



# Globility Global Traveler

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## A SENSE OF ADVENTURE

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## ON THE GOLF TRAIL

Play your way to Canada's ultimate course at The Algonquin Resort. BY DALE LEATHERMAN



CASTLE  
BY THE SEA:  
The Algonquin

PHOTO: © DONNELLE  
OXLEY

**WHO DOESN'T LIKE A GOLF** road trip, especially when it combines exciting courses with fresh seafood, scenic coastal drives and welcoming locals? Last summer I made a long-overdue pilgrimage to the eastern tip of Canada — the Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. I was drawn by the buzz about Canada's top golf designer, Rod Whitman, who had been busy in the Maritimes. His Cabot Links layout in Nova Scotia's Cape Breton Highlands opened to high praise, and deservedly so. Drawing inspiration from the classic courses of England and Scotland, Whitman transformed a former coastal coal mine into a true links course with views of the restless Gulf of St. Lawrence from every hole. Then he collaborated with Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw on the adjacent Cabot Cliffs, Canada's No. 1 course (*Golf Digest*, 2017–18). Cabot Links is No. 5, and both rank in the world's top 100.

We played our way from course to course down Nova Scotia's west coast to Digby and the iconic Stanley Thompson layout at the historic Digby Pines Golf Resort and Spa. From there we caught a ferry across the Bay of Fundy (home to the world's highest tide) to New Brunswick and made our way south to St. Andrews. How can

anyone *not* fall in love with a storybook village named St. Andrews-by-the-Sea? I did, on my first visit a decade ago, and it was just as much fun as I remembered, with brightly painted shops and inns lining the main street, and tourists happily consuming fresh lobster at outdoor eateries. On a hill in the center of town, the 233-room Algonquin Resort still reigns. Built by the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1889, the Tudor-style "castle by the sea" is an enduring favorite of visiting royalty and heads of state. It looked the same when we pulled beneath the portico — bright white with deep red roofs — but a \$50 million renovation had added modern touches, many of them unseen.

Kilted young men took charge of our bags and car, and we lingered in the lobby with a charming staff member, Sydney, the black Lab. It's that kind of place, where black-tie affairs happen but you can play with a dog on the lobby floor and no one looks askance. The hotel has seen it all. History is everywhere: in the artwork, the fireplaces, the furnishings — and the golf course, which dates back to 1894 and boasts the country's oldest clubhouse.



The 7,108-yard, par-72 Algonquin course delves into woods on the front nine, emerging into the open for a back nine overlooking Passamaquoddy Bay, with several bayside holes. Donald Ross mapped out the route in the 1920s, and Thomas McBroom redesigned it in 2000. But the most dramatic changes occurred in 2017, when Rod Whitman and associate Keith Cutten worked their magic. They touched up most holes on the front nine, changing bunkers, greens and fairway lines. On the back nine they moved several holes closer to the sea to optimize the views and natural hazards. The effect is stunning yet uncontrived. It's hard to imagine the layout any other way.

"Although the back nine is breathtaking, the front will offer a very good test for all golfers," said Jason Porter, director of golf and head professional. "Whitman's pot bunkers are strategically positioned and will definitely make a golfer think. The greens on holes one, four and seven are much larger now, and the breaks will cause a lot of head scratching. The seventh hole has great new tees and a pot bunker in front of the green that will scare even the best golfers."

#### HOLE 7 | 432 yards, par 4

This nifty par 4 poses a difficult question on the second shot because the fairway ends on the brow of a steep drop-off to a green tucked into a hollow. Unless your drive is well down the fairway, you'll be hitting a blind shot with a longish wood to a relatively shallow putting surface.

#### HOLE 10 | 225 yards, par 3

Thanks to the thinning of trees along the shore, this new hole now has a sweeping view of the bay and sets up one of Canada's best four-hole stretches. The green is wide but shallow and well-bunkered.

#### HOLE 11 | 572 yards, par 5

By lengthening the hole and adding some clever mounding and bunkering, the designer created several different approach options. The hole also has "infinity green," a technique used by Whitman's mentor, Pete Dye. From 200 yards out, all you can see behind the green is sky and sea.

#### HOLE 12 | 170 yards, par 3

This cliffside hole has always been one of the prettiest par



3s in Canada, but its positioning was cramped, and trees blocked the view of the bay. Whitman thinned the trees, carved out a 170-yard back tee and accented the green with artsy bunkers. Wind off the bay makes this a tricky one-shotter.

#### HOLE 13 | 491 yards, par 5

From a perch in a tree, Whitman discovered a new tee site next to the water, so this hole now hugs the shore from tee to green, with spectacular views of the bay and the town in the distance. Again, the wind makes it tougher than it looks.

PICTURE PERFECT:  
Algonquin green (top),  
and Hole 12 (bottom)

PHOTOS: © DONNELLE OXLEY

**The Algonquin Resort**  
**St.-Andrews-by-the-Sea,**  
**Autograph Collection**

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