

Sable Island: Wild Horses and Outpost Legacy

June 13–20, 2028

July 01–08, 2028

July 19–26, 2028

From **\$7,295** to **\$16,150** USD

Aboard the *Ocean Nova*

Starts: St. John's, NL, Canada

Ends: St. John's, NL, Canada





Adventure
Canada

Expedition Summary

The Restless Island

How has a narrow ribbon of shifting sand, adrift in the Atlantic, become such an icon of the Canadian landscape that inspires fascination around the world?

Out in the open Atlantic beyond Nova Scotia's shores, Sable Island is a slender crescent of sand shaped by wind, waves, and ocean currents. Its dunes migrate, its shoreline shifts, and yet life persists. Wild horses roam its ridges, grey seals gather by the thousands, and the Ipswich sparrow nests in only one place on Earth.

Part of Sable Island's enduring fascination lies in the stories shaped by this restless place. Long known as *the Graveyard of the Atlantic*, its shifting sands claimed hundreds of ships, while generations of lifesavers risked their own lives to rescue those in peril. Wild horses crest the dunes as they have for generations, seemingly as much a part of the island as the wind itself. They are among the reasons Sable Island has captured the imagination, inviting visitors to wonder how they came to inhabit this ever-changing landscape, and how they continue to thrive here.

Step ashore by Zodiac to wander among shifting dunes, encounter the island's iconic wildlife, and experience a place where nature sets the terms. Along the way, in collaboration with Parks Canada, we'll have the rare privilege of visiting this protected national park reserve. Few people ever have the opportunity to walk this remarkable landscape, and every visit carries with it a responsibility to approach it with care and respect. Adventure Canada's expedition team brings Sable Island's natural and human history into focus, while a visit to nearby Saint-Pierre offers another perspective on the North Atlantic's rich cultural heritage.

Returning to St. John's, we conclude a voyage that invites a deeper appreciation for one of Canada's most remarkable places. As wind reshapes the dunes and wild horses disappear beyond the horizon, Sable Island remains a place that is never quite the same twice, perhaps one reason it has captured the imagination for centuries.

Expedition Summary

Website & brochure copy · 80 words

The Restless Island



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How has a narrow ribbon of shifting sand become such an icon of the Canadian landscape that inspires such fascination around the world? Journey to Sable Island with Adventure Canada and Parks Canada to explore a landscape shaped by wind, waves, and time. Encounter wild horses, grey seals, and shifting dunes while discovering the stories of shipwrecks, lifesavers, and conservation that define this extraordinary place. Rare access, thoughtful exploration, and expert interpretation make this a journey of privilege, responsibility, and lasting curiosity.

Itinerary

Day 1: St. John's, NL, Canada

Day 2: At Sea

Day 3–6: Sable Island

Day 7: Saint-Pierre, France

Day 8: St. John's, NL, Canada

Highlights

An island that never stands still

Far out in the North Atlantic, beyond the curve of mainland Nova Scotia, Sable Island is a narrow crescent of sand continually reshaped by wind, waves, and ocean currents. Dunes migrate, shorelines shift, and storms redraw its contours. Across this restless landscape lie centuries of stories of shipwrecks, lifesaving, scientific research, and the people who have lived and worked at the edge of the Atlantic.

Horses, seals, and a sparrow found nowhere else

Sable's free-roaming horses have become enduring symbols of the island, appearing along dune ridges and among windswept grasses. Yet they share this narrow world with an extraordinary concentration of life. Sable Island supports the world's largest colony of grey seals, while the Ipswich sparrow, a distinctive subspecies of Savannah sparrow, breeds almost entirely on Sable Island. Together, these species reveal how life has adapted to an island continually reshaped by the Atlantic.

The privilege of stepping ashore

Few people have the opportunity to set foot on Sable Island. In collaboration with Parks Canada, travel ashore by Zodiac to explore Canada's forty-third national park. Walk among shifting dunes, observe wildlife, and learn from those who know the island's ecology and history. Here, expedition travel means accepting that weather and the island itself ultimately determine what is possible.

An authentic taste of France

Just off Newfoundland's southern coast, Saint-Pierre offers an unmistakably French experience in the North Atlantic. Stroll colourful streets where French is the language of daily life, linger over coffee at a café, and discover an island shaped by centuries of French and North Atlantic history. With its cuisine, architecture, and distinctive culture, Saint-Pierre offers an authentic taste of France just beyond Canada's shores.

Highlights at a Glance

- Discover Sable Island, a restless crescent of sand continually reshaped by wind, waves, and ocean currents.
- Encounter free-roaming horses, vast gatherings of grey seals, and the Ipswich sparrow, which breeds almost entirely on Sable.
- Explore centuries of shipwrecks, lifesaving, scientific research, and human endeavour at the edge of the Atlantic.
- Experience the rare privilege of stepping ashore on Sable Island National Park Reserve, a remote place of enduring significance in Canada's natural and cultural imagination.
- Savour an authentic taste of France amid the colourful streets and distinctive culture of Saint-Pierre.

Itinerary

Day 1: St. John's, NL, Canada

Into the North Atlantic

Your journey begins in St. John's, a harbour city whose history has long been shaped by the North Atlantic. Colourful houses climb the hills above one of the world's great natural harbours, while Signal Hill and the Narrows speak to centuries of arrivals, departures, fishing, trade, and seafaring.



As you cast off, pass through the Narrows and leave the sheltered harbour behind. Signal Hill rises above you and Cape Spear marks the eastern edge of the continent as you turn toward open water. Ahead lies Sable Island, a slender crescent of sand whose story begins with the same forces surrounding you now: wind, waves, currents, and the restless Atlantic.

Day 2: At Sea

Reading the Restless Island

Your passage south offers time to begin understanding the unusual island ahead. Through presentations and conversations, the expedition team introduces Sable's ecology, geology, wildlife, and human history, revealing how wind, waves, and ocean currents continually reshape a landform that seems improbable in the open Atlantic.

From deck, watch for seabirds, whales, and dolphins as you cross the northwest Atlantic. The ocean itself is part of Sable's story, carrying the currents and weather that have shaped its dunes, challenged generations of mariners, and continue to determine when and where you may be able to step ashore.

Days 3–6: Sable Island

The Living Sands of Sable

Sable Island appears low on the horizon, a long crescent of sand surrounded by the open Atlantic. Yet even its familiar shape is temporary. Wind moves dunes across the island, waves alter its beaches, and currents continually redistribute the sand from which it is made.

Your exploration is conducted in close collaboration with Parks Canada, with weather and sea conditions determining when and where you can safely go ashore. When conditions allow, travel by Zodiac to experience this protected national park with the care such rare access requires.

On shore, look closely. Grey seals may gather along the beaches, while Ipswich sparrows move among marram grass and beach peas and terns wheel overhead. Free-roaming horses appear across dunes and open grasslands, sometimes distant on a ridge, sometimes encountered while walking through the island's shifting landscape.

Naturalists and Parks Canada guides help you understand the relationships that sustain life here and the forces that continually reshape it. Human stories are written into the landscape too.



Learn about shipwrecks, lifesaving stations, scientific research, and the people who have lived and worked on this remote island.

No two visits to Sable are quite alike. Zodiac cruises, shore walks, wildlife observations, and opportunities to explore will depend on the conditions you encounter. Over several days, you have the rare privilege of experiencing the island on its own terms.

Day 7: Saint-Pierre, France

An Authentic Taste of France

Just off Newfoundland's southern coast lies Saint-Pierre, part of the French archipelago of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon and France's last remaining territory in North America. Close to its North American neighbour, yet unmistakably French, the island reflects centuries of French and North Atlantic history.

French is the language of daily life, while the architecture, cuisine, shops, cafés, and public spaces give Saint-Pierre its distinctive character. Spend time exploring its streets, perhaps stopping at a café, visiting a museum, or sampling local flavours along the way.

After the wild sands of Sable Island, Saint-Pierre offers a fascinating contrast: an authentic taste of France in the North Atlantic.

Day 8: St. John's, NL, Canada

Through the Narrows

Follow the rugged, cliff-lined coast toward St. John's. From the sea, there is little to suggest that a city lies nearby until the entrance to the Narrows appears and the harbour is suddenly revealed beyond the steep headlands. Pass beneath Signal Hill and through this remarkable natural gateway into the sheltered waters of St. John's Harbour.

By the time you disembark, Sable Island is already changing. Wind moves sand across its dunes, waves redraw the shoreline, and horses wander somewhere beyond the horizon. The island encountered on this journey belonged to a singular moment in its restless existence, one that will never unfold in quite the same way again.



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