

Halifax, Nova Scotia: A Disney Cruise Line Port of Call Review

by Amy Wear, PassPorter Featured Columnist

In the fall of 2016 and 2017, the Disney Magic will return to Halifax. The capital city of Nova Scotia, Halifax is known for its coastal maritime charm. Having been born there, I can proudly call myself a "Bluenoser."

☐ Halifax is so rich in history, it will be tough to decide on your touring priorities. For a detailed overview of Halifax and the surrounding region, you can read about it [here](#).

With so many great places to see, how should you spend your day in Halifax? Much like your stop the day before in Saint John, New Brunswick, you can disembark in Halifax and set out to do your own exploring. Even if you just want to walk around the pier, you can enjoy a daily farmer's market and sample the wares of the locals.

☐ The dock is a fair distance from the downtown core area, so you may want to take a taxi to the boardwalk area. Whether you choose to walk or take a taxi, I always caution about being back to the ship long before last call, but it truly is a 5-minute taxi ride.

☐ If you're up for it, you can walk approximately 30 minutes to the boardwalk, following along the dock. You'll enjoy a stop at Bishop's Landing, not far from the dock, where you can find Nova Scotia souvenirs and restaurants. You can also take the Alexander Keith's Brewery Tour, going back in history to see how the famous Halifax beer was made.

Along the boardwalk towards the far end away from the pier, you simply must stop and have the world's best ice cream at Cow's. You can shop for fun souvenirs, including the ever-popular cow t-shirts which poke fun at pop culture. Bring home some Cow's hot chocolate also. You can thank me later…

☐ If you'd like to get a good look at the Halifax skyline, take the inexpensive 12-minute ferry ride nearby. The ferry goes across the Halifax Harbour to Dartmouth for \$2.25 per person each way, leaving Halifax on the quarter hour and Dartmouth on the half hour.

☐ Children can explore the new playground at the Dartmouth ferry terminal. You can also view the Peace Pavilion. A youth project of the 1995 G7 Summit, the pavilion displays stones and bricks from over 70 countries, including the Berlin Wall and Great Wall of China. Allow one to two hours for a round trip.

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□ Local Port Adventures:

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□ If you prefer to stick to the cruise line's port adventures, you have plenty of local options.

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□ Once again, you can take a fairly inexpensive guided walking or hop-on / hop-off tour in Halifax. Set your own pace with buses running at least every half hour. Bus stops include the public gardens, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Citadel Hill National Historic Site, Historic Properties, and Museum of Natural History. Note that admission to these attractions is not included in your tour price (no charge to walk through the public gardens).

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□ Those looking for an immersive experience will enjoy the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic on the Halifax waterfront. Learn about the Halifax Explosion of 1917 and even walk on the CSS Acadia, the only ship to survive WWI, WWII, and the Halifax Explosion. The Titanic exhibit at the museum is especially popular and is detailed [here](#).

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□ The Halifax City and Harbour Hopper Tour is a unique land and sea tour experience. I didn't believe that the vehicle could go over land and sea until I saw it for myself. You'll pass downtown Halifax landmarks before, "plunging into the water for a narrated tour." You'll want to dress warmly for this tour. Note that this tour is unfortunately not wheelchair accessible and wheelchairs of any kind cannot be brought on-board.

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□ Full day Port Adventures:

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□ If this is your one and only visit to Nova Scotia, consider one of the following full day touring options, ranking from my 3rd to 1st choice…

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□ 3rd choice: Peggy's Cove, NS Take the Lighthouse Route to the fishing village of Peggy's Cove in St. Margaret's Bay. This fishing village and lighthouse on the rocks is touted to be one of the most famous tourist stops in Atlantic Canada and highly popular with photographers. See more at <http://www.peggyscove.ca/#sthash.jO2lphAm.dpuf>.

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□ Please, please stay off the black rocks for safety. As the sign on the lighthouse says, "Warning: Injury and death have rewarded careless sightseers here. Savour the sea from a distance."

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□ While you explore, enjoy gift shops like Amos Pewter. Also be sure to sample the sea food chowder at the Sou'wester Restaurant.

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□ The St. Margaret's Bay area is also sadly famous for being the site of the devastating Swiss Air Crash of 1998. If you read my article on [overcoming my fear of flying](#), you'll understand why this place is especially significant to me.

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□ 2nd choice: Bus Tour to Lunenburg, NS

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□ An equally picturesque destination is Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. Also on the Lighthouse Route, you'll take a 90-minute bus ride to this quaint town. According to Disney Cruise Line, this was once the busiest shipbuilding port in the world. I got to experience this region of small-town Nova Scotia one summer on student placement at the rural hospital.

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□ You can join the 45-minute walking tour or explore the area on your own. Note that this is a very hilly area and may not be suitable for those with mobility limitations.

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□ If you're lucky, you may catch the famous Blue Nose II in port. You can also take a horse and carriage ride through historic Lunenburg or visit the Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic. On the ride back, you'll also enjoy a stop in scenic Mahone Bay.

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□ 1st choice: Top 10 Best of Halifax Tour

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□ This is the ultimate tour for your day in Nova Scotia. Stops include the Public Gardens, Citadel Hill National Historic Site, and Fairview Lawn Cemetery (the resting place of 121 Titanic passengers), followed by a one-hour coastal drive to Peggy's Cove. Return to Halifax for lunch overlooking the harbour and to enjoy the shops of the Historic Properties.

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□ As you can tell, you simply can't see all that this region of Nova Scotia has to offer in one day. After countless visits and two summers spent here, I still haven't done everything. You'll just have to make another trip and see more!

About The Author: Amy Wear is a work at home Mom, travel agent, writer, and former occupational therapist. She lives in New Brunswick, Canada, and specializes in planning magical vacations for people of all abilities at [Click the Mouse](#)

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