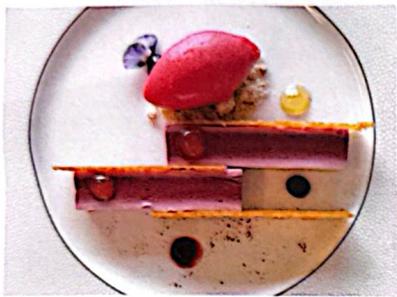




TRAVEL

FROM LEFT: Harbour view; dessert at Mystic; a room at the Muir; a cocktail from BKS.



By Land & BY SEA

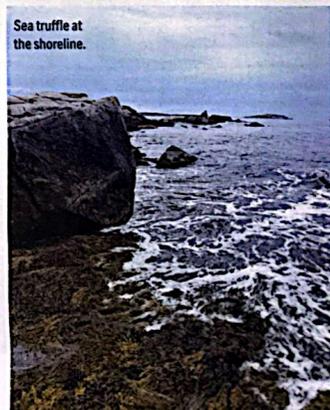


SEASIDE DELIGHTS

> **POINTING OUT TO SEA** and up-shore from where we were walking — near Prospect Village on the Chebucto Peninsula, an hour outside of Halifax — forager Fred Dardenne explained that a great white shark had unexpectedly taken up residence there for the summer. But we were hunting more benign prey — beach peas, for example, which grow wild on the craggy shoreline, their sprouts and tendrils delicate and sweet. Next, over a 15-minute hike, Dardenne pointed out some purplestem angelica, sea plantain, salt-marsh goldenrod, Scottish lovage, creeping salt-bush, Labrador tea, candleberries and sorrel. A rocky coastline that appeared barren was, for our tour guide, packing a feast — or, at any rate, some good seasonings and the makings for a few curative libations.

And the best was yet to come. There, in the shallows, looking like a disembodied clump of dirty hair slapping up against the rocks on the tide, a mess of *Polysiphonia lanosa* — the sea truffle. "It contains the exact same chemical compound as white truffle," Dardenne noted as we fished some out of the water. And indeed, the aroma was the same — with a little salinity mixed in. Sea truffle is available from Forbes Wild Foods.

• wildfoods.ca/products/sea-truffle



Sea truffle at the shoreline.

Nova Scotia's culinary scene rewards a deep dive. BY ALANA LAPIERRE

EACH TIME I VISIT Nova Scotia, I can taste the salt breeze even before I land. It permeates the vineyards and lingers in the air. Though this is a relatively young wine region, that salinity is without question a key factor in Nova Scotia's emerging culinary identity. This is a place where sea and soil are in harmony.

It's also defined by contrasts — a rugged coastline hugged by orderly vine rows, innovative chefs working with seasonal ingredients, and wines that are strangely familiar, yet unique. Located just over an hour northwest of Halifax, in the Annapolis Valley, the area around Wolfville is a cool-climate destination to watch — and visit.

Follow the wine trail to explore more than 20 licensed wineries, all within 20 kilometres of the coast. The Bay of Fundy, which has the highest tides in the world, moderates temperatures and lends that distinct salinity to the wines. The region is best known for its crisp whites and traditional-method sparklings — and, for the Tidal Bay appellation, Canada's first and North America's only appellation defined by style.

These white wines are aromatic and saline, intended to pair with, say, fresh-shucked oysters, lobster rolls and scallop *crudo*. But they are versatile enough — and nimble, too, with bright acidity — to warrant further culinary exploration. At Juniper Food + Wine, a 16-seat gem that opened on Wolfville's Main Street in 2019, the kitchen expands this interplay with a blend of Acadian tradition and modern restraint. Think vegetable terrines, beef-tallow chips and seared scallops with creamed



Tuna tartare with pommes allumettes at Bar Kismet.

local corn and bacon.

Halifax has been staking its claim as a major dining destination for almost a decade, with Bar Kismet, launched in 2017, at the forefront. The restaurant has consistently delivered sharp cocktails and a thoughtfully curated wine list, alongside unerringly inventive dishes such as succulent scallop *crudo*, its seasoning changing regularly. The Narrows Public House, which opened in 2022, shows another side of Nova Scotia's spirit. A house-made fried-bologna sandwich anchors the menu of traditional pub fare, and there's the added touch of old-school public-house-style accommodations upstairs.

More recent attractions include the one-year-old Mystic, where chef Malcolm Campbell's dishes draw heavily on the coast. Look for knotweed skewers, scallops with sea truffle, and Acadian caviar with smoked egg yolk and wild sea flora. Meanwhile, Peacock Wine Bar, a sharp new anchor for the wine crowd, is known for its seasonally inspired small plates.

After a week touring the region, I head back into the vineyards and watch rows of vines sway in the Bay of Fundy air while

enjoying a glass of sparkling. I lean back, drink in that Maritime influence one more time and feel entirely content.

Don't tell the other provinces, but I think my palate belongs to Nova Scotia.

WINERIES TO VISIT Lightfoot & Wolfville

Set in the heart of the Annapolis Valley, this family-run estate farms organically and biodynamically, crafting wines that faithfully express the cool climate and maritime terroir. Their farm-to-table philosophy underpins a restaurant whose menu shifts with the seasons — wood-fired pizzas and coastal fare under a marquee tent in summer, with views of Cape Blomidon and the Minas Basin, then indoors through the winter. Hospitality extends beyond the table to a wine shop and tasting room, bedded in beside gardens and vineyards overlooking the valley. • lightfootandwolfville.com

Blomidon Estate Winery

Nestled on a scenic site along the Minas Basin, near the village of Canning, this boutique winery has some of the province's old-

est vines. Visitors can unwind on the sunny patio with charcuterie and cheeseboards showcasing local products, stroll the vineyard and savour award-winning sparkling and still wines while gazing at the expansive sea-edge views. • blomidonwine.ca

Luckett Vineyards

Luckett, perched on a hillside above the Gaspereau Valley, blends a playful spirit with traditional Maritime warmth. This family-run winery offers a bistro-style dining experience that seamlessly pairs locally sourced fare with tastings in a scenic welcoming setting. Adding a dash of whimsy is an iconic — and fully functional — red phone booth standing proudly amid the vines. • luckettvineyards.com

WHERE TO STAY

Muir

Located in the old port of Halifax for maximum convenience, beautifully and thoughtfully designed with furnishings and finishes of obvious quality, this hotel has it all. Our handsome room featured a stunning view of the water — and a nightly cocktail kit from BKS. • marriott.com

NAN BARLOW (HARBOUR, FOOD)

BRANDON BARRE (MUIR HOTEL ROOM), ROXANNE MAILLOUX (COCKTAIL), JACOB RICHLER (SHORELINE)