

Exploring the Canadian Maritimes

The Canadian Maritimes are the eastern provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland/Labrador. They have been on our bucket list of places to explore for a while. In summer 2018 my wife Lisa and I joined longtime friends Mark and Lori who recently joined us in retirement to do a month-long motorcycle camping trip to visit the Maritimes. Lisa and I used our 2015 Goldwing towing a Time-Out tent camper. Mark and Lori ride a 2012 Goldwing and tow a Time-Out camper.



BASECAMP 1 – Bar Harbor Maine, July 3- July 4

Our first stop was a short stay at the Bar Harbor, Maine area. We wanted to visit the Acadia National Park plus we heard that Bar Harbor was a great place to spend the 4th of July. We first drove the park loop in the Acadia NP with many stops at scenic ocean overlooks and a visit to Cadillac Mountain. We had lunch at a very local



roadside seafood diner. The lobster rolls and haddock sandwiches were excellent. We returned to basecamp, freshened up then parked our bikes and used the free Bar Harbor shuttle to head downtown for dinner. After dinner and a few drinks, we boarded a tour boat to view the coastline and then we anchored in the bay for an outstanding view of the Bar Harbor firework show.

Lisa atop steep cliffs along the Maine coastline.

BASECAMP 2 – West Halifax Nova Scotia, July 5 – July 8

Our second basecamp was setup at West Halifax KOA. For our first day exploring Nova Scotia we drove along the Nova Scotia side of Bay of Fundy that separates Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The highest tide changes in the world occur in the Bay of Fundy. The difference between high and low tide can be as much as 50 feet. It is very common to see fishing boats sitting on the ocean floor during low tide waiting for the high tide to return to sea. On our second day, we were very lucky to score 4 tickets for a guided tour of Oak Island which is the location of “The Money Pit” recently made more famous by the History Channel series. After that very interesting tour guided by Curse of Oak Island star Charles Barkhouse, we drove along the southern coastline of Nova Scotia with stops at several lighthouses and had another great seafood lunch. On our last day we broke camp and took a long drive along the northeast coast into the Cape Breton Island portion of Nova Scotia. We enjoyed a very scenic counterclockwise ride on the famous Cabot Trail. We ended the day by boarding the seven hour overnight ferry from Sydney, Nova Scotia to Port Aux Basque, Newfoundland.



Mark, Lori, Lisa and Gary at Peggys Cove Lighthouse



Cabot Trail



Gary and Lisa's 2015 with low tide grounded fishing boats in background along Bay of Fundy.

BASECAMP 3 – Gros Morne, Newfoundland – July 9 – July 12

After exiting the overnight ferry from Nova Scotia, we drove to the Rose Blanche and Cape Ray lighthouses along the southwestern Newfoundland coast. We then drove to Gros Morne National Park and setup our basecamp. The next day we made a short drive north to the Western Brook Pond trailhead. We did a hike to a dock where we boarded a tour boat into the deep gorge at Western Brook Pond. This is an absolutely must do activity for anyone visiting Newfoundland in our opinion. After tour and the hike back, we made a stop at Lobster Cove Head Lighthouse. The next day we drove along the Trout River to an area referred to as the



Rose Blanche Lighthouse

Tablelands. It is one of the few places on earth one can see the earth's mantle that was exposed when continental collisions created the Appalachian Mountains 480 millions years ago. It almost had a Mars like feel to it. We enjoyed also checking out a lot of unique vegetation not seen in the mid-Atlantic US. We then had lunch at a small seafood restaurant in the tiny fishing village of Woody Point. The next day we broke camp and headed north toward our next basecamp.



Western Brook Pond in Gros Morne National Park

BASECAMP 4 – Northern Tip of Newfoundland, July 13 – July 15

After we left our Gros Morne basecamp, we headed north to our next basecamp north of St. Anthony. On our first day from this basecamp we went to L'Anse aux Meadows which is an archaeological site on the northernmost portion of Newfoundland. Vikings set up a winter camp in this area around the year 1000 and is believed to be associated with Vinland established by Leif Erikson. There are two separate sites to visit. One run by the Canadian Park Service, the other privately owned with a very nice recreated Viking trade ship. Both are worth the visit. After our time at the Viking sites, we then drove to Goose Cove where we were able to watch whales feed right below us as we stood on steep cliffs overlooking the sea. On our second day we drove



to St. Anthony and boarded an iceberg and whale watching tour boat. We got to see both. Normally by mid-July the icebergs would have already melted and broken apart, but due to a colder than usual June, several icebergs were still present. Later we even had a local beer made from 25,000 year old iceberg water. Yep, they go out to icebergs, mine the ice for beer.

Recreated Viking lodge



Humpback whale feeding



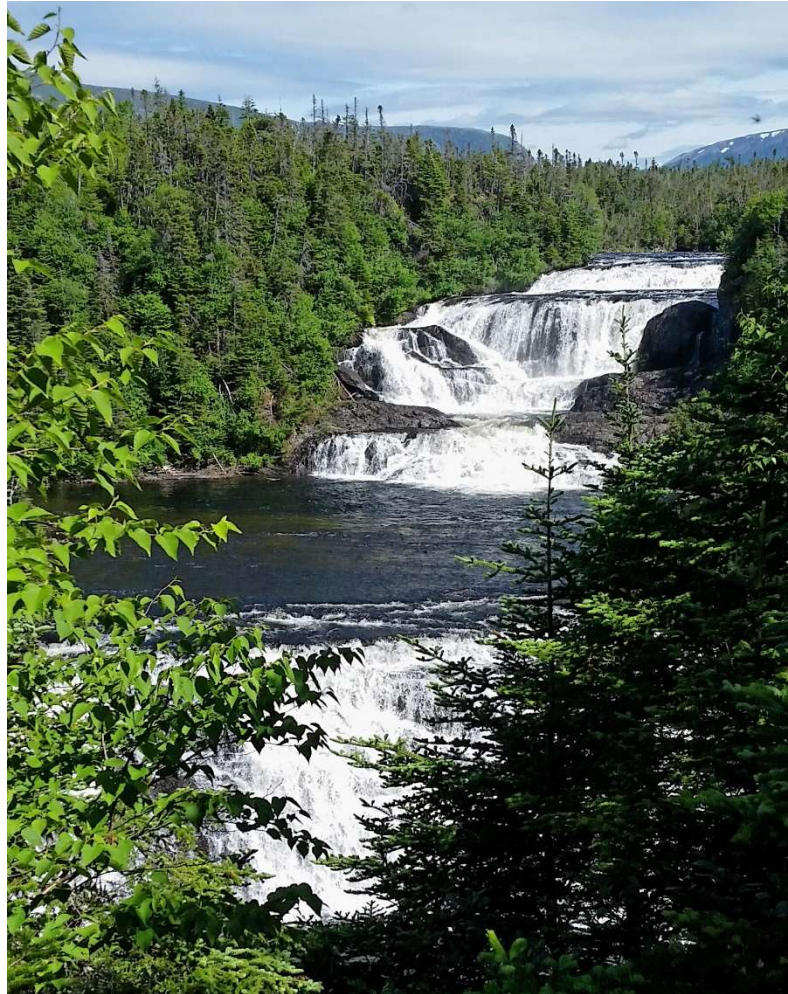
Iceberg off coast of Newfoundland



Mark, Lori and Lisa relaxing at basecamp near L'Anse aux Meadows

BASECAMP 5 – Trinity Bay, Newfoundland - July 16 – July 19

Due to the long distance between basecamp 4 and 5, we did a one night stand at our previous camp at Gros Morne. After we setup that one night camp, Lisa and I rode a few miles to a trailhead and took a 6 mile hike to Baker Brook Falls. The next day we drove to the next basecamp at Trinity Bay on the eastern side of Newfoundland. Along the way, we stopped at the small Aviation Museum in Gander, Newfoundland. As a



retired air traffic controller who was working on 9-11-01, I wanted to see the exhibit on how Gander took in several thousand stranded travelers that horrible day. On our first day from this base we rode along the southeast coast on what is called the Irish Loop. Named so due to the heavy Irish influence in Newfoundland. We stopped at a very nice nature park where we spent a few hours. We had a very hardy lunch at the Celtic Pub & Restaurant before visiting the Colony of Avalon site that was founded around 1621. Our second day we rode the Baccalieu Trail along Conception and Trinity Bays. A scenic ride with great views. We enjoyed a nice stop at a local brewery in Dildo, Newfoundland. We did hit some rain and lots of fog today. Our last day was spent mostly hanging out at camp due to heavy rain. Later in the day we broke camp and rode one hour to the port at Argentia to catch the overnight ferry back to Nova Scotia.

Baker Brook Falls



A bull Moose



Coastline on the Avalon Peninsula

BASECAMP 6 – Cavendish, Prince Edward Island – July 21 – July 23

Between basecamps, we had a 17 hour overnight ferry cruise from Newfoundland to Nova Scotia. We then visited the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site on the southern side of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. We spent several hours here then moved on to a one night camp in Nova Scotia. The next morning, we took yet another ferry into Prince Edward Island where we then visited several lighthouses before making it to our basecamp at Cavendish. The next day was a very full day exploring Prince Edward Island. We visited several lighthouses, a basilica, PEI Brewery, and a Canadian Air Force monument. Later, Lisa and I rode to Thunder Cove Beach to view the sunset at Teacup Rock. We then enjoyed one last campfire with our dear friends. On our last day in Canada, we left Prince Edward Island via the 8.4 mile long bridge into New Brunswick then we rode to Hopewell Rocks along the New Brunswick side of Bay of Fundy and walked on the ocean floor during low tide among huge rock formations. We then began the 3 day trek back to home in east TN.



St. Dunstan's Basilica



Camp at Pictou, Nova Scotia



Hopewell Rocks, New Brunswick



Teacup Rock, Thunder Cove Beach, PEI

RECAP

This adventure was amazing. Sharing it with good friends made it even more special. Anyone who can visit these wonderful places should do so. The people we met were all down to earth, friendly, and very welcoming. There is so much to see that I feel we left enough on the plate to warrant another future visit. I will warn all who take this trip on their motorcycle to be aware that road conditions are rough in many areas. Also fuel and repair shops can be few and far between in some areas so pack and plan accordingly. Our trip lasted a total of 26 days and we logged 7,306 miles. The stories and photos presented here only touch on this trip. For anyone who wishes a more in depth look at our adventure, feel free to visit my trip blog at <http://www.facebook.com/garylmace>