

## Prince Edward Island: Travel Feature

by Michelle Kosloff, PassPorter Guest Contributor

I love to go to Walt Disney World. When we were little, my grandparents were snowbirds and every year they would go to Florida and we often went with them for a couple of weeks. More often than not, we made a trip to Walt Disney World. Sadly my grandmother passed away some years ago and my grandfather sold their Florida house so our trips to Disney World have become much less frequent and more expensive. With two growing children involved in many activities, it's a double whammy to our finances.

So because I love to vacation, I had to find an alternative. That turned out to be vacationing locally. It helps that I live in an area to which tourists flock every summer. I live on beautiful Prince Edward Island (PEI) in Canada. It is the smallest Canadian Province but one of the most beautiful.

This island, unlike its neighbors Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, has sandstone as its foundation rather than granite. So its beaches are all sandy and soft. The coastline doesn't have the same rugged beauty, but is more soft and romantic.

In the summer with the hoards of visitors you might not see this tranquil beauty, especially if you hit the touristy areas of the north shore. In the winter, the wind and the blizzards would certainly cause you to miss it. However, in the shoulder season -- June and September, you will see this island in another light.

In June, the world is new and the grass and all the trees glow green. The red soil is so fertile that people don't have to sod their lawns when they buy a new house, they just throw down some grass seed. Lupines grow wildly in all the ditches. You can walk along the beach and not meet another soul for miles. In September, it may be cool, but the autumn leaves are beautiful and you still have all the beaches to yourself.

Do you love seafood? This is the place for you. You can mosey down to one of the many docks around the island and get the best fish and chips from a little fish and chip stand. Restaurants specializing in lobster are all over. Lobster is best in the shoulder season in any case because they molt in the summer and are fished in the spring and fall.

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□Mussels are also cultivated in the island waters in abundance. I remember going into a restaurant and ordering their special, which was a plate of mussels with your entree for around \$2. I expected 10 or so mussels. The plate they brought was heaped so high with delicious, fresh mussels, that by the time I got to my meal I was already too full to eat any of it. Often restaurants will have these special prices in the spring and fall to entice locals to their restaurants.

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□Since this is a prime tourist area, the accommodations are plentiful. While your dream location has probably been booked months in advance for July, it's probably available at a discount in the shoulder season. You can get anything from a fancy hotel to a lovely little B&B. Many of the accommodations will put you right up close to water (it is after all an island). The government of PEI has the best directory of accommodations I have ever seen anywhere. You can order a tourist guide, but everything in it is searchable online.

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□For our wedding anniversary one year we visited a little B&B. We were the only ones there other than the owners. It felt like we had the whole place to ourselves. During the day we would wander along deserted beaches, finding all the marvels of the ocean. During the evening we ate lobster and at night we slept in luxury (at a reduced cost, of course). It was one of the most romantic anniversaries ever.

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□If you are a sun lover and love to just lie in the sun and swim in the ocean, this might not be the vacation for you. Even in the summer the water can be chilly, but for an intimate, romantic getaway, give PEI a try, especially when you can have it all to yourself.

### *About The Author:*

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