

# East Coast RV trip features family, food and a few bumps

*Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island offer plenty of opportunities for both relaxation and fun*

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Published Jul 09, 2024 • Last updated Jul 16, 2024 • 5 minute read



Our rented CanaDream RV, which we dubbed Bertha, sits in front of the lighthouse at Victoria-by-the-Sea in P.E.I. PHOTO BY GREG OLSEN

If I said that our RV camping trip to Atlantic Canada went perfectly, I wouldn't be entirely honest. When the side door of the vehicle flew open as we turned onto an exit ramp on the second day, I ran back to close it, realizing that I was the one who hadn't closed it all the way to begin with. And when chip dip and pop went flying out of the fridge on another corner, I realized that I was the one who forgot to lock the fridge.

I jokingly called my husband Capt. Kirk when he sat in the driver's seat of our CanaDream RV rental. He said that made me Scotty — chief engineer and fixer of problems, which turned out to be an appropriate role since I was the one causing most of them. As for our Starship Enterprise vessel, we named her Bertha.

Our adventure began just outside Halifax, where we picked up our CanaDream RV rental, a 26-foot beauty. Even though we didn't have a lot of experience driving a larger vehicle, we took to Bertha right away, stopping for provisions at a grocery store and driving to the Halifax West KOA campground, our home for the next two nights.

We had never stayed in a KOA campground before, and I wish I had discovered them when our kids were younger. The Halifax KOA has everything a family could want: bathrooms and showers, a swimming pool, canoe and kayak rentals, recumbent bike rentals, a camp store and a large playground.



The Halifax West KOA campground features many amenities. We rented kayaks and enjoyed some paddling. PHOTO BY GREG OLSEN

We used the Halifax stop to visit family. We spent both evenings with my sister, Tammy, and her husband, Gary, who live about 10 minutes from the campground. It was nice to visit relatives and still have our own space.

We enjoyed a bonfire together at our campsite on the second night. I made an Atlantic Canada s'more by squishing a roasted marshmallow between two chocolate-covered potato chips made in P.E.I. and sold in Atlantic Canada grocery stores as Cow Chips.

During the day, we paddled the river in rented kayaks and explored nearby attractions. The best thing about a road trip is the little discoveries you make along the way, like community museums and craft markets. We visited Fultz House Museum in Lower Sackville to learn some of the local history and then walked along the Bedford Waterfront Boardwalk to visit the Coastal Makers Market that features about 30 artisan booths.

After two days in Halifax, we headed to the Confederation Bridge and Prince Edward Island, stopping at Masstown Market just outside Truro, N.S., to pick up more provisions.

Masstown Market started as a farm gate operation in 1969 and grew into a foodie destination with a butcher shop, a creamery, a bakery and a market that specializes in local food. There's also a fish-and-chips shop and a lighthouse where you can buy fresh-caught Bay of Fundy seafood.

Our next three nights were spent at the Borden/Summerside KOA on P.E.I. It wouldn't be a family camping trip without rain, and we were grateful not to be in a tent when it rained for two days straight. Between rainstorms, we rented bikes at the campsite and cycled the Confederation Trail to the tiny town of Borden-Carleton, where we stopped at Cows Creamery and explored Marine Rail Park. We also drove to Summerside and wandered around Spinnakers' Landing, tried "fries with the works" at Starlite Diner & Dairy Bar and went for homemade ice cream at Holman's Ice Cream Parlour.



The best thing about the Borden/Summerside KOA is the on-site music hall and the live music four days a week. PHOTO BY GREG OLSEN

The best thing about the Borden/Summerside KOA is the on-site music hall and live music four days a week. Bad weather loses some of its sting when you're at an indoor concert, and we were impressed with the musicians who performed on a rainy Tuesday evening.

We ended our trip with three days of mostly sunny skies at Cavendish KOA Holiday, a large campground with many amenities in the hometown of Lucy Maud Montgomery, who wrote the Anne of Green Gables books. The campground is near Green Gables Heritage Place, where we discovered all things Anne, walking through the Haunted Woods and Lover's Lane.

We spent the next few days visiting Cavendish Beach and Greenwich Beach in P.E.I. National Park, Singing Sands Beach in Basin Head Provincial Park, exploring lighthouses, looking for sea glass, watching fishermen bring in their catches, and eating fantastic seafood.

We took the ferry back to Nova Scotia, stopping on the way back to the Halifax CanaDream rental depot to visit Burntcoat Head Park, the site on the Bay of Fundy where the world's highest tides were recorded. As we walked on the ocean floor at low tide, I couldn't help thinking that even though our RV camping trip featured a few minor mishaps and a bit of bad weather, it was an unforgettable experience. After all, minor mishaps are the things you laugh about afterwards.

### **Tips for Planning an RV Camping Trip**

- Driving an RV isn't as intimidating as it may seem — even though Captain Kirk was a back seat driver when he wasn't behind the wheel.
- We rented our RV from CanaDream ([canadream.com](http://canadream.com)), a Canadian company that celebrated 30 years in Canada in 2024. RV rental options come in a variety of sizes. Watch the website for sales and one-way relocation rental deals.
- If you're travelling from Nova Scotia to Prince Edward Island and back, consider crossing the Confederation Bridge into Prince Edward Island and returning on the ferry. There is no fee for crossing the bridge into Prince Edward Island, but there is a fee to exit on the bridge.
- Always secure and lock the RV side door and the fridge door before setting out — lessons learned the hard way on our trip.
- We stayed at KOA campgrounds ([koa.com](http://koa.com)) on this trip and we liked the diverse amenities they offered. Each campground had fully equipped RV and tent sites as well as equipped cabins and many amenities.

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