

best of nova scotia by bike



trip highlights

Cycle along historic railway corridors linking Nova Scotia's coastal communities

Feast on Atlantic Canada's famous lobster and seafood

Explore iconic port towns such as colourful Lunenburg and Mahone Bay

Discover Acadian culture and early history at Grand Pré and Annapolis Royal

Stay at charming inns with authentic maritime character

Sip on crisp, aromatic, signature Tidal Bay wines



Trip Duration	8 days	Trip Code: HAR
Grade	Introductory to Moderate	
Activities	Self-guided cycling	
Summary	7 nights B&B's and inns	

welcome to Great Canadian Trails

Thank you for your interest in our Best of Nova Scotia by Bike trip. With a small population compared to its vast size, Canada's wilderness is immense, wild, and largely untouched; an endless natural playground with countless opportunities for outdoor adventure. And, with history and character unique to each region, Canadian culture is a rich mosaic of customs. With Great Canadian Trails, experience charming communities and changing landscapes on foot or by bike, paddle along dramatic shorelines, or hike rugged trails with the support of our expert local teams. If you enjoy a physical challenge in the great Canadian wilderness or prefer a more leisurely pace, we're here to provide all you need so that you can enjoy your active holiday to the fullest. From the grand mountains of the West to the impressive Great Lakes and jovial Maritime culture of the East, not to mention the unimaginable scale of the remote North, there is no shortage of beauty and wonder awaiting the active traveller. We invite you to discover all of Canada's treasures from coast to coast to coast.

why travel with Great Canadian Trails?

We are Canadian, our team is highly-experienced, and our understanding of the land means carefully-crafted hiking and cycling holidays that offer the active traveller an immersive and truly authentic experience. Our unique selection of itineraries draws upon some of the country's most inspiring landscapes, incredible networks of trails, and stunning national parks while showcasing communities along the way. Our wide range of accommodations include our selection of friendly bed & breakfasts, charming inns, perfectly-located hotels, and quiet cottages or cabins. Our drivers are local, professional, and full of information which they are eager to share as they take you to the trailheads and move your luggage ahead to the next overnight stay. We provide you with sectional maps, an emergency hotline, and a customized route booklet with detailed local information and the inside scoop on where to eat, visit, and explore each day. Each itinerary has been tried and tested with every detail accounted for, so that all you need to do is spend the day exploring at your own pace, to your heart's content. By travelling with Great Canadian Trails you are also making a positive impact, since most of our trips include a donation to the local non-profit organization who builds and maintains the trail. This helps others get out and experience Canada's natural wonders.



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As the trip price is based on double share accommodation, a single supplement is payable if you are not sharing with a friend/family member; or a solo traveller supplement if you are travelling solo and the tour's transfer services are not shared/public. Please refer to the price options for costs or ask our office for details. Note regarding single rooms: The single supplement guarantees the privacy of your own room, however, rooms can at times be small and in some places may not enjoy the same facilities as double/twin rooms.

trip dates

Saturdays from 6 June to 3 October

fast facts

Countries Visited:

Canada

Visas:

Please check visa requirements with your reservations consultant*

Vaccinations:

Please consult a travel vaccination specialist for up to date information

Private Groups:

Private group options are available for this trip*

Singles:

A single supplement is available for this trip*

Leader:

This journey is unescorted

Advice for people with limited mobility

This trip is not suitable for people with limited mobility.

responsible travel

The natural environments that you'll travel through are fragile and the cultures and traditions precious. It is our responsibility as visitors to minimise the impact of our presence, protect what is precious and where we can leave a positive impact.

trip grading

Introductory to Moderate

the trip

Nova Scotia's South Shore and Annapolis Valley offer some of Canada's most inviting coastal and countryside cycling routes. Following historic railway corridors, this journey moves through charming harbour towns, open valleys, and landscapes shaped by centuries of maritime and Acadian life.

Beginning in Halifax, the route traces sections of the Rum Runners and Harvest Moon Trails, linking fishing villages, coastal communities, and farmland at a relaxed, engaging pace. Along the way, you'll encounter UNESCO World Heritage sites, colourful waterfronts, communities known for their warm Maritime character, and local flavours, including Nova Scotia's appellation wine, Tidal Bay.

This supported self-guided adventure allows you to explore at your own rhythm, leaving room for detours, tastings, and meaningful encounters. Whether you're drawn by ocean views, heritage sites, fresh seafood, or the vineyards of the Annapolis Valley, the journey offers a memorable experience.

at a glance

DAY 1	ARRIVE IN HALIFAX
DAY 2	TRANSFER TO LUNENBURG VIA PEGGY'S COVE
DAY 3	CYCLE TO CHESTER (~40KM/24.8MI; +/-40M/130FT)
DAY 4	TRANSFER TO GRAND PRÉ, CYCLE TO WOLFVILLE (~11.4KM/7.1MI)
DAY 5	EXPLORE WOLFVILLE (UP TO 56.2KM/34.9MI)
DAY 6	CYCLE TO KINGSTON, TRANSFER TO ANNAPOLIS ROYAL (52.3KM/32.5MI; +/-82M/262FT)
DAY 7	EXPLORE ANNAPOLIS ROYAL (~20KM/12.4MI TO ~53KM/32.9MI)
DAY 8	RETURN TO HALIFAX (DRIVE TIME ~2.5HRS)

what's included

- 5 breakfasts
- 7 nights B&B's and inns at double occupancy with private facilities
- Transfers as listed in the itinerary
- Sightseeing stops at Peggy's Cove
- Luggage transfer service (1 piece)
- Quality performance hybrid bicycle rental with helmet, lock, bike bag, and basic repair kit
- Navigation APP inclusive of detailed route notes and points of interest (available offline while cycling)
- Emergency hotline
- C\$50 per person donation to Trans Canada Trail

detailed itinerary

DAY 1 Arrive in Halifax

On arrival, make your way to our centrally-located Halifax accommodation and spend the rest of your day exploring Nova Scotia's vibrant capital. Stroll to the iconic harbor, the Halifax Citadel, and museums dedicated to rich local maritime heritage. Experience fine seafood restaurants, great shopping, and an optional guided e-bike tour of the city is available upon request. (Tours meet at 9:40 AM or 1:40 PM: tours are based on availability and must be requested 45 days before departure; additional cost applies).

meals: NIL

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The Rum Runners Trail and Harvest Moon Trail follow converted railway lines ('rails to trails'), making them among the flattest cycling routes in the region, with grades under 2%. Note that trail conditions vary by section, as maintenance is shared between communities. Most of the Rum Runners Trail features a crusher dust surface well suited to hybrid bikes and riders of all abilities, though some sections may include loose gravel or uneven patches.

Accessing accommodations involves short sections of road riding, which have been kept to a minimum wherever possible.

These roads are shared with vehicle traffic, though drivers in Nova Scotia are generally courteous and accustomed to cyclists. Additional road-based loops and out-and-back rides are available, but these routes are hillier and better suited to experienced, road-savvy cyclists.

As this is a self-guided trip, participants should be comfortable navigating with maps and route notes, making basic bike adjustments, and handling minor issues such as a flat tire using the included repair kit. Occasional route-finding challenges are part of the experience, and most travellers quickly find their rhythm, often with help from locals along the way. Detailed route materials are provided, along with access to a 7-day service hotline for support if needed.

adventure travel

By its very nature adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected. When hiking, expect rugged terrain with plenty of dirt, roots and rocks. In wet conditions, trails can be muddy and slippery, potentially raising the level of difficulty of your trip. Remote areas are sometimes unpredictable and itineraries may be altered. To get the most out of your adventure it is important that you are flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise. If you are uncertain about your suitability for this trip we recommend that you speak with our trained staff.

DAY 2 Transfer to Lunenburg via Peggy's Cove

Begin the day with a visit to Peggy's Cove, where smooth granite shores and the iconic Peggy's Point Lighthouse meet the Atlantic. From here, our driver will bring you to the historic port town of Lunenburg. This UNESCO World Heritage site, founded in 1753, is known for its colourful waterfront and relaxed coastal charm. After settling in, the afternoon is free for you to go and explore museums, galleries, and seaside streets, or venturing out for a bicycle ride to Blue Rocks (12 km / 7.4 mi round trip).

Avid road cyclists have the option to take the loop road and ferry to the artsy community of La Have (35km/21.mi), though we recommend extending your stay in Lunenburg if you intend on this.

meals: B

DAY 3 Cycle to Chester (~40km/24.8mi; +/-40m/130ft)

Along the route today lies one of Canada's most beautiful communities. Leaving from Lunenburg's old train station, the Rum Runners trail leads north to Mahone Bay, a waterfront community known for its artistic spirit and easygoing pace. Take a leisurely lunch, browse harbourfront shops, and soak in the atmosphere before continuing past sparkling Oakland Lake and on to Chester. Settle into a cozy inn and enjoy the charm of this welcoming sailing town, with its lively harbour and excellent small restaurants. If time allows, a ferry visit to Big Tancook Island offers a memorable way to end the day.

meals: NIL

DAY 4 Transfer to Grand Pré, Cycle to Wolfville (~11.4km/7.1mi)

Today, you'll visit Grand Pré, located on the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq and one of the most historically significant landscapes in Atlantic Canada. This UNESCO World Heritage site is defined by sweeping marshlands and a remarkable agricultural system developed by the Acadians in the 17th century. Through an intricate network of dykes and aboiteaux, generations carefully adapted the land to withstand tidal ranges of up to 11.6m/5.2 ft, shaping historic farmland that reflects centuries of Acadian life. From here, cycle on to Wolfville, set in the heart of the Annapolis Valley and surrounded by its renowned wine country. Settle into a welcoming B&B for the evening, with time to explore the vibrant town or enjoy tastings at nearby wineries, breweries, or cideries.

meals: NIL

DAY 5 Explore Wolfville (Up to 56.2km/34.9mi)

This is an ideal day to plan ahead and book a tasting, with many of Wolfville's wineries and cideries easily reached by bike via the Harvest Moon Trailway. Set within Nova Scotia's wine country, the Starrs Point Loop offers a rewarding ride, including an optional climb to the Blomidon Look-Off for sweeping valley views. Time in Wolfville lends itself to savouring local fish and chips or visiting the lush botanical gardens.

meals: B

DAY 6 Cycle to Kingston, Transfer to Annapolis Royal (52.3km/32.5mi; +/-82m/262ft)

Enjoy a hearty breakfast and hop on your bike. Today you'll cover more distance, but you'll cycle on a mostly flat and straightforward route. Cycling to the meeting point in Kingston brings the reward of a relaxed, pub-style lunch before we pick you up for the drive to Annapolis Royal, a historic port town on Nova Scotia's northern shore. Time here allows for visits to the Historic Gardens and Fort Anne National Historic site, showcasing a firsthand look into Acadian culture and the region's early history dating back to the 1600s.

meals: B

DAY 7 Explore Annapolis Royal (~20km/12.4mi to ~53km/32.9mi)

Annapolis Royal offers several cycling options for the day. Option A (~53 km / 32.9 mi) follows Victoria Beach Road on a scenic out-and-back route. Grab a packed lunch from town before you hit the trail. Option B (~20 km / 12.4 mi) includes more elevation and travels along a quiet road to the fishing community of Parker's Cove. Option C (~53 km / 32.9 mi) passes Cornwallis Park and its



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important note

These trip notes represent the most current information for this itinerary, and may supersede any information in the current brochure, including but not limited to the itinerary and price. The itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control.

beach on the way to Bear River. Whichever route you choose, we recommend you join the optional must-see graveyard tour in Annapolis Royal, lit by lanterns and candlelight, offers a fitting close to your time in the Annapolis Valley.

meals: B

DAY 8 Return to Halifax (drive time ~2.5hrs)

The final morning in Annapolis Royal allows time for breakfast and a leisurely morning before an afternoon transfer back to Halifax. Services conclude on arrival, with additional nights available upon request.

meals: B

This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

joining instructions

You will need to make your way to your hotel in Halifax on day 1. You will receive accommodation details before departure in a hotel list and voucher document. At 9am on Day 2 you will be picked up from your accommodation and transferred to Peggy's Cove and then the bike shop where the initial trailhead is located.

climate

Please be prepared for a wide range of temperatures while on tour, depending on the month of travel and location. The climate in the Maritimes is milder and more moderate than inland. In spring and autumn, morning temperatures are often brisk or cold, warming up fast after the strong sun rises. Therefore we recommend a layering system for clothing, so you can adapt to the temperature changes without problems. Summers are quite warm, but rarely humid. Daytime temperatures are usually in the 20s (70s) and can go as high as 34 degrees C (93 degrees F). Summer days and evenings have a refreshing breeze. July and August are the warmest months.

dietary requirements

Provided we are advised in advance of your departure, we are able to cater to vegetarian diets and can assist with medically recommended diets (allergies and intolerances). Please ensure you discuss your requirements with us well in advance (ideally, months prior to your trip/at time of booking) to determine whether we can cater to such dietary requirements on your chosen adventure. Please note that options are likely to be limited in very remote locations or alternatives may be more expensive or unavailable. There may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own food. We are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip, and therefore, we strongly encourage that travellers with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Passengers must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

equipment provided

These are modern performance hybrids perfectly-suited for the rail trail surface. Included with the bikes are: water bottle cage, rear rack and bike bag, basic repair kit, pump, helmet and lock. We recommend using the flat pedals included on the bicycle, but if you prefer to bring your own pedals with clips or cages, let us know and the bike shop will be happy to swap them out.

pre and post tour accommodation

Extra nights in Halifax or Lunenburg can be arranged upon request.



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what you carry

Main luggage is moved ahead each day, so only items needed during the day will be taken with you in the provided panniers.

equipment required

Participants will need to bring their own bike water bottle and appropriate clothing for cycling. Cyclists who plan on adding extra mileage and increased road cycling may consider bringing their own pedals to swap out at the bike shop before their ride, however the flat pedals that come with the bicycles are more than adequate for the tour route itself. If you plan to do a lot of road cycling, please consider bringing your own road bicycle, as our bikes are best suited to rail trail cycling.

getting there

BY CAR

Most will fly in to Halifax to join this tour, though it is possible to join by car via New Brunswick and, in turn by crossing the Confederation Bridge from Prince Edward Island.

PARKING & TRANSFERS

If driving, parking near or within the downtown core of Halifax may prove to be difficult. There is long term parking at the airport, though using that will require a transfer or shuttle between there and the city itself.

BY AIR

The nearest international airport is Halifax Stanfield International Airport (YHZ). We recommend joining by air for this tour and taking a shuttle or taxi to your hotel upon arrival.

special visa requirements

All international visitors will require proper documentation to enter Canada. Most nationalities require either a tourist visa or an ETA. Detailed information will be provided upon booking.

what's not included

- Travel to and from start/end of the trip
- Optional electric-assist bicycle upgrade (extra cost, limited quantities)
- Additional gear rental is available at an extra cost (bike trailers, e-bikes, etc). Please inquire.
- Guide (this is a self-guided tour)
- Meals where not specified
- Entrance fees
- Guided e-bike tour of Halifax (additional supplement applies)
- Airport pickup or drop-off
- Unscheduled transfers requested during the trip
- Personal expenses such as laundry and phone calls
- Travel insurance
- Applicable taxes of 14% when booking made in North America

private groups

The adventures featured on our website are just a starting point for many of our private group travellers. Working closely with our Groups Department we can organise custom designed itineraries for groups of friends, clubs, charities, schools or even work colleagues. Our team will assist you with all aspects of your private group adventure from itinerary design to group flights. Contact our team today.



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To keep up to date with our new and exciting adventure opportunities, special promotions and adventure news, subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter! You can do this on line through our website, www.greatcanadiantrails.com

social networking

Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GreatCanadianTrails>, on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/@GreatCanTrails> and on Instagram at <https://instagram.com/GreatCanadianTrails>

trip availability

If this trip seems right for you then we encourage you to book now. There are many reasons why you may not be able to join your desired departure and limited space on our small group departures is just one of them. Our self-guided holidays visit small communities with limited accommodations, and we can only guarantee rooms once we've booked and confirmed with each property. For this reason, we can only confirm availability of tour once bookings have been received. The demand is increasing each year making it difficult to join a trip last minute. To ensure we can confirm your adventure of a lifetime we ask that you check trip availability with our team at your earliest convenience.

how to book

To book a Great Canadian Trails trip, you will need to complete a booking form and pay a non refundable deposit which you can do by using our online booking function. We can also help you with any additional arrangements that you require, such as pre or post trip accommodation in conjunction with the main Great Canadian Trails trip.