Cape Breton Island Sampler

An Exploration of Cape Breton Island
Saturday, August 26 to Sunday, September 3, 2023
Trip #2355
Trip Overview

Cape Breton is located on the northern part of the province Nova Scotia in the Canadian Maritimes. It is known for its lush forests, rugged mountains, and stunning seascapes. On this adventure we will be sampling some of Cape Breton’s most beautiful sights by land and sea. We will hike some of Cape Breton’s most breathtaking trails along the Cabot Trail, Cape Mabou Highlands, and the Whyocomagh Provincial Park. We will search for whales, seals, water birds, and eagles in the St Lawrence Bay and cycle the Celtic Shores Coastal Trail on e-bikes. Along the way we will enjoy Cape Breton’s Scottish and Acadian cultures and listen to the sounds of Cape Breton-style Celtic music.

We will be visiting the villages of Ingonish, Cheticamp, and Mabou. We will travel along the world-famous Cabot Trail as it climbs and switchbacks along the coast in the Cape Breton Highlands National Park, as well as, other scenic drives. Our hikes start on the eastern coast and continue to two sites on the western coast of Cape Breton Island. Our hikes will feature ocean vistas and coastal pathways, and range from moderate to vigorous in difficulty. While whale watching and exploring the fishing village of Cheticamp, we will enjoy Cape Breton’s Acadian heritage. The Cape Mabou Highlands and the Celtic Shores Coastal Trail will give us a flavor of the island’s Scottish heritage. A visit to the iconic Red Shoe Pub, and live music at the Glenora Distillery, and Doryma Pub, will introduce us to the traditional Cape Breton “ceilidh” (Kay-Lee), a musical kitchen party.

We will enjoy a 3-hour e-bike ride on The Celtic Shores Coastal Trail (CSCT), which is part of the Trans-Canada Trail and the International Appalachian Trail. This hard packed rail trail is relatively flat and meanders along the coastline and through scenic woodlands from Inverness to Port Hood for 57 miles. We will travel along a 24-mile section of the trail’s most picturesque section from Port Hood to Glenville and back.
Highlights

*Hiking in Cape Breton National Park, the Cape Mabou Highlands, and the Whycocomagh Provincial Park
*Whale watch boat tour
*Live Celtic music
*Cycling on e-bikes on the Celtic Shores Coastal Trail (CSCT)

This trip is rated 4/moderate to 5/vigorous. Please review our ratings by clicking here Trip Ratings. Hikes will average 6.5 miles per day with 1000 feet of elevation gain. Our most strenuous hike is 10 miles/1600 feet of elevation gain. The trip also includes a whale watching tour on a small vessel, and cycling with e-bikes on the Celtic Shores Coastal Trail.

The itinerary below is subject to change due to weather conditions, closures, transportation or lodging availability, unforeseen possibilities (weather, natural disasters, governmental and/or ranger recommendations) and/or group considerations. Per AT AMC Terms and Conditions, leaders reserve the right to make changes as necessary, both before and during the trip.

Itinerary

Our adventure will include: 3 nights in Ingonish; 2 nights in Cheticamp; and 3 nights in Mabou before returning to Sydney for our flights home. Each day will be filled with athletic adventures to help you sample all the beauty and grandeur of Cape Breton Island.

Day 1 - August 26 - Saturday - Arrival
Arrive from home to Sydney, Nova Scotia airport. We will pick up cars, shop for food, and travel 2 hours to Ingonish Chalets, Ingonish NS.
After settling into our rooms, we will have group orientation and our welcome dinner.
Optional after-dinner walk on Ingonish Beach.
Dinner TBD

### Trip Ratings
- **Hikes**:
  - Average: 6.5 miles per day with 1000 feet of elevation gain.
  - Strenuous: 10 miles/1600 feet of elevation gain.
- **Whale Watching**: Small vessel.
- **Cycling**: E-bikes on the Celtic Shores Coastal Trail (CSCT).

### Itinerary

1. **Day 1 - August 26 - Saturday - Arrival**
   - Arrive from home to Sydney, Nova Scotia airport.
   - Pick up cars, shop for food, and travel 2 hours to Ingonish Chalets, Ingonish NS.
   - Group orientation and welcome dinner.
   - Optional after-dinner walk on Ingonish Beach.
   - Dinner TBD
Day 2 - August 27 - Sunday
Cape Breton Highlands National Park, east
After breakfast we will drive to Franey Mountain for our morning hike.
Morning - Franey Mountain Hike: 4.5 miles, 1,118 ft elevation gain
Afternoon - The Coastal Path: 1.5 miles, 200 ft elevation gain
After dinner - Middle Head trail: 2.4 miles, 45 ft elevation
Dinner TBD

Day 3 - August 28 - Monday
Cape Breton Highlands National Park, central
Fishing Cove hike: 10 miles, 1,600 ft elevation gain
Dinner at Morrison's Restaurant, Cape North
**Day 4 - August 29 - Tuesday - Leave Ingonish**

*Cape Breton Highlands National Park, central*

After breakfast we will heading west towards Cheticamp

1. Aspy Trail and Beulach Ban Falls: 5.7/1100 feet elevation gain
2. The Skyline Trail: 6.3 miles/ 908 feet elevation gain

Arrive Cheticamp - Silver Linings Inn and Motel

Dinner Doryman Pub, Cheticamp

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**Day 5 - August 30 - Wednesday**

*Cape Breton Highlands National Park, west*

After breakfast we will head out on our whale watch, then spend the afternoon enjoying the splendid views from the Acadian Trail.

am Whale Watch - Cheticamp 2 -3 hours

pm Acadian Trail: 5.9 miles, 1400 feet elevation gain

Dinner TBD
Day 6 - August 31 - Thursday - Leave Cheticamp
This morning, we will take some time to explore the Acadian fishing village of Cheticamp before
driving south to Mabou. We will spend the afternoon riding e-bikes then check into the Glenora
Inn and Distillery.
Dinner TBD

Day 7 - September 1 - Friday
Cape Mabou Highlands, southwest
We will spend our day enjoying the
Cape Mabou Highlands hiking trails
with views of the Northumberland Strait.
Sight Point and Fair Alistair Trails:
8 - 10 miles, 1000 - 1200 feet elevation gain
Dinner Red Shoe Pub, Mabou

Day 8 - September 2
Cape Breton, southwest
We will again head out to explore more of
Cape Breton Island with a stunning hike to
Salt Mountain and Scout Loop,
Whycocomagh: 2.6 miles/ 826 ft elevation
gain
Our afternoon hike will lead us to one of Cape
Breton's loveliest waterfalls, either Egypt
Falls, Inverness: 0.8 miles /314’ elevation
gain or Uisage Ban Falls, Baddeck: 1.7
miles/396’ elevation gain
Farewell dinner Glenora Inn

Day 9 - September 3
Depart for airport in am.
Activity Summary Note: All hiking mileage and gain listed are our best estimates based on trip reports and guidebooks; our experience on the ground may vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Miles/Elevation gain (feet)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Su, 8/27</td>
<td>Franey Mountain</td>
<td>4.5/1,118</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coastal Path</td>
<td>1.5/200</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Middlehead</td>
<td>2.4/45</td>
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<tr>
<td>M, 8/28</td>
<td>Fishing Cove Trail</td>
<td>10/1600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tu, 8/29</td>
<td>Aspy Trail</td>
<td>5.7/1100</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skyline Trail</td>
<td>6.3/908</td>
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<tr>
<td>W, 8/30</td>
<td>Whale Watch</td>
<td>2 - 3 hours</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Acadian Trail</td>
<td>5.9/1400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th, 8/31</td>
<td>e-biking</td>
<td>3 hrs/24 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>F, 9/1</td>
<td>Cape Mabou Highlands</td>
<td>10/1200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sa 9/2</td>
<td>Salt Mountain</td>
<td>2.6/860</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*waterfall hike</td>
<td>0.8 - 1.7/396</td>
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Accommodations (subject to change, based on availability)

Ingonish Chalets, Ingonish, NS
2- Bedroom chalets with kitchen, living room, and full bath.
Self-service with full breakfast available nearby
Features an Atlantic-facing beach

Silver Linings Motel, Cheticamp, NS
Standard 2- double motel rooms
expanded continental breakfast
Features access to NW hiking trails and the charming Acadian community of Cheticamp

Glenora Inn and Distillery, Mabou NS
Standard 2- double motel rooms
In-room continental breakfast or full breakfast available on your own in the Inn’s restaurant
Features lovely gardens, and optional distillery tours

Weather

Late August and early September temperatures range from 43°F to 72°F, with temperatures feeling cooler along the coast due to winds. Rainfall during August and September averages 6 - 7 days/ month. The average sea temperature is 64.5 degrees.
Participant Expectations

On the day hikes, you must be able to hike an average of 6-7 miles per day with elevation gains on average of 1100 feet per day. On our hardest day you will hike up to 12 miles with an elevation gain of 2000 feet. Participants should be able to actively hike up to 7 days in a row, carrying a daypack with enough food, water and equipment to keep yourself safe in the event of bad weather or injury. People wishing to participate in this trip must have previous hiking experience at the intermediate level or higher. Although the hiking will be at a moderate pace, this is not a trip for beginners or people who have not hiked regularly during the past year.

A history of neck and back injuries may exclude participants from participating in the whale watching trip.

The knowledge and ability to ride a bicycle is required. A participant should have e-biking experience prior to the trip. An e-bike training and safety orientation will take place prior to the ride.

Leaders will ask for volunteers among the participants to share in the driving, which requires a check of your driving record.

Our group will be a minimum of 12 people and a maximum of 14, including leaders.

Trip Cost:

The AMC Member price is $2800. The non-member price is $2900. To join the AMC (2022 pricing $50 individual, $75 family) click here.

Included:

- All lodging, as specified above
- All dinners
- All breakfasts
- Car rentals and gas
- Whale Watch tour
- E-bike rentals
- Emergency medical and evacuation insurance coverage
- AMC Adventure Travel Fee (20% of land costs)
- Cape Breton Highlands National Parks Pass

Not included:

- Airfare to/from Sydney approximately $1200.00 (Note: Only Air Canada and WestJet service YQY)
- Lunches, beverages
- Individual travel insurance coverage

The cost for the excursion is based on quotes at the time the trip was submitted to the Adventure Travel Committee (December 2022).
HOW TO APPLY

If you would like to apply for this trip, please contact the leaders for the application, the Acknowledgment and Assumption of Risks & Release and Indemnity Agreement, Confidential Health Questionnaire (and, if applicable, Covid-19 Warning and Supplemental Liability Waiver). The forms may be filled out electronically, printed, signed and mailed with a deposit check for $1000.00 to Sam Jamke, payable to the Appalachian Mountain Club, to the address listed below:

Sam Jamke
13257 Fountain Head Road
Hagerstown, MD 21742

The balance of $1800/members is due by April 30, 2023 or the date at which we declare the trip a “go,” whichever is later. When application and deposit are received, one of the leaders will be in touch to discuss next steps.

CANCELLATION POLICY

The AMC Adventure Travel cancellation policy is based on the premise that your cancellation may not raise the cost to other participants or the leaders. Any participant cancelling after notification that the trip will run as scheduled will be assessed a minimum cancellation fee of $200. If actual costs (expenses already incurred on your behalf and any unavoidable future expenses that will be incurred as a result of your registration and cancellation) are higher, they will be assessed instead, unless they can be applied to another acceptable participant. Should the leaders be able to replace you, you may be charged a reduced penalty. The cancellation fee will generally not be determined until after the trip. Failure to make trip payment(s) in a timely manner will be considered a cancellation.

By applying for this trip, you acknowledge that you have read, understood, and agree to the Adventure Travel Standard Terms and Conditions.

*Note: A packing list will be provided after acceptance onto the trip.
Trip Leadership

Trip Leader Sam Jamke has been leading Adventure Travel trips since 2008 to locales such as New Zealand, Patagonia, Ireland, Scotland, Luxembourg, Canada and Death Valley. A life member of AMC, she has climbed the New England Hundred Highest peaks in winter, been a four-season leader for the NH Chapter and is a past member of AMC’s Board of Directors. Sam recently located to Maryland is now a Potomac chapter member. On recent non-AMC trips, she visited the polar bears in Churchill, Manitoba and the penguins, seals, and icebergs in Antarctica, while on a journey “in the footsteps of Shackleton.” She may be reached at 240-730-1660 (home) or samjamke@myactv.net.

Anne Duggan is a new Associate Adventure Travel Leader. Anne has been a hike leader for the Southeastern Massachusetts (SEM) Chapter of AMC for more than 10 years, and is a 4-season hike leader. She is SEM Education Chair, and teaches Leadership Training and winter hiking skills in her chapter. She was a leader for AMC’s 2022 August Camp.

Anne has hiked the NH 48 4K mountains. She is a graduate of Mountain Leadership School and is certified in SOLO Wilderness First Aid and CPR. She enjoys leading mountain hikes and backpacking trips, kayaking, swimming, and gardening. Her most recent hiking travel experiences were: Sedona and the Grand Canyon, March 2022; Nova Scotia, July 2022, North Cascades National Park, August 2022 and Scottish Highlands, June 2019. Anne can be reached at 508-789-5538 or at abduggan12@gmail.com.

Photo credits: All photos provided by Anne Duggan 2022