

Travel



Legends still told in timeless Gaspé

By JANE BOW
Special To The Times
The road winds around the coast to a small cove where a man hunting mussels at low tide is dwarfed by the giant Gaspé cliffs.
Beyond the man a single red rowboat rocks on the water and behind him the steeple at Anse Pleureuse (Whimpering Bay—named long ago for the sound of the wind in the trees) catches the sunlight.

This is the Gaspé in September, a mysterious, timeless country where stunning scenery breathes a sense of history unknown to the rest of Canada.
Here along the lower lip of the Saint Lawrence, farming and fishing villages with violent histories dating back through the French-English struggle for domination of Quebec, to the 1600s now lie asleep. But the legends left by the

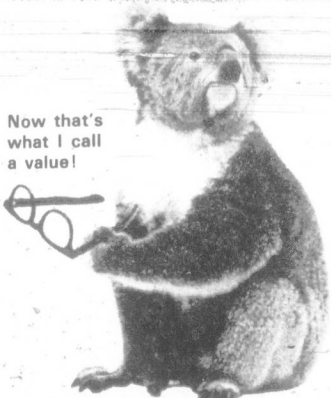
first French settlers and the MicMac Indians before them are still being told. They are part of Canada's oldest culture.
To the south, the road turns inland along a bay to the City of Gaspé, built on the spot where Jacques Cartier planted his cross to claim the land for France.
Inside Gaspé restaurants you hear people mixing English and French in mid-sentence, choosing words that best fit their

meaning.
Fifty miles south of Gaspé and a total of 500 miles along the coast road from Quebec City, lies Percé, home of the famous rock with a hole in it. It is a paradise in September.
Summer tourism will have finished, but the hotels and cabins may still be open. And the wonderful restaurants will still offer a meal of bouillabaise, made with fresh seafood, followed by

French Canadian maple sugar pie.
You can spend days hiking and rock collecting along the coast or up into the hills and at low tide you can beachcomb around the rock behind which Cartier anchored his three tiny ships in 1534. But a day on Bonaventure Island, a bird sanctuary two miles off shore, is the real highlight of the Gaspé tour.

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