

CANADA

Nova Scotia: Cape Breton Island

A Self-Guided Walking Adventure





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Travel Style

Our Self-Guided Walking Adventures are ideal for travelers with an independent spirit who enjoy exploring at their own pace. We provide authentic accommodations, some meals, along with comprehensive Route Notes, detailed maps, and 24-hour emergency assistance. This gives you the freedom to focus on the things that matter to you—no group, no guide, and no set schedule to stand in the way of enjoying your adventure, your way.



Overview

Below the windswept headlands of Cape Breton Island, the iconic Cabot Trail hugs Nova Scotia's coast in a scrollwork of switchbacks and swooping curves. Beyond it, the Gulf of St. Lawrence is a wash of vivid blue dotted with fishing boats and the occasional breaching whale. This is the Nova Scotia you've always imagined: a land of bald eagles, wild blueberries, foraging moose, and 350-year-old sugar maples. Here, you can experience sleepy villages steeped in Scottish and Acadian history: savoring traditional fiddlers, crofters' cottages, and historic distilleries. With the freedom to set your own schedule—and your own vehicle to take you from place to place—you can experience unforgettable walks in Cape Breton Highlands National Park, soak in the view from the top of Burnt Mountain, and perhaps even go for a refreshing swim in Bras d'Or Lake. Along the way, spot rare songbirds in prime birding locations, enjoy an optional whale watch, unwind at a spa, or explore the coast via kayak. At night, savor quaint and comfortable lodgings in timber frame lodges, clapboard inns, and a grand ocean-view resort.

PLEASE NOTE: Unlike other Country Walkers Adventures, this trip requires guests to drive from destination to destination. We will reserve a car rental on your behalf (rental cost not included in tour price) or you may use your own vehicle.



Daily Itinerary

DAY 1

Arrival in Sydney or Halifax. Drive from Sydney to Baddeck: 1 hour or from Halifax to Baddeck: 3½ hours

Your destination today is the lovely town of Baddeck. In the heart of Cape Breton Island, it is the official starting and ending point of the Cabot Trail, the coastal road around the island completed in 1932, and named for the English explorer John Cabot, who first sighted the island in 1497, staking England's claim in North America. Baddeck is ideally situated on the northern shore of 60-mile-long Bras d'Or Lake. Alexander Graham Bell maintained his cherished summer home here for 37 years, and the Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site houses a museum commemorating his work. Upon arrival, you can explore the town and its historical properties and shops, or relax at your charming inn.

Dunlop Inn, Baddeck

A gracious small inn, this is Baddeck's only waterfront accommodation with a waterside deck with perfect views of Baddeck lighthouse. Spacious guest rooms have elegant English-country and coastal décor, with muted colors and fabric accents. The harbor-view sunroom overlooks Bras d'Or Lake, and a spacious living room with television and self-serve kitchen are also available. The shops,

restaurant, and sites of historical Baddeck are within walking distance, as well as outdoor activities such as sailing, kayaking, and the Bell Bay 18-hole golf course.

DAY 2

Baddeck River Trail and Uisge Ban Falls; 4.5 miles, easy to moderate, 500-ft. elevation gain and loss. Total driving time: 2 hours



This morning, a walk just outside Baddeck takes you to Uisge Ban Falls (the name is Gaelic for “white water”). The trail winds through hardwood forest and open fields to the Falls Brook, where the deep stream valley leads to the base of the dramatic 500-foot granite gorge and 50-foot waterfall. Returning to your car at the park entrance, you can meander through the Margaree River Valley, with opportunities to visit its high-quality crafters, stunning coastline and deserted beaches, eat lobster for lunch, or try fly-fishing. Scottish tenant farmers, or crofters, came to Cape Breton Island in the early 1800s, cast out of their highland homes by the English, and brought many of their traditions. Your destination for the evening is North America’s only single-malt whiskey distillery and inn in the small town of Glenville, where you partake in a tour and tasting. The on-site pub offers a daily *ceilidh* of Cape Breton music and musicians.

The Glenora Inn and Distillery, Glenville

The Glenora Inn and Distillery is a charming country inn—with a single-malt whiskey distillery on site—in Glenville, a small fishing and farming community. Spacious guest rooms, with classic décor and colors, overlook a lovingly tended courtyard garden and back patios. Walking trails lead from the inn to nearby MacLellan Brook and grounds. Conceived and developed by local businessmen using equipment and know-how from Scotland, the distillery has been in operation since 1989. The restaurant serves locally sourced and inspired fare, and the cozy pub offers a wide selection of single malts in addition to their own.



DAY 3

Acadian Trail; 5.2 miles, moderate, 1,100-ft. elevation gain and loss, with some steep sections. Afternoon option: Salmon Pools Trail; 7.6 miles, easy to moderate, 300-ft. elevation gain and loss. Total driving time: 1 hour

Today you enter the Cape Breton Highlands National Park, a truly

stunning portion of the winding Cabot Trail. The Acadian Trail begins near the Cheticamp Visitor Center and rises almost 1,000 feet above the Cheticamp River, with panoramic views along the Acadian Coastline, the river valley, and the park's highland interior. It eventually winds to the top of Burnt Mountain. Among the many blueberry bushes, you may see evidence of bear and moose. After a picnic lunch, you can enjoy an easier walk along the Salmon Pools Trail, which, as its name indicates, follows the cascading Cheticamp River that features a series of still pools in which Atlantic salmon hover in the deepest spots. In the later afternoon, walking along the valley floor, with cliffs towering above, you may hear the "who cooks for you" of the barred owl. Your home for the next two nights is the fishing village of Cheticamp, originally settled by exiled Acadians in the 1760s when Acadia, the French territory further south, was surrendered to the English in the Seven Years War. In this vibrant community that has maintained its cultural roots, you can browse small shops exhibiting the exquisite hooked rugs and crafts of this area. You may also be able to catch a Celtic musical performance.

Maison Fiset House, Cheticamp

Located on the Cabot Trail with panoramic views of Cheticamp harbor, the town, and surrounding Cape Breton Highlands, this boutique hotel offers eight guestrooms. A meticulously renovated historic home dating from 1895, individually decorated guestrooms are plush with muted tones. Surrounded by outdoor seating on terraces and several balconies, just a short walk leads to Cheticamp's craft shops and restaurants specializing in lobster, maritime salmon, local crab, and Acadian-style baked cod.

DAY 4

Skyline Trail; 5.7 miles, easy to moderate, 400-ft. elevation gain and loss. Afternoon option: Corney Brook; 4 miles, easy to moderate, 450-ft. elevation gain and loss or whale watching excursion; 2 hours (at your own expense). Total driving time: 1 hour



This morning's walking route is the famous Skyline Trail, with its spectacular views from 1,000 feet above sea level. You begin at about 950 feet and reach a maximum of 1,300 feet, so you are not climbing all the way to that elevation. From the dramatic headland cliff, you can trace the Cabot Trail around the mountainsides and, on a very clear day, you may be able to see the French archipelago of Les Iles de la Madeleine in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. It is not uncommon to sight whales in the water far below, and, along the trail, moose and eagles. After a picnic lunch, you may choose to set off on an exciting whale-watching boat tour out of Cheticamp—humpback, minke, pilot, and fin whales are common in this Gulf corridor called the Cape Breton Trough. Alternatively, the Corney Brook trail follows a meandering brook through mixed hardwood forest to a small waterfall—again keep an eye out for moose, birds, and snowshoe hare.

Maison Fiset House, Cheticamp

DAY 5

Lone Shieling Trail; 0.4 miles, easy. White Point Trail; 4.8 miles, easy. Middle Head Trail; 2.4 miles, easy. Total driving time: 2 hours

An easy and very short warm-up walk this morning on the Lone Shieling trail takes you through one of the largest old-growth forests in the Maritimes, dominated by 350-year-old sugar maple trees. Continuing your drive along the northernmost part of the Cabot Trail, the next stop is the White Point Trail, which provides the most dramatic coastal scenery in Cape Breton. Overlooking Aspy Bay at the end of this windswept grassy point is a cemetery that dates back to the settlement of this area as a French fishing village in the late 1700s. You continue to your day's destination, the award-winning Keltic Lodge Resort & Spa, stunningly located on a peninsula jutting into the Atlantic, with a backdrop view of Cape Smokey. You may choose, upon arrival, to walk from the hotel on



the Middle Head Trail that snakes out on the cliff-bound peninsula that divides Ingonish Bay.

Keltic Lodge, Ingonish Beach

An elegant resort and spa, in operation since 1940, perched on a headland overlooking the Atlantic Ocean and boasting extensive grounds, recreational facilities, and amenities. Main lodge

guest rooms have been updated with contemporary furnishings and colors, hardwood floors, and luxurious linens. Set amidst the manicured grounds are a heated pool, beaches, a tennis court, a full-service spa (advance reservation required for treatment), and an 18-hole links golf course. On site are both fine-dining and casual restaurants and an inviting lobby bar, all offering locally inspired and sourced cuisine, with an emphasis on seafood. In the nearby town of Ingonish, numerous activities are available, such as hiking trails, wildlife and bird viewing, artisanal craft shopping, and freshwater fishing.

DAY 6

Franey Mountain; 4.6 miles, moderate with a challenging section, 1,150-ft. elevation gain and loss. Warren Lake; 3 miles, easy. Total driving time: 1 hour

This morning, you may opt for the exhilarating walk up Franey Mountain, which includes a steep and steady ascent into the Acadian forest through a stand of hardwoods. Rising from sea level, the surroundings change to balsam fir, with trailing arbutus and pipsisawa underfoot. At the peak, you are rewarded with a panoramic view of the open sea, with Middle Head and Cape Smokey to the east, Money Point to the south, and the Clyburn Valley below. Another walk available today (either instead of, or in addition to your morning outing), is the path around Warren Lake. This walk provides a chance to spot some of the astonishing variety of birds native to the area: boreal chickadees, warblers, ruby-crowned kinglets, Canada jays, hermit thrushes, Swainson's thrushes, and nesting loons, to name a few. The easy walk ends at the sandy banks of cool, clear Warren Lake, a good place for a swim, depending on the season. Returning to your resort, you may opt for a dip in the heated outdoor pool or enjoy the spa facilities.

Keltic Lodge, Ingonish Beach

DAY 7

Departure from Ingonish Beach. Drive to Sydney: 2½ hours or Halifax: 4¾ hours

This morning, options include a relaxed stroll on the pink granite stones of Ingonish Beach, or perhaps a round of golf at the renowned Highland Links course, or indulging in the spa's offerings before driving back to Sydney or Halifax for onward travels. (Golf and spa fees are not included in tour price, advance reservations required.)



ITINERARY CHANGES

Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual activities, sites, and accommodations may vary due to season, special events, weather, or transportation schedules. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary, since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance and unforeseen circumstances may arise that mandate change. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience.

ABOUT YOUR CAR RENTAL

As a service, we have reserved a car for your 7-day Self-Guided Walking Adventure. We have selected Budget, located directly at the airport, as a preferred partner and arranged for a full-size vehicle. You may upgrade or add options (such as insurance coverage, additional drivers, etc.) at the time of pick-up; a valid driver's license and a major credit card will be required. As a reminder, the rental fee is not included in your tour price.

You are welcome to use your own vehicle. If you wish to do so, please let us know at the time of reservation.

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Country Walkers is a leader in active travel with responsible tourism an integral part of our core values. Our tours reflect our dedication to best travel practices—and to the preservation of indigenous cultures and the environment. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every traveler to the CW Travelers Fund, which supports designated projects in the communities and habitats in which we travel. We invite you to learn more about our efforts and initiatives for giving back.

Itinerary Overview

PLEASE NOTE: your detailed Route Notes will be mailed to you approximately one month prior to your departure. While these Route Notes may list a number of accommodation options, **your specific accommodations are listed below**. Please make sure to bring this Itinerary Overview with you.

STARTING POINT

JA Douglas McCurdy Sydney Airport (YQY), Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada

OR Halifax Stanfield International Airport (YHZ), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

NIGHT 1

Dunlop Inn

552 Chebucto Street

Baddeck, NS

Canada

Tel 888.290.1988 or 902.295.1100

Email waterside@dunlopinn.com

dunlopinn.com

Wireless Internet, hair dryers available. Laundry service not available.

NIGHT 2

Glenora Inn & Distillery

13727 Route 19

Glenville, NS

Canada

Tel 800.839.0491 or 902.258.2662

Email info@glenoradistillery.com or info@glenora1.ca

glenoradistillery.com

Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service not available.

NIGHTS 3 & 4

Maison Fiset House

15050 Cabot Trail

Cheticamp, NS

Canada

Tel 902.224.1794

Email maisonfisethouse@bellaliant.com

maisonfisethouse.com

Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

NIGHTS 5 & 6

Keltic Lodge

383 Keltic Inn Road
Ingonish Beach, NS
Canada
Tel 800.565.0444 or 902.285.2880
Email keltic@kelticlodge.ca
kelticlodge.ca

Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

ENDING POINT

JA Douglas McCurdy Sydney Airport (YQY), Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada

OR Halifax Stanfield International Airport (YHZ), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Tour Facts at a Glance

TOUR LENGTH

7 days, 6 nights

DEPARTURES

This tour is available daily, on request, from June 15 through October 15, 2017.

TOUR PRICE

2017 departures	Per person	Single +	Solo Surcharge
June 15–October 15	\$1,998	\$565	\$520

Car rental additional, call for details

STARTING POINT

JA Douglas McCurdy Sydney Airport (YQY), Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada
OR Halifax Stanfield International Airport (YHZ), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

ENDING POINT

JA Douglas McCurdy Sydney Airport, Sydney (YQY), Nova Scotia, Canada
OR Halifax Stanfield International Airport (YHZ), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

ACTIVITY LEVEL

This tour is one of our Self-Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate, with an average of 3 to 7 miles per day and options available. The walks have elevation gains and losses up to 1,100 feet. Walking terrain includes dirt roads, gravel paths, and packed earth trails with roots and rocks in some places, mainly in the national park. Cape Breton's scenery is wild and seemingly untouched, ranging from deep forests to dramatic Atlantic coastal rocky shores with occasional sandy beaches, tiny fishing villages to bustling small towns that have conserved Scottish or Acadian culture. Opportunities for viewing fauna and flora are ubiquitous—including whale-watching cruises out of several harbors or simply looking out to sea from a rocky promontory. Moose, bear, and bald eagles are not uncommon sights on the walks or drives.

INCLUSIONS

- » All breakfasts and two dinners (days 2 and 5); beverages not included
- » All accommodations while on tour
- » Car rental reservation service; please note, rental fee not included
- » Distillery tour and tasting
- » Detailed Route Notes and maps (mailed to you approximately one month prior to your departure)
- » 24-hour tour-related support provided by Country Walkers' local partner
- » 24-hour One Call International Emergency Hotline and Travel Assistance
- » Orientation phone call with Country Walkers representative
- » The unbeatable and cumulative experience of the Country Walkers staff

LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

Prior to your adventure you will be asked to sign a Participation Agreement and you will receive:

- » A Guest Information Form to complete and return at least 45 days prior to your tour
- » Luggage tags
- » Route Notes and maps
- » Your trip invoice

GRATUITIES

Standard Gratuities for all hotels, meals, and services that are included in your tour price will be paid by Country Walkers; however additional tips are always welcome. Should you wish to tip for meals or services not included in the cost of the tour, please do so at your discretion. Local currency preferred.

Traveling To and From Your Tour

STARTING POINT

JA Douglas McCurdy Sydney Airport (YQY), Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada

OR Halifax Stanfield International Airport (YHZ), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Please provide us with your arrival and departure details by returning your Guest Information Form by 45 days prior to the departure.

A tour representative will contact you upon arrival at the first hotel on the first day of the tour (unless other arrangements have been made with our office) to provide an orientation, ensure you are comfortably settled, and answer any questions you may have.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORTS

JA Douglas McCurdy Sydney Airport (YQY), Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada
sydneyairport.ca

OR Halifax Stanfield International Airport (YHZ), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
hiala.ca

GETTING TO THE STARTING POINT

There are no direct flights from the U.S. to Sydney; most connect via Halifax.

Unless you are using your own vehicle, follow the signs for car rental upon arrival to either airport and proceed to the Budget counter to pick up the car that we have reserved for you. You may upgrade, add options (such as insurance coverage, additional drivers, etc.), and arrange for payment at that time; a valid driver's license and a major credit card will be required. As a reminder, the rental fee is not included in your tour price.

The drive to Baddeck from Sydney takes approximately 1¼ hours while the drive to Baddeck from Halifax takes approximately 3½ hours.

PRE- AND POST-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

If you are spending a night in Halifax or Sydney, please visit destinationhalifax.com or novascotia.com/about-novascotia/regions/cape-breton/sydney for hotel and restaurant suggestions.

ENDING POINT AND TIME

JA Douglas McCurdy Sydney Airport (YQY), Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada

OR Halifax Stanfield International Airport (YHZ), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

There are no walks scheduled for the last day of the tour, and you may depart at your leisure. Please note that car rental quotes are for 7 days based on your pick-up time, as indicated on your Guest Information Form; additional charges may apply for later returns. The journey from Ingonish Beach to Sydney takes approximately 2½ hours, while the journey from Ingonish Beach to Halifax takes approximately 4¾ hours. Please check flight schedules carefully and contact your airline directly for specific check-in requirements.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORTS

JA Douglas McCurdy Sydney Airport (YQY), Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada
sydneyairport.ca

OR Halifax Stanfield International Airport (YHZ), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
hiala.ca

Information & Policies

GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Country Walkers guarantees the departure of every tour*—no exceptions and no disappointments! From the moment you make your deposit, you can start preparing for your adventure. We take care of all the details to ensure a seamless, self-guided experience. For best availability, reserve your trip today!

**except in cases of force majeure*

RESERVATIONS

Reservations for this tour may be made by calling Country Walkers at 800.464.9255. A \$350 per person deposit is required at the time of the reservation request. Final tour cost is due 90 days prior to tour departure date. As arrangements are confirmed at least a year in advance, the tour price is subject to change.

GUEST RESPONSIBILITIES

Each guest has the responsibility to select a trip appropriate to his/her abilities and interests and to prepare for the trip by carefully reading the confirmation materials. To join this trip, you must be in good health and capable of completing activities as described in the day-to-day itinerary. Our in-house experts welcome the opportunity to discuss the tour in more detail. In order to meet your needs, we ask that you please share any relevant physical limitations or health conditions when you make your reservation.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations received 91 days or more prior to the tour start date will incur a loss of \$150; cancellations received between 90 and 61 days prior to the tour start date incur a loss of 25 percent of the tour price; there are no refunds within 60 days of the tour start date. Up to 91 days prior to departure, you may transfer your reservation, depending on availability, from one departure to another in the same calendar year at no cost*. Please notify us in writing.

**One transfer per year; afterwards a modest per person transfer fee will apply. Please note that tours with seasonal prices may involve a higher price.*

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We offer guests the opportunity to purchase a Travel Protection Plan. Please contact us for details.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Air or other travel arrangements to and from your tour are not included in the price of your trip. We encourage you to contact your local travel agent, or Better Travel, a Vermont-based agency (800.331.6996 or bettertravel@madriver.com), for any additional air, hotel, rail, or transfer arrangements you may need.