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NORTH SYDNEY, CAPE BRETON

Fleur-de-lis Trail, Marconi Trail and Metro Cape Breton

Living History, Lively City


Step through a doorway in time into a magnificent French town whose streets are a bustle of 18th-century activity. Inside the massive stone gates, the year is 1744. Stroll lively streets where costumed washerwomen, bread sellers, soldiers, noblemen and musicians are going about their daily business. Explore historic period gardens, watch musket and cannon drills, roam through the king's storehouses, and visit the homes of commoners, merchants, and wealthy residents. This is the Fortress of Louisbourg, the largest historic reconstruction in North America, meticulously rebuilt on the foundations of the original fortress—the site from which the French hoped to reign over all North Atlantic navigation in the 1700s.

The region's colourful French heritage is alive and well along the Fleur-de-lis and Marconi Trails, in picturesque Acadian fishing villages that dot the rugged sea coast. Be sure to sample regional fare like *T'chaude* or *Pâté à la viande*.

Visitor Information Centres

Baddeck E15, 295-1911
Chéticamp B14, 224-2642
Inverness D13, 258-3740
Little Narrows E14, 756-2413
Louisbourg E17, 733-2720
Margaree Forks D14, 248-2803
North Sydney D16, 794-7719
 Port Hastings F13, 625-4201
Port Hood E13, 787-2521
St Peter's F14, 535-2185
Sydney E16, 539-9876

Most Visitor Information Centres are open mid-May to mid-October (subject to change). Call the above numbers or 1-800-565-0000.

 Provincial Visitor Information Centre
cbisland.com

Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site of Canada





Near Petit-de-Grat, Isle Madame

The roots of the technical and industrial age can be found throughout this area. The Marconi National Historic Site marks the location of the first west-to-east transatlantic radio transmission in 1902. In Louisbourg, the Sydney & Louisbourg Railway Museum pays tribute to the region's rich railway heritage.

The history of coal mining in Canada's richest coal country is captured at Cape Breton Miners' Museum, where visitors can tour a turn-of-the-century miners' village and actually enter a coal mine, the Ocean Deeps Colliery, with guides who once worked in the mines.

Fleur-de-lis Trail

The 263-km (164-mi.) Fleur-de-lis Trail begins at the Canso Causeway and ends at the magnificent Fortress Louisbourg. Along the way, it traces the shores of beautiful Isle Madame, passing through charming Acadian communities, then follows one of Nova Scotia's most unspoiled and beautiful stretches of Atlantic coastline. As you enter Cape Breton at the end of the Causeway is  **Port Hastings**, a full-service community (see Ceilidh Trail).



Just a few minutes from the Causeway is **Port Hawkesbury**, a full-service community on the Strait of Canso. The attractive waterfront is the site of the Isle Quilt Market and Tuesday night ceilidhs during the summer at the Creamery, and a small park on Granville Street offers benches and pleasant shaded areas, many with interpretive historical signage. The Granville Green series of free outdoor concerts, each Sunday evening in summer, features some of Atlantic Canada's best performing artists.

The Fleur-de-lis Trail follows Route 4 to **Louisdale**, where you can sample authen-

tic Acadian cuisine in the bakery and restaurants. From Louisdale, the Fleur-de-lis Trail crosses lovely Lennox Passage Bridge to **Isle Madame**. This beautiful cluster of islands offers some of the most captivating scenery along the Fleur-de-lis Trail. The islands have a strong Acadian heritage, and you will often hear French being spoken. The Fleur-de-lis Trail loops around the main island; full visitor services are available in the area.

206 From Lennox Passage, turn right on Route 206 and follow the shore through **West Arichat** to **Arichat**. Babin's Hill provides a striking view of Arichat Harbour with its islands and lighthouse. One of the oldest communities in Nova Scotia, Arichat had strong business ties with Jersey in the Channel Islands during the mid-1700s and, when tall ships ruled the seas, it was a booming Atlantic seaport with 17 consular representatives.

On a rise of land overlooking the harbour, Our Lady of the Assumption Cathedral, built in 1837, is typical of the large wooden churches built by the Acadians. Cannon Lookoff, on Lower Road, overlooks Arichat Harbour, and features interpretive displays that relate the region's history as the cradle of European presence on the continent. Further along Lower Road, on the waterfront, the LeNoir Forge Museum is a restored 1793 shipbuilder's blacksmith shop that offers regular demonstrations of the blacksmith's art (see p. 357). Arichat boasts the largest candy shop in Atlantic Canada.

OFF TRAIL ▶ Continuing east on Lower Road, a right turn leads to Cape Auguet. This route is one of the island's most scenic short drives, winding along the very edge of the shore, and presenting constantly

Fortress of Louisbourg
National Historic Site



St. Peter's Canal National Historic Site



Near River Bourgeois

Approx. touring distances along scenic route:

- Port Hastings–St. Peter's 55 km
- St Peter's–Fourchu 48 km
- Fourchu–Louisbourg 52 km
- Louisbourg–Glace Bay 65 km
- Glace Bay–Sydney 40 km



Don't Miss!

Cape Breton Miners' Museum

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Marconi National Historic Site

Relive the thrill of one of the first transatlantic wireless communications.

Louisbourg Playhouse

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Sydney & Louisburg Railway Museum

Be delighted by a working model of the historic S&L railway line.

Cossitt House Museum

Drop in for a visit at the oldest house in Sydney.



changing vistas of the rocky coastline, inlets, coves and islands of Arichat Harbour.

Just beyond Arichat, the Acadian fishing villages of Petit-de-Grat and Little Anse are romantic and picturesque with their weathered piers, stacked lobster traps and nets, colourful houses facing the sea and boats anchored in small inlets. **Petit-de-Grat** is the oldest fishing village in the area; Basque and Portuguese fishermen found refuge here against the Atlantic storms as far back as 1500. An Acadian festival is held at the end of July. **Little Anse**, on Petit-de-Grat Island, is a photographer's delight with its typical fishermen's houses and numerous coves. A hiking trail leads to Cap Rouge and a view of Green Island, whose lighthouse guards the entrance to the Strait of Canso.

320 Returning from Petit-de-Grat, a right turn towards the High Road leads back to the Fleur-de-lis Trail, now Route 320 towards D'Escousse.

OFF TRAIL ▶ Off Route 320, a right turn leads to **Pondville** where there is a fine sand beach and picnic park. Continuing north on Route 320, bear right once again to follow the coastal road to **Rocky Bay** and **Cap La Ronde**. This is another of Isle Madame's exceptional scenic drives, with high sea bluffs, rocky wave-carved shoreline and windswept offshore islands.

320 The coastal road continues, rejoining Route 320 at **D'Escousse**, an attractive seaside village settled by fishermen in the 1700s. Further along Route 320 is a scenic rest stop at a coastal park with a sand beach, a lighthouse, walking trails and several picnic areas.

4 The Fleur-de-lis Trail returns to the mainland and joins Route 4. A short coastal loop road leads to scenic **River Bourgeois**, which was founded in the early 1700s by workers seeking masonry clay for the Fortress of Louisbourg.

At **St. Peter's** the Bras d'Or Lake is separated from the sea by just 800 metres (1/2 mile), the perfect location for St. Peter's Canal, begun in 1854 and now a National Historic Site. Visitors can enjoy watching the yachts and other pleasure boats making their way through the locks. For more information on St. Peter's, a full-service community, see Bras d'Or Lakes Scenic Drive.

247 From St. Peter's, the Fleur-de-lis Trail continues along Route 4 to Route 247, which leads along the Atlantic coast to **L'Ardoise**, a small Acadian village that celebrates the Festival Acadien de L'Ardoise in July. At nearby Point Michaud, visitors can enjoy one of the region's most spectacular sand beaches. Over 3 km (1.5 mi.) long, the beach has facilities that include change houses and a picnic area.

From L'Ardoise, the Fleur-de-lis Trail leads to **Grand River** and **L'Archeveque**, a picturesque fishing port situated on a wide ocean cove.

OFF TRAIL ▶ Off the Fleur-de-lis Trail to the left, a gravel road leads to **Loch Lomond**, named by Scottish settlers who arrived in 1827. This area is a favourite with local sportsmen and anglers, and a canoe route leads from Loch Lomond into Grand River.

The road to **Framboise** passes inland through deep coastal spruce woods. The nearby coastline is one of the wildest and least populated stretches of seashore in Nova Scotia. You can enjoy this unspoiled coastal beauty at Morrison Beach (look for a marked right turn beyond Framboise). This 2-km (1.5-mi.) fine sand beach is perfect for beachcombing, birdwatching, and enjoying solitude amid the sound of the waves.

Continuing, the Fleur-de-lis Trail leads to the pretty coastal village of **Fourchu**, a small fishing port that surrounds a narrow harbour. A gravel road leads along the edge of the harbour to Fourchu Head, which offers splendid views of the harbour entrance and the dramatic coastline.

OFF TRAIL ▶ Further along, a side road leads to **Gabarus**, one of the most picturesque villages on the Fleur-de-lis Trail. With its lighthouse overlooking a lovely half-moon bay, weathered fishing sheds, brightly painted fishing boats and neatly tended houses, Gabarus is a delightful place to explore.

327 From Gabarus, the Fleur-de-lis Trail follows Route 327 to **Marion Bridge**, where some services are available. It is an attractive riverside community immortalized in the popular Canadian folk-tune *Song for the Mira*. The Mira River, one of Nova Scotia's longest and widest rivers, is a favourite with boaters and fishermen.

OFF TRAIL ▶ At Marion Bridge, turn left across the bridge and left again to follow the river 8 km (5 mi.) to Two Rivers Wildlife Park. This peaceful 500-acre wildlife park displays wildlife native to Nova Scotia, and provides hiking trails, picnic tables, stocked fishing ponds, an observatory, and a swimming area (see p. 358).

22 Following along Trout Brook Road to **Albert Bridge**, cross Route 22 to Mira River Provincial Park. Returning to Route 22, the Fleur-de-lis Trail, a left turn leads south to the outskirts of Louisbourg, where it joins the Marconi Trail.

Louisbourg is a full-service community that has welcomed travelers for over 250 years. Perhaps best known as the home of the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, the town has several attractions that reflect its long and interesting history.

A scenic five-minute drive along the northern shore of Louisbourg Harbour leads to Lighthouse Point and the historic Louisbourg Lighthouse. Lighthouse Point is a spectacular setting with a rocky, wave-carved shore and views of the fortress across the harbour. This is the site of the first lighthouse in Canada, built by the French in 1733–34. Another lighthouse was erected here by the Colony of Nova Scotia in the 1820s. The ruins of both historic lighthouses can still be seen near the base of the current working lighthouse, which was erected in the 1920s.

On the right, as you enter Louisbourg, the brick-red railway station (c. 1895) houses the Sydney & Louisbourg Railway Museum. The museum's extensive railway memorabilia collection and historic buildings recreate the romance of Cape Breton's railway era (see p. 357). The station also houses a **?** visitor information centre. The Louisbourg Playhouse is an Elizabethan-style performing arts centre offering live Cape Breton entertainment nightly from mid-June to mid-October (see p. 358).



The Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, covering some 6,700 ha (16,549 acres), is one of the largest national historic sites in Canada and one of the largest historic reconstructions in North America (see p. 357). Settled by the French in 1713, Louisbourg was, for many years, France's crown jewel of military strength and commerce in the New World.

At **Kennington Cove**, 7 km (4 mi.) past the Fortress, there are two sandy ocean beaches and picnic facilities. For more information on the area, inquire at the visitor centre.

The Marconi Trail

The Marconi Trail is named for Italian inventor Guglielmo Marconi, who spent several years in Cape Breton establishing three transatlantic wireless stations. Marconi's first station was built at Table Head, Glace Bay, where on December 15, 1902, the first transatlantic wireless message was sent to England. This is now the Marconi National Historic Site. A second wireless station, built on Marconi Towers (on Sand Lake Road) in 1907, became the main transmitting station. A third station, built in Louisbourg in 1913, was a transatlantic receiving station.

The Marconi Trail traces Cape Breton's rugged eastern coastline for 60 km (37 mi.) from Louisbourg to Glace Bay, linking the three historic Marconi wireless station sites.

OFF TRAIL ▶ Beyond **Little Lorraine**, a gravel road on the left leads to **Baleine**, where Sir James Stewart, Lord Ochiltree, attempted a settlement in July 1629. In 1936, British aviator Beryl Markham crash-landed her plane at Baleine at the end of the first east-to-west solo flight across the Atlantic. A 14-km (9-mi.) hiking trail along the coastline starts at the beach at Baleine.

Main-à-Dieu is the largest fishing village on this coast. Visit the Main-à-dieu Fisherman's Museum (see p. 357), or take a stroll on the scenic oceanside boardwalk along a sandy beach.

The Marconi Trail follows the shores of Mira Bay to the village of **Mira Gut**, whose white sand beach is one of the busiest in Nova Scotia. The broad tidal waters of the Mira River attract a wide variety of birds and wildlife and are popular with canoeists and naturalists.

Continue on Route 255 through **Round Island to Homeville**. A few kilometres beyond Homeville, a right turn leads to Port Morien Beach. This broad, pristine sand beach



*Top: Cape Breton Miners' Museum
Centre: Shop window in Louisbourg
Bottom: Two Rivers Wildlife Park*

and the large tidal inlet that lies behind it are noted for birdwatching and clamdigging.

Nestled on a long, unspoiled stretch of coastline, **Port Morien** is a picturesque seaside village with an active fishing fleet. This was the site of the first coal mine in North America: in the 1720s, French troops from nearby Fortress Louisbourg dug into exposed seams in the sea cliffs for coal to heat the fortress. Port Morien is also the site of the first Boy Scout troop in North America, begun just one year after Lord Baden Powell organized the first troop in England in 1908. Cairns at the north end of the village commemorate these two firsts.

OFF TRAIL ▶ Straight ahead, Route 255 leads to Marconi Towers, named after Marconi's second transatlantic transmitting station.

From Port Morien, the Marconi Trail bears right and follows the coast to **Donkin**, a former coal-mining community. As you approach you see the dark seams of coal in the ocean cliffs.

The Marconi and Metro Cape Breton trails lead through one of North America's first and most productive coal-producing areas. The communities along the way—Donkin, Glace Bay, Sydney, Sydney Mines—were largely built on the mining of coal and the steel production that followed.

In **Glace Bay**, visitors can experience life in a coal mine first-hand at the Cape Breton Miner's Museum, one of the region's most popular attractions. The museum's highlight is a guided tour into the Ocean Deeps Colliery, a real coal mine that lies below the museum. Visitors wear hardhats and protective clothes, and are guided into the dark, cool depths of the mine by retired miners. The Ocean Deeps Colliery is an example of the room-and-pillar method of coal mining that was used in the 1930s.

Above ground, the museum's interpretive displays recount the history of coal mining both in Cape Breton and internationally. Visitors can also tour historic buildings that reflect life in a turn-of-the-century coal mining town (see p. 357).

Also in Glace Bay, the Marconi National Historic Site marks the place from which Guglielmo Marconi and his team of engineers and scientists sent the first wireless transatlantic signal in 1902. Inside the small museum, photographs and displays tell the story of Marconi's achievements (see p. 357). Outside the building, visitors can see the foundations of the huge transmitting tower that once stood here.



Experience a proud past on the Fleur-de-lis Trail

"Miners had a hard life. It was hard work and it was hard to raise a family. They would go to work every morning in the dark and they would come home in the evenings after dark. Some of the men started coal mining when they were only nine years of age. One of the best aspects of coal mining was the camaraderie that the men experienced underground. Everyone knew their job, but everyone looked after each other. Back then, it was all hand picked, hand shoveled, the coal was bored by hand and it was loaded into boxes by hand—it was back-breaking work. It's a history we're proud to share and we hope people can come and get a sense of what it was like to live and work the coal mines."

– Tom Miller

Director, Miners' Museum

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Sydney Harbour is a regular stop-off for cruise ships.

Metropolitan Cape Breton

Sydney, Reserve Mines, Glace Bay, Dominion, New Waterford, North Sydney, Sydney Mines, Louisbourg, and Cape Breton County comprise the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Nova Scotia's second-largest city, which provides an extensive array of services and amenities for visitors.

This region was the cradle of Canada's industrial revolution, fueled by the rich seams of coal that lay beneath the ground. Mining began here in the 1720s with the digging of coal from the cliffs at Port Morien to supply Fortress Louisbourg. Large-scale commercial mining began in 1829, when the General Mining Association of England opened a drift mine at Dominion. In the late 1800s steel manufacturing joined coal mining as a major industry in the region, and at the turn of the century, Dominion Steel and Coal Company's new steel plant in Sydney was the largest in North America.

From Glace Bay, coastal Route 28 leads through Dominion, New Waterford, and New Victoria before reaching Sydney. Route 4 travels inland from Glace Bay to Sydney, passing through Reserve Mines. From Sydney, Route 305 travels to North Sydney and Sydney Mines.



The **Colliery Route**, a tour of sites of interest in the rich coal-mining history of northeastern Cape Breton, begins at Glace Bay and follows Route 28 to Dominion and then through New Waterford and Victoria to Sydney. Maps for the Colliery Route are available at the Miners' Museum and at visitor information centres.

Overlooking sparkling Lingan Bay, **Dominion** is the site of Cape Breton's earliest large-

scale commercial coal mine. Nearby, the Dominion Heritage Building is a restored one-room schoolhouse (c. 1888) that is now a museum, with interpretive displays that recount the coal mining history of the area (see p. 357).

River Ryan, located on the outskirts of Dominion, features a public beach as well as great fishing.

At **New Waterford**, a memorial commemorates the 298 miners killed over the years in the local collieries. The Colliery Lands Park, located on the site of the former No. 12 and No. 16 coal mines, features an exposed coal seam, a representative mine slope, and a coal hopper-car display. There are also picnic tables and a bandshell.


Route 28 from New Victoria to Sydney is particularly scenic, as it follows the coastal bluffs and offers panoramic views of Sydney Harbour, North Sydney, and Sydney Mines. In **New Victoria**, Fort Petrie Museum is on the site of a coastal gun emplacement that was operational in both the first and second World Wars, one of a series of coastal defences protecting the entrance to Sydney Harbour (see p. 357). At **Whitney Pier**, the museum and the Festival of the Arts offer insights into this multicultural industrial community (see p. 357).

Situated on a large protected harbour, **Sydney** was founded in 1785 by Col. J.F.W. DesBarres and first settled by Loyalists from New York State, who were followed 20 years later by immigrants from the Scottish Highlands. Sydney boomed at the turn of the century with the construction of the Dominion Steel and Coal Company steel plant at Whitney Pier, which was then the largest self-contained steel plant in North America.

Two of Sydney's oldest historic houses have been restored as museums, and are

just a short stroll from each other on Charlotte Street. Cossit House, built in 1787, is the oldest house in Sydney. Originally the home of Sydney's first Anglican minister, today the house is furnished circa 1818, and visitors may tour the house guided by staff in period costume. Nearby, Jost House was started about the same time as Cossit House, but clearly displays several different architectural styles in additions made over its 200-year history; each part of the house has been furnished as in the era that it was built (see p. 357).

Nearby, on the Esplanade, the tiny stone St. Patrick's Church is the oldest Catholic church on Cape Breton Island. Built in 1828, it now serves as a museum featuring displays and artifacts that depict local history. On George Street, visitors can tour the Cape Breton Centre for Heritage and Science (see p. 357), which highlights the social and natural history of Cape Breton County. A focal point of the city is an extensive boardwalk with colonial lighting which winds along 3 km (2 mi.) of harbourfront, past a yacht club, marinas and hotels. In the summer months this is a popular centre of activities and entertainment. Near the city centre, Wentworth Park is an attractive green space with duck ponds, walking paths and picnic areas.

 Route 4 west leads from Sydney to **Sydney River**, a major shopping district, at the junction with Routes 305 and 125, and continues along the Bras d'Or shore to St. Peter's.

239 Route 239, Westmount Road, along the scenic north side of the harbour, leads to panoramic views of the inner harbour at Petersfield Provincial Park.

305 An historic seaport founded on Sydney Harbour in 1785, **North Sydney** is a full-service community. The North Sydney waterfront is the site of the Marine Atlantic terminals, which offer ferry service to Newfoundland (check at the information centre for the schedule). Dockside ceilidhs take place here throughout the summer months. Just south of the ferry terminals Archibald's Wharf offers shops, a bandshell, a playground, and a boardwalk, with views of Sydney Harbour.



Adjacent to the wharf, the North Sydney Historical Society features collections and displays that highlight the history of the area and the coal mining operations that took place here (see p. 357). The Purves Street Lookoff is an excellent vantage point from which to watch the comings and goings of harbour traffic. There is a park here, with a playground and supervised sand beach.

Sydney Mines is a full-service community that grew up around the great coal fields of Sydney Harbour, where coal mining began as early as 1766. In the centre of the business district, a beautifully restored gothic post office, originally built in 1904, is currently used as the Town Hall, and the train station, built in 1905, now houses the Sydney Mines Heritage Museum and the new fossil interpretive centre (see p. 358). An outdoor recre-

ation complex on Pitt Street includes a walking track, ball field and tennis courts. On the grounds is a monument dedicated to all those who have lost their lives in the coal mining industry, and a second monument honours the 20 men who died in the Princess Mine disaster in 1938.

Princess Mine was located on nearby Cranberry Head, which overlooks Lockman's Beach. Today this area has easy walking trails that trace the shore of a small pond, offering excellent views of the coastline and nearby ruins of a World War II military installation.

Route 305 ends at **Little Bras d'Or** at Exit 18. Highway 105 to the left leads back to North Sydney and Sydney, and to the right leads to Baddeck and the Cabot Trail.

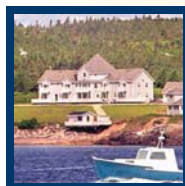
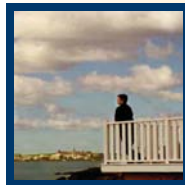


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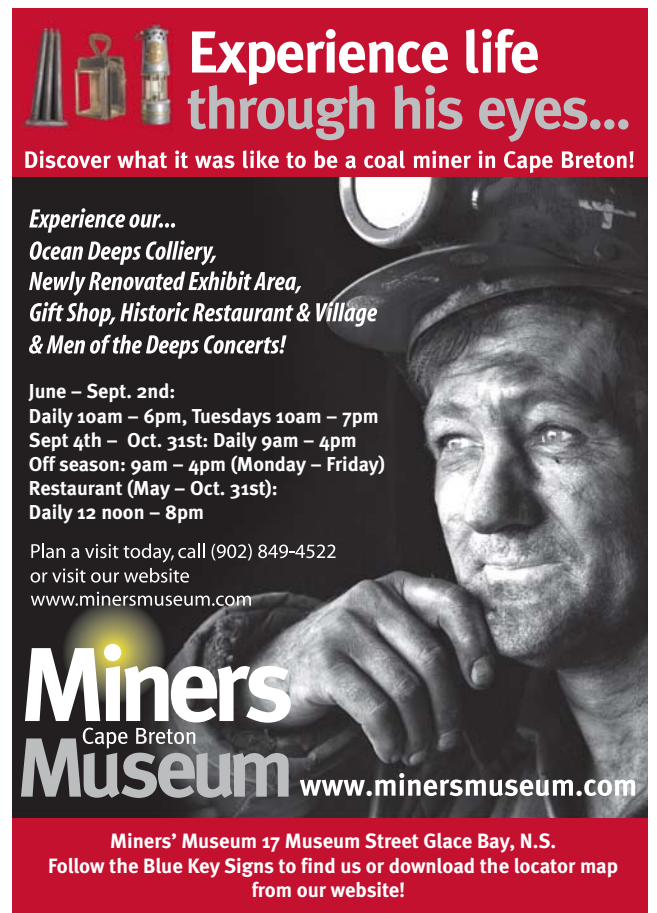
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