

## CHAMPLAIN'S WINE COUNTRY



*The Annapolis Valley is Canada's up-and-coming wine destination with 11 established wineries in this region alone. Perfect boutique wineries and unique varietals such as Marechal Foch and L'Acadie Blanc make tours and tastings a must-do in this region. Food lovers will delight in the bounty of land and sea. Feast upon succulent Digby scallops or visit the Hall's Harbour Lobster Pound for the catch of the day. Explore plentiful farmers' markets and U-picks of the Annapolis Valley where fresh strawberries, blueberries and apples inspire many a seasonal local dish. Throughout the region, you can explore the legends of Nova Scotia's First People, the Mi'kmaq, and of the settlers who arrived in the 1600's with Samuel de Champlain and set up camp at historic Port-Royal National Historic Site, eventually becoming known as the Acadians. Port-Royal along with Grand-Pre National Historic Site, and Fort Anne National Historic Site provide an important history lesson about the life and deportation of the Acadians.*

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### DAY 1

Arrive at the 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

Fill up with a hearty breakfast before you leave the city life and travel along the Evangeline Trail or Highway 101 towards Digby.

The Evangeline Trail parallels the Bay of Fundy coast, passing through some of North America's earliest European history and the delightful villages and orchards of the Annapolis Valley. It's a journey that spans 400 years of settlement, a journey that will take you past forts, farms and fishing villages, a journey rich in culture, diversity, charm and natural beauty.

Just outside the town of Digby is the quaint village of Bear River. This tidal village of 800 is a showcase of how rural living often demands creativity and community spirit ... and Bear River villagers are perfect examples of this. The village is home to many artisans from far & wide, drawn here by the beauty and uniqueness of the area. The original peoples of Bear River are the Mi'kmaq who lived here for thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans. Visit their Heritage Centre located just 1.5 km inland from the village. The little village also boasts 2 growing wineries: Annapolis Highlands Vineyard and Bear River Vineyards.

In Digby, check in at the Digby Town Visitor Information Centre (110 Montague Row) to meet up with a local guide for the [Plankton, Periwinkles and Predators Tour](#). Explore what makes the Bay of Fundy such fun at low tide!

Digby is known as the Scallop Capital of the World so time to dig in and see what all the fuss is about! For dinner, make sure its one of the many offerings of restaurants or pubs that offer fresh world-famous Digby scallops!

Overnight: Digby, NS

### DAY 3

Follow the Evangeline Trail (Route 1) and make your way to the historic town of [Annapolis Royal](#). This beautiful community was originally inhabited by a strong Mi'kmaq community before it became home in 1605 to some of North America's earliest European settlers. Stroll down St. George Street, one of the oldest streets in North America. The Annapolis Royal area has gained a reputation as a vibrant centre for cultural activity, and over the years it has become a magnet for visual artists, craftspeople, performers and writers. And the well-preserved heritage buildings, such as Fort Anne and Port Royal National Historic Sites, make up one of the loveliest streetscapes in the country.

- In a beautiful setting overlooking a tidal river valley, the [Annapolis Royal Historic Gardens](#) is a premiere Nova Scotia attraction showcasing gardening methods, designs and materials representing more than four hundred years of local history. Highlights include the Rose Collection, boasting hundreds of rose cultivars and thousands of fragrant and colourful blossoms; the Innovative Garden which showcases methods and plant materials suitable for today's urban garden; the reconstructed Acadian House, based on the pre-deportation 1671 time period, designed using evidence from local archaeological excavations.
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- Across the bay is [Port Royal National Historic Site](#), a reconstruction of early 17th- century buildings representing the former colony of the French who settled for a time along the Nova Scotia coast. Costumed interpreters and period demonstrations help recreate the look and feel

of Port-Royal, one of the earliest settlements in North America. Visitors can also take in the panoramic view of the Annapolis River and Basin.

- Annapolis Royal is home to the first and only tidal power plant in North America, one of just a few in the world. The [Annapolis Tidal Power Plant](#) came online in 1984. It can make as much as 20 megawatts of electricity and has a daily output of roughly 80-100 megawatt hours, depending on the tides. Learn more about the harnessing of this powerful energy source at the Annapolis Tidal Generating Station Interpretive Centre.

Overnight: Annapolis Royal, NS

This evening, be sure to go on the [Candlelight Graveyard Tour](#) @ Fort Anne. Have you ever thought of a graveyard as a place of adventure, learning and discovery? Have you ever wondered about the meaning of some of the graveyard art on old tombstones? Have you ever read names and dates and wondered what kind of life the people led? If you enjoy unique experiences and want to find out more about "images of the past etched in stone" don't miss the chance to tour the Oldest English Graveyard in Canada by candlelight. Created in 1991 by internationally-acclaimed heritage interpreter Alan Melanson, they are consistently one of the most popular events in Nova Scotia, recommended by major media throughout the world. Join the fun, wear comfortable walking shoes, and don't forget to bring your sense of adventure! (Tour departs @ 9:30 pm)

## DAY 4

Travel through the scenic Annapolis Valley, Atlantic Canada's richest agricultural region, a patchwork quilt of fields, dykes, orchards and vineyards. The power of nature is apparent here with the world famous Bay of Fundy tides and ever-changing landscape of rocky shores, fertile farmlands, salt marshes and broad sandy beaches.

For lunch, visit [Hall's Harbour Lobster Pound](#), home to the "Lobster in the Rough" dining experience. During the warm weather, locals and visitors alike flock to this tiny fishing village to select and have prepared in the on-site cook shack, a sample of the world renowned Bay of Fundy lobster. The experience is heightened by devouring this delicacy while seated in the waterfront dining room, the prime stage for observing the highest tides in the world. At low tide the wharf is high and dry and the fishing boats wait patiently on the harbour bottom until the tide rises as much as an inch a minute to the 40 foot high tide mark on the wharf. Truly a phenomenon to witness! The scene is set with some lobster traps, fishing boats, the scents of pine and sea wrack with a gang of hungry seagulls hanging around. Is there a better way to eat lobster?

After your feed of lobster, make your way to the farming town of Wolfville. Along the way are several unique stopping-spots to check out:

- [Foxhill Farm & Cheese House](#) crafts over 20 varieties of cheese using milk from their own herd of Holstein cows. The Rands are a 6th generation dairy farm family who are strongly committed to using quality fresh milk for a truly unique dairy product. They proudly plant the seed to grow the grass to milk the cow to make specialty products for their customers. But it's not just cheese they make! Their yogurt, gelato and fresh pasteurized non-homogenized milk packaged in glass bottles are so popular that they have become known as "The Annapolis Valley Dairy Store". (1678 Church St, Port Williams)

- From crisp Annapolis Valley apples to fresh sweet corn, [Noggins Corner Farm Market](#) has the Valley's finest selection of locally grown fruits and vegetables in addition to homemade jams, fresh local honey, mouth-watering pies and freshly baked bread. And delicious, fresh apple cider as well. They are open year round, 8 am to 8 pm, thanks to have a large greenhouse on site for fresh produce in the winter too! (10009 Highway #1, Wolfville)
- [Wolfville Farmer's Market](#) is one of the most popular markets in the province. They recently moved into a new, year round facility and are open every Saturday and Wednesday (evenings) year round.
- [Hennigar's Farm Market](#) needs no introduction to many locals; a stop here is like "coming home." Browse the store for giftware, plants, baked goods, produce or line up for some of our famous ice-cream; have some delicious cookhouse food, or wander through our park and nature trail. You can also play 'farmer's golf' amongst the apple orchard. (10272 Highway #1, Wolfville).
  - For the adventurous types, get your exercise in for the day while exploring a local farm in a unique way! Play Farmersgolf at Hennigar's Farm Market! Farmersgolf is for people who want to get exercise and fresh air while enjoying the farm experience and having fun. This type of golf is affordable and enjoyable for the beginner to the experienced golfer. The ball is a small soccer-type ball and the club has a small wooden shoe on the end. There are 10 holes, a total distance of 1.7 km, takes approx. 1 ½ hours.

Overnight: Wolfville, NS

## DAY 5

Board the "Magic Winery Bus" for an unforgettable wine and culinary experience coupled with a little history and culture!

- Tour and tasting at [Gaspereau Vineyards](#), a premium boutique winery located in the Gaspereau Valley, just minutes from Wolfville. The first winery to establish in the valley, Gaspereau Vineyards is situated on the edge of a picturesque, 35-acre vineyard. Best known for outstanding Rieslings, Gaspereau Vineyards specializes in fruit-forward, terroir driven whites, and earthy, robust red wines. European-trained, Nova Scotian born winemaker, Gina Haverstock, strives to produce wines that are true to the variety and uniquely Nova Scotian.
- The winemaker at [Luckett Vineyards](#) will guide you personally through the property to explain how the crisp maritime breezes, legendary ocean tides and brilliant sunshine meet to create an outstanding terroir on a hillside overlooking the magnificent Gaspereau Valley. Try their Buried Red, Phone Box White, or Rosetta Rose, along with award-winning favourites including L'Acadie, Tidal Bay, as well as delightful wines made from locally grown fruit. After the tour, have lunch on The Crush Pad Bistro, an open air dining patio at Luckett Vineyards, which serves up stunning views and delicious local food carefully selected to complement their wines.
- [Domaine de Grand Pre Winery](#) is one of the oldest wineries in the Province works hard to develop special wines true to our province and unlike any others in the region. Explore the acres of land and learn about the grape varieties unique to Nova Scotia then taste their passion at the wine shop. This property has been described as "world-class" — from the vineyards and museum to the restaurant and tours. Over 25,000 visitors each year certainly speak volumes about the experience you'll get at Domaine de Grand Pré.

Overnight: Wolfville, NS

**DAY 6**

Make your way back towards Halifax. But before you leave the area, there are a few more interesting story ideas to be found in the Grand Pre area:

- Amazing smells of unique herbs and fruits can be found at [The Tangled Garden](#) – its therapeutic just walking thru the gardens! Beverly McClure transforms herbs and fruits into jewel-like jellies and flavourful vinegars to enhance simple fare or gourmet meals. The property features an extensive herb garden, a labyrinth, art gallery and a production kitchen where the jams, jellies, vinegars, liqueurs, ice cream and more are made and sold. Fresh herbs are picked daily from the garden and are used with fruit from local farms and orchards and wine from local wineries to make the jellies in small batches, six jars at a time. All this ensures intense, unique flavours and quality.
- The [Just Us Coffeehouse](#) is a perfect spot for your coffee fix. While enjoying your coffee or tea, you can take a peek at the Roastery, the Fair Trade museum and the Chocolate Workshop. This is a happening place with visitors and regulars who love this gem within the Valley. (HINT: try their refreshing Blueberry Blaster made with 100% Nova Scotia grown wild blueberries)
- Stretch your legs with a stroll along Evangeline Beach, which offers stunning views of Blomidon Ridge. Take a walk at low tide or go for a swim at high tide. It's a great place to get a feel for the phenomenal Bay of Fundy.
- Take a guided tour around the [Grand Pre National Historic Site](#) and learn how it commemorates the Grand-Pré area as a centre of Acadian settlement from 1682 to 1755 and the site of the Deportation of the Acadians, which began in 1755 and continued until 1762.
- [Evangeline's Inn & Motel Café](#) is known to the locals as “Stirling's” (ask them why!) and has been a part of the village of Grand Pre since the 1940's, renowned for fresh fish chowder and scones, “real” burgers and homemade pies.

Continue to travel towards Halifax. Enroute you will find the town of Windsor, known locally as the “town of firsts”:

- The great game of hockey was FIRST played in Windsor around 1800, on Long Pond by the boys of King's College, Canada's FIRST College. (The [Windsor Hockey Heritage Museum](#) is conveniently located at the historic Haliburton House Museum. It serves as host to a treasure trove of hockey heritage including artifacts and memorabilia from the earliest days of hockey's beginning.)
- Windsor was home to Judge Thomas Chandler Haliburton, North America's FIRST recognized writer of humour, and one of the most quoted authors in the English language. Learn more at the historic [Haliburton House Museum](#).
- Windsor is the giant pumpkin capital of the universe. The FIRST world champion giant gourds were grown on the farm of Howard Dill, who launched an international pumpkin growing craze and is the creator of [Dill's Giant Atlantic Pumpkins](#) – visit the farm and get some seeds to take home and grow your own. (Interesting fact: The world's FIRST Pumpkin Regatta was held in Windsor in 1999. This internationally recognized event takes place annually on the second Sunday in October.)
- The FIRST agricultural fair in North America was held in Windsor in 1765. After 243 years, the [Hants County Exhibition](#) is still going strong.

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!