

Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada: 'The Greatest Little City in the East': A Disney Cruise Line Port Review

by Amy Wear, PassPorter Featured Columnist

My hometown of Saint John, New Brunswick has long been touted as the "Greatest Little City in the East."

□ For those who aren't really sure just where New Brunswick is, we are between Maine and Nova Scotia. You'll want to make the most of your day here.

Saint John is rich with history as the oldest incorporated city in Canada. We often refer to it as the Loyalist City. Why? Remember the Boston Tea Party? Well our descendants decided to stay under British rule at that time, got in their boats, and came to Saint John.

□ It's easy for those of us who live here to take for granted the majestic beauty of this area. Cruise ships come into our city day after day in summer and early fall. When you sail in, there's a chance you'll encounter a foggy maritime day in Saint John. If that happens, the good news is, generally speaking, the further you get out of the city, the nicer the weather will become.

□ How do you want to spend your limited time in this region? The most affordable option, of course, would be to do your own walking tour. You can walk to City Hall, only five minutes from the port, and talk to the helpful people at the information desk. They will give you maps and pointers of what to see in the immediate area. Even if it's raining or cool, our city has a rare ped-way system that will allow you to stay indoors and walk through two small shopping malls to the top of the hill and into the famous Saint John City Market.

If you prefer to book a tour that stays within the city, you can choose from fairly inexpensive guided walking or hop on / hop off bus tours. You'll have the option to visit the famous Reversing Falls, King's Square, Saint John City Market, Rockwood Park, and the Historic Uptown Saint John area (we are strange and refer to our "downtown" as "uptown", because well, it's on a hill). Your bus pass is good all day long and you can even return to the ship for lunch and then head back out to see more sights.

□ If, however, a more extensive tour fits into your budget, I implore you to venture out and see the best scenery that New Brunswick has to

offer, all of which take you to the Bay of Fundy. In his 2011 article, [Vote for Canada's Bay of Fundy](#), Dave Marx gave an excellent overview of the marvel that is the Bay of Fundy. He explained why it was in the running for one of the Seven Wonders of Nature. You can read about it in detail [here](#).

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□ Here are my top three picks for your Disney Magic New Brunswick excursion options:

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□ 3rd Choice: Bay of Fundy Whale & Wildlife Watching

□ This tour requires a 75-minute motorcoach ride to the scenic town of Saint Andrews. You will take a catamaran boat ride out into the Bay of Fundy (which opens into the Atlantic Ocean) and spend about three hours watching for wildlife, including eagles, seals, and seagulls.

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□ Most importantly, you will hopefully see some smaller Finback and Minke whales. It's important to note that you may not get to see any whales. I've done three whale watching experiences and saw whales on two of the three tours.

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□ Since this tour is in the Bay of Fundy, you can expect it to be very windy and cool, so be sure to dress warmly. The ride out to the prime whale viewing area is also a very long one. If you are prone to seasickness, you probably want to skip this one.

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□ Once you are back on shore, you will have about 45 minutes to explore the little shops in St. Andrew's. You may find yourself wishing you had more time to spend in this scenic area. Many celebrities have been known to come to golf and stay at the Fairmont Algonquin Inn.

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□ 2nd Choice: St. Martin's and the Bay of Fundy

□ On this tour, you'll enjoy a brief visit to the Reversing Falls, City Market, and the main event, St. Martin's. St. Martin's is so scenic that it's featured in the O' Canada film at Epcot!

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□ The drive alone to St. Martin's will be especially scenic with the fall foliage and views of the Bay of Fundy as you approach the town. Your onboard guide will add to the enjoyment of the approximately one-hour drive.

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□ You'll arrive at a rocky beach and if the tide is out, be able to get up close and explore the sea caves. Enjoy some seafood chowder and then visit the often photographed lighthouse and covered bridges. Notice at low tide how the fishing boats appear to be washed ashore, only to be surrounded by water a few hours later.

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☐ Sadly, this tour does not include time for a hike on the Fundy trail located only minutes away, where you can catch a glimpse of paradise; hence why this is my second choice for you.

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☐ 1st Choice: Hopewell Rocks Tidal Discovery

☐ This is the ultimate tour option if you really want to see the beauty of New Brunswick. This is a 7.5-hour tour, so you will need to decide if you and your traveling companions are up for a full day tour, including just over two hours of driving in each direction. If your top reason for choosing a Canada / New England cruise was to see the fall foliage and the magnificent Canada coast scenery, this is the tour for you.

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☐ During your 130-minute motorcoach ride to the rocks, you will enjoy a costumed local guide, who will entertain you with commentary on your surroundings. During this ride you will have the opportunity to drive through Fundy National Park. You will come around a bend overlooking the Bay of Fundy and be swept away by the scenery before you. Even after living in this region most of my life, it still takes my breath away. The national park will also show you some of the East Coast's best fall foliage.

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☐ The main event, of course, will be your 2.5 hour visit to the Hopewell Rocks, which are also called the Flowerpot Rocks. Your guide will teach you about the largest tides in the world. How close you get to the rocks will depend on the timing of the tides.

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☐ If you are there during low tide, you'll get to walk on the ocean floor and get up close to the famous rocks. According to [this link for the tide tables in October](#), your chances of getting to walk on the ocean floor are good. During high tide you would see that same area completely covered over in water.

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☐ However you decide to spend your day in New Brunswick, I hope you will have a magical day in the "greatest little city in the East." If you've already had a chance to experience one of these tours, please let us know what you thought!

About The Author: Amy Wear is a work at home mom, travel agent, writer, and registered occupational therapist. She lives in New Brunswick, Canada, and specializes in planning magical vacations for people of all abilities at Click The Mouse. You can find her online at <http://www.clickthemouse.ca/amy-w.html>

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