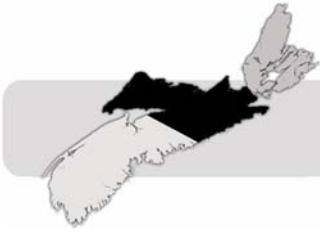


Nova Scotia

Disc Two – Nova Scotia Routes

RIDE	Kms / Miles	DESCRIPTION	PAGE
Northern Nova Scotia			
Amherst-Chignecto Tour Amherst to Pugwash	63 / 39	Warm water beaches; gently rolling terrain; easy to moderate cycling	20
Amherst-Chignecto Tour Pugwash to Tatamagouche	70 / 44	Explore beautiful, quiet Malagash Peninsula; more beaches; mostly easy terrain	25
Amherst-Chignecto Tour Tatamagouche to Masstown	56 / 35	Inland ride through Cobequid Hills to south coast of isthmus of Chignecto; some moderate climbs	28
Amherst-Chignecto Tour Masstown to Parrsboro	72 / 45	Superb Bay of Fundy scenery; difficult climb over Economy Mountain, and several more climbs; challenging	32
Parrsboro Excursions	7 / 4 & 17 / 11	Visit historic home, now a museum, in seaside setting; also visit an area renowned for rich fossil beds	36
Amherst-Chignecto Tour Parrsboro to Cape Chignecto	50 / 44	Hilly terrain with spectacular views; Age of Sail Heritage Centre; camping and hiking at Chignecto Provincial Park; challenging	40
Cap D'Or Excursion	12 / 8 +	Short ride but with difficult climb on dirt road to spectacular cape	44
Amherst-Chignecto Tour Cape Chignecto to Amherst	89 / 56	Return to start – paved road through rolling countryside; no services for first 55 kilometres; moderate cycling but a long day	45
Cape George Loop	76 / 48	Start and finish in Antigonish – gorgeous scenery, sometimes called 'mini Cabot Trail,' with a challenging climb to the cape	49
Canso Tour Antigonish to Sherbrooke	61 / 38	Follow chain of lakes through inland Nova Scotia to restored historic village; fairly easy cycling	54
Canso Tour Sherbrooke to Canso Area	117 / 73	– innumerable hills and harbours; countless grand views; many moderately challenging climbs	57
Canso Tour Canso Area to Guysborough	49 / 31	Relatively short ride to charming seaside village or spectacular provincial park; easy to moderate cycling	63
Canso Tour Guysborough to Antigonish	64 / 40	Return to start – first part scenic, one boring stretch, a short portion of ride on Trans-Canada Highway; easy to moderate cycling	66
Tatamagouche-Pictou Connection	67 / 42	Warm water beaches and lovely views of Northumberland Strait; easy to moderate cycling; passes PEI ferry	69
Pictou-Antigonish Connection	72 / 45	Some riding in busy towns, then quiet roads to Big Merigomish Island, a hidden paradise, and to Antigonish, varied terrain, moderate difficulty	72
Truro – Wolfville Connection	134 / 84	Along shores of Cobequid Bay and Minas Basin; easy start but then deep, rolling hills; splendid views; moderately difficult overall.	75
Southern Nova Scotia			
Yarmouth-Liverpool Connection Yarmouth to Shelburne	122 / 76	Some boring inland sections but good side trips; Shelburne is a splendid destination; moderately difficult because of length	83
Yarmouth-Liverpool Connection Shelburne to Liverpool	74 / 46	Again some boring inland sections but good side trips; Carter's Beach a highlight; easy to moderate terrain	89
Ocean and Valley Tour Liverpool to Lunenburg	90 / 56	One of best sections of the Lighthouse Route; Lunenburg is a World Heritage Site; moderate difficulty	93

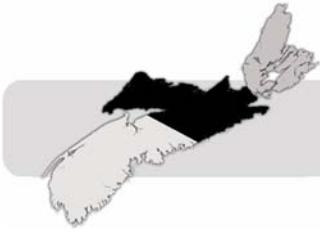


Nova Scotia

Lunenburg Excursions	21/13 & 21/13	Easy ride to tiny port of Blue Rocks and on beautiful Second Peninsula	101
Ocean and Valley Tour Lunenburg to Chester	45 / 28	Visit Mohone Bay and Chester, two of Nova Scotia's most popular coastal villages; Graves Island Provincial Park; fairly easy and short ride	106
Aspotogan Peninsula Loop	61 / 38	Follows shores of peninsula; grand views over St. Mary's Bay; varied terrain, some riding on rail trails; moderate difficulty	111
Ocean and Valley Tour Chester to Annapolis Valley	85 / 53	Through interior of the province to Wolfville in the Annapolis Valley; long rolling hills of moderate grade; Ross Farm Museum; moderate difficulty	115
Capes Blomidon and Split	30/19 & 35/22	Excursions to two spectacular lookouts, each with a campground; each requires a very challenging climb	121
Kingsport Loop	47 / 29	Quiet, gently rolling to flat roads through Annapolis Valley countryside; pleasant villages by the sea; easy cycling	125
Halls Harbour Loop	53 / 33	Requires moderately difficult climbs over North Mountain to one of the province's most picturesque fishing ports; then back to valley	129
Ocean and Valley Tour Length of the Annapolis Valley	110 / 69	Wolfville to Annapolis Royal – quiet, rolling roads, bucolic scenery, easy to moderate cycling, 1 or 2 days	133
Margaretsville Loop	53 / 33	Amazing variety, from Annapolis Valley to Fundy coast; fairly difficult climb over North Mountain; moderate cycling otherwise	139
Port Royal Loop	80 / 50	Difficult climb to and beyond Valley View Park on North Mountain; then moderate cycling on Fundy coast; visit important historic site	144
Ocean and Valley Tour Annapolis Royal to Liverpool	116 / 73	Annapolis Royal back to Liverpool – Pass Kejimkujik National Park on ride through interior; rolling hills of only moderate grade; long day	149
Annapolis Royal-Yarmouth Connection	133 / 83	Follow Route 1, Evangeline Trail, through Acadian Villages; interesting region; traffic can be heavy; only moderate difficulty but long ride	151

Cape Breton

Cabot Trail Tour Cheticamp to Pleasant Bay	47 / 29	Spectacular; hardest climb of the tour over French Mountain	158
Cabot Trail Tour Pleasant Bay to Cape North Village	55 / 34	Layover to enjoy excursions; more spectacular scenery; moderate except hills to Meat Cove	162
Cabot Trail Tour Cape North Village to Ingonish Beach	48 / 29	Part of ride on hilly, challenging alternative to Cabot Trail; Ingonish Beach is popular resort, has good campground	166
Cabot Trail Tour Ingonish Beach to Baddeck	93 / 57	Long but moderate climb up Smokey Mountain with spectacular descent; hilly on Artisans' Loop; long day	169
Cabot Trail Tour Baddeck to Margaree	50 / 31	Much of ride through empty countryside, but beautiful around Margaree; some long hills; moderate difficulty overall	172
Cabot Trail Tour Margaree to Cheticamp	51 / 32	Beautiful along Margaree River; superb beach near harbour; moderate cycling overall	175
Washabuck Peninsula Loop	56 / 35	Ferry, Highland Village highlights; beautiful cycling, moderate difficulty	179
Lake Ainslee Loop	55 / 34	Circle large, unspoiled lake; swimming, picnicking; moderate cycling	184
Inverness-Margaree Loop	80 / 50	Varied route in river valley, on coast, beside lake, over hills; charming villages; fine beaches; moderate difficulty	186
The Ceilidh Trail	85 / 53	Surprisingly light traffic on beautiful linear route; easy to moderate	190



Nova Scotia

Welcome to Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia is Canada's second smallest province; only PEI is smaller. This only shows that the other provinces are big indeed. The distance from Yarmouth in the southwest of Nova Scotia to Cape North is 799 kilometres / 500 miles – a long day's drive. This "small" province" is bigger than the states of Vermont and New Hampshire combined, almost three times the size of New Jersey. Many of the best cycling routes follow the coastline, and there are 7500 kilometres / 4700 miles of it!



Strong Scottish traditions

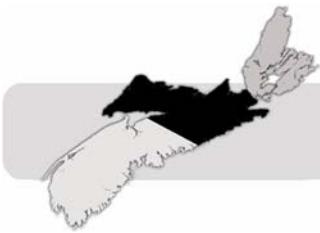


Three regions
of Nova Scotia:
Northern; Southern; Cape Breton

The province consists of a large mainland region, plus Cape Breton Island to the north, which is now joined to the mainland by a causeway across the Strait of Canso. In fact, the whole of Nova Scotia is very nearly an island, connected to the rest of Canada by the isthmus of Chignecto, only 22 kilometres / 14 miles across at the low-lying Tantramar Marsh.

Nova Scotia is undoubtedly the most "maritime" of the Maritime Provinces. It is the only one that faces the open Atlantic Ocean. (Newfoundland, to the north, faces the open Atlantic as well, but for historical and geographical reasons, it is not considered one of the Maritimes). Nova Scotia's economy and people have for centuries been shaped by the sea. Although the heyday of wooden sailing ships, whaling, and a rich offshore fishery is now past, most of Nova Scotia's innumerable small ports are still busy, and Halifax remains one of the most important shipping centres in North America. A few tall ships still sail, and the historic fishing schooner *The Bluenose* is the provincial symbol, the pride and joy of Nova Scotia – and its image appears on every Canadian dime.

The sea brought many newcomers to Nova Scotia. The original Mi'kmaq inhabitants were first joined by French settlers in the 16th century, who became the Acadian people, and then by successive waves of immigrants from other European nations. Nova Scotia means "New Scotland," and the province's Scottish traditions are still strong, but Nova Scotia was also settled by immigrants from England, Loyalists from the rebellious colonies to the south, and people from Ireland, Germany, and Africa. Today Nova Scotians celebrate a rich and diverse culture that is one of the province's greatest attractions. Their music especially, from sea shanties to Cape Breton fiddling, is known and loved across North America and beyond.



Nova Scotia

You will learn more about Nova Scotia from riding its winding, rolling roads than from reading a guidebook, so let's get to the cycling. Rarely is Nova Scotia flat. Along the coast, roads often climb over hills and headlands, then descend once again toward the shore. Of all the fine areas for cycling in the province, the Annapolis Valley is probably the easiest; Cape Breton's Cabot Trail among the hardest.

To organize the routes, we divide Nova Scotia somewhat arbitrarily into three regions, the northern mainland, southern mainland, and Cape Breton. The province designates and promotes several scenic routes including the Lighthouse Route and the Evangeline Trail in the south; the Gloscap Trail, Sunrise Trail, and Marine Drive in the north; and the Ceilidh Trail and Cabot Trail in Cape Breton. There are several more. In fact, the so-called "trails" are not trails at all, but well maintained, paved roads – sometimes heavily traveled. Sections of some of the trails are excellent for cycling, but it would be a mistake to plan a tour of Nova Scotia simply by following these tourist routes. Other sections of the designated scenic routes are more suitable for motorists than cyclists.

Of Nova Scotia's three regions, the northern mainland is the least known to tourists, the least developed, and the least crowded. But it is just as beautiful as the rest. In keeping with our predilection for cycling "the road less traveled," the northern mainland is where we will begin.



A province shaped by the sea – Windows at St. Joseph's Church, Dingwall, honour men lost on the ocean.