Dear Alumnae and Friends,

A little over a year ago I encouraged you to come to Spain with the Meredith Travel Program because of the wonderful experiences I had had there. I’m writing today, once again from personal experience, to invite you to join Betty Webb and me as we travel to the second largest country by area in the world. In 2017 it is celebrating the 150th anniversary since its separate colonies came together as one country. Stumped? It’s our friendly – and at this time of year, color-filled – neighbor to the north, Canada.

Scheduled from September 25-October 5, the peak of the fall color season, our custom tour will take us on a counterclockwise loop through the Maritime Provinces beginning in Halifax, Nova Scotia, traveling up the eastern Atlantic coast, across to Prince Edward Island, then down through New Brunswick, to end where we started. I traveled a similar route with my family several years ago and I still recall with awe standing in the water in the Bay of Fundy and being able to feel the water rising up my legs in mere seconds – a daily phenomenon that lifts boats that appear to be abandoned on dry land as much as 50 feet in one day.

We hope that the summary of our itinerary that follows will entice you to join us. As with all Meredith Travel tours, this one was planned to balance interesting cities, beautiful countryside, small towns, an in-depth exploration of the history and culture – and in this case, two ferry rides and a sailboat cruise!

Most flights from the US to Halifax arrive in the afternoon, so on Day One, when you arrive with no jetlag, we will gather for a welcome dinner. The next morning, Day Two, our local guide will show us historic Halifax, from Citadel Hill, with its star-shaped fort, to the beautiful public gardens and the harbor area, to Fairview Cemetery where 100 victims of the sinking of the Titanic are buried. The afternoon brings a special treat – a sailboat cruise from the harbor.

On Day Three we’ll take an early morning day-trip in our private motor coach to the charming fishing village of Peggy’s Cove for a traditional Nova Scotian breakfast, then, well-fortified, travel on to picturesque Lunenburg, a UNESCO World Heritage site and the best surviving example of a planned British settlement in North America.

Day Four will find us leaving Halifax to cruise Marine Drive along the Atlantic shore, passing more quaint fishing villages to stop at Jeddore Oyster Pond for a tour of a typical fisherman’s house at the Fisherman’s Life Museum. The next stop, a visit to Sherbrooke Village, will show what life was like in the boom-years of ship-building, lumbering and gold mining between 1860 and the beginning of WWI.

Moving on from Sherbrooke Village, we cross to Cape Breton Island, the first land sighted by John Cabot in 1497, but already inhabited by Mi’kmaq Indians for centuries. Today half of the population is Scottish, the result of immigration that began in the mid-18th century when the English claimed Scotland and landowners were dispossessed. French and Irish immigrants complete the cultural mix. We end the day in Baddeck, Cape Breton Island, where we will be staying for the next three nights.

Our Day Five excursion will take us back to the 18th century. For those of you who have toured Colonial Williamsburg, the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, a fortified French town and colonial capital destroyed in the 1760s by the British, will provide another view of colonial life in North America. The Fortress of Louisbourg reconstruction is the largest in North America.
Day Six balances man and nature, as we stop at the Alexander Graham Bell Museum – his summer home was on Cape Breton Island – and then continue on our way, viewing the magnificent vista of the shoreline as we drive along the stunning Cabot Trail. After a break for a traditional Acadian lunch our group will travel on to the Cape Breton Highlands National Park, where the terrain so closely resembles the Scottish coast that the 18th century immigrants must have felt right at home.

Maple sugar may be my favorite Canadian import, and on Day Seven we will visit a farm and see how it’s harvested and processed. After a traditional sugar camp lunch and treat, we board the ferry to Prince Edward Island where a walking tour of colonial Charlottetown, the provincial capital, awaits us. Tonight, it’s lobster for all!

On Day Eight we’ll see the sand dunes and beaches of Prince Edward Island National Park, then visit Green Gables farmhouse. Lunch will be accompanied by Irish storytelling and music. To continue the Anne of Green Gables theme, some of you may opt to see a theatre performance in the evening about Anne as a young adult.

We will depart Prince Edward Island on Day Nine across an eight mile-long bridge to New Brunswick Province. A stop at the Cape Jourimain Nature Center will teach us more about the wildlife, plants and people who lived in this region. But, the highlight of the day will undoubtedly be the Hopewell Rock formations and Fundy National Park that encompasses the highest bay in the world. The night will be spent in St. John, where the St. John River narrows before spilling into Fundy Bay.

Day Ten will bring our final boat ride – a catamaran ferry to Digby, a summer resort. After a day spent enjoying the resort, nature, or the village of Digby at your leisure, we end with a local fisherman’s demonstration about the importance of the Digby scallop, a local seafood specialty, and Nova Scotian music. Dinner follows at a local restaurant, where, naturally, Digby scallops are featured on the menu.

Our tour ends on Day Eleven with our last breakfast together before boarding our motor coach for the return trip to Halifax airport and the flight home.

We hope that you will make plans to join us for this journey north in September 2017.

Sincere best wishes for safe travels always,

Becky Bailey

Rebecca Bailey  
Professor Emerita  
Department of Art &  
Retired Dean, School of the Arts

Betty Webb  
Professor Emerita  
Department of English &  
Retired Director of International Studies