

Fall in love with Fredericton

Explore this capital city's history, culture and art



PHOTOS COURTESY CITY OF FREDERICTON

By Sandra Phinney

SITUATED ON THE St. John River—one of Canada's most storied waterways—Fredericton has much to crow about. The capital of New Brunswick has a population around 85,000, with most people employed by the government and the many small businesses that work with local colleges and universities.

The city has a long and noble history, including the tale of how the New Brunswick 104th Regiment left Fredericton in the dead of winter and marched 1,100 km on snowshoes to Kingston, Ontario, to help defend upper Canada during the War of 1812.

Because this was such a pivotal event, the Fredericton Region Museum (www.frederictonregionmuseum.com) will commemorate the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 with a special three-year exhibit starting in January of 2012.

Although any season is the right time to find your way to Fredericton, fall seems especially magical. To take advantage of the region's splendour, consider booking a Lakeway houseboat (lakewayhouseboats.com), often referred to as a "cottage on the water," and take a self-guided cruise from Mactaquac to Fredericton.

If you are close to Mactaquac on a Wednesday, you may want to take part in the Great Canadian Beaver Pond Voyage—a guided walk through a beautiful, pristine nature reserve featuring Mactaquac Provincial Park's remarkable chain of beaver ponds. The park is also home to TreeGO Aerial Adventure (www.treego.ca), an exhilarating tree-to-tree experience. Golf aficionados will want to check out the park's unique 18-hole championship golf course (www.travel-new-brunswick-canada.com/mactaquac-provincial-park.html).

If you are in the city over a weekend, visit the W.W. Boyce Farmers Market (www.boyce

farmersmarket.com). Held every Saturday, it's loaded with artisans and food vendors, such as the fourth-generation Mulders, who operate John Henry's Fresh Fish, Mulder's Meats and The Cheese Market. The family is legendary. Fall harvest time at the market is especially bountiful and fun.

Close by is The Playhouse (www.theplayhouse.ca), which stages world-class concerts and theatre productions. Across the street you'll find the Beaverbrook Art Gallery



From the 1876 City Hall (top) to the guard honouring the birth of the Canadian military, Fredericton is filled with history.

(www.beaverbrookartgallery.com). Tip: Ask if Gerry Rymes is around. He's part of the security staff and can tell you fascinating stories related to the art collections. And don't be surprised if he asks you to lie flat on your back to view the Beaverbrook's signature art treasure, Salvador Dali's *Santiago el Grande*—a memorable 3D experience.

Uptown, costumed guides will entertain you with local history and folklore on a free walking tour of downtown Fredericton's historic sites. You'll see the Historic Garrison District, the Old Public Burial Ground, the

Provincial Legislative Building and former homes of some famous Canadian poets. Tours are offered once daily in September and October (until Thanksgiving) and leave City Hall at 4 p.m. (www.tourismfredericton.ca).

Adding to the city's charm, Fredericton has a plethora of festivals. For example, each fall the city rolls out the carpet for its Harvest Jazz & Blues Festival. This year, from September 13 through 18, more than 50 bands and solo artists—including musical gurus such as the Warren Haynes Band, Gregg Allman and Old Man Luedecke—will be playing throughout the city (www.harvestjazzandblues.com).

Just outside the city you'll find Kings Landing Historical Settlement. It features more than 70 historic buildings and provides lots of opportunities to experience what it was like living here in the 1800s. Kings Landing also hosts a special Thanksgiving Festival that receives rave reviews (www.kingslanding.nb.ca).

It's easy to see why Fredericton was ranked one of the top 10 places to live in Canada by *MoneySense* magazine this year. To find out what's happening in this vibrant city and to keep abreast of special

deals and giveaways, visit Fredericton's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/frederictontourism). Then plan your getaway. 📍

Sandra Phinney is a Nova Scotia-based journalist who never tires of visiting Fredericton.

The Costco Connection

The Fredericton Costco warehouse opened in August. For a complete list of Costco warehouses, visit Costco.ca and click on "Locations."