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Canada celebrates 450th anniversary of Jacques Cartier's arrival



Jacques Cartier

This year, Canada is marking the four-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of Jacques Cartier's arrival from France with a major celebration involving sailors, sailing enthusiasts, history buffs and tourists from many parts of the world.

For more than two months, Canadians and visitors will have an opportunity to relive history in a great summer festival with exhibitions illustrating the past, present and future of Canada's maritime tradition, the finest seafood, concerts and stage plays, and entertainment in picturesque settings.

Highlighting the festivities will be four events, each one closely linked to the sea: the gathering of the "Tall Ships", those graceful sailing ships that plied the oceans centuries ago; the "Flying Sails," competing in national and international sailing and wind surfing championships; the Labatt Canada Challenge sailing race; and

the trans-Atlantic sailing race of "Formula One" yachts.

Tall Ships from 20 countries

The most dramatic event of the summer will be the arrival in Canada of the Tall Ships. At least 60 of these magnificent vessels from more than 20 countries will arrive in Quebec City on June 25.

Like Cartier himself, one fleet left from St. Malo in France in mid-April with a stopover at Las Palmas. After sailing to Bermuda, it will join a fleet of South American ships heading north to Bermuda from Puerto Rico.

From Bermuda, the enlarged fleet will race to Halifax and be there June 10-13. Joining them in Halifax will be US training vessels from Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Lead by the *Bluenose II*, a copy of Canada's most famous fishing schooner, the whole fleet of some 75 sailing ships, at least 12 of them large square-riggers, will cruise to Gaspé (June 18-20), then to Quebec City (June 25-30). Leaving Quebec, the line of ships will be 22.5 kilometres long and take four hours to pass.



The Portuguese "Tall Ship" Sagres, one of some 60 such vessels visiting Quebec this June.