

# Newfoundland and Labrador Travelogue

Robert Sexton, DDS

So you've made the (wise) decision to come to Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) in late August for the 2006 CDA Annual Convention. As a native Newfoundlander, I have been getting a lot of questions from colleagues across Canada about how to get here and what to do once you arrive. I've prepared this brief travelogue that I hope you will find useful in planning your trip.

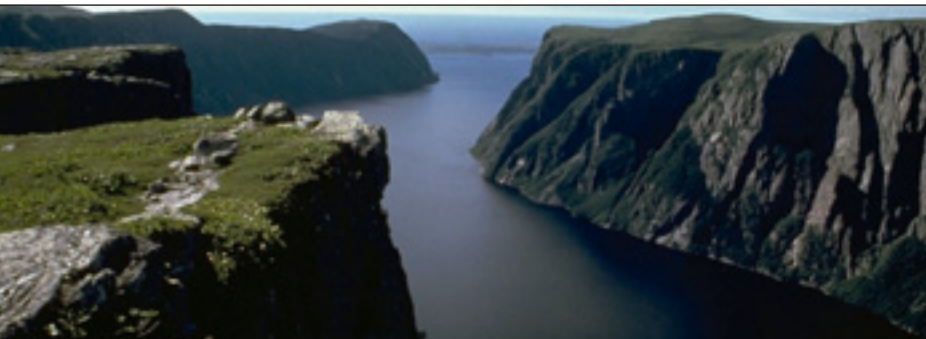
## Getting to St. John's

Air Canada, Canjet and WestJet all have flights arriving daily in the capital city. St. John's airport is about a 20-minute drive from the downtown hotels. While most of you will choose to fly, others might consider coming by ferry. Marine Atlantic runs a ferry service from North Sydney, Nova Scotia, to both Port Aux Basques and Argentia, NL. The ferry trip to Port Aux Basques takes 6 hours, followed by a 10-hour drive to St. John's. The ferry trip to Argentia is

16 hours, but driving to St. John's from there takes only 3 hours. I recommend booking your ferry and cabin reservations as early as possible with Marine Atlantic as space can be limited. If you do book an overnight cabin, ask for one on Deck 5, as this is the best place to be.

## Local Attractions

You'll find plenty to do in St. John's but some of the "must-see" attractions include **Signal Hill**, **Johnson Geo Centre**, **The Botanical Gardens at Memorial University** and **The Rooms**. Several boat tours are available, but at this time of year you might not see any of the icebergs that NL is known for. Just outside St. John's is **Cape Spear**, a national historic site that is the most easterly point of land in North America. If you're feeling really ambitious, go early in the morning and be the first to see the sun rise on the continent!



Take a boat tour of Western Brook Pond in Gros Morne National Park.  
Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism/John Byrne



A "bird's eye view" at Cape St. Mary's Ecological Reserve.  
Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism/Ned Pratt



The archaeological site at L'Anse aux Meadows on the Great Northern Peninsula.  
Photo courtesy of Parks Canada/Shane Kelly

### Further Afield — Avalon Peninsula

Venturing outside of St. John's will really make your time in NL memorable. If you choose to drive up the Avalon Peninsula, head to **Cape St. Mary's Ecological Reserve**, the most accessible and spectacular sea bird colony in North America (a 2-hour drive from St. John's). You could also visit **Placentia**, the former French-speaking capital of Newfoundland, or the unique animal enclosure at **Salmonier Nature Park**. If you enjoy live theatre, another must-see is the city of **Trinity** on Route 239 (a 3-hour drive from St. John's). The **New Founde Lande Trinity Pageant** walking tour makes it well worth the trip.

### Great Northern Peninsula

A slightly more adventurous trip consists of touring the Great Northern Peninsula. The city of **Deer Lake** is the jump-off point for the Great Northern Peninsula and it's about an 8-hour drive from St. John's. If you take the **Viking Trail** (Route 430) along the peninsula, you will see 2 UNESCO World Heritage Sites: **Gros Morne National Park** and **L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site**. **Gros Morne** is great hiking country, but come prepared with full gear and provisions if you intend to hike. There are several excellent boat tours in the park, most notably **Western Brook Pond**, where I would recommend taking the 1.00 pm sailing. Book the Western Brook Pond tour in advance by contacting BonTours.

On the drive between Deer Lake and St. John's, it's worth stopping in **Grand Falls** to visit the **Salmonid Interpretation Centre**. In **Gander**, you can visit the **North Atlantic Aviation Museum** and the **International Airport Exhibit**. Along the highway from Port Aux Basques, the **Codroy Valley** is quite a scenic area, while **Corner Brook** has many attractions including the **Corner Brook Stream** walking trails and the **Model Forest** tour.

### Driving Tips

Renting a car will really expand your horizons in NL, but it is critical that you book your rental car early! When driving at night in areas outside St. John's, be careful of moose and caribou as there are an estimated 120,000 moose on the island. Most road signs use the acronym T.C.H. to

indicate Route 1 of the Trans Canada Highway instead of the regular numerical designations you may be used to. My last bit of driving advice: in some remote areas there can be a long distance between gas stations, so keep the tank above half at all times.

I know you'll have a wonderful time in NL. Come and experience the legendary Newfoundland charm and hospitality for yourself. And remember, Screech is really as bad as they say it is and that cod that you'll be kissing at a "Screech-in" is likely about 10 years old!

Best regards and have a great trip,

*Dr. Bob Sexton*  
CDA Board of Directors  
Corner Brook, NL

CDA is pleased to be partnering with McCarthy's Party Ltd. ("McCarthy's") in offering dentists a wide range of pre- and post-Convention travel excursion options. The 2006 CDA Annual Convention Preliminary Program has details on all of the specially arranged tours, which include many of the sites mentioned in Dr. Sexton's travelogue.

A PDF version of the Preliminary Program can be found on CDA's website at [http://www.cdaadc.ca/\\_files/cda/news\\_events/featured\\_events/events/annual\\_convention06/ac06\\_program\\_prelim\\_en.pdf](http://www.cdaadc.ca/_files/cda/news_events/featured_events/events/annual_convention06/ac06_program_prelim_en.pdf)

Stay a little longer or come a little early and enhance your travels to Newfoundland & Labrador. In fact, the entire range of travel activities on offer can be combined or modified. Simply let McCarthy's know your personal preferences and they will design a memorable holiday tailored to you.

Contact McCarthy's for your individual travel needs.

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#### Related Web Resources:

[www.newfoundlandandlabradortourism.com](http://www.newfoundlandandlabradortourism.com)  
[www.marineatlantic.ca](http://www.marineatlantic.ca) (1-800-341-7981)  
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