

CANADA IS

VIBRANT

The Atlantic coast springs to life as puffin colonies build nests on craggy cliff sides, towering icebergs drift along the shore and the sound of fiddles fills the streets of quaint fishing villages.

Get ready to see a different side of Canada...

Trinity Bay, Newfoundland

Fly Qantas direct from Sydney to Vancouver, with connecting flights to Halifax

Nova Scotia's identity is etched in the wind and the waves – and the residents of this maritime province are its beating heart.

Experience the seafaring spirit

In Halifax, the capital of Nova Scotia, naval vessels mingle in the harbour with local trawlers and the scent of salt fills the air. Browse boutique stores along the four-kilometre waterfront boardwalk before stopping at

the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic (maritimemuseum.novascotia.ca) to explore the city's nautical history, traditions of the Mi'kmaq people and artefacts from the RMS *Titanic*, which sank off this coast.

Wander over to Halifax Seaport Farmers' Market (halifaxfarmersmarket.com) for artisanal goods – think small-batch sea salt and apple brandy – then follow the sound of sea shanties and Celtic rhythms to historic pub The Lower Deck (lowerdeck.ca).

Visit Canada's most scenic coastline

Thirty-three kilometres southwest, the road to St Margarets Bay skirts sleepy towns and sheltered inlets before the landscape shifts and the trees

give way to massive granite boulders, crowned by Peggy's Cove Lighthouse (below), one of the country's most-photographed sights.

A five-minute drive away, tucked between the spruce and the sea, a hydrothermal spa awaits at Oceanstone Resort (oceanstoneresort.com). Soak in a hot pool and unwind in the salt-inhalation hammam (said to soothe respiratory and skin issues) before dashing down to the rock-strewn beach for an invigorating ocean plunge.

Follow the lights for the brightest nights

Continue along Nova Scotia's 1049-kilometre Lighthouse Route, which circles the province's wind-sculpted

South Shore, where you'll pass charming villages and grey seals lazing in the sun.

In nearby Lunenburg, the brightly painted 18th-century wooden buildings have earned the town UNESCO World Heritage status. A guided one-hour tour (lunenburgwalkingtours.com) uncovers the community's history, from its shipbuilding past to its creative revival, with a stop at the famed *Bluenose II* schooner when it's in port.

Afterwards, drop in to Liverpool, a town with a storied privateering history, and Yarmouth, where the illumination from Cape Forchu Lighthouse is rivalled only by the night-time twinkle of the Milky Way galaxy.

NOVA SCOTIA

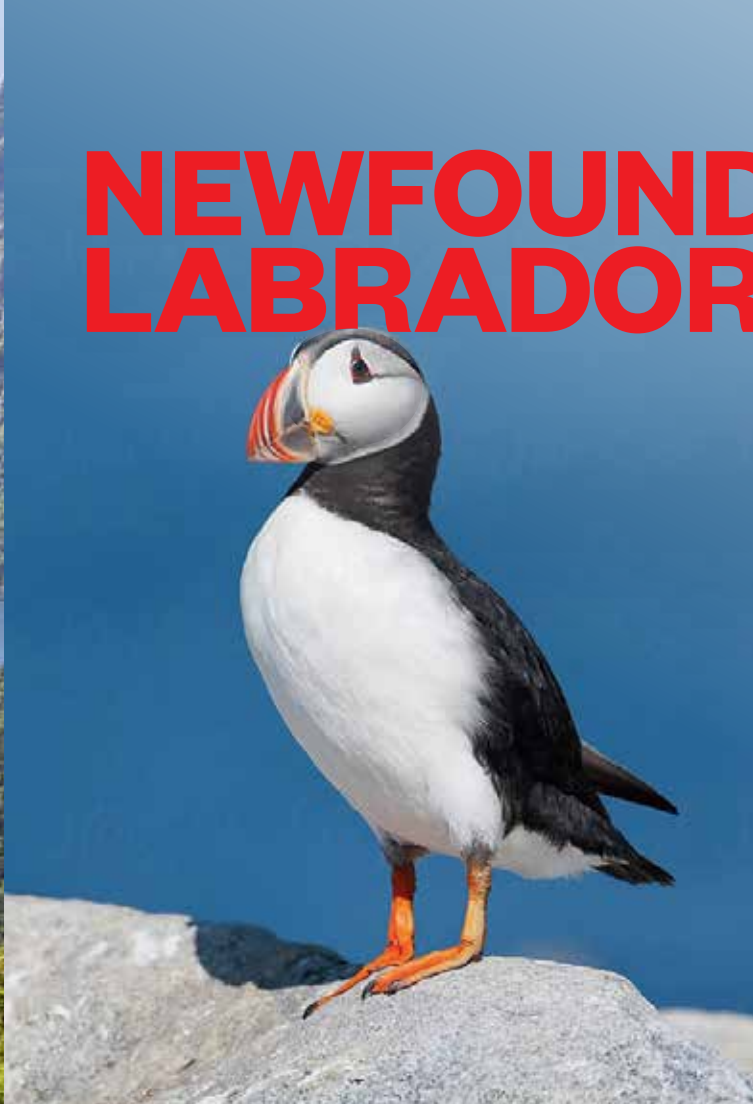




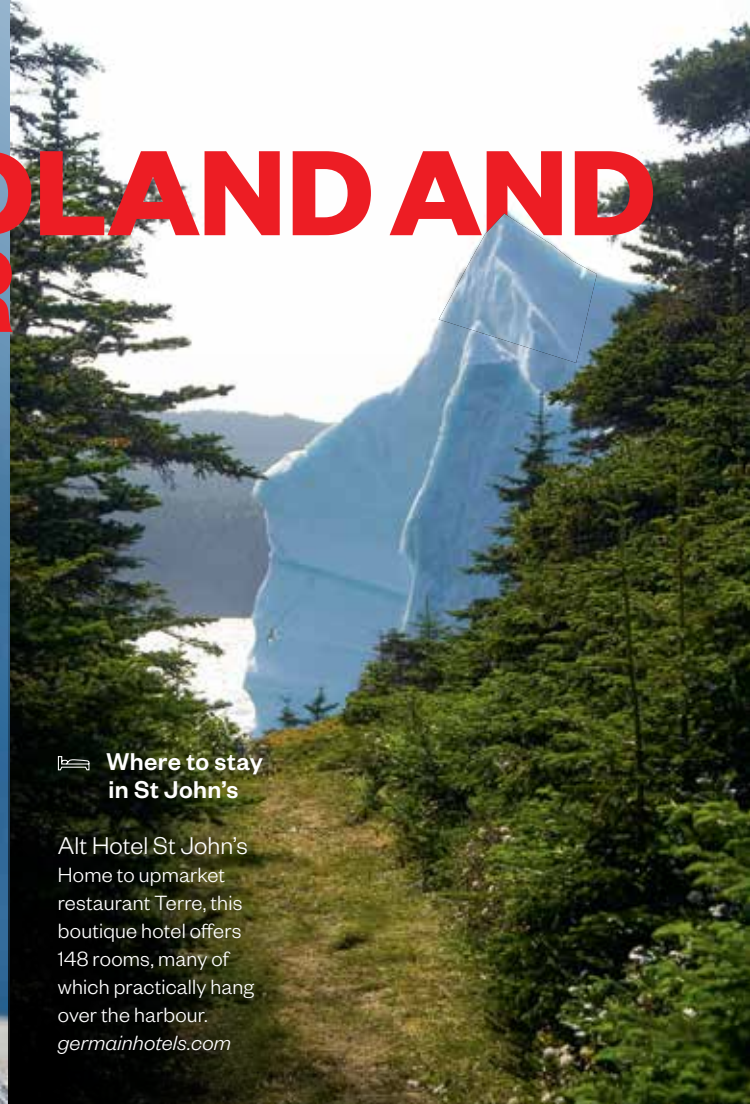
Where to stay in Halifax

Muir Hotel

Right on the harbourfront with 109 nautically inspired rooms, spa and a restaurant serving elevated regional cuisine, this prime-position stay is the perfect seafaring home base. muirhotel.com



NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR



Where to stay in St John's

Alt Hotel St John's Home to upmarket restaurant Terre, this boutique hotel offers 148 rooms, many of which practically hang over the harbour. germainhotels.com

Spot whales and tidal wonders

From Yarmouth, the road curves towards the Bay of Fundy, where the ocean surges create the highest tidal shifts in the world. Walk along the exposed sea floor at Burntcoat Head Park or see the dramatic "flowerpot" rock formations during low tide at New Brunswick's Hopewell Rocks Provincial Park.

This region provides a vital nursery for the North Atlantic right whale. Boat tours, which run between June and mid-October from Digby Neck, offer a chance to see these endangered creatures in their natural habitat (nova.scotiawhalewatching.ca).

Dine out like the lobster-loving locals

Lobster fishing is a balance of tradition and sustainability.

Each specimen is examined with precision – if it's too small or a female has eggs, it goes back into the water. Often, more are returned than kept in order to ensure the population thrives. Discover the Strait (discoverthestrait.com) allows you to take part in a real catch on the Northumberland Strait, a narrow channel known for its calm, sheltered waters. The day starts at 4am, when you'll meet your captain, who'll be dressed in oilskins and preparing the bait. As the sun lights the sky in cotton-candy hues, you'll watch the crew haul handmade wooden traps and hear their seafaring stories.

If early mornings aren't your thing, head to the Sea-to-Table Lobster Adventure with East Coast Outfitters (eastcoastoutfitters.com) in Terence Bay near Peggy's Cove. You'll paddle a kayak

past wild granite islands and visit a working boat before heading back to the wharf and cracking into just-caught lobster as the sun sets.

Halifax to Deer Lake 1.5-hour flight

Set forth to Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada's easternmost province, where dramatic fjords and rugged coastlines are backdrops to moments of awe.

Explore the untamed beauty of Bonne Bay

In Gros Morne National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site on the west coast of Newfoundland, an ancient

inland fjord slices through mountains exposing parts of the earth's mantle. Bonne Bay winds around the soaring volcanic cliffs and forested slopes connecting the open Atlantic to the heart of the park. With Gros Morne Adventures (grosmortheadventures.com), an Indigenous guide will whisk you away by Zodiac boat to a secluded cove to walk among untouched flora and watch for harbour seals and migrating minke whales. You'll also use stone-age tools to make fire and cook bread.

On the outskirts of the park is a delightful farmstay championing sustainability. During the summer months at Upper Humber Settlement (upperhumbersettlement.ca), built by hosts Lauralee and Mark Ledrew with local lumber, guests forage for berries and herbs before

enjoying a four-course meal of game and garden-fresh veg.

Feast your eyes on puffins and icebergs

On the other side of the island is Bonavista Peninsula. If Neverland existed, it might look like this – the electric-green meadows and jagged rock formations were in fact a stand-in for the fictional isle in the 2023 film *Peter Pan & Wendy*. With Seas the Day Boat Tours (facebook.com/seastheboatours), you'll have the opportunity to witness a wildlife trifecta – puffins (early May to September), humpback and minke whales (from May to September) – as well as towering icebergs drifting from Greenland in May and early June.

Feel the beat of quirky capital St John's

A 3.5-hour drive south-east from Bonavista, St John's has

an industrious-yet-playful energy that comes from its remoteness. Colourful houses cling to steep streets that overlook a dramatic harbour, spirited accordion tunes filter out of the pubs along George Street and the culinary scene is driven by the island's food-rich landscapes and surrounding waters.

Eight years ago, chef Matthew Swift fell in love with the city after a weekend trip with his partner. Soon after, he opened Terre (terreresrestaurant.com), where the ever-evolving menu is shaped by a hyperlocal supply chain. Expect French-inspired smoked mussels with kohlrabi caesar and cod fillet with Jerusalem artichoke.

Venture south of the city with Ocean Quest Adventures (oceanquestadventures.com) to kayak among icebergs – you can paddle close enough to hear the ice crack as it melts and shifts.

Or depart from the picturesque Quidi Vidi, five minutes from downtown, on a fishing tour with experienced locals Noel Browne Jnr and Kevin Battcock (qvcharters.com). Once there, clean, cook and dine on your own freshly caught cod.

Stay a bit longer...

Can't get enough of Atlantic Canada's myriad charms? Then add these intriguing spots to your itinerary.

Eat your way around an island famed for its food

On Prince Edward Island you can dig for clams on red-sand beaches, sip mead at the local distilleries and join the music and dancing at the Festival of Small Halls (smallhalls.com), held in June.

Rest your head at the edge of the world

Perched on a remote island off the north-east coast of Newfoundland and Labrador, Fogo Island Inn (fogoislandinn.ca) is famed for its masterful design. Built on stilts on a section of coastline known as "Iceberg Alley", the retreat has 29 guestrooms, a gallery, 37-seat cinema and spectacular rooftop deck with saunas and hot tubs. Everything, from the produce to the linen, is sourced locally.

Seek out native fauna on the Cabot Trail

Hoping to spot moose and bald eagles? Your best bet is the 298-kilometre Cabot Trail that winds through Cape Breton Island. Stop in at Eskasoni Cultural Journeys (eskasoniculturaljourneys.ca) to learn about Mi'kmaw traditions and the island's Indigenous heritage.