

# Overview of Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia is a 350-mile (560km) peninsula on the east of Canada, connected to the mainland by a narrow isthmus. Its rugged coastline, numerous rivers and slew of lakes make for a watery wonderland of delicious seafood, scenic routes, waterside wilderness trails, and dolphin and whale-watching opportunities.

The semi-island has a strong mixed history with influences from French, Scottish and English colonisations, as well as from the local Mi'kmaq Nation, clearly visible. But it's the Scots who had the biggest impact on Nova Scotia's culture, the first clue of which is in the name, which means 'New Scotland' in Latin. Indeed, there is a certain Scottish flavour that permeates its bars and restaurants, and even the famous Scottish wit is alive and well in Nova Scotia locals.

Nova Scotia, together with its neighbouring provinces of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, are known as the Maritime Provinces of Canada. Nowhere in Nova Scotia is further than 35 miles (56km) from the ocean, and the busy port of Halifax attracts more than 200,000 cruise-ship passengers every year.

The relatively small spit of land also supports a vibrant musical culture, which includes the only symphony orchestra in Atlantic Canada, and a rich tradition of Scottish and Irish music.

The warm summers in Nova Scotia make it ideal for a range of outdoor activities, such as golf, sailing, zip lining, hiking, cycling, fishing, swimming and horseback riding. The winters are undeniably cold, but offer other pastimes such as cross-country skiing and snowmobiling.

Nova Scotia is ultimately a great destination for those interested in the great outdoors. While it is primarily celebrated as one of Canada's maritime capitals, there is certainly enough fun to be had on dry land if exploring the waves isn't your thing.

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## Key Facts

### **Language:**

The official languages are English and French (spoken predominantly in Quebec).

### **Passport/Visa:**

All visitors must hold a valid passport, and it's recommended that passports always be valid for six months after the intended period of travel. Visitors are required to hold onward or return tickets, all documents needed for the next destination and sufficient funds to cover the period of intended stay. Travellers from most visa-exempt countries arriving in Canada by air need to fill in an Electronic Travel Authorisation (eTA) form online prior to visiting Canada. This requirement is applicable to all but U.S citizens and travellers with a valid Canadian visa. Canadian citizens, including dual citizens, and Canadian permanent residents cannot apply for an eTA. As part of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), all travellers travelling between the United States and Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, and the Caribbean region are required to present a passport or other valid travel documents to enter or re-enter the United States. If departing from the USA a valid passport will be required by immigration authorities.

### **Currency:**

The currency used is the Canadian dollar (CAD). Banks and bureaux de change will change cash, as will some hotels. Major credit cards are widely accepted and ATMs are widespread. US dollars are widely accepted.

### **Electricity:**

Electrical current is 120 volts, 60Hz. American-style flat two-pin plugs and a plug with a third round grounding pin are standard.

# Travel to Nova Scotia

## Climate for Nova Scotia

The Nova Scotia climate is a continental one tempered by the province's coastal location, and the weather is often changeable from day to day. Summers tend to be warm, though short; winters are moderately cold; and autumn tends to be a lovely time of year as it is a long, mild season. Summer temperatures average around 70°F (20°C) with the coastal areas cooler than inland. Winter temperatures are modified by the Gulf Stream and snowfall is moderate, with more snow inland than on the coast. Fog is prevalent in late spring and early summer and the province receives plenty of rain.

## Health Notes when travelling to Canada

Travellers should be up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines before traveling to Canada, and should consider taking routine vaccines as a standard precaution. Medical care is excellent but expensive, so medical insurance is advised.

## Safety Notes when travelling to Canada

While most visits to Canada are trouble-free, the country does share the common international risk of terrorism. The crime rate is low but travellers are advised to take sensible precautions to safeguard their belongings, as they would anywhere. Parts of Canada are prone to tornadoes between May and September.

## Customs in Canada

Rowdiness and loud speech are inappropriate except under special circumstances or in places such as bars, as Canadians tend to be soft spoken, patient and almost apologetic in their public behaviour. They are generally tolerant of the complex network of cultural differences in public behaviour, particularly in cities where such diversity is more common place. Recreational cannabis is legally available throughout Canada, though local laws can vary depending on the province or territory travellers are visiting.

## Duty Free in Canada

Travellers to Canada are allowed to enter the country with the following items without incurring custom duties: gifts to the value of C\$60 per recipient (excluding advertising material, tobacco and alcoholic beverages); 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars or cigarillos and 200g of tobacco or 200 tobacco sticks; 1.14 litres of liquor or wine or 24 x 355ml bottles or cans of beer or ale. There are strict regulations governing the import of the following: explosives, endangered animal and plant species, items of heritage, fresh foodstuffs and weapons.

## Doing Business in Canada

Vancouver, Toronto, Calgary, and Montreal are the main business centres, and English is the language of business except in French-speaking Quebec, where all written material and business cards should be in French. Business cards are not traditionally exchanged during an initial meeting, but at some appropriate time thereafter; it is best to wait for the host to offer theirs first.

A firm handshake is used by way of greeting and punctuality should be taken seriously for meetings. Canadians dress conservatively and smartly for business and suits are the norm. Gifts can be given in conclusion to celebrate a deal, but should be understated; taking someone out for a meal is a popular way to conclude business dealings.

Canadians are reserved and frown on emotional outbursts. Business is based on facts and figures rather than relationships, so it is best to be as prepared as possible for meetings. Hours of business are usually 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

## Communication in Canada

The international access code for Canada is +1. The outgoing code is 011 followed by the relevant country code. The outgoing code is not necessary for calls to the US and the Caribbean. Hotels, cafes and restaurants offering free WiFi are widely available. As international roaming costs can be high, purchasing a local prepaid SIM card can be a cheaper option.

## Tipping in Canada

A tip of around 15 percent is standard in restaurants, and hairdressers and taxi drivers are usually tipped at the same rate. Bellhops, doormen, porters, and similar service providers at hotels, airports, and stations are generally paid at the customer's discretion.

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# Airports in Nova Scotia

## Halifax International (YHZ)

### *Halifax Robert L. Stanfield International Airport*

[halifaxstanfield.ca/](http://halifaxstanfield.ca/)

**Location:** Halifax The airport is 19 miles (30km) north of Halifax.

**Time:** GMT -4 (GMT -3 from the second Sunday in March to the first Sunday in November).

**Contacts:** Tel: +1 (902) 873 4422.

**Getting to the city:** An airport shuttle service serves the main hotels in the metro area, and a variety of other bus services connect to various destinations in the region. Taxis are available outside the airport building.

**Car rental:** Several major car rental companies are represented at the airport, including Avis, Budget and Enterprise.

**Airport Taxis:** Taxi services are available curbside in the arrivals area.

**Facilities:** There are a number of shops, cafes and restaurants at the airport, as well as duty-free shopping, internet access and children's play areas. ATMs are located in Arrivals and Departures, and a currency exchange booth is available for international travellers. Tourist information is available in Arrivals. Disabled passengers are well catered for.

**Parking:** Hourly parking is located in lots P1 and P2. Visitors will find daily parking in lots P1, P2, P3 and P4.

## Halifax

Halifax is the provincial capital of Nova Scotia, and serves as the centre of commerce for Atlantic Canada. It sits on one of the largest natural harbours in the world and has long been an important maritime centre.

Founded in 1749 by the British who sought to strengthen their presence in the North Atlantic, the city retains its British military air. Many historic stone and wood buildings have been preserved, particularly in the restored waterfront area, which has become a major tourist attraction. The metro offers shopping, exciting nightlife, eclectic restaurants and a diversity of entertainment, and it boasts North America's oldest yacht club, Northwest Arm.

Halifax is also the cultural hub of Nova Scotia and the Atlantic provinces as a whole. It has a number of art galleries, museums, theatres and other charming cultural attractions. It's also home to the Nova Scotia Symphony, and also hosts many cultural festivals such as the Nova Scotia International Tattoo, Shakespeare by the Sea, the Halifax International Busker Festival and the Atlantic Film Festival.

Visitors can find out more about the city's culture from reading *The Coast*, its free alternative arts weekly magazine which can be found online. The city also offers a range of lovely recreational sites, such as parks, beaches, walking trails and some living-history experiences such as the firing of the noon day gun at the Halifax Citadel and the working locks of the Shubenacadie Canal.

Halifax offers visitors a fascinating glimpse into life in Canada's Atlantic provinces, and there's so much to see and do here that tourists will hardly ever experience a dull moment.

## Getting around in Halifax

Central Halifax is walkable, but visitors who want to explore more widely should hire a car. That said, Metro Transit provides a bus service in the city and to surrounding areas, and runs passenger ferries from various city-based terminals. Free transfers are available from the ferry to buses. Cabs can be hailed in the downtown area and there are taxi ranks at the largest hotels and shopping centres.

## Climate in Halifax

Its position on the coast ensures that Halifax experiences less extremes in its climate compared to inland Nova Scotia. Summer temperatures average between about 57°F (14°C) and 75°F (24°C). Spring arrives in April, marred by rain and fog, but as summer moves in conditions warm up and balmy ocean breezes blow the damp away. Autumn is a beautiful season, the days warm, nights cool, and the foliage taking on spectacular hues. Winters are cold and wet, with both rain and snow, and average temperatures between 17°F (-8°C) and 37°F (3°C).

## Sightseeing in Halifax

Halifax's waterfront is a tourist playground of pubs, shops, museums, craft markets and outdoor concerts. In fact, the city's student population ensures a lively pub and bar scene well beyond the waterfront district.

Visitors will encounter plenty of history too, such as the graves of about 150 victims of the Titanic disaster, Pier 21, which is where immigrants were once processed for entry to Canada, and the Halifax Citadel. Visitors who enjoy maritime history should stop at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic.

Most tourist attractions are located downtown and can be reached on foot. Visitors who want to explore more widely should consider booking a tour or hiring a car, as the public transport system is not comprehensive. Travellers should note that some attractions only open in the summer months.

## Halifax Attractions

### Citadel

One of Halifax's military-history heritage sites, the Citadel was built between 1828 and 1856. It's designed in a star shape and features vaulted rooms, a dry defensive ditch and a musketry gallery, offering an awe-inspiring view of Halifax and its harbour from the ramparts. Visitors can watch an audio-visual presentation about the defences of Halifax and visit the soldiers' library, barrack rooms, powder magazine and garrison cell. The site also has exhibits on the communications, engineering and construction of the Citadel. Guides at the site wear the uniform of soldiers of the Royal Artillery and the 78th Highlanders of 1869, and conduct tours in English and French.

**Address:** Citadel Hill

**Website:** [www.novascotia.com/see-do/attractions/halifax-citadel-national-historic-site/1440](http://www.novascotia.com/see-do/attractions/halifax-citadel-national-historic-site/1440)



## Memory Lane Heritage Village

This site in Clam Harbour Road, Lake Charlotte, is owned and operated by the community, and features 13 restored buildings that illustrate rural village life in Nova Scotia in the 1940s. Local people demonstrate traditional skills such as rug hooking, while the cookhouse offers typical meals of the period, completing the feeling of immersion in a historically-accurate coastal community. An award winner, this interesting living museum fills a few hours with fun for the whole family.

**Address:** Lake Charlotte

**Website:** [www.heritagevillage.ca](http://www.heritagevillage.ca)

## Maritime Museum of the Atlantic

This museum has one of Canada's finest collections of both ship models and ship portraits, as well as the world's largest assemblage of wooden artefacts from the Titanic. In addition to a collection of about 24,000 marine photographs, some dating back to the 19th century, there are also examples of rare and unique Nova Scotian boat-building traditions with its small craft displays. The exhibition includes shipwreck treasures, naval World War II convoys, steamboats and the opportunity to explore the 1913-built ship CSS Acadia at the dockside. The museum also boasts a large collection of genealogical resources, including journals, diaries, ship's logs, shipping registers and a library containing more than 5,000 shipping-related books.

**Address:** 1675 Lower Water Street

**Website:** [museum.gov.ns.ca/mma](http://museum.gov.ns.ca/mma)

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# Currency

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## Exchange rate for 1 CAD - Canadian Dollar

<b>0.00</b> BMD Bermudan Dollar	<b>0.68</b> EUR Euro	<b>0.73</b> USD U.S. Dollar	<b>0.58</b> GBP U.K. Pound Sterling	<b>111.95</b> JPY Japanese Yen	<b>0.66</b> CHF Swiss Franc
<b>1.11</b> AUD Australian Dollar	<b>28.83</b> UAH Ukrainian Hryvnia	<b>324.82</b> KZT Kazakhstani Tenge	<b>68,104.49</b> LBP Lebanese Pound	<b>3.55</b> LYD Libyan Dinar	<b>5.02</b> BOB Bolivian Boliviano
<b>0.00</b> NPR Nepalese Rupee	<b>0.00</b> OMR Omani Rial	<b>0.00</b> QAR Qatari Rial	<b>0.99</b> SGD Singapore Dollar	<b>7.92</b> SEK Swedish Krona	<b>0.00</b> TTD Trinidad Tobago Dollar
<b>0.00</b> VEF Venezuelan Bolivar	<b>42.52</b> DOP Dominican Peso	<b>0.00</b> HRK Croatian Kuna	<b>12.41</b> MXN Mexican Peso	<b>446.74</b> XOF West African CFA Franc	<b>0.00</b> PGK Papua New Guinean kina
<b>0.00</b> BSD Bahamian Dollar	<b>0.00</b> FJD Fiji Dollar	<b>0.00</b> HNL Honduran Lempira	<b>97.95</b> DZD Algerian Dinar	<b>0.00</b> MMK Myanma Kyat	<b>0.00</b> BWP Botswana Pula
<b>2.72</b> PEN Peruvian Nuevo Sol	<b>686.67</b> CLP Chilean Peso	<b>283.06</b> AMD Armenia Dram	<b>17.04</b> CZK Czech Koruna	<b>12.90</b> MDL Moldova Lei	<b>102.36</b> ISK Icelandic Krona
<b>9,206.75</b> UZS Uzbekistan Sum	<b>2.72</b> ILS Israeli New Sheqel	<b>0.52</b> JOD Jordanian Dinar	<b>0.00</b> KWD Kuwaiti Dinar	<b>27.92</b> UYU Uruguayan Peso	<b>0.00</b> MUR Mauritian Rupee
<b>0.00</b> NIO Nicaraguan Córdoba	<b>7.96</b> NOK Norwegian Krone	<b>2.95</b> PLN Polish Zloty	<b>2.74</b> SAR Saudi Riyal	<b>0.00</b> LKR Sri Lanka Rupee	<b>26.92</b> THB Thai Baht
<b>2.68</b> AED U.A.E Dirham	<b>3.73</b> BRL Brazilian Real	<b>3.39</b> RON Romanian New Leu	<b>5.72</b> HKD Hong Kong Dollar	<b>446.74</b> XAF Central African CFA Franc	<b>18,589.76</b> VND Vietnamese Dong
<b>642.71</b> ARS Argentine Peso	<b>0.00</b> XCD East Caribbean Dollar	<b>0.00</b> GTQ Guatemalan Quetzal	<b>7.36</b> MAD Moroccan Dirham	<b>0.00</b> BHD Bahrain Dinar	<b>0.73</b> PAB Panamanian Balboa
<b>1.24</b> AZN Azerbaijan Manat	<b>2,868.33</b> COP Colombian Peso	<b>64.70</b> KGS Kyrgyzstan Som	<b>264.88</b> HUF Hungarian Forint	<b>7.97</b> TJS Tajikistan Ruble	<b>11,761.39</b> IDR Indonesian Rupiah
<b>35.09</b> EGP Egyptian Pound	<b>994.29</b> KRW South Korean Won	<b>5,456.06</b> PYG Paraguayan Guaraní	<b>3.47</b> MYR Malaysian Ringgit	<b>371.94</b> CRC Costa Rican Colón	<b>1.22</b> NZD New Zealand Dollar
<b>203.32</b> PKR Pakistani Rupee	<b>66.87</b> RUB Russian Rouble	<b>13.54</b> ZAR South African Rand	<b>2.29</b> TND Tunisian Dinar	<b>0.00</b> BBD Barbadian Dollar	<b>1.33</b> BGN Bulgarian Lev
<b>23.66</b> TRY Turkish Lira	<b>41.92</b> PHP Philippine Peso	<b>23.64</b> TWD New Taiwan Dollar	<b>852.33</b> NGN Nigerian Naira	<b>0.00</b> XPF CFP Franc	<b>0.00</b> GHS Ghanaian Cedi
<b>0.00</b> JMD Jamaican Dollar	<b>0.00</b> ANG Neth. Antillean Guilder	<b>0.00</b> BND Brunei Dollar	<b>79.69</b> RSD Serbian Dinar	<b>5.30</b> CNY Chinese Yuan	<b>5.08</b> DKK Danish Krone
<b>2.55</b> TMT New Turkmenistan Manat	<b>61.04</b> INR Indian Rupee				