Is Newfoundland one province you regret not having visited (yet)?

RAQ has arranged a way to remedy that!

Join Collette’s “Wonders of Newfoundland” tour:
September 5 – 16, 2019

Double occupancy $ 6,149 CDN pp*
Single occupancy $ 7,549 CDN pp*

Included in the above price: return airfare from Pearson International Airport, transfers to/from airports within NL, transportation and accommodation on the tour, 11 breakfasts, 1 lunch and 6 dinners.

*These prices include a “Prompt Booking” discount of $200 for RAQ members if the booking is made by March 22, 2019.

Specific tour details and booking information are on page 2 of this newsletter. Book by March 22 to ensure the rate above!

George Brandie, RAQ member and inveterate traveler, shares his views on why Newfoundland is a great travel destination, and what is in the Collette Tour:

Most of us have seen the marvelously enticing ads Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism has run in print and on TV for the last several years. I was there in 2013 and I can say, “It’s even better being there. There’s the history, the scenery and the people you’ll meet.”

The Collette tour leaves from Pearson International Airport on Thursday, September 5, 2019, for the flight to St. John’s on the easternmost peninsula on the island. There you’ll visit the famous tower on Signal Hill, where you’ll get a panoramic view across the harbor to the central city. In the city, you’ll see residential streets, where even mailboxes look like house fronts.

From St. John’s you’ll travel south to Cape Spear (right), “where Canada ends ... or begins” (text on a government sign). In addition to the modern lighthouse, they have preserved the 1835 lighthouse and something from more recent history. Leaving St. John’s you’ll stop in many beautiful villages such as Brigus and Trinity as your tour explores this vast and varied province.

At L’Anse aux Meadows (below) you can see evidence that proved Viking settlement and visit a modern reconstruction of what such a settlement might have looked like. Inside the longhouse try hefting a round oak shield and Viking sword. You’ll see why medieval battles were not drawn-out affairs.

Newfoundland and Labrador has so much to see and do that a few pictures cannot do it justice. The Collette tour on page 2 offers RAQeteers an opportunity to experience for themselves the Wonders of Newfoundland.

What is it like to travel with RAQ and Collette Tours? RAQ members reflect on their recent “Iceland: Land of Fire and Ice” trip.

From September 28 to October 6, 2018, five travelers took advantage of RAQ and Collette’s tour to Iceland. Here are some of their impressions:

“An individual’s expectations determine vacation destination choice and evaluations of the experience. I sought a unique, escape experience. I had not had a holiday in over 3 years, had experienced retirement, the sudden and unanticipated death of husband, the stress of trying to maintain and sell a heritage-designated estate property and wanted to be “out of my world” without making a study and doing individual bookings. I also looked forward to getting to know new individuals with knowledge of the Queen’s working environment that I had loved, but wanted to avoid crowds and cities. My prior travels had taken me multiple times above the Arctic Circle to...continued on page 2
to tundra and to volcanic islands as found in Japan, Hawaii and Haida Gwaii but Iceland was supposed to be different. My late husband had been a sailor who crossed the Pacific with a crew of one (not me!!), and I needed a destination he had never desired to see. Iceland was it!

“I attended Dr. Brandie’s RAQ lecture on Iceland and was hooked. The rift valley geologically and the early parliament of the Commonwealth at that site historically were anticipated highlights that were fully engaging as a walking experience. In addition to meeting all of my emotional needs and need for new friends, Iceland was hugely educational, every day on a different topic. Two geothermal plants on the same volcano, the vastness of the ranges for Icelandic sheep and horses, the differences in volcanos and the information about them you can read in the lava deposits plus cruising on the lagoon filled with calved icebergs eddying in an incoming tide were captivating for me. The folk museum exhibit of the earliest housing (about 900AD) struck me as replication of an igloo but in stone. Identical design; there was a low, crawl-in entry passage to a domed living space that contained 2 sleeping platforms to either side of a narrow passage way the extended into a tiny storage alcove. The Icelandic version however was never heated, so there was no smoke exit hole. How could anyone survive? At this site we also learned that driftwood collection eventually enabled the use of wood in homes and the museum example, again a tiny dwelling for 10+ people, was a house that had 2 walls made of salvage from the wreck of the regional hospital ship. Such a special landscape and experience that far exceeded my expectations.”

Anne Croy DVM, PhD

“It’s a very special vacation when you can go to a place that seems like no other on Earth, but that is what Iceland feels like. Lava fields as far as the eye can see, (barely) dormant volcanoes, daily earthquakes, glaciers (top, right), waterfalls pouring over cliffs, black sand beaches, clockwork geysers, thermal hot springs. And where else can you stand on a fissure where the planet’s surface is literally splitting in two? Every day offered a new and spectacular experience.”

John Dorland

“The Collette trip to Iceland offered a wealth of unique sites and fascinating learning experiences. One of these was our visit to Friðheimar, a family farm, where we were treated to a demonstration and explanation of the five difference gaits of the Icelandic horse. On the same premises we toured one of the four large greenhouses in which, year round, they grow tomatoes and cucumbers using state-of-the-art technology in environmentally friendly ways and using Iceland’s geothermal energy. The Friðheima farm visit concluded with a bowl of scrumptious fresh made tomato soup and a variety of delicious home baked breads (left). This was truly an exceptional and tasty learning experience.”

Ruth Bailey

Photos courtesy of George Brandie; stamp Creative Commons