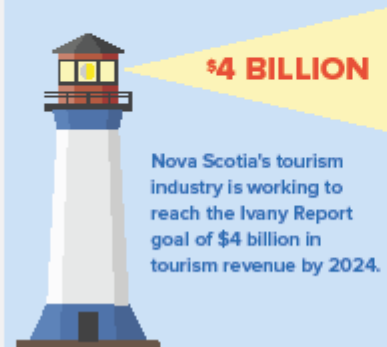


## THE TOURISM TIDE KEEPS RISING

Congratulations on a successful 2017!



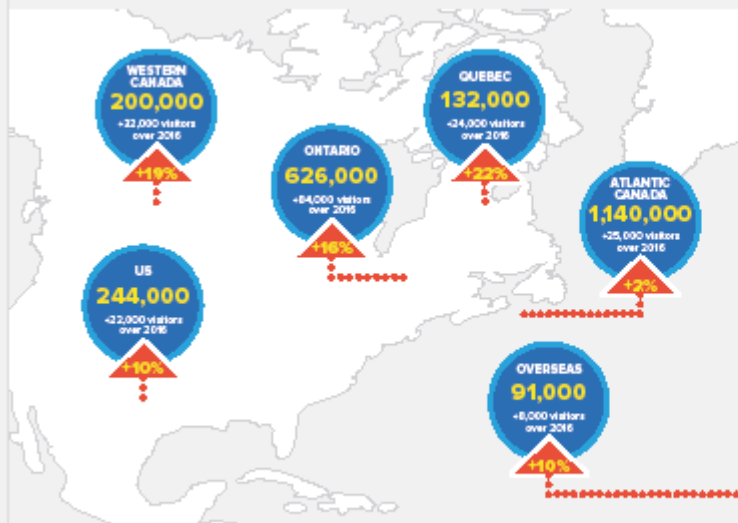
### MORE VISITORS THAN EVER



2017 brought a record **2.4 MILLION** non-resident overnight VISITORS to Nova Scotia

That's an increase of 9% over 2016 (+195,000)

### VISITORS TO NOVA SCOTIA FROM AROUND THE WORLD



### TRAVEL TO NOVA SCOTIA



### LICENSED ACCOMMODATIONS IN NOVA SCOTIA



## Press Release

TOURISM NOVA SCOTIA--2017 Record Year for Tourism in Nova Scotia  
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Nova Scotia's tourism industry had its best year in history last year and its fourth consecutive year of growth.

In all, a record 2.4 million visitors came to the province in 2017 and tourism revenue is estimated at \$2.7 billion.

"I want to congratulate the industry on an amazing year," said Geoff MacLellan, Minister of Business. "A strong tourism industry is important to Nova Scotia's economy. The more visitors we welcome, the more we expose the world to our province and all it has to offer."

"This leads to more business opportunities and jobs for Nova Scotians, more restaurants and shops, and more vibrant communities for all of us to enjoy."

For comparison, 2017 saw about 195,000 more visitors than 2016 - an increase of nine per cent. Tourism revenue increased by over \$100 million - seven per cent more than the year before.

2017 highlights include:

- highest visitation growth came from Ontario, up 16 per cent, or 84,000 more visitors, compared to 2016
- visitation from Western Canada was up 19 per cent, or 32,000 more visitors
- visitation by air, which on average brings higher-spending travellers, rose by 13 per cent
- visitation by road increased seven per cent
- licensed room nights sold in 2017 increased by two per cent to 2.8 million.

"There were a lot of factors that made 2017 a strong year for tourism, but these results are not by chance," said Tourism Nova Scotia CEO Michele Saran. "Our industry is working hard, and we're working collaboratively to create effective marketing campaigns and compelling experiences that will inspire people to choose Nova Scotia."

Twelve new travel experiences were developed by tourism operators in 2017 through Tourism Nova Scotia's World-class Experience EXCELLerator Program. These experiences are now available to buy in 2018.

For a complete breakdown of results visit:  
<https://tourismns.ca/research/visitor-statistics/tourism-performance>

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FOR BROADCAST USE:

Nova Scotia's tourism industry had its best year in history in 2017 and its fourth consecutive year of growth.

Business Minister Geoff MacLellan says a strong tourism industry is important to Nova Scotia's economy.

In all, 2.4 million visitors came to the province last year and tourism generated an estimated 2.7 billion dollars in revenue.

The industry is working to reach four billion dollars in revenue by 2024.

-30-

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## 2017 Visitation to Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia welcomed an additional 195,000 non-resident visitors in 2017, an increase of 9% from 2016. Increases in visitation were observed across both road (+7%) and air (+13%).

Visitor Origin	2017 Non-resident Visitors	Change vs. 2016	
<b>CANADA</b>	<b>2,099,000</b>	<b>+9%</b>	<b>+165,000</b>
Atlantic Canada	1,140,000	+2%	+25,000
Quebec	132,000	+22%	+24,000
Ontario	626,000	+16%	+84,000
Western Canada	200,000	+19%	+32,000
<b>UNITED STATES</b>	<b>244,000</b>	<b>+10%</b>	<b>+22,000</b>
<b>OVERSEAS</b>	<b>91,000</b>	<b>+10%</b>	<b>+8,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,433,000</b>	<b>+9%</b>	<b>+195,000</b>

### *Nova Scotia Licensed Accommodations*

Licensed accommodation activity includes licensed accommodations purchased by Nova Scotians and non-residents, and people travelling for both tourism and non-tourism reasons. This data does not include any non-licensed accommodations sold through the sharing economy.

In 2017, licensed room nights sold in Nova Scotia of 2,760,000 increased by 2% compared with 2016. The occupancy rate, meanwhile, increased by 3 percentage points to 55%.

Region	2017 Licensed Room-Nights Sold	% Change vs. 2016
Halifax	1,448,000	-1%
South Shore	184,000	+3%
Eastern Shore	20,000	+13%
Cape Breton	476,000	+4%
Northumberland Shore	201,000	+3%
Bay of Fundy & Annapolis Valley	363,000	+10%
Yarmouth & Acadian Shores	68,000	+4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,760,000</b>	<b>+2%</b>

The preliminary estimate of tourism revenues for 2017 is \$2.7 billion, compared with \$2.6 billion in 2016.

## **Tourism Nova Scotia Overview**

Tourism Nova Scotia (TNS) is a private sector-led provincial Crown corporation with a mandate to grow Nova Scotia's tourism industry and maximize the value of tourism to Nova Scotia's economy.

Established in April 2015, TNS is focused on attracting non-resident overnight visitors to the province and increasing tourism revenues through experience and sector development, marketing and visitor servicing.

Nova Scotia's tourism industry is working to reach \$4 billion in tourism revenues by the year 2024. This is a goal that was identified for the industry in the Now or Never Report, released in 2014 by the Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy.

To help lead the industry to achieve the \$4 billion goal, TNS's corporate strategy has four key pillars:

- Attract more first-time visitors
- Invest in markets of highest return
- Focus on world-class experiences
- Build tourism confidence

### **Our Mandate**

The Tourism Nova Scotia Act, passed on May 4, 2015, states the objectives of the corporation are to:

- Achieve tourism growth in the province and maximize the value of tourism to the economy of the province.
- Develop and implement a long-term strategy for tourism to drive sustainable tourism in the province that delivers growth and profitability in the tourism sector, provides economic benefit to the province, and is consistent with the province's strategic priorities.
- Communicate and collaborate with communities, private industry, and the tourism industry in the province.

### **Our Mission**

To market Nova Scotia's tourism experience to the world through innovation and collaboration.

### **Our Vision**

To be recognized globally as the leading destination marketing organization.

## The World-class Experience EXCELLerator Program

Through the World-class Experience EXCELLerator Program, Tourism Nova Scotia and private sector partners create new, saleable experiences that grow Nova Scotia's destination profile, influence visitation, and increase tourism revenues. Backed by market research, the program develops experience concepts that have been tested for appeal with our target market segment.

Tourism Nova Scotia provides program participants with:

- Experience development coaching, to help the business navigate the experience development process (from concept and implementation to pricing and marketing).
- Market insights, including training focused on our target market segment to help the business make strategic decisions and investments.
- Marketing assets, including photography, for the new experience specifically produced to appeal to our target market segment. Creative production and execution is managed by Tourism Nova Scotia.
- Inclusion in Tourism Nova Scotia's promotions, including NovaScotia.com, social media channels, and the *Nova Scotia Doers & Dreamers Travel Guide*.
- Access to sales and media expertise to best navigate relevant sales channels, including travel trade (tour operators and travel agents), and to best position their experience to travel media (travel writers, photographers, videographers, and social media influencers).

To reach the tourism industry's goal of \$4 billion in annual tourism revenues by 2024, new is necessary. New ideas, new collaborations, and new experiences that differentiate Nova Scotia from destinations around the world attract new visitors. By creating experiences that align with the travel values of our target market segment, and combining entrepreneurial spirit with Tourism Nova Scotia's research, development, marketing and sales insights, our industry will achieve success through a collaborative focus on world-class experiences.

Since its start in 2016, the EXCELLerator Program has brought 22 unique, world-class experiences to market in Nova Scotia. Visit [NovaScotia.com/explore/must-do-experiences](https://www.novascotia.com/explore/must-do-experiences) for a look at all the experiences inspiring visitors to choose Nova Scotia.

## New Nova Scotia Travel Experiences Available in 2018

### Acadian Kitchen Party

*By Argyle Lodge in Lower Argyle, Yarmouth & Acadian Shores*

Indulge in a chef-prepared dinner featuring authentic stories of local Acadians through food and music, from early days of French Acadie to connections with Cajun cousins in Louisiana to seafaring joie-de-vivre. Then join locals in a seaside kitchen party and try to play the spoons!



#### Experience includes:

- Four-course dinner featuring Acadian stories through local seafood and specialties, paired with Nova Scotia wine.
- Authentic Acadian culture: hear Acadian tales from the area and dance to local Acadian music.
- Connect with locals while learning to play the spoons—keeping rhythm with the band.
- Experience takes place at Argyle Lodge's beautiful oceanfront property on Lobster Bay.

#### Media Contact:

Jonathan Joseph: [info@argyle.com](mailto:info@argyle.com) or 902-643-2500

## LaHave Islands Glamping Adventure

*By Cape LaHave Adventures in the LaHave Islands, South Shore*

Foodies will love this guided glamping adventure with everything provided! Island hop by kayak to colourful fishing communities and pristine coasts. Indulge in fresh seafood and local flavours prepared for you on the beach, try yoga on stand-up paddleboards, and glamp under the stars.



### Experience includes:

- Guided activities: enjoy guided kayaking, hiking, paddle boarding, and yoga sessions with a certified guide.
- Seafood dinner of local lobster and mussels, steamed over seaweed on the beach.
- Meet locals, like the last lighthouse keeper in the LaHave Islands.
- Canvas tents from East Coast Glamping, which include elevated beds, quality bedding, camp chairs, maritime-inspired décor, and transfer of guests' personal items.
- All meals and snacks feature local delicacies, such as Ironworks Distillery's Bluenose Rum-seared scallops, oysters, water buffalo mozzarella, sourdough breads and freshly-baked goods.

### Media Contact:

Sarah Hrdlicka: [info@capelahaveadventures.ca](mailto:info@capelahaveadventures.ca) or 902-693-2023



## Ocean Ceilidh & Seafood

*By Celtic Music Interpretive Centre in Judique, Cape Breton*

Kick up your heels to jigs and reels of bagpipers and fiddlers serenading your Cape Breton Island adventure. Dine seaside on lobster, then hop aboard a fishing boat for an exclusive ceilidh (Celtic party) at sea and local whisky tasting. You'll be dancing like a local in no time!



### Experience includes:

- Meet and greet at the Celtic Music Interpretive Centre with live Celtic music, local crab cakes, Nova 7 (Nova Scotia's award-winning sparkling wine), and local craft beer.
- Local insights: hear Cape Breton stories and have fun trying Gaelic phrases on a guided walk with local musician and Celtic culture insider.
- Private Cape Breton step dance: instruction on the Celtic Shores Coastal Trail with traditional fiddle music, overlooking the ocean.
- Oceanview lobster dinner with local ingredients, wines, craft beer, and live music.
- Join lively locals aboard an authentic lobster fishing boat to dance to live music.
- Whisky tasting: enjoy Glen Breton single malt whisky from award-winning Glenora Distillery, North America's first single malt whisky distiller.

### Media Contact:

Cheryl Smith: [cheryl@celticmusiccentre.com](mailto:cheryl@celticmusiccentre.com) or 902-787-2708

## Sea-to-Table Lobster Adventure

*By East Coast Outfitters in Lower Prospect, South Shore*

Kayak Nova Scotia's dramatic granite coast and clear, turquoise waters to a charming fishing village for the inside scoop on lobster fishing in this sea-to-table adventure! A chef-prepared lobster dinner, featuring local ingredients and seafood awaits you at the ocean's edge at sunset.



### Experience includes:

- Two-hour guided kayak tour along Nova Scotia's dramatic granite coast.
- Exclusive insights: meet local lobster fishermen and step aboard their boat. You'll hear stories from the fishermen, while experiencing how lobsters are caught.
- Authentic lobster dinner featuring locally-foraged ingredients, prepared by renowned local chef, Dennis Johnston, instrumental in the slow-food movement in Nova Scotia.
- Help the chef collect seaweed to BBQ fresh, local oysters.
- A portion of proceeds from the tour will support Nova Scotia Nature Trust's Rogue's Roost Conservation fund to help keep this coastline protected.

### Media Contacts:

Adam Zita: [adam@eastcoastoutfitters.com](mailto:adam@eastcoastoutfitters.com) or 902-852-2567

Travis Humphrey: [travis@eastcoastoutfitters.com](mailto:travis@eastcoastoutfitters.com) or 902-852-2567

## Wild Islands Camping Adventure

*By Great E.A.R.T.H. Expeditions in the Wild Islands area, Eastern Shore*

Sail, hike, and snorkel the beautiful Wild Islands dotting Nova Scotia's Atlantic coast. Savour local seafood prepared over an open fire for a meal unlike any other, topped by campfire fun and stargazing. Everything is provided in this guided eco-adventure.



### Experience includes:

- Guided, hands-on sailing adventure aboard an open whaleboat with the owner of Windansea Whaleboat Sailing Tours to the 100 Wild Islands area, part of the Eastern Shore Islands Wilderness Area. This spectacular chain of coastal islands features white sand beaches, dramatic headlands, and expansive coastal barrens and forests.
- Guided hiking and snorkelling with your experienced outdoor guide, including snorkeling gear and wetsuit.
- Beachside seafood dinner prepared over an open fire with local ingredients, and all meals and snacks.
- Fully-equipped island camping, set-up for visitors upon arrival (includes transfer of their personal items).

### Media Contact:

Ryan Barry: [greatearthexpeditions@gmail.com](mailto:greatearthexpeditions@gmail.com) or 902-223-2409

## Lobster Feast & Peggy's Cove Adventure

*By Oceanstone Seaside Resort in Peggy's Cove area, South Shore*

Nova Scotia essentials are served up by your seaside resort host, exclusively guiding you to Peggy's Cove authentic fishing village and lighthouse, introducing you to local seafood experts, and meeting Oceanstone's chef to select your fresh lobster for your gourmet feast by the ocean!



### Experience includes:

- Local insights: meet a local fisherman at Ryer's Lobster Pound and select your lobster with the help of Oceanstone Resort's chef.
- Visit world-famous Peggy's Point Lighthouse and get private wharf access for an exclusive vantage point of the Peggy's Cove village.
- Oceanside lobster feast, featuring local oysters, Nova Scotia wine and craft beer at Oceanstone Seaside Resort, with spectacular coastal views.
- Private beach walk at sunset.

### Media Contact:

Lizzie Moore: [lizzie@oceanstoneresort.com](mailto:lizzie@oceanstoneresort.com) or 902-240-5760

## Good Cheer Lobster Feast

*By Good Cheer Adventures in the Annapolis Royal area, Bay of Fundy & Annapolis Valley*

Authentic Acadian and Mi'kmaw music, local flavors, and 400 years of stories feature in this exclusive after-hours dinner party at Port-Royal National Historic Site, one of North America's first European settlements. Host Samuel de Champlain brings good cheer to the table!



### Experience includes:

- After-hours access with private tour of Port-Royal National Historic Site, North America's first European settlement.
- Four-course feast including lobster, scallops and Nova Scotia wines, spirits and craft beer.
- Experience Mi'kmaw and Acadian cultures through stories and music.
- Private shuttle service provided from Annapolis Royal.
- Champlain will induct you into one of the oldest social clubs in North America, the Order of Good Time.

### Media Contact:

Paul and Val Stackhouse: [goodcheeradventures@outlook.com](mailto:goodcheeradventures@outlook.com) or 902-526-3888

## Fundy Sunrise Yoga and Kayak

*By NovaShores Adventures at Cape d'Or, Bay of Fundy*

Enjoy a cliff's edge yoga session overlooking the sunrise mirrored in the waters of the Bay of Fundy. Beside the lighthouse, indulge in a lobster-inspired brunch featuring locally sourced ingredients, then take a guided kayak tour of the breathtaking rugged Bay of Fundy cliffs as the world's highest tides roll under your kayak.



### **Experience includes:**

- One-hour sunrise yoga session on the cliffs of Cape d'Or, overlooking the Bay of Fundy.
- Relaxing neck massage, featuring local balsam fir oil.
- Chef-inspired, locally-sourced gourmet brunch of eggs benedict with lobster and Nova Scotia sparkling wine in an al fresco setting outside at the Cape d'Or lighthouse.
- A 1.5-hour guided sea kayak tour on the Bay of Fundy—famous for the world's highest tides—including hot drinks and home-baked goodies.
- Fully supported experience: yoga mats and blankets will be ready for you. All kayaking gear is of high quality and mostly made in Canada. We solely use double kayaks and provide neoprene booties and paddle jackets for your comfort.

### **Media Contact:**

Anne Grabinsky: [seakayak@novashores.com](mailto:seakayak@novashores.com) or 902-392-2222

## Private Island Yurt for Two

*By Pleasant Paddling in Blue Rocks, South Shore*

Take a thrilling kayak adventure to a seal colony, snorkel hidden inlets, cycle winding coastal roads, and dine on local delicacies. Sleep under the stars in a cozy yurt on your very own private island, just off the coast of beautiful Blue Rocks fishing village near Lunenburg.



### Experience includes:

- Four-hour guided kayak tour of Blue Rocks Islands and seal colony with Pleasant Paddling.
- Locally-sourced picnic lunch, snorkeling equipment, and bikes with panniers for an afternoon of adventure.
- Easy-to-prepare meal basket for your private dinner in the yurt, including locally-sourced charcuterie and mussels.
- Private island yurt with quality bedding, locally-inspired décor, a domed ceiling for stargazing, and transporting of guest's personal items.
- Breakfast delivered by boat the next morning.

### Media Contact:

Karl Marsters: [info@pleasantpaddling.com](mailto:info@pleasantpaddling.com) or 902-541-9233

## Gourmet Garden Party

*By Tangled Garden in Grand Pré, Annapolis Valley*

Step into the captivating, award-winning Tangled Garden to delight your senses! Weave your way through Nova Scotia flavours toward the sounds of local musicians, gathering fresh ingredients for your gourmet picnic overlooking Grand Pré, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



### Experience includes:

- Private garden tour with expert guide: your host is the designer of one of Canada's finest gardens and creator of Tangled Garden recipes. You will be introduced to new and exciting flavour combinations you can share with your friends back home.
- Exclusive kitchen access, only available to guests of this experience.
- Gourmet tastings throughout the tour of seafood and local specialties, infused with Tangled Garden's award-winning products—such as Nova Scotia smoked salmon and local goat cheese, paired with Tangled Garden hot dilly cucumber jelly and matched with a sip of Tidal Bay wine infused with blackberry blue liqueur and tarragon.
- Pop-up picnic of locally-sourced, gourmet foods and salad, featuring ingredients picked throughout the tour, paired with Nova Scotia wine and spirits, live music, and overlooking the Landscape of Grand Pré UNESCO World Heritage Site.

### Media Contact:

Beverly McClare: tangledgardenherbs@gmail.com or 902-542-9811



## Fundy Tides & Fireside Adventure

*By the Tidal Bore Rafting Resort in Urbania, Bay of Fundy*

Take a thrilling Zodiac ride on tidal bore waves, feel the rush of mud sliding, float in waters of the world's highest tides, and savour a sandbar wine and seafood tasting! Back on land, indulge in an authentic lobster boil before bonfire fun with live music and a Nova Scotia rum flight.



### Experience includes:

- Private wine and seafood tasting on an exposed sandbar.
- Tidal bore rafting adventure—an only in Nova Scotia activity—influenced by the Bay of Fundy and world's highest tides.
- Mud sliding on the banks of the Shubenacadie River.
- Authentic lobster dinner, featuring local ingredients and Nova Scotia wine.
- Exclusive Nova Scotia rum tasting and live music around a bonfire.
- Exclusive insights: you'll connect to stories about lobster, Nova Scotia's most famous food, and rum making. You'll learn about the tidal bore's environment and wildlife.
- Quality lifejackets, rain gear or warm flotation suits are provided. Hot showers are available after the tour. If needed, extra footwear can be provided.
- Stay overnight in a charming pine cottage nestled in the woods.

### Media Contact:

Steve Elder: [steve@raftingcanada.ca](mailto:steve@raftingcanada.ca) or 902-758-8433

## Great Canadian Lobster Fishing Feast

*By White Point Beach Resort in White Point, South Shore*

Get a taste of the world's largest lobster fishery! Join a crew of Nova Scotia lobster fishers for a morning at sea, returning to your seaside resort with the freshest lobster and ultimate bragging rights. Meet at the beachside bonfire, as Chef prepares today's catch for your cozy dinner party inside.



### Experience includes:

- Exclusive meet-and-greet with Captain Crouse and fisherwoman Sarah Allen of the J.K.C., a 37-foot lobster boat. Enjoy hot lobster croquettes and gourmet cheeses, paired with Benjamin Bridge Tidal Bay, Nova Scotia's signature wine.
- Lobster 101 orientation to learn about the lobster fishing gear and equipment you'll be using, and prepare you for assisting on deck.
- Half-day lobster fishing adventure: depart at sunrise and spend 2-3 hours working aboard a lobster fishing boat (hot beverages and snacks will be provided onboard).
- Enjoy lunch, overlooking the ocean, from your cozy cottage or in the Main Lodge.
- Lobster prepared beachside over an open fire with White Point Beach Resort's Chef.
- Executive Chef-prepared lobster feast, including local mussels and Nova Scotia wine.
- Two nights' accommodation in a one-bedroom, oceanfront cottage at White Point Beach Resort, including breakfast.

### Media Contact:

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