*

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### DAY 1

Arrive Halifax Stanfield International Airport and transfer to downtown Halifax

Halifax deftly blends the past with the present to produce a skyline dotted with elegant 18th- and 19th-century architecture alongside ultra-modern towers of glass and steel. The heart of Halifax is perfect for exploring on foot, with tree-lined streets, international restaurants, galleries, libraries and museums. Inviting sidewalk cafés beckon you to while away a few hours amid park-like, waterfront, and historic settings in the busy downtown, often with a backdrop of the bustling harbour, which entertains ship traffic from every corner of the globe. Explore what this "capital city by the sea" has to offer, such as:

- Tour the [Maritime Museum of the Atlantic](#), generally recognized as having the world's finest collection of wooden artifacts from Titanic. Halifax was the closest major port to the 1912 sinking and all of the recovered bodies were brought to Halifax, along with many pieces of wreckage.

These fragments, including a near perfectly preserved deckchair and large pieces of oak carving, are featured as part of the museum's permanent exhibit.

- The [Art Gallery of Nova Scotia](#) houses the Province's collection of art unique to Nova Scotia and offers a range of exhibitions and programming, including the Maud Lewis (folkart) collection.
- The [Halifax Waterfront](#) is one of the most visited attractions in the province. With a sparkling water, working port as a backdrop, it's no wonder that the Halifax waterfront is home to a number of businesses and countless world-class events each year. From walk-a-thons, to Nocturne, the world-renowned Busker Festival to Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo, Halifax is a vibrant event city.
- Visit [Pier 21](#), the Canadian Museum of Immigration. Learn about the experiences of immigrants as they arrived in Canada, the vital role of immigration in the building of Canada and the contributions of immigrants to our country - all at one unique place. The Museum's main exhibition is dedicated to the years when Pier 21 was open as an immigration shed – it's Canada's version of Ellis Island.
- Visit the [Halifax Seaport Farmers' Market](#), especially lively on the weekends, but with storefronts that are open every day of the week. This is the oldest farmers' market in North America which moved into a new location a couple of years ago that now boasts nearly 140 weekend vendors and a green roof with spectacular views of the Harbour.
- At the [Alexander Keith's Nova Scotia Brewery](#), you can take an interactive tour of the brewery, where actors in period costume lead you back in time to learn about the famous beer, the historic brewery and the challenges of life in Halifax in 1863. Then swing by the Stag's Head Tavern for great music, games and of course to sample Alexander Keith's finest ales! Tours are one hour long, beginning the top of every hour.
- Become a soldier for a day at [Halifax Citadel National Historic Site](#), where the sounds of a modern, bustling port city are exchanged for the crack of rifle-fire and the skirl of bagpipes. The present Citadel was completed in 1856 and is the fourth in a series of British forts on this site. Today, the restored Citadel is a national landmark, commemorating Halifax's role as a key naval station in the British Empire and bringing history to life in Atlantic Canada's largest urban centre.
- Take a stroll along [Spring Garden Road](#) for good shopping and good food! This is one of the most popular streets in Halifax and a great spot for people watching! Grab a coffee at The Smiling Goat Organic Espresso Bar or sample the taps at Rockbottom Brew. While you're there tour the Halifax Public Gardens, a rare example of a formal Victorian garden.
- Explore the city's North End. From the ashes of the catastrophic Halifax Explosion, which shattered the City's North End on 6 December 1917, rose the [Hydrostone District](#), a splendid example of an English-style garden suburb. Completed in 1920, this well-preserved neighbourhood was designed according to the most-up-to-date yet practical principles of town planning. This morning, we suggest you visit this unique little part of Halifax's north end where the buildings are all variations on the same architectural theme and all constructed with "Hydro-Stone" concrete blocks and are aesthetically arranged along each side of wide treed courts. The houses and landscape contribute to a remarkable sense of time and place. The neighbourhood is an important achievement by the influential town planner Thomas Adams. The ensuing remerchandising of this shopping area has created a "retail theatre" of unique shops, eateries and services and has become a lively, vibrant place to shop, eat out, and enjoy the Hydrostone.

Overnight: Halifax, NS

## DAY 2

Depart Halifax for Cape Breton Island. When you cross the Canso Causeway, “turn right” to travel along the Fleur de Lis Trail.

Arrive at St. Peter’s Canal for half-day sailing adventure on “[The Misty Cat](#)”. Join Captain Greg for a 3-hour sailing experience. Enjoy a light meal dockside before you set out from the St. Peter's Canal for an afternoon sail. You can be as involved as you want in operating the boat, or just sit back and enjoy the scenery. Captain Greg is always happy to show novices the ropes, and Misty Cat is an ideal yacht to learn on. Experienced sailors will enjoy her 'wishbone catboat' rig, easy helm and dinghy-like handling.

Back on land, explore the historic [St. Peter's Canal](#) on your own. St. Peter's Canal is an 800 metre canal linking the Atlantic Ocean with the Bras d'Or Lakes. Work started on the canal in 1854 and was completed in 1869. St. Peter's was the site of Fort Saint-Pierre, a 17th century fortified trading post acquired by Nicolas Denys in 1650 to trade with the Mi'kmaq. It was also the site of Port Toulouse, a French community with a military presence that bore witness to the Anglo-French rivalry during the period 1713 and 1758.

Overnight: St. Peter’s, NS

### DAY 3

Travel northeast on either the Fleur de Lis Trail or the Bras d'or Lakes Scenic Drive. Either way, the region’s colourful French heritage is alive and well in picturesque Acadian fishing villages that dot the rugged sea coast. Be sure to sample regional fare like T’chaude or Pâté à la viande. If time permits, stop for a spot of tea at [Rita's Tea Room](#) which offers warm hospitality, homebaked goodies including the ever popular oatcakes, and of course, a good cup of tea! Take a few minutes to browse through the exhibit room and learn of the many accolades and awards gathered by Big Pond’s very own musical queen, Rita MacNeil.

Continue to Glace Bay. Situated on one of the most picturesque coasts of Cape Breton Island, on a 15-acre site filled with wild roses and grasses, the [Glace Bay Miners Museum](#) pays tribute to the region's long and rich history of coal mining. It is home to profound stories of miners and their families, and the resource that helped build a nation. The Museum is also home to the famous choir of miners - The Men of the Deeps. The highlight of your visit here will be an underground tour of the Ocean Deeps Colliery, a coal mine located beneath the Museum building. Retired coal miners are your guides for this excursion underground, and promise to entertain and inform you in a custom that has become treasured by visitors all over the world. The exhibit area focuses on the geological development of Cape Breton's coal field. Learn all about the various types of coal mining and mining techniques, see our vast display of equipment and listen to the stories of miners, the companies they worked for, their unions and their families.

Make your way to Louisbourg for an authentic evening dining experience at the [Beggar's Banquet!](#) Join in for a tantalizing evening of lobster and crab, storytelling and Louisbourg tales. Know how to crack a lobster? If not, Linda and Tom will be glad to show you how! Watch Tom steam the main courses outside in the great outdoors, just before you sit down to eat – and then serve them up Cape Breton style. Choose from market lobster, snow crab, halibut or roasted half chicken. Stay after dinner for a

sing song or a walk on the beach and enjoy the wonders of our salty ocean breezes and the majestic view of the 18th century Fortress.

Overnight:               Louisbourg, NS

#### **DAY 4**

This morning, visit the [Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site](#) and take a step back into a bygone era – back to a time when the French and English crowns fought for control of the New World and all of Nova Scotia was a battleground.

The Fortress of Louisbourg is the largest reconstruction project in North America. The original settlement was founded in 1713 by the French and developed over several decades into a thriving center for fishing and trade. Fortified against the threat of British invasion during the turbulent time of empire-building, Louisbourg was besieged twice before finally being destroyed in the 1760s. The site lay untouched until well into modern times, when archaeologists began to reconstruct the 18th century fortress to create its present day - 'living history' - hands-on experience.

Today, visitors to the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site can watch French colonial soldiers fire muskets and cannons, smell fresh bread as it comes from the brick oven or try their own hand and upper-class dancing and pastimes like quill writing or lace making. Everything has been faithfully recreated in exacting detail.

Meet for a guided tour of a trio of rotating workshops offer many opportunities to explore a place that time has forgotten. Rub shoulders with local characters, the De Gannes and the Chief Engineer's servants, as they provide a rare glimpse into the exciting challenges faced by the resilient residents of the 18th century town. Revel in the magnificence of the King's Bastion while you hear stirring tales of soldiers testing their mettle in an unfamiliar new environment. And for pure indulgence, treat yourself to the elegant bliss of our chocolate demonstrations, delighting in a first-hand experience making hot chocolate the "old fashioned" way.

After your tour, gather at the Grandchamp Tavern where costumed staff in period restaurants prepare and serve delicious food and beverages based on 18th century tradition and recipes. Here the townspeople and off-duty soldiers would have eaten, drank, gambled and gossiped. Plan on sharing a knife, as you'll get only large spoon as your eating utensil!

After lunch, savour the good times with an 18th century cookie-baking workshop. Uncover the secrets of this French society's culinary customs and traditions while you treat yourself to an unbeatable taste of Louisbourg's history, learning first-hand tricks and tips from a servant in the Engineer's kitchen.

Depart Louisbourg and make your way to Sydney, the largest city on Cape Breton Island.

Overnight:               Sydney, NS

#### **DAY 5**

This morning visit the Sydney area, also commonly known as the Steel City, a major industrial hub for Atlantic Canada. Located on the shores of the vast Sydney Harbour, Sydney is a popular stopover point for cruise ships on the Atlantic Shore. This historic community is a mainstay of the legendary Cape Breton region, and boasts several buildings and landmarks that date as far back as 1786. As the largest urban area on Cape Breton and the island's historical capital, Sydney, Nova Scotia is the perfect mix of metropolitan charm and down home hospitality.

- The heart of Sydney is its waterfront. It's a great place to go for a walk, stop to listen to a busker and watch the ships in the harbour. Along the way, be sure to get your photo taken beside the [world's largest fiddle](#), built in recognition of Cape Breton's musical talent.
- Sydney embraces its history at every turn, from the historical [Cossit House](#) and [Jost houses](#), which were both built in the 1780s, to St. Patrick's Church, which is the oldest Catholic church in Cape Breton and the final resting place of some of Sydney's early colonists.
- The [Old Sydney Society](#) gives regular walking tours, including personally tailored tours for those who want to look at areas of particular interest or walk in their ancestors footsteps. Throughout July and August, more adventurous souls can take a ghost walk through historical Sydney, past weathered graves and old jails.
- Craft lovers will definitely want to visit the [Cape Breton Centre for Craft and Design](#), featuring a gallery of work by Cape Breton artisans in a variety of media, including textile, clay, glass and wood.
- Experience the stories and oral history regarding the people of the Community of Membertou through enactments and cultural presentations. Walk with a tour guide and/or Elder through the [Membertou Heritage Park](#) and learn about the unique history, heritage and culture through educational and interactive experiences. The Park honours the spirituality and the strength of the Membertou people telling the story of Membertou, educating and sharing the Mi'kmaq culture and assisting in the preservation of the Mi'kmaq heritage.
- The [Cape Breton Centre for Craft & Design](#) exists to promote excellence in the field of craft & design through education, training, exhibitions and special events. The Centre is committed to developing programs that preserve, elevate, expand and enhance the creation of craft. Since 1973, the Cape Breton Centre for Craft & Design, a not for profit charitable organization, has been serving the needs of the Island craft sector and community. Located at 322 Charlotte Street, explore the Gallery and Gift Shop – then visitors can follow the Artisan Trail map to explore Cape Breton's Handmade Traditions around the Island.
- Stop for a light soup and sandwich lunch but make sure you save room for your sweet tooth with a visit to the [Cape Breton Fudge Company!](#) Not only will you get to sample delicious, homemade fudge while sipping a coffee and listening to local musicians in an intimate atmosphere, but they make killer ice cream floats too (when was the last time you had one of those?)

Depart Sydney and cross over Kelly's Mountain as you make your way to Baddeck. Enroute in St. Ann's, "Cead Mile Failte" (One Hundred Thousand Welcomes) comes your way! Stop by the [Gaelic College of Celtic Arts & Crafts](#) to learn to speak Gaelic or play the fiddle. This college is one-of-a-kind on the continent. Genealogy lovers; go straight to the Great Hall of the Clans to explore your heritage. Before you leave drop by the expansive gift shop and have a kilt, in your family tartan, made just for you!

Overnight:           Baddeck, NS

## DYA 6

The most famous of Baddeck's Scottish residents was Alexander Graham Bell, who built two homes on his estate he called "Beinn Bhreagh", Scottish Gaelic for "Beautiful Mountain". In addition to being credited as the inventor of the telephone, Bell worked on many other world achievements while in Baddeck, including a hydrofoil that set a long-lasting speed record for watercraft and the first manned flight of an airplane in the British Commonwealth.

Get up close and personal with history at the [Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site of Canada!](#) The White Glove Tour is a unique, behind-the-scenes tour where participants get a hands-on experience with some of Alexander Graham Bell's own personal mementos. With a guide leading your experience, you will be taken to one of the site's artifact storage rooms. Here, you will be introduced to the collection and invited to hold a selection of Bell's artifacts, including one of his walking sticks and notebooks. You will also be invited to open storage cabinets and pull back the curtains protecting a wide variety of artifacts. As more collection areas are opened up for the White Glove Tour, each visit to the site promises to be a one-of-a-kind experience with new discoveries at every turn!

Enjoy lunch while overlooking the stunning views of the Bras d'Or Lake and Alexander Graham Bell's family estate at the [Bell Bay Golf Club](#). If time permits, take cart for a drive around the scenic golf course or grab a club and try a hole or 2!

Depart Baddeck and make your way back towards Halifax.

This evening, we highly recommend a farewell to Nova Scotia dinner at the [Five Fishermen Restaurant](#) (1740 Argyle Street, Halifax). This historic restaurant has been home to a number of prestigious businesses that have played significant roles in Halifax's history. For many years in the early 1800's, it served as the first school in Canada to offer a free education. It is for this reason that the building has the distinction of being a protected Heritage site. The building then changed hands to a new proprietor, Anna Leonowens. Her purpose was to start up an Art school, thus the Halifax Victorian School of Art was born. Eventually the art school moved to a new location and became the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. It wasn't long after Anna left the building that it was taken over by the Snow family. Snow & Sons would enjoy a bustling business running a mortuary and would play a significant part in the Titanic disaster.

Overnight: Halifax, NS

## DAY 7

Time to depart Nova Scotia with fond memories ... and a full belly!