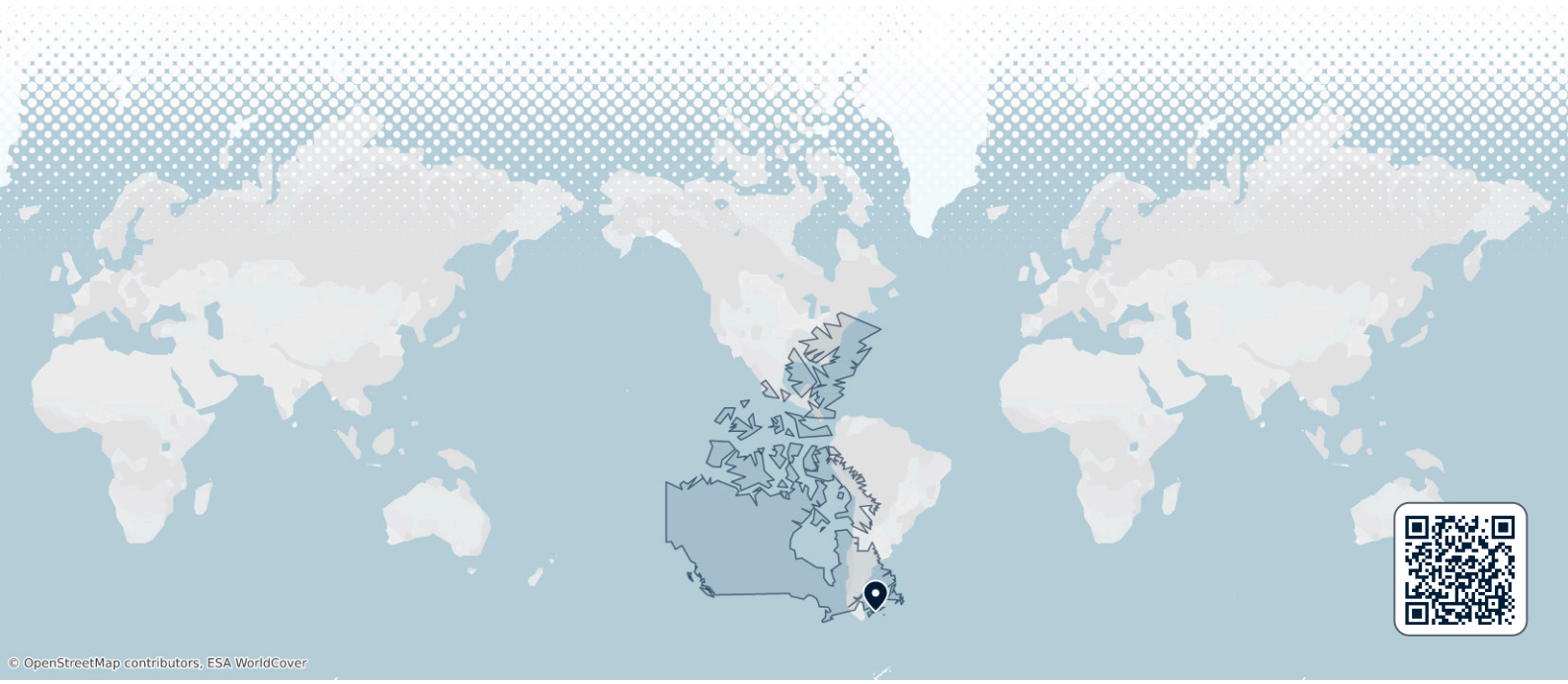


Halifax County

Nova Scotia · Canada

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



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Overview

Halifax is the largest city in Atlantic Canada and the capital of Nova Scotia. It sits on a hilly peninsula around a deep natural harbour. The compact downtown faces the water, with Dartmouth across the harbour.

It suits a stay of two to four days. Visitors come for the waterfront, the hilltop Citadel, good seafood and pubs, and easy trips to fishing villages and the Atlantic coast. The wider Halifax area also covers rocky shores, beaches and small coastal communities well outside the city.

When to visit

Summer and early autumn are the best times. July to September is warm, with the longest days and the warmest sea. Fog is common on the coast in early summer. Autumn is mild and often clear in September, then turns wet and grey.

Winters are cold and damp rather than deeply frozen. Snow, rain and wind alternate, and some seasonal sights and tours are closed. Spring comes late and is cool.

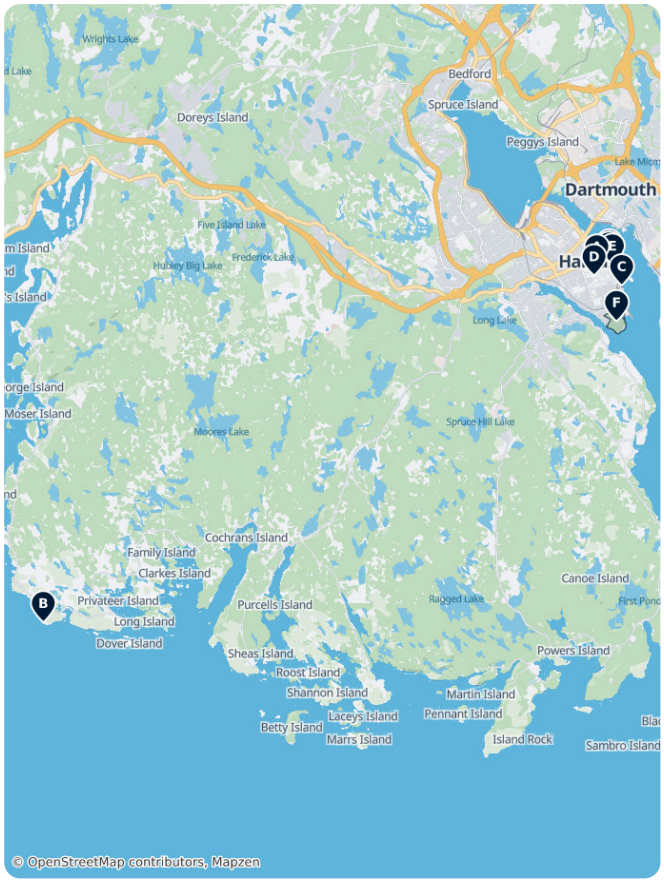
MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for watersports	0° / 8° Feels like -6°	-7° / -16°	13 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for watersports	0° / 7° Feels like -6°	-7° / -15°	Dry air
March	Poor Poor for watersports	3° / 9° Feels like -3°	-3° / -11°	13 rainy days · Dry air
April	Poor Poor for watersports	7° / 13° Feels like 3°	1° / -3°	13 rainy days · Dry air
May	Good Good for hiking	12° / 18° Feels like 9°	6° / 2°	12 rainy days · Dry air
June	Good Good for hiking	17° / 23°	11° / 7°	12 rainy days · Dry air
July	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 25°	16° / 13°	
August	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 25°	17° / 14°	Humid air
September	Great Great for sightseeing	19° / 24°	14° / 9°	Dry air
October	Good Good for hiking	14° / 19° Feels like 10°	9° / 3°	12 rainy days · Dry air
November	Poor Poor for hiking	8° / 15° Feels like 3°	3° / -3°	12 rainy days · Dry air
December	Poor Poor for watersports	3° / 11° Feels like -3°	-2° / -10°	14 rainy days · Dry air

Best months: July

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5; NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Top sights

- A Halifax Citadel is the star-shaped fort on the hill above downtown. It has harbour views and a living-history program. Opening hours and tours change by season, so check before you go.
- B Peggys Point Lighthouse is the famous lighthouse at Peggys Cove, on bare granite rock above the Atlantic. It is about 45 minutes from downtown by car.
- C Pier 21 is the national immigration museum, in the old terminal where many newcomers arrived between 1928 and 1971.
- D Public Gardens are Victorian gardens with ponds, bandstand and flower beds. They are free to enter and close to downtown.
- E Maritime Museum of the Atlantic sits on the waterfront. It covers seafaring history, the Halifax Explosion of 1917 and the Titanic.
- F Point Pleasant Park is a wooded park at the southern tip of the peninsula. It has shady trails, sea views and old fortifications.
- G Halifax Harbour Ferry crosses the harbour to Dartmouth. It is a cheap way to see the skyline from the water.
- H Art Gallery of Nova Scotia shows Nova Scotia and Canadian art, including folk art.



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What to experience

- **Take the harbour ferry to Dartmouth and back.** It is short and gives a view of the city from the water.
- **Hike the coastal trails on the Northwest Arm.** Sir Sandford Fleming Park is close to the city.
- **Visit a beach.** Crystal Crescent Beach, southwest of the city, has long white sand. The water stays cold, even in summer.
- **Drive the coast.** Follow the road along St Margarets Bay to fishing villages and rocky coves.

Day trips

All trips are one way from downtown, in order from closest to farthest.

- **Peggys Cove**: about 45 minutes by car. A small fishing village around a lighthouse, with rocky shore. Come early or late to avoid tour buses.
- A Lunenburg: about 1 hour 15 minutes by car. A colourful UNESCO World Heritage port town, with a working waterfront.
- B Kejimkujik National Park and National Historic Site of Canada: about 2 hours by car. Forest, lakes and quiet paddling, plus an area on the Atlantic coast.



Where to explore

- Cape Breton Island is a scenic island with the Cabot Trail. It is a long drive northeast, about 4 to 5 hours.
- Sable Island Migratory Bird Sanctuary is a remote sandbar far out in the Atlantic, known for its wild horses. It is hard to reach and heavily restricted.

Getting there

- **By air**: Halifax Stanfield International Airport (YHZ) is about 35 km north of downtown, around 30 minutes by car. It has flights across Canada, to the US and and to Europe. Taxis and rental cars are the simplest way into the city.
- **By train**: VIA Rail's Ocean runs overnight from Montreal. It is slow and does not run daily, so check the schedule before planning around it.
- **By road**: Highway 102 links Halifax with the airport and Truro, and the rest of Canada by road through New Brunswick. Moncton is about 2.5 to 3 hours away.
- **By bus**: Intercity coaches link Halifax with other Nova Scotia towns and with New Brunswick.
- **By sea**: Cruise ships dock at the downtown waterfront in season.

Getting around

- **Public transit**: Halifax Transit runs buses and the harbour ferries between Halifax and Dartmouth. See Halifax Transit.
- **Taxi and ride-hailing**: Available in the urban area. Fares add up quickly for trips out to the coast.
- **On foot**: Downtown, the waterfront and the Public Gardens are all walkable. Streets climb steeply from the harbour to the Citadel.
- **By bike**: Cycling suits parts of the peninsula, but hills and traffic limit it. Out of town, distances are long.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

Downtown and the waterfront are compact and walkable, though streets climb steeply from the harbour.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

Hills and traffic limit cycling on the peninsula.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?** Not for downtown. A car is very useful for Peggys Cove, the Atlantic coast, beaches and Lunenburg. Many coastal sights have no practical transit.
- **Parking**: Paid garages and street parking are common downtown. Fees are higher near the waterfront.
- **Winter**: Snow and ice can make roads hard. Allow extra time and check forecasts.

Food & drink

Halifax is known for seafood: lobster, scallops, mussels and chowder. Look for a lobster roll in summer. The **donair**, a spiced beef wrap with a sweet sauce, is a local late-night favourite. Craft beer and live music in pubs are part of the city's character.

Eat along the waterfront, on Argyle Street and Barrington Street, and on Spring Garden Road. Tipping of 15 to 20 percent is normal in sit-down restaurants.

What to eat & drink

DINNER

Tourtière
A savory meat pie, traditionally made with pork, beef, or game, especially popular in Quebec.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Poutine
Fries topped with cheese curds and hot gravy, originally from Quebec and now popular nationwide.

Bannock
A simple fried or baked bread with roots in Indigenous cooking, found in many regional variations across the country.

Montreal-style Bagel · Bagel montréalais
A smaller, sweeter, denser bagel than the New York style, boiled in honey water and baked in a wood-fired oven.

Maple Syrup · Sirop d'érable
Syrup tapped from maple trees, mainly in Quebec and Ontario, used on pancakes and in baking and savory dishes alike.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Butter Tart
A small pastry shell filled with a sweet, gooey butter, sugar, and egg filling, sometimes with raisins or pecans.

Nanaimo Bar
A no-bake dessert bar from British Columbia with a chocolate-crumb base, custard filling, and chocolate topping.

DRINKS

Caesar
Canada's signature cocktail: vodka, Clamato juice (tomato and clam broth), and spices, served with a celery stalk.

Canadian Whisky
A lighter, smoother style of whisky than Scotch or Bourbon, often blended with rye.

Ice Wine
A sweet dessert wine made from grapes frozen on the vine, produced mainly in Ontario's Niagara region and British Columbia's Okanagan Valley.

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Safety & health

Halifax is a safe city for visitors. Normal city care is enough. Keep valuables out of sight in parked cars. Some downtown streets get rowdy late at night.

At Peggys Cove and other rocky shores, stay well back from the water. Waves can be large and sudden, and wet dark rocks are very slippery. People have been swept off the rocks.

Ticks that can carry Lyme disease are common in Nova Scotia. Wear long pants on trails and check yourself afterwards. Fog and rain are frequent, so bring a waterproof layer in any season.

History

The Mi'kmaw people have lived in this area for thousands of years. Britain founded Halifax in 1749 as a military base and naval port, and the Citadel hill was fortified to protect it.

In December 1917 two ships collided in the harbour and one, loaded with explosives, blew up. The Halifax Explosion killed about 2,000 people and flattened the north end. In the 20th century the port received waves of immigrants and sent convoys across the Atlantic in the Second World War.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Canada at a glance:

CURRENCY
CAD $

EMERGENCY
911

ELECTRICITY

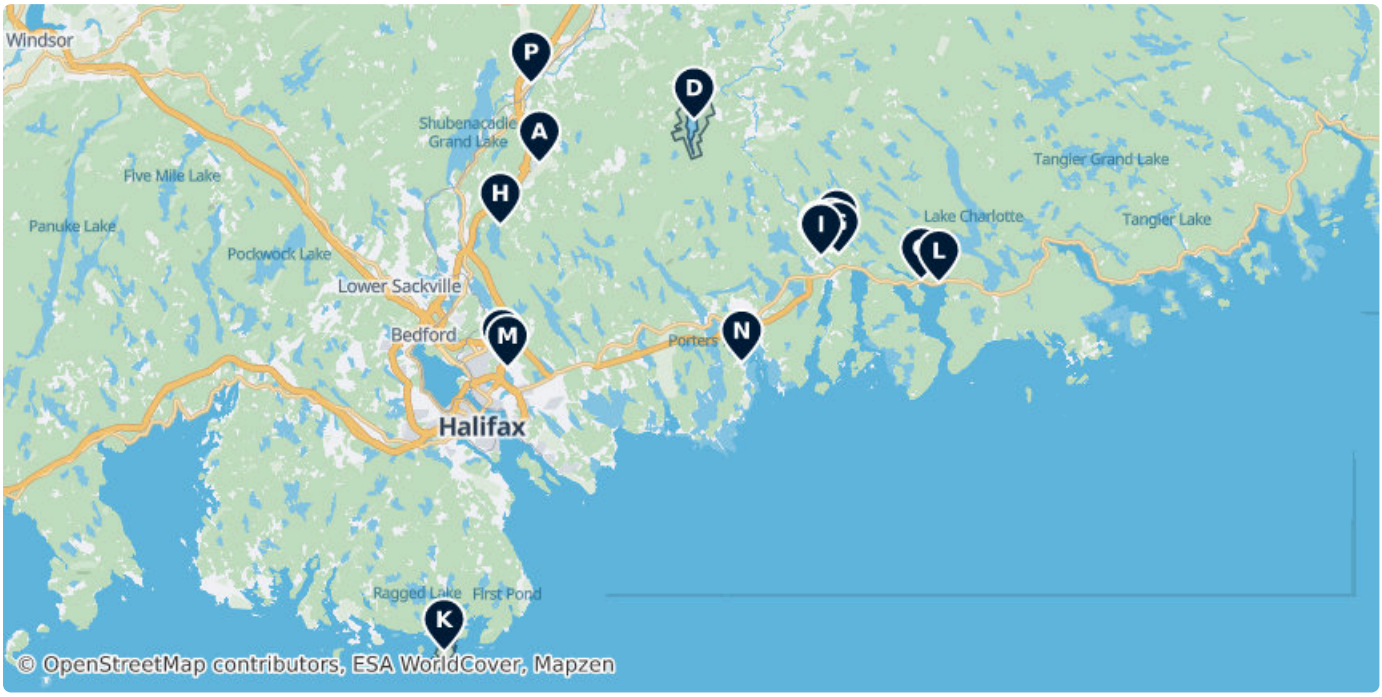
Type A / Type B
120 V · 60 Hz

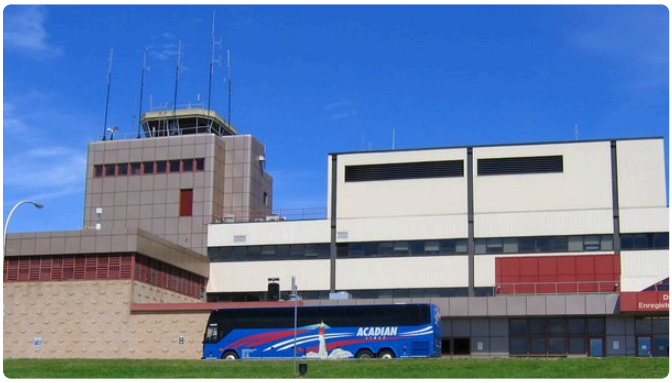
LANGUAGES
English, French

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Halifax Unmissables

This selection spans the Halifax Regional Municipality, from the main international gateway at Stanfield to the rugged trails of the Musquodoboit Valley. It highlights the region's coastal geography at Crystal Crescent Beach and its industrial heritage at the Fairbanks Centre on the Shubenacadie Canal. Cultural sites like the Fisherman's Life and Acadien House museums offer insight into local history, while regional eateries provide a taste of Nova Scotian seafood.





A Halifax Stanfield International (YHZ)

Halifax Stanfield International Airport is a Canadian airport in Goffs, Nova Scotia, a rural community of the Halifax Regional Municipality.

1 Bell Boulevard, Enfield, Nova Scotia B2T 1K2, Canada
(44.88283, -63.51377)

halifax-airport.com, +1-902-873-4422

B Cineplex Cinemas Dartmouth Crossing

Multiplex cinema located in the Dartmouth Crossing retail area, featuring IMAX and UltraAVX screens.

Shubie Drive 145, B3B 0C3 Dartmouth
(44.70773, -63.56042)

cineplex.com/Theatre/cineplex-cinemas..., +1-902-481-3251

C Empire Theatres

Cinema located within the Dartmouth Crossing shopping complex.

(44.70796, -63.56049)

D Dollar Lake Provincial Park

Dollar Lake Provincial Park is a seasonal provincial park located in the Musquodoboit Valley area of the Halifax Regional Municipality in...

(44.92110, -63.32083)

novascotia.ca/nse/protectedareas/cons... , +1-902-384-2770

E Skull Rock

Rock formation and lookout point within the Musquodoboit Valley trail system, offering views of the surrounding wilderness.

(44.80470, -63.15001)

F Admiral Lake Lookoff

Panoramic viewpoint on the Admiral Lake Loop trail, overlooking the rugged backcountry of the Musquodoboit Valley.

(44.81318, -63.14293)

G Harbour Lookoff

Elevated viewpoint situated along the Musquodoboit Valley trail network.

(44.80253, -63.14101)

H Johnston Falls

Waterfall located near Sackville, accessible via local woodland hiking trails.

(44.82807, -63.56257)

I Blue Falls

Waterfall located on the Musquodoboit River system, accessible via the Admiral Lake trail loop.

(44.80077, -63.16268)

J Jam Falls

Waterfall located within the Musquodoboit Valley trail system near the Admiral Lake Loop.

(44.80263, -63.16390)

K Crystal Crescent Beach Provincial Park

Coastal park featuring three white sand beaches and a 10-kilometre hiking trail leading to Pennant Point.

B3V, Canada (44.45031, -63.63248)

parks.novascotia.ca/content/crystal-crescent-beach

L Fisherman's Life Museum

Restored early 20th-century coastal homestead depicting the daily life of a traditional Nova Scotian fishing family.

Navy Pool Loop 58, B0J 1W0 Oyster Pond
(44.77728, -63.01609)

fishermanslife.novascotia.ca

M Fairbanks Centre

Interpretive centre at Shubie Park focusing on the history and technology of the Shubenacadie Canal and its lock system.

Locks Road 54, B2X 2W7 Dartmouth (44.70195, -63.55361)

shubenacadiecanal.ca, +1-902-462-1826

N Acadien House Museum

Historic site in West Chezzetcook showcasing Acadian culture and heritage through period artifacts and architecture.

Hill Road 79, B0J 2L0 West Chezzetcook (44.70658, -63.26167)

acadiedechezzetcook.ca/en/

O The Lobster Shack Restaurant

Casual dining venue in Salmon River Bridge specializing in fresh local seafood and maritime dishes.

(44.77978, -63.03796)

P Curly Portable's

Long-standing pub and restaurant in Enfield known for its casual atmosphere and classic fare.

(44.95277, -63.52407)

Mo–Su Closed

DATA SOURCES

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