

Sailing Newfoundland: Fjords, Bays, and Tickles

Pre-Tour Extension Highlights

City of St. John's

St. John's is one of the oldest cities in North America. A city unlike any other - cradled in a harbour carved from 500 million year old rock and surrounded by hills running down to the ocean. A city of a thousand colours - even a street affectionately known as 'Jellybean Row'.

St. John's offers an enticing combination of old world charm, unique architectural, historic and natural attractions, top notch facilities and services, and is located in close proximity to spectacular coastlines, historic villages and a diverse selection of wildlife.

For more than 500 years St. John's has been visited by European explorers, adventurers, soldiers and pirates. St. John's, the provincial capital, is the economic and cultural centre for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Signal Hill

Signal Hill overlooks the historic port city, witness to a bygone era. As early as 1704 signal flags were flown from this site to inform merchants of the approach of ships whether hostile or friendly. With its panoramic view of the Atlantic ocean, port and city, Signal Hill has been the site of countless military endeavours over the centuries, and in 1901, was on the receiving end of the first transatlantic wireless signal by Marconi.

Cape Spear Lighthouse

From the mid 1800s the lighthouse at Cape Spear has flashed its message from this point of land. Today the Cape Spear lighthouse has been restored to its original appearance and refurbished as a light keeper's residence to the period of 1836. Cape Spear lighthouse is the oldest surviving lighthouse in Newfoundland and Labrador.

During the Second World War, a very different kind of danger focused activities at Cape Spear as a coastal defence battery to protect the entrance to St. John's Harbour. The gun emplacements were built at the tip of the Cape and connected by underground passages to magazine and equipment rooms. From 1941 to 1945, troops were stationed here, and barracks, mess halls and canteens were built.

Today, the bunkers and gun barrels provide a sheltered view of the ocean. No longer watching for the enemy, visitors survey the horizon for whales, icebergs, seabirds and ships headed in and out of St. John's harbour.

O'Brien's Whale Tours

O'Brien's Whale & Bird Tours is a family owned and operated business that was formed in 1985, by brothers Joe and Loyola O'Brien

Come for the humpback whales, puffins, seabirds, icebergs and the O'Briens' stories and insights into the nautical wonders of this rugged coast and maybe even a song.

Terra Nova National Park

Terra Nova National Park has abundant natural resources, such as fish and sea mammals. For at least 5,000 years people have been attracted to the Terra Nova area. Prehistoric peoples and European settlers depended on the rich resources of the sea and land, as do many people in the region today. The significance of the area's natural and cultural heritage was officially recognized in 1957 when Terra Nova became Newfoundland's first national park. Today, people continue to be attracted to this land because of the abundant wildlife, exceptional scenery and array of recreational activities.

Twillingate

Twillingate is one of the most picturesque outports in all of Newfoundland and Labrador. Located on the edge of what is known as iceberg alley, Twillingate is affectionately known as the iceberg capital of the world.

Post-Tour Extension Highlights

Gros Morne National Park

Gros Morne National Park, the second-largest National Park in Eastern Canada and stretches across 1,805 square kilometres of western Newfoundland. This UNESCO World Heritage site is part of the towering Long Range Mountains and encompasses tiny seaside communities, forests, bogs, barren lowlands, and striking shorelines.

The Gros Morne area is world renowned for its complex geology and stunning scenery. It was here that geologists proved the theory of plate tectonics. The Tablelands, a mountain of flat-topped rock of a kind usually found only deep in the earth's mantle, is an awe inspiring sight. The chemical composition of the rocks on this eerie moon-like landscape may be too harsh for plants to colonize, but you can hike all over this discovery.

Port au Choix

Port au Choix, on the west side of Newfoundland's Great Northern Peninsula and has been populated for thousands of years. The remains of four ancient cultures have been found at Port au Choix to date: Maritime Archaic Indian, Dorset and Groswater Paleoeskimo, and recent Indians. Archaeologists searched many years for a site such as this one, which sheds new light on our understanding of native peoples in this part of the world.

L'Anse aux Meadows

The reconstructions of three Norse buildings are the focal point of this archaeological site, the earliest known European settlement in the New World. The archaeological remains at the site were declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978. Exhibits highlight the Viking lifestyle, artifacts, and the archaeological discovery of the site.