



Western Newfoundland  
and Labrador  
National Historic Sites

# Visitor Guide

**L'Anse aux Meadows**

**Port au Choix**

**Red Bay**



Saddle Island, Red Bay / Cannelia Ibrahim



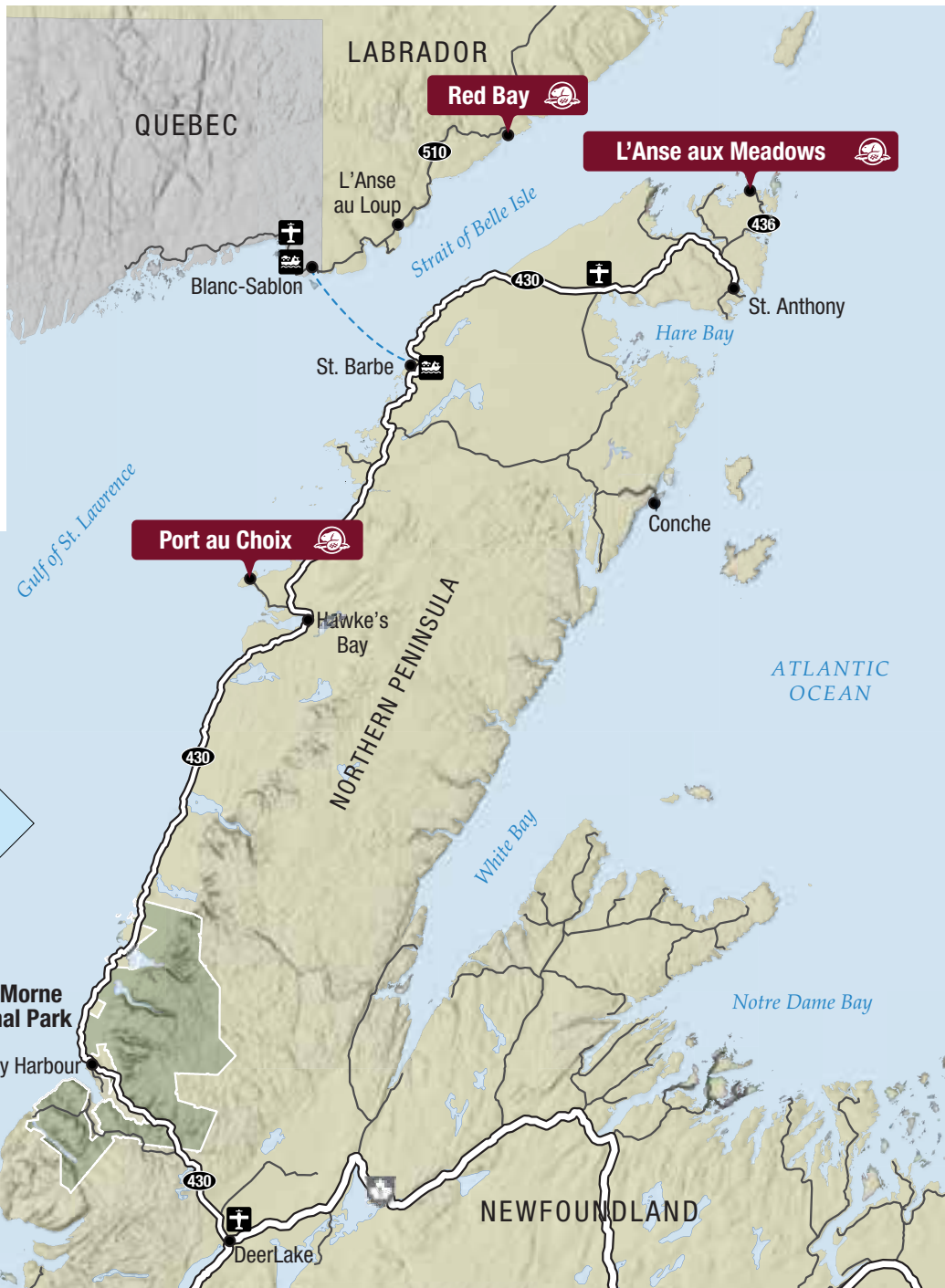
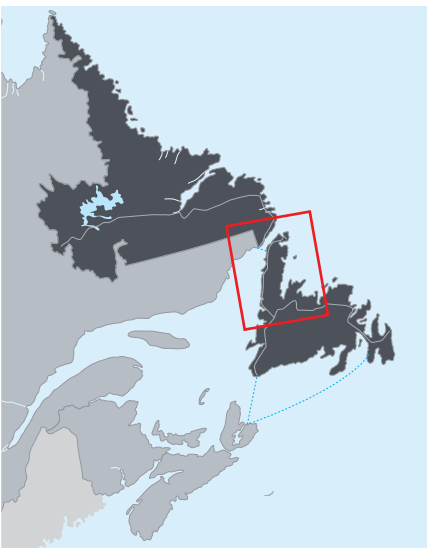
Parks  
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Canada



Kayaker sculpture / Sheldon Stone

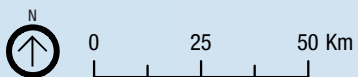


	Red Bay	L'Anse aux Meadows		St. Barbe		Port au Choix		Rocky Harbour		Deer Lake	
262											
120	142										
214	231	94									
349	366	229	157								
418	434	298	235	71							

Distance in kilometers

National Historic Site

National Park





## History on the **Edge**

For thousands of years different cultures travelled great distances to take advantage of the natural bounty of the West coast of Newfoundland and Southern Labrador. Each brought with them skills and new technologies that helped them thrive. Ancient Indigenous peoples arrived first. As sea levels and climate changed so too did the cultures that lived here. Vikings voyaged here from across the ocean a thousand years ago. Basque whalers came five centuries later to exploit the riches of the New World. Other Europeans came and settled on the land while Indigenous peoples maintained their presence. Ship wrecks, tall tales, mysterious stones, and sacred traditions; each culture left their mark on the landscape for us to discover.



# Port au Choix National Historic Site



Doiset Doorway / Camella Ibrahim



Fernand's Baya / Camella Ibrahim



Seal for All Seasons program / Camella Ibrahim



## Exploring a Living **Landscape**

Attracted by the rich resources of the sea, people have lived at Port au Choix for more than 6,000 years. A large sacred burial ground bears witness to the marine-based technology, economy and spiritual culture of the first people to live here – the Maritime Archaic. The remains of a large settlement at Phillip’s Garden paint a vivid picture of the material and intellectual culture of the Groswater and Dorset people, 3,000 years later. After the arrival of Europeans, Indigenous people tentatively traded with fisherman at Benie Island. Discover the ancient peoples who journeyed through this special landscape and connect with today’s thriving Indigenous cultures of Newfoundland and Labrador.



Caribou / Guillaume Paquette-Jettin

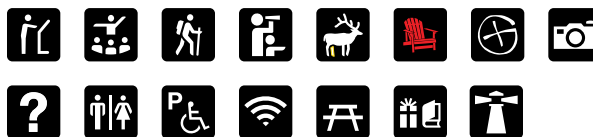


Guided tour / Parks Canada



Mother and Child sculpture / Guillaume Paquette-Jettin

### Activities and services



### Season and hours of operation

Early June - Early October / Daily 9 am - 5 pm  
For exact dates and fees, please see our website

### Contact info

(709) 861-3522 / (709) 458-2417 (off season)

# Things to do



## Sacred Burial Grounds

Visit the **Gathering Circle** in the town of Port au Choix and reflect on the sacred burial grounds of the Maritime Archaic people. Thousands of years ago when sea levels were higher this area was an island. It was a special place to honour and lay to rest their loved ones.



## Seal for All Seasons

Join an interpreter for the **Seal for All Seasons** program to explore the different ways past and present cultures have used seals to sustain their livelihoods.



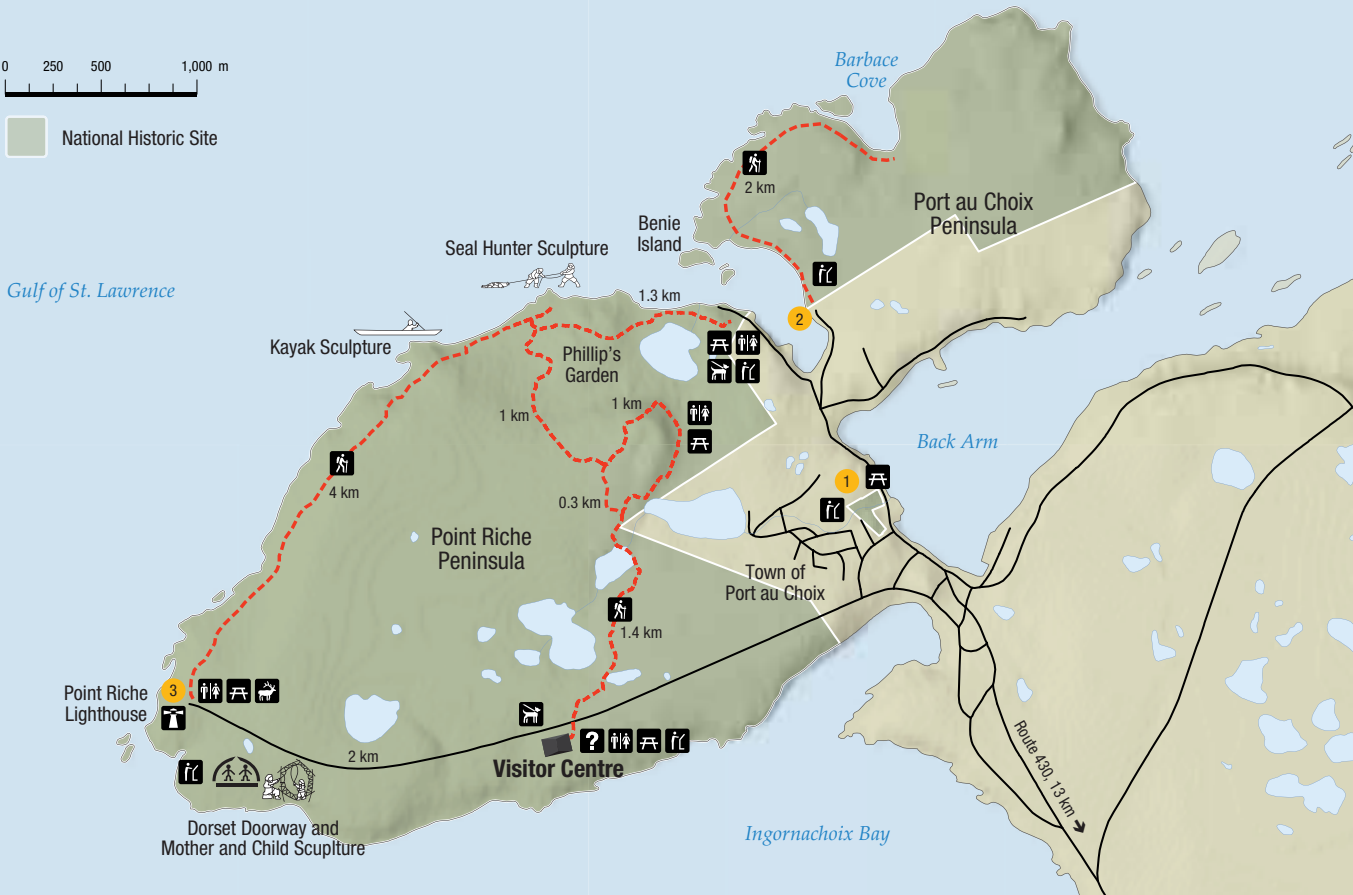
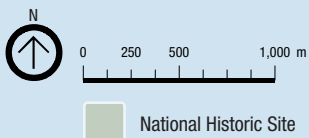
## Beauty and the Barrens

Go on a guided tour to explore the rare and fragile limestone barrens, home to shoreline fossils and rare arctic plants found nowhere else in Canada, and some species found nowhere else in the world.

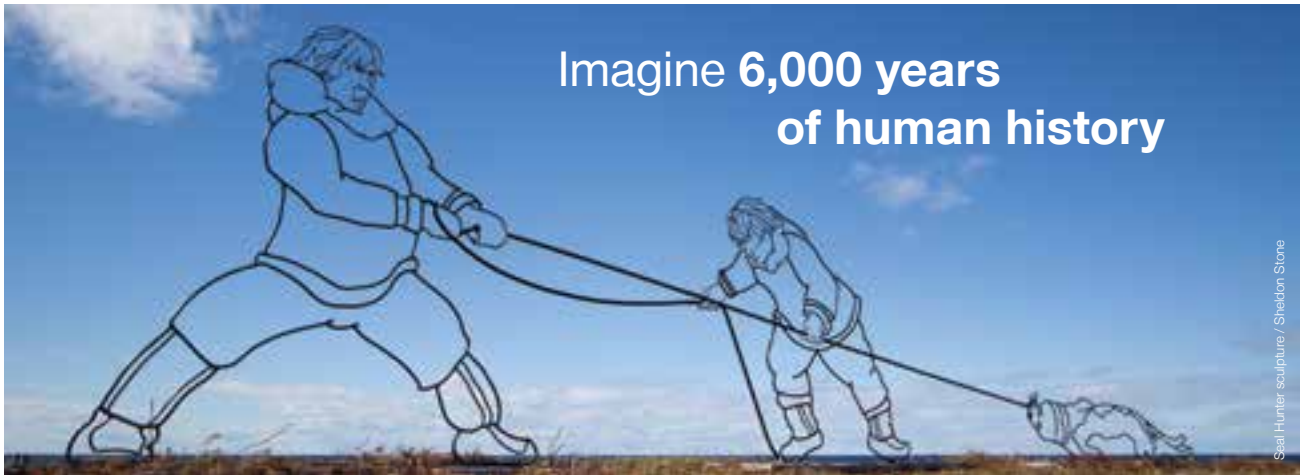


## Hiking in Port au Choix

Travel through time on hiking trails over dramatic limestone barrens, to coastal trails ideal for spotting whales, moose, caribou and sea birds. Visit archaeological sites including 5,500 year old Maritime Archaic sacred burial grounds and Phillip's Garden, one of the most important archaeological sites for Dorset and Groswater settlement in the world.



# Imagine 6,000 years of human history



Seal Hunter sculpture / Sheldon Stone

## Not to be missed

### French Rooms Cultural Center



Learn about the resettlement era, the French migratory fishery and the Point Riche lighthouse. Local shrimp and crafts are available for purchase at the center gift shop.  
*(709) 861-2142*

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### French Bread Oven



Enjoy freshly baked bread topped with local jams from a reconstructed French oven, and have your photo taken with the chaloupe in period costume. For further details and program schedule contact the French Rooms Cultural Center.  
*(709) 861-2142*

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### Point Riche Lighthouse



Explore the areas around the Point Riche lighthouse. It is accessible by road and caribou are often seen grazing nearby. While there learn more about the history of the Dorset presence at Point Riche.

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### Torrent River Salmon Interpretation Centre



Learn about the adult salmon restocking story, view Atlantic salmon - eye to eye. Located in nearby Hawke's Bay it is the site of the province's most successful salmon enhancement program.  
[www.torrentriver.ca/home](http://www.torrentriver.ca/home)



### Geocaching

Explore more with the geocaching activity program. Locate hidden caches and punch the program card. Find three caches and receive a trackable geocoin unique to Port au Choix.



### Good to know

Wild animals such as caribou are often seen on the trails in and around Port au Choix. Please do not approach or entice them, and be sure to give them space to safely pass you on the trail.

### Did you know?

The Griscom's Arnica is in the sunflower family and grows at just nine sites around the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Of this small global population, more than 90% is found within Port au Choix National Historic Site!



# L'Anse aux Meadows

## A UNESCO World Heritage Site



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture



**L'Anse aux Meadows  
National Historic Site**  
inscribed on the World  
Heritage List in 1978

**Lieu historique national  
de L'Anse aux Meadows**  
inscrit sur la Liste du  
patrimoine mondial en 1978



Replica of Norse sod hut / Dale Wilson



Weaving textiles / Chris Beardon



Guided tour / Guillaume Paquette-Herbert





## An epic Viking adventure **unearthed**

Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978, L'Anse aux Meadows provides evidence of one of the great steps in human migration and is the only authentic Viking site in North America. Recalling epic voyages across raging oceans, L'Anse aux Meadows contains the remains of an 11<sup>th</sup>-century Viking basecamp and is the earliest known European presence on the American continent. At this Norse outpost on Newfoundland's windswept northernmost tip, walk in the footsteps of the Vikings and experience life in the North Atlantic.



Meeting the blacksmith / Chris Beardon

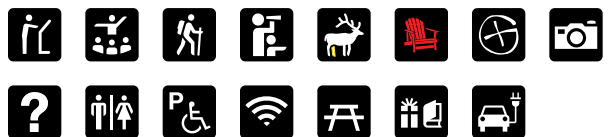


Boat building / Dale Wilson



The Meeting of Two Worlds sculpture / Perks, Canada

### Activities and services



### Season and hours of operation

Late May - Mid June / Daily 9 am - 5 pm  
 Mid June - Late September / Daily 9 am - 6pm  
 Late September - Early October / Daily 9 am - 5pm  
 For exact dates and fees, please see our website

### Contact info

(709) 623-2608 / (709) 458-2417 (off season)

# Things to do



Chris Reardon

## Viking Encampment - Living History

Curious about how the Vikings lived and worked? Visit with the navigator-adventurer, the weaver, the blacksmith or other members of the crew and hear tales of trade, Norse society, how to turn bog iron into a nail and cloth into currency. Check out their weaponry, tools, cooking utensils and reproductions of many artifacts representing everyday living.



Chris Reardon

## Sagas and Shadows

Gather around the fire and join the crew for an evening of heroic and tragic tales from the Viking Sagas. Tuesday and Saturday 7:30 pm. Call (709) 623-2608 for more information or to book.



Archaeological site / Dale Wilson

## The Meeting of Two Worlds

Discover the archaeological significance of L'Anse aux Meadows and its powerful place in the history of the human migrations. This guided tour departs from the Visitor Centre at regular intervals throughout the day.



Servant's Hut / Greg Kroit

## Test of Tykir - Escape Room

You will have 45 minutes to search the Servant's Hut for clues and solve puzzles in hopes of finding the riches of Vinland. Daily 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. Call (709) 623-2608 for reservations.



# Step into your own saga at the only authenticated Viking settlement in North America!



Vikings / Sheldon Stone

## Not to be missed

### Norstead Viking Village



Norstead replicates a Viking era port of trade and has Snorri, a 54 foot long Viking knarr. Hours of operation: Early June to Mid-September (9:30 am - 5:30 pm)  
[www.norstead.com](http://www.norstead.com)  
(709) 623-2828

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### Icebergs



Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

Icebergs abound in the cold waters off Newfoundland and Labrador from early April to late June. Boat tours offer a chance to view Icebergs, whales, and bird life.

### Grenfell Properties St. Anthony



Visit Grenfell Historic Properties and walk in the footsteps of Sir Wilfred Thomason Grenfell, a medical missionary. The gift store features traditional Grenfell and locally crafted products.  
[www.grenfell-properties.com](http://www.grenfell-properties.com)  
(709) 454-4010

### Conche Interpretation Centre



Follow further along the French Shore to the Conche Interpretation Centre. Home of the French Shore Tapestry.  
[www.frenchshoretapestry.com](http://www.frenchshoretapestry.com)  
Tour the interior of the peninsula for beauty off the beaten path.  
[www.frenchshore.com](http://www.frenchshore.com)



### Geocaching

Explore more with the geocaching activity program. Locate hidden caches and punch the program card. Find three caches and receive a trackable geocoin unique to L'Anse aux Meadows.



Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

### Good to know

The tip of the Great Northern Peninsula is great place for whale watching. See whales and other marine mammals from shore or get even closer with a boat tour.

### Did you know?

The Vikings were the first Europeans to trade with Indigenous people in North America. They traded textiles and goat's milk for furs.



Guillaume Paquette-Jetten

# Red Bay Basque Whaling Station

## A UNESCO World Heritage Site



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**Red Bay Basque Whaling Station**  
inscribed on the World  
Heritage List in 2013

**La Station baleinière  
basque de Red Bay**  
inscrit sur la Liste du  
patrimoine mondial en 2013



Tracey Hill / Sheldon Stone



Brian Shore / Sheldon Stone



Excavating the San Juan / Parks Canada



# Things to do



## Digging through Time – Saddle Island Guided Tour

Take a short ride on the water shuttle with a Parks Canada guide to visit the archaeological sites on Saddle Island. Walk around the breath-taking island to hear first-hand experiences of finding some of Red Bay's most precious artifacts, check out where whale oil was processed, and explore the life and times of Labrador's 16<sup>th</sup>-century Basque whalers. Regularly scheduled tours depart from the Visitor Interpretation Centre.



## If These Bones Could Talk

Explore the Boney Shore on a guided walk to see remains of a 16<sup>th</sup>-century whaling industry. Walk along the beautiful harbour with a view of Saddle Island. Let these ancient bones cast new light on the present-day population of North Atlantic right whales.



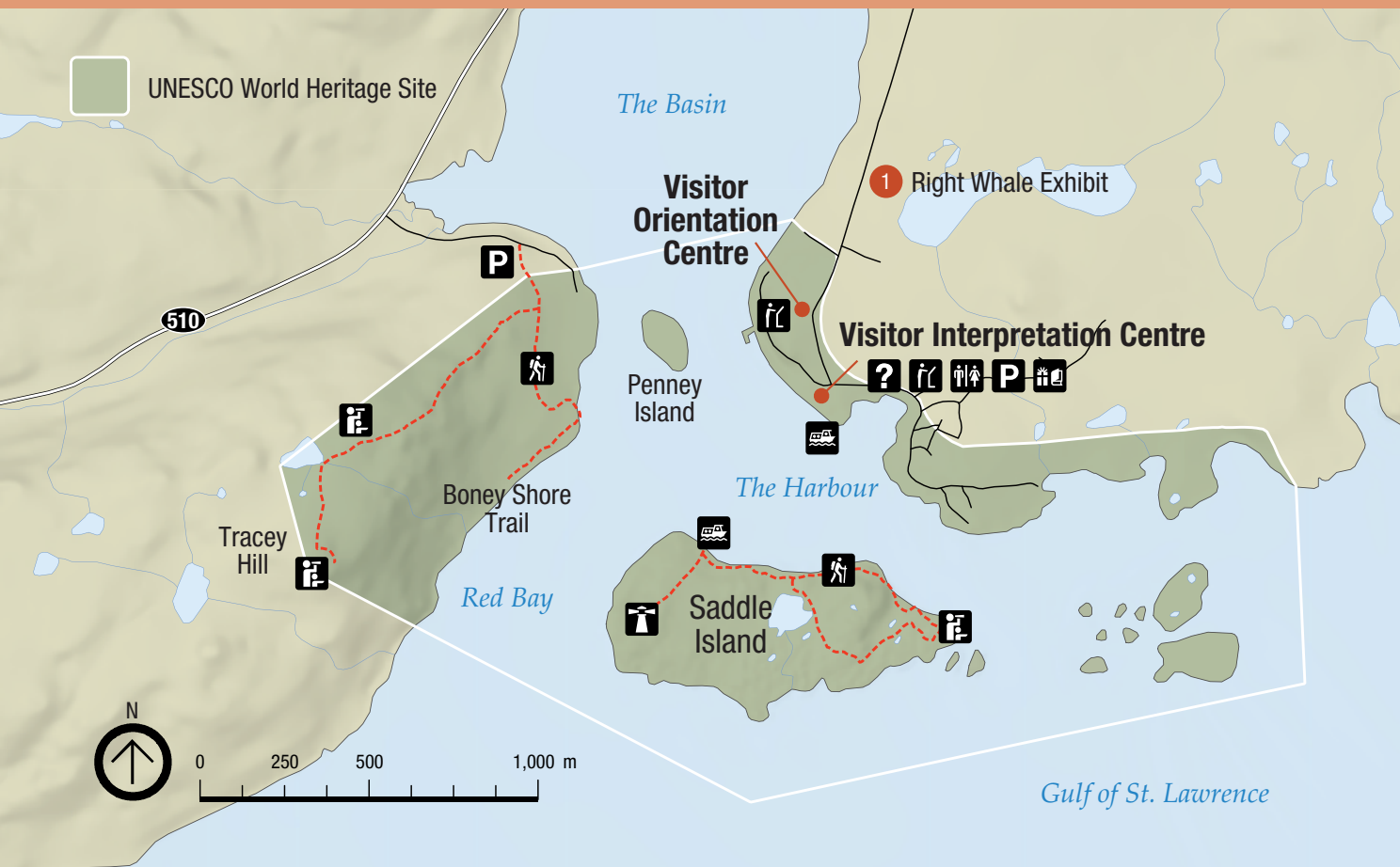
## Bites of Basque History

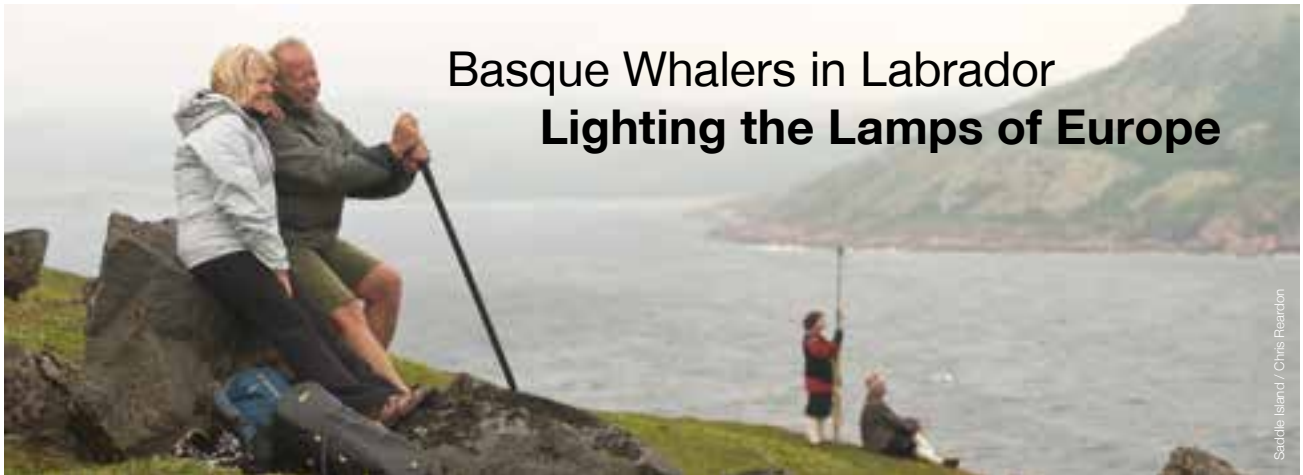
Stories, music and food – Immerse yourself in the stories of Red Bay's history and Basque culture. Enjoy music with a 16<sup>th</sup>-century flair and a mouth-watering selection of authentic Basque pintxos (little bites) by a local chef. Call (709) 920-2142 for reservations.



## Weird and Wonderful Artifacts

Explore Red Bay's weird and wonderful artifact collection to uncover the stories behind some of our one-of-a-kind objects, including both bizarre and beautiful artifacts of Basque life.





# Basque Whalers in Labrador Lighting the Lamps of Europe

Saddle Island / Chris Reardon

## Not to be missed

### Red Bay Right Whale Exhibit Selma Barkham Community Centre



The exhibit features the 400-year old skeleton of a 52-foot Bowhead whale and focuses on the research and protection of the Bowhead and North Atlantic Right whales.  
*(709) 920-2197*

Cedric Davignon

### Labrador Straits Museum and Craft Shop



The Museum showcases life 150 years ago with emphasis on the role of women. Features ongoing traditional skills demonstrations, WIFI, and Gift Shops.  
Labrador Straits Museum  
L'Anse au Loup *(709) 927-5077*  
Red Bay *(709) 920-2043*

### L'Anse Amour National Historic Site of Canada



Contemplate thousands of years of human history in Labrador at the site of a 7,500-year-old ceremonial burial place of a Maritime Archaic youth.  
*(709) 927-5825*

Dru Kennedy Photography / NL Tourism

### Point Amour Lighthouse



Climb to the top of the tallest lighthouse in Atlantic Canada and view exhibits about the natural and cultural history of the Labrador Straits.  
*(709) 927-5825*

Barrett & McKay Photo / NL Tourism



### Geocaching

Explore more with the geocaching activity program. Locate hidden caches and punch the program card. Find three caches and receive a trackable geocoin unique to Red Bay.



### Good to know

The popular boardwalk hike to the top of Tracey Hill provides excellent views of the landscape and the Red Bay UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Sheldon Stone

### Did you know?

The Basques brought thousands of terracotta tiles to Red Bay during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and these tiles helped researchers find the remains of the whaling station over 400 years later.



Sheldon Stone

# The UNESCO Experience in Newfoundland and Labrador

Red Bay Basque Whaling Station



Sheldon Stone

L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site



Guillaume Paquette-Jettin

Gros Morne National Park

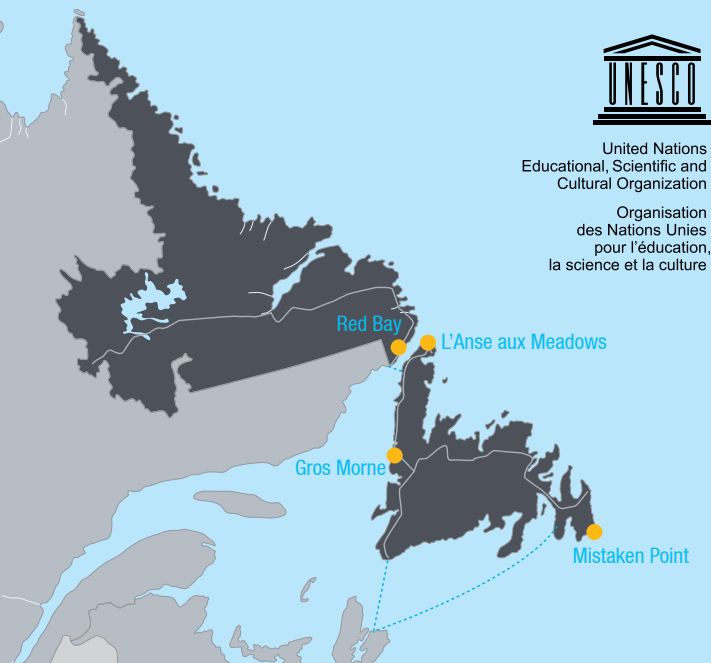


Dru Kennedy Photography, Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve



Barrett & Mackay Photo, Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism



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## Four UNESCO World Heritage Sites

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has designated sites from all over the world that are of outstanding natural and cultural significance. Newfoundland and Labrador is home to four of these World Heritage Sites. Visit:

- **Gros Morne National Park** – a natural wonder created by continental collision 500 million years ago.
- **L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site** – the only authenticated Viking settlement in North America.
- **Red Bay National Historic Site** – the remnants of a 16<sup>th</sup>-century Basque whaling station.
- **Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve** – fossils of the oldest complex life forms from 565 million years ago.



Parks Canada  
Parcs Canada

Canada