

DOWN EAST *charm*

The Maritimes are having a moment! Fresh ocean air, delightful towns and succulent seafood all in a chilled-out atmosphere. This summer, take a break from the fast lane in New Brunswick BY LAURA PAQUET

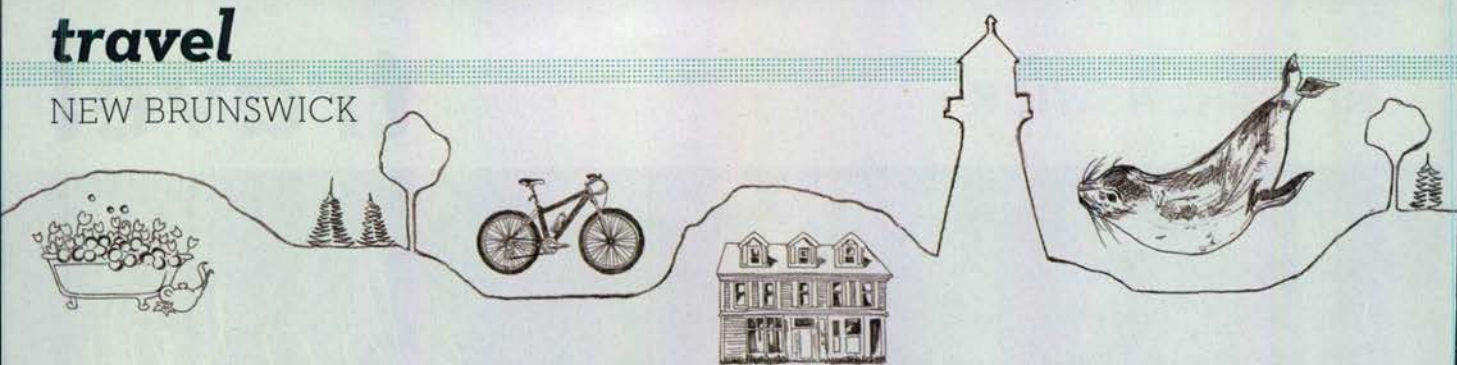
First of all, there's the food. The temperate Maritime climate creates a wealth of regional bounty, including some of the sweetest strawberries in the country. Chefs take full advantage, serving up both traditional specialties – wild blueberries, tender fiddleheads and buttery lobster – and relative newcomers like spaetzle and local caviar.

Then there's the great outdoors. New Brunswickers are fiercely proud of the region's spectacular forests, hills and coves and delight in showing them off. Wherever you turn, it seems that someone is eager to rent you a horse, kayak or bike to explore the province's wild places. And did we mention the salt water is the warmest north of Virginia?

Tranquil villages are another draw. Summer doesn't get much better than sitting on a waterfront deck with an ice-cold pint of locally brewed Picaroons Blonde Ale while inhaling deep breaths of salty sea air.

But in the end, New Brunswick's greatest unsung attraction may be its friendly inhabitants. Whether they're pressing you to sample fresh smoked salmon or urging you to go full throttle along a root-warped mountain biking trail, they just want you to have a good time. What more can you ask of a vacation destination than that? >

ISLAND LIVING
Traditional Acadian prohibition-era buildings in Bouctouche, a fishing village in Pays de la Sagouine.



OFF KILTER BIKE

DAY 1

ST. ANDREWS

Almost impossibly charming, St. Andrews is a friendly, photogenic town of clapboard homes, wooden churches, pubs and shops overlooking Passamaquoddy Bay.

EXPLORE

Hit the road with Canada's quirkiest cycle-tour company: **Off Kilter Bike**. Once you're suitably dressed in one of its Velcro-adjustable kilts (which go over your cycling shorts), it's time to hit the trails. Owner Kurt Gumushel can make your ride as tame or as adventurous as you like—stick to quiet country roads or hurtle across rock-strewn beaches. At low tide you can even bike over the sea floor to **Ministers Island**, former summer estate of railway baron Sir William Van Horne. 506-466-8388, offkilterbike.com.

DISCOVER

The vast **Kingsbrae Garden** is a horticultural fantasy with gardens of every description: knot, cottage, white, rose, bird and butterfly. Kids will make a beeline for the alpacas, rabbits and goats in the children's area. 220 King St., 506-529-3335, kingsbraegarden.com. Get up close and personal with sea creatures of all kinds at the **Fundy Discovery Aquarium**. Highlights include feeding

time for the aquarium's harbour seals and "touch pools" where you can pick up and hold sea cucumbers, mollusks, anemones and other intertidal species. 1 Lower Campus Rd., 506-529-1200, huntsmanmarine.ca.

SHOP

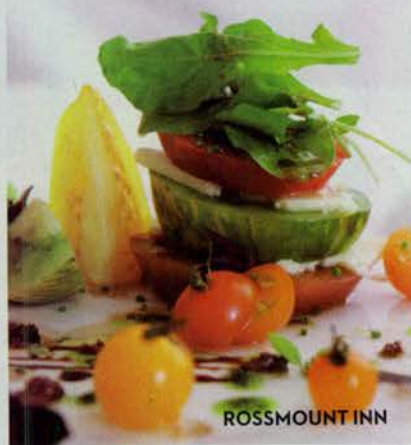
Need a good long soak in the tub after your cycling adventure? Throw in a hand-made Citrus Explosion Bath Bomb, scented with orange and lime, from **Garden by the Sea** and feel those aches melt away. 217 Water St., 1-888-548-8327, gardenbythesea.gostorego.com.

EAT

Swiss-born chef Chris Aerni and his wife, Graziella, do wonderful things with local meats and seafood, seasonal ingredients and organic produce at the **Rossmount Inn**. The menu changes daily—it could feature a crispy duck-leg confit one day and a chanterelle-truffle risotto the next—but the fabulous view of Passamaquoddy Bay from the inn's hillside location is a constant. 4599 Rte. 127, 506-529-3351, rossmountinn.com.

STAY

Some two decades ago, Annette Lacey-Mercer and Jerry Mercer escaped Toronto to create the **Treadwell Inn**, a gorgeous bed and breakfast in a house dating back to 1820. Book early to snag one of the four rooms with waterfront balconies. 129 Water St., 1-888-529-1011, treadwellinn.com.



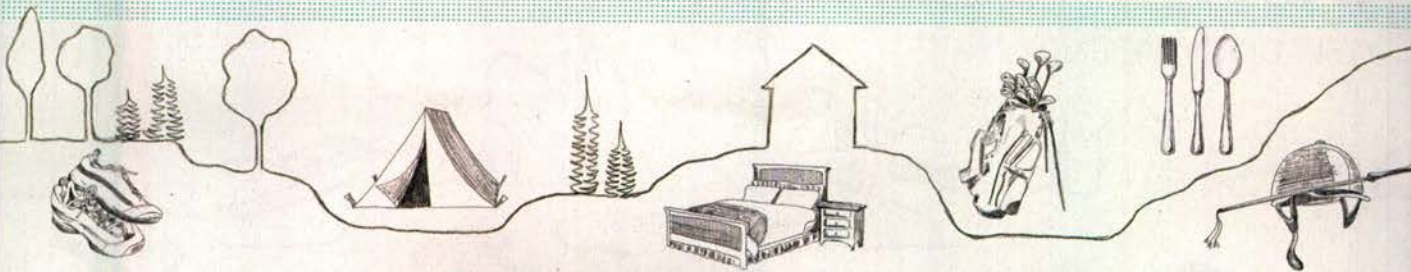
ROSSMOUNT INN

KINGSBRAE GARDEN



TREADWELL INN





DAY 2

BAY OF FUNDY & MONCTON

The Bay of Fundy, with its dramatic cliffs and ever-changing tides, is the star of the show. In fact, there's so much to see here, you may want to split this stop into several days.

EXPLORE

Feeling energetic? You can hike all or part of the 16-km **Fundy Trail** from St. Martins to Long Beach, with a guide or without. If that sounds too strenuous, there are also spectacular views from the **Fundy Trail Parkway**, a road that runs approximately 250 m above the Bay of Fundy. Keep an eye out for **Fuller Falls**, a narrow waterfall tumbling over a rocky cliff. fundytrailparkway.com. Then head east to **Fundy National Park**, where you can camp, golf, hike, swim, go birdwatching or stay in a yurt. Zipline above the **Bay of Fundy** or rappel down a 43-m cliff at rocky **Cape Enrage**, near Alma. capeenrage.ca. Fuel up with



FUNDY TRAIL

delish lobster tacos—laced with lime, tobiko, avocado and baby greens—at the **Cape House Restaurant**. 506-887-2275, capeenrage.ca. The **Hopewell Rocks** have been a top tourist draw for decades. It's easy to see why. Sculpted from sandstone by millennia of rain, ice and tides, the "Flowerpots" along the shoreline are huge, eerie and weirdly mesmerizing. Depending on the tides, you can explore them on foot or by kayak. Bring binoculars to spot peregrine falcons, bald eagles, blue herons and other birds. thehopewellrocks.ca.

EAT

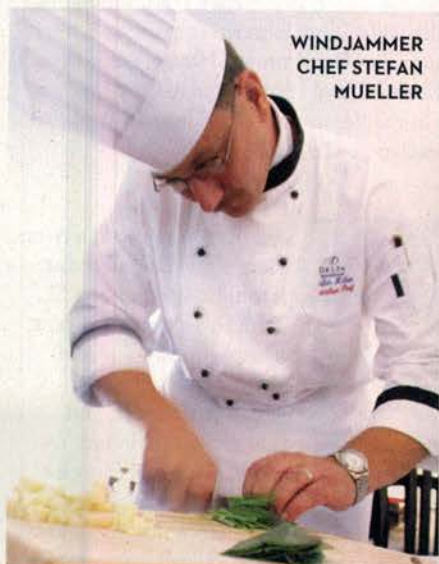
With its plush upholstered booths and dark wood panelling, the **Windjammer Dining Room** at the Delta Beauséjour in Moncton has a *Mad Men* feel to it. The menu is traditional: Caesar salad prepared tableside and a perfectly executed chateaubriand. Ask Frédéric Mazerolle—arguably the courtliest maître d' in Canada—to share his recipe for "pearls of the fields": Cointreau-macerated blueberries served with ice cream, almonds and Bombay Sapphire gin. 750 Main St., Moncton. 506-877-7137, deltahotels.com.



BROADLEAF GUEST RANCH

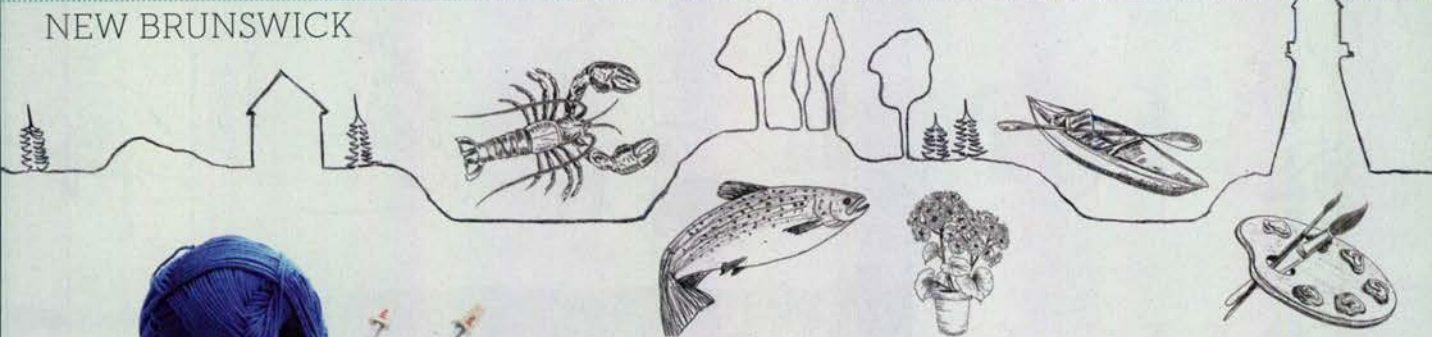
STAY

If you don't want to press on to the Hopewell Rocks and Moncton, check in to the **Broadleaf Guest Ranch**, run by three generations of the Hudson family. With horseback riding, canoeing and biking on offer, it's a very pleasant place to break your journey. Stay in a log cabin or, if you're travelling with a big group, splurge on a catered weekend in the five-bedroom Mountain Chalet, with an outdoor hot tub and a huge stone fireplace. 5526 Rte. 114, Hopewell Hill, 1-800-226-5405, broadleaffranch.com. >



WINDJAMMER CHEF STEFAN MUELLER

NEW BRUNSWICK



YARNS ON YORK

DAY 3

FREDERICTON

Compact, historic and pretty, New Brunswick's capital is a great place to play. Home to both the New Brunswick College of Craft & Design and the Beaverbrook Art Gallery, it's a cultural hotbed.

SHOP

Over the years, craft-college graduates and others have established studios, galleries and gift shops of all kinds. Try **Aitkens Pewter** (408 Queen St., aitkenspewter.com) for giftware, and **Botanicals** (610 Queen St., botanicalsgiftshop.com) for flowers made of tin—it sounds weird, but the delicate lily of the valley and colourful narcissus are wonderfully decorative. Award-winning jewellery designer Trudy Gallagher sells her bespoke pieces at **Bejewel**. C540B Queen St., 1-877-258-7839, bejewel.ca. If you want to make your own fisherman knit sweater, **Yarns on York** has every type of wool in a panoply of colours. 72 York St., 506-458-9193.

EAT

Every Saturday morning, seemingly half of Fredericton congregates at the **Fredericton Boyce Farmers Market**. The earliest birds are pub-crawling university students,

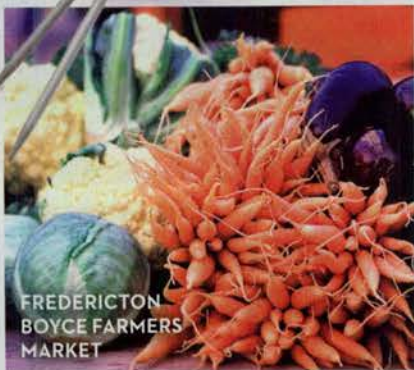
who show up at 6 a.m. to slake their all-nighter munchies with samosas and coffee. By 8 a.m. the place is packed with people browsing for fresh salmon, goat cheese, croissants, crafts, books and more. Sip on fair trade coffee and nibble a cupcake as you stroll, or sit down for crepes, pad Thai or southern barbecue. 665 George St., 506-451-1815, frederictonfarmersmarket.ca. The **Blue Door** is the best place to eat in Fredericton. It serves beautifully prepared seasonal dishes along with fantastic cocktails. Don't forget to make a reservation as it's always busy. 100 Regent St., 506-455-2583, thebluedoor.ca.

EXPLORE

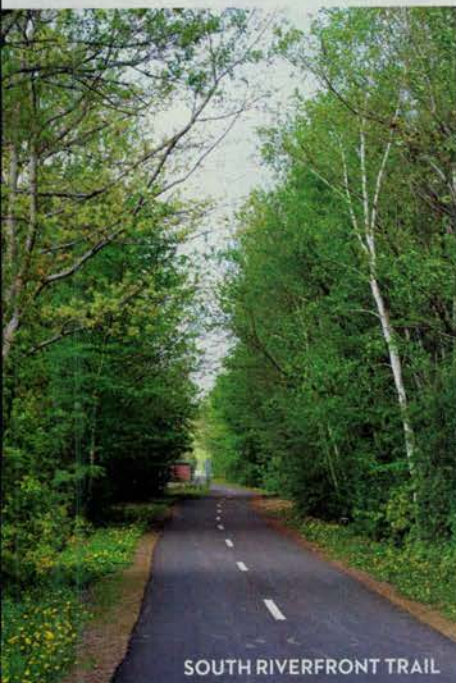
The **Beaverbrook Art Gallery** is home to almost 3,500 artworks by Canadian, European and other artists, including Emily Carr, Jean-Paul Riopelle, John Constable, Thomas Gainsborough and members of the Group of Seven. One of the highlights is Salvador Dali's enormous *Santiago El Grande*, which dominates the foyer. (If you can get away with it, squat low or lie down on the floor to appreciate it fully.) 703 Queen St. W., 506-458-2028, beaverbrookartgallery.org. To take in Fredericton's beautiful setting, walk the 3.6-km **South Riverfront Trail**, which hugs the wide Saint John River, passing historic sites like **Government House**, while the **Lincoln Trail** connects to nearby Oromocto on the **Trans Canada Trail**. fredericton.ca/trails.

STAY

Ask for a room with a river view at the **Delta Fredericton**. Located on the St. John River it's undergoing a huge facelift. The staff are super-friendly, wonderful to kids, and there's a pool. Bonus: You can rent kayaks, bicycles or snowshoes. 225 Woodstock Rd., 506-457-7000, deltahotels.com. **G**



FREDERICTON BOYCE FARMERS MARKET



SOUTH RIVERFRONT TRAIL



GOVERNMENT HOUSE