

VICAR'S VIEW

Baddeck

vicarsview.com

EXPLORER QUOTIENT IDEAL AUDIENCES: Free Spirit and Authentic Experienter
UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION: Offering unique and convenient amenities for active lifestyle travellers
TYPE AND SIZE: Three private, two-level, lighthouse-themed suites, each with attached garage
YEARS IN BUSINESS: One
PARTNERS: Local businesses
GAME CHANGERS: Niche market. Quality. Attention to detail.
ADVICE: "Do your homework and don't stop learning."

As long-time entrepreneurs and experienced bikers, you could say that **Norm and Mary Campbell** like to live a little on the edge. That went a long way when it came to tackling their latest venture as owners and operators of Vicar's View, three lighthouse-themed rental units targeted to active lifestyle travellers.

"We're not shy about trying new things," says Norm. "We saw a niche, and we're comfortable with the pressures of starting and running a new business. We want to appeal to travellers interested in active living – biking, sledding, hiking – we're here for all of them. We know what it's like to travel with motorcycles and

expensive gear, and we offer them accommodation designed to meet their needs."

Located in Mary's hometown of Baddeck, Vicar's View features three brand new units that pay homage to the history of the area. The Elsie Room, the Silver Dart Room and the Alex & Mabel Room are all inspired by Alexander Graham Bell and showcase local art created by Mary's sister-in-law, painted on 100-year-old board from her Aunt Margaret's barn. Each room boasts lovely Bras d'Or lake views and offers amenities, storage and security for those travelling with specialized vehicles and equipment.





Norm and Mary recently retired to Cape Breton after living in Alberta for many years, where they owned a business in the oil and gas sector. “It’s nice to come home,” says Mary. “A big part of this is being here with family.”

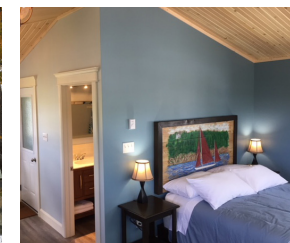
Though not originally from Cape Breton, Norm has come to love life on the island. “We’re celebrating Celtic Colours – I’m wearing a kilt in the walk to Uisge Ban Falls. It’s important for us to give back to the community and share and enjoy what makes this place special,” he says. “We want to promote Victoria County and everything that is

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going on here. We love working with local businesses to build one another up.”

While Norm and Mary aren’t new to taking risks and starting new ventures, they are new to the accommodations sector. “We did most of the work ourselves; it was a learning curve for us, and we are still learning when it comes to things like online and social media,” says Norm. “This is very different, and we had to do our homework. It took a little longer than we might have expected, but we are still only in our first full year. It’s been a slow start. I’m glad we don’t have shareholders,” he jokes.

While it is early days, Vicar’s View has been getting good feedback from guests from the region and from the UK, who appreciate great customer service in an accommodation geared to their specific requirements. Norm and Mary are willing to stay the course, while staying flexible to their guests’ needs, especially when it comes to booking. “We will give ourselves a few years to stick to our guns and learn,” says Norm. “We are licensed and taking bookings through our website, but we are also taking them through Airbnb – we have to be open to bookings, wherever they come from.”



“This is the vision,” says Norm. “But we have to be cautious and keep learning and growing. We are sticking to what makes us different and appealing to our customers. It’s about providing outstanding quality and good old Cape Breton hospitality.”



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