

# Canada The Atlantic



Canada has four Atlantic provinces: Newfoundland (which includes both the island of that name and the mainland territory of Labrador), New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. The geography of these provinces is extremely varied, ranging from glacial mountains in northern Labrador to lush farmlands and orchards in the south. Together, the provinces cover 539 101 square kilometres, more than two-thirds of this being the rugged terrain of Newfoundland and Labrador with elevations as high as 1 650 metres in the north. The other three provinces have more gently rolling terrain, much of it heavily forested, with elevations generally not exceeding 500 metres. Arable land is abundant, and the growing season extends from late April to early November. The climate is cold and wet in winter, with heavy snowfalls in coastal areas. Summers are generally cool, with a reliable

amount of rain. The otherwise hostile Labrador region is well-endowed with minerals, especially iron, and there are also substantial coal deposits in the scenic Cape Breton region of Nova Scotia. Perhaps the most notable geographic feature of the area is the undersea continental shelf, which extends far out from the coasts, providing one of the richest fisheries in the world. The first Europeans to set foot in this region were Viking adventurers, who established short-lived settlements in what is now Newfoundland about 1000 A.D. European fishing fleets continued to visit the coasts sporadically, but it was not until Sir Humphrey Gilbert's expedition to Newfoundland in 1583 that permanent settlement began. Shortly thereafter,

Samuel de Champlain established a French colony at Port Royal in Nova Scotia. Nearly two centuries of conflict between British and French ensued, culminating in a final British victory in 1755. A few years later the first elected assembly in what was to become Canada convened in Nova Scotia. As Loyalists fleeing the American Revolution (1776) swelled the region's population, new governments were formed, and the provinces of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island were separated from the original territory of Nova Scotia. In 1867, Canada was born when Nova Scotia and New Brunswick joined the provinces of Quebec and Ontario in Confederation under the terms of the British North America Act (now part of the Constitution of Canada). While Prince Edward Island was added to the new nation only six years later, it was not until 1949 that Newfoundland became the fourth province of Canada's Atlantic region.

With the exception of New Brunswick, where about 40 per cent of the province's 700 000 people are French-speaking, most of the Atlantic provinces' population of 2.2 million is of British origin, predominantly of Scottish and Irish descent. Each province maintains its own cultural local points, with theatres, galleries and museums in the cities of Charlottetown (P.E.I.), Fredericton (N.B.), St. John's (Nfld.) and Halifax (N.S.). Fishing, agriculture, pulp and paper, mining and offshore oil and gas development are the region's chief economic activities. Halifax is the chief seaport, linked by road and rail to Canada's transcontinental systems.



## Geography



1. The scenic coastline of Cape Breton Island, reminiscent of Scotland, has lured both Scottish settlers and thousands of tourists to this north-eastern part of Nova Scotia.
2. Summer sun makes a popular attraction of Cavendish Beach (Prince Edward Island), one of the finest in Atlantic Canada.
3. At the entrance to the Bay of Fundy (between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia), a lighthouse on Grand Manan Island guides ships bound for coastal ports.
4. Wildflowers blanket a meadow near Alma, in the southeast corner of New Brunswick. Most of this province's 73 436 square kilometres are forested.
5. Gros Morne National Park, facing the Gulf of St. Lawrence on Newfoundland's northwest shore, includes some of the most scenic examples of the island's rugged, convoluted coastline.

## Economy



1. The Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia's chief fruit farming region, is famous for its apples.
2. Offshore oil and gas exploration is a growing industry in Atlantic Canada, especially off Newfoundland.
3. Potatoes are a prime product of farms in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.
4. Ships take shape in drydocks in the harbour of Saint John (New Brunswick), the region's second-largest port.
5. In the days of schooners, Lunenburg (Nova Scotia) was a major shipbuilding centre.
6. Canada's Atlantic fisheries produce one million tonnes of fish and shellfish each year.
7. Newfoundland's forests yield pulpwood and timber for paper and building product industries.
8. A liner approaches a pier in Halifax harbour, which handles 2 000 vessels a year.
9. A tractor harrows the rich, rust-coloured soil of Prince Edward Island.

## Culture



1. A reconstructed Micmac village recalls the lifestyle of Prince Edward Island's original inhabitants.
2. *Bluenose II* is a copy of the famed Nova Scotia schooner immortalized on Canada's 10 cent coin.
3. Brightly painted houses give a youthful look to one of North America's oldest cities, St. John's (Newfoundland).
4. A potter works in a craft village in Mactaquac (New Brunswick).
5. The fortress of Louisbourg (Nova Scotia), one of the most elaborate fortified complexes of the colonial period, has been completely restored.
6. Tossing the caber is a popular feature of Nova Scotia's annual Highland Games.
7. A costumed yarn spinner in New Brunswick's Acadian Historical Village preserves a link with eighteenth century French settlers of the region.
8. The traditional skills and craftsmanship of Atlantic shipwrights have survived in the age of high technology.
9. The Scottish heritage of Nova Scotia is passed on to a new generation.

Concept, Text and Design: Burns, Cooper, Hayes Limited, Toronto, Canada.