

Culinary Tourism Roadmap

Final Report



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Title	Page
I.	Introduction	2
PART 1: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS		
II.	Culinary Tourism	3
III.	Nova Scotia Culinary Direction	9
IV.	Best Practices from Other Jurisdictions	14
V.	Pan Cape Breton Food Hub	20
VI.	Cape Breton's Unique Selling Proposition	22
VII.	Industry Consultation	27
VIII.	Findings	29
PART 2: CULINARY TOURISM ROADMAP		
IX.	Strategic Direction	33
X.	Product Development	37
XI.	Brand	40
XII.	Marketing	41
XIII.	Demand Measurement/Research	43
XIV.	Action Plan	44
APPENDIX		
	Inventory of Culinary Experiences	

I. INTRODUCTION

As a result of extensive research conducted in a visitor exit survey by the Tourism Nova Scotia, it was determined that a key core experiences for travel to and within Nova Scotia is cuisine. Therefore, emphasis has been placed on culinary tourism as an opportune area for development within the tourism industry in Nova Scotia. Tourism Nova Scotia is now working with such organizations as Taste of Nova Scotia and the Bonavista Institute and other industry partners to strengthen Nova Scotia's reputation as a place to enjoy authentic, quality food experiences and food culture.

Cape Breton Island is now at the point where a roadmap must be established to help guide the Island in further developing and marketing its culinary offering. This will complement the direction being taken by Tourism Nova Scotia and other partners, and of successful foodie festivals and initiatives such as the Pan Cape Breton Food Hub Co-op.

Destination Cape Breton Association (DCBA) is seeking to gain an understanding of the culinary product available on Cape Breton Island and to identify opportunities on how to develop the product. This will include identification of key stakeholder interests, prioritization of strategic initiatives, development of an organizational structure and funding streams, awareness campaign creation, increased media visibility, and coordination of the foodservice industry. This roadmap will:

- Provide a better understanding of the current state of the Island's culinary product;
- Identify partners and their roles;
- Determine the steps (challenges and opportunities) required to enhance Cape Breton Island's brand as a "seed to fork" destination; and
- Identify initiatives to support the growth and enhance the quality of our culinary product experience.

A Cape Breton based firm, Icon Communications and Research Incorporated, was contracted to conduct research regarding the culinary product and opportunities for development. To meet the requirements of this assignment, Icon adding a subject matter expert in the culinary field, Alicia Lake, to the project team.

This Final Report includes two parts: a Situational Analysis with the findings of the research and a summary of industry consultation, and a Culinary Tourism Roadmap with a recommended strategic direction, a series of recommendations, and an action plan for implementation.

PART 1: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

II. CULINARY TOURISM

Culinary tourism has evolved from a focus on traditional destinations associated with their unique cuisines, such as Provence, Tuscany or New Orleans, to be one of the fastest growing tourism segments in North America. In the Canadian Tourism Commission's *How-to Guide: Develop a Culinary Tourism Product*, culinary tourism is defined as follows:

According to the CTC, culinary tourism goes well beyond the dining experience. It includes a variety of culinary, agri-tourism, and agri-food activities, developed expressly for tourists, that showcase food and beverages and provide an opportunity for visitors to discover dishes indigenous to each region while learning about the talent and creativity of artisans.

The guide goes on to state:

Cuisine in Canada is rooted in the history, characteristics, expertise and flavours specific to each region. It is the creative expression of the cultural values of all those who have helped build and continue to help build Canada.

It is said that each region of the country has its own particular essence. Soil composition, waterways or the lack of them, ocean currents, weather conditions, cold regions with their own microclimates, traditional and modern growing methods, all are factors that vary from area to area.

That's why Canada has such a variety of regional products. Not only do conditions fluctuate from region to region, they differ from east to west and north to south. Every time zone has its own environment that impacts local crops, farming and fishing practices, and natural resources. The result is exceptional diversity and abundance from the Maritimes to Quebec and Ontario, to the Prairies and all the way to British Columbia.

According to the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance, "Food tourism is any tourism experience in which one learns about, appreciates, and/or consumes food and drink that reflects the local, regional or national cuisine, heritage and culture." Culinary tourism is a growing travel niche. In the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance and Skift report, *The Rise of Food Tourism*, it states:

According to the 2010 World Food Travel Association (WFTA) report, "The State of the Culinary Tourism Industry," the growing interest in F&B-themed travel is driven by a number of factors. These include the explosion of food-focused media and social media, a farm-to-table movement among large travel brands, and the introduction of high-profile events celebrating local cuisine.

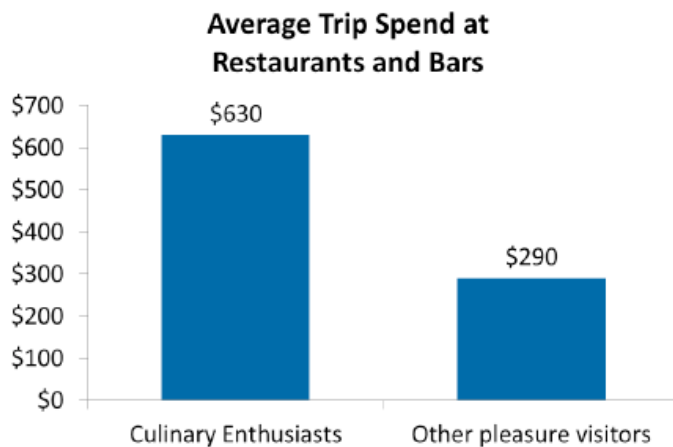
The Mandala Research firm, publisher of the 2013 "American Culinary Traveler Report," says leisure travelers, defined as someone who has booked at least one vacation in the previous 12 months, represent 71% of the U.S. adult population, or around 170 million Americans. Mandala reports that 77% of those leisure

travelers can be classified as culinary travelers, having participated in culinary travel activities such as dining out for a unique or memorable experience, taking cooking classes, or attending food festivals.

The *Travel Activities and Motivations Survey (TAMS 2006)* market analysis of those with an interest in food and wine found that 16% of adult Canadian travellers reported that participating in wine and cuisine activities was a primary trip motivator. Additionally, 74% of adult Canadian travellers participated in at least one type of activity associated with wine and cuisine while on an out-of-town overnight trip. Therefore, while culinary tourism may be considered a niche in terms of those who will plan trips based on the food experience, it appears to be a significant secondary motivator for those travelling with a different primary purpose.

Culinary Tourists

In the Tourism Nova Scotia presentation, *“Capitalize on Culinary Experiences”*, the following chart is provided, which clearly demonstrates the potential for attracting more Culinary Tourists. They also state that approximately one-half of visitors counted food and drink experiences as one of their best parts of their Nova Scotia trip.



The 2010 document *Nova Scotia Tourism Market Profile: Culinary Enthusiasts*, which was derived from data in the 2010 Visitor Exit Survey provides the following customer profile:

Culinary Enthusiasts are primarily comprised of couples (51%) and lone travellers (20%) who have higher levels of education and higher incomes compared to all pleasure visitors. The average party size for visitors in this segment is 1.9 people, somewhat lower than average.

A higher percentage of Culinary Enthusiasts come from Western Canada, 23% compared to 10% of all pleasure visitors, with another 50% comprised of visitors from Atlantic Canada and Ontario. This higher percent of longer-haul visitors means that more Culinary Enthusiasts arrive in NS by air (54% compared to 33% for all pleasure visitors).

Nova Scotia's visitor population includes a large percentage of baby boomers and a smaller but growing number of 20 to 30 year olds. Culinary Enthusiasts are more likely to be mature travellers, especially 55 and older, and travel parties have fewer young adults and children.

While unique in their high motivation to experience Nova Scotian food, Culinary Enthusiasts are similar to Cultural Enthusiasts and Outdoor Enthusiasts in their activity level. All three of these high-yield segments have higher than average

participation rates in various tourism activities indicating they are highly engaged and keep busy while on vacation.

The *Travel Activities and Motivations Survey (TAMS 2006)* market analysis of those with an interest in food and wine offered the following highlights:

- 74% of all adult Canadian travellers participated in at least one type of activity associated with wine and cuisine while on an out-of-town overnight trip.
- 16% (or 2.5 million) reported that participating in such activities was a trip motivator (main reason) for taking at least one trip.
- 37% (or 7.7 million) of Canadian travellers were Wine and Cuisine Enthusiasts, exhibiting either moderate or high interest in wine and cuisine-associated activities while on trip in the past two years.
- Wine and Cuisine Enthusiasts were more likely to be from larger urban areas with more affluent populations. Interest in wine and cuisine-related activities was highest in British Columbia, followed by Quebec, Alberta, and Ontario.
- There were strong associations between interest in wine and cuisine and levels of education and household income. Travellers holding a university degree and having household income over \$80,000 were more likely to be interested in wine and cuisine.
- Mature (35-64 years old) couples and families (those with kids) were more likely to be interested in wine and cuisine-related activities. Young couples (less than 35 years old) and senior couples (over 64 years old), though to a lesser extent, were also actively engaged in activities associated with wine and cuisine.
- Wine and Cuisine Enthusiasts were frequent travellers, taking an average of 4.1 trips between 2004 and 2005 versus 3.2 trips for other Canadian travellers. Compared to other travellers, Wine and Cuisine Enthusiasts on average took more vacations in Canada, and substantially more vacations to US and overseas countries.
- Wine and Cuisine Enthusiasts were very active while on trips in 2004 or 2005. They were considerably more likely than other travellers to participate in a variety of activities associated with outdoor, cultural and entertainment experiences.
- Relative to other travellers, Wine and Cuisine Enthusiasts had a higher tendency to consult a large number of information sources when they were planning trips. Using the internet (78%), taking advices from friends and relatives (61%), and considering their own past experiences (58%) were the most popular information sources. They were also more likely to read the travel section of daily and weekend newspapers than other Canadian travellers.

TAMS reported the top food-related activities for Canadian travellers as follows:

Activity	Percent reporting participation
Dining at restaurants featuring local foods	57.9%
Going to local cafés	40.9%
Dining at high-end restaurants	20.9%
Dining at restaurants with international reputations	19.9%
Shopping or browsing at gourmet/kitchen stores	11.5%
Day visits and tasting at wineries	11.5%
Day visits and tasting at breweries	7.0%
Attending food/drink festivals	6.9%
Dining at a farm	4.8%
Attending cooking or wine course	4.4%

Ontario's Four-year Culinary Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2011-2015 classified the culinary tourism segments based on the TAMS profiles, as follows:

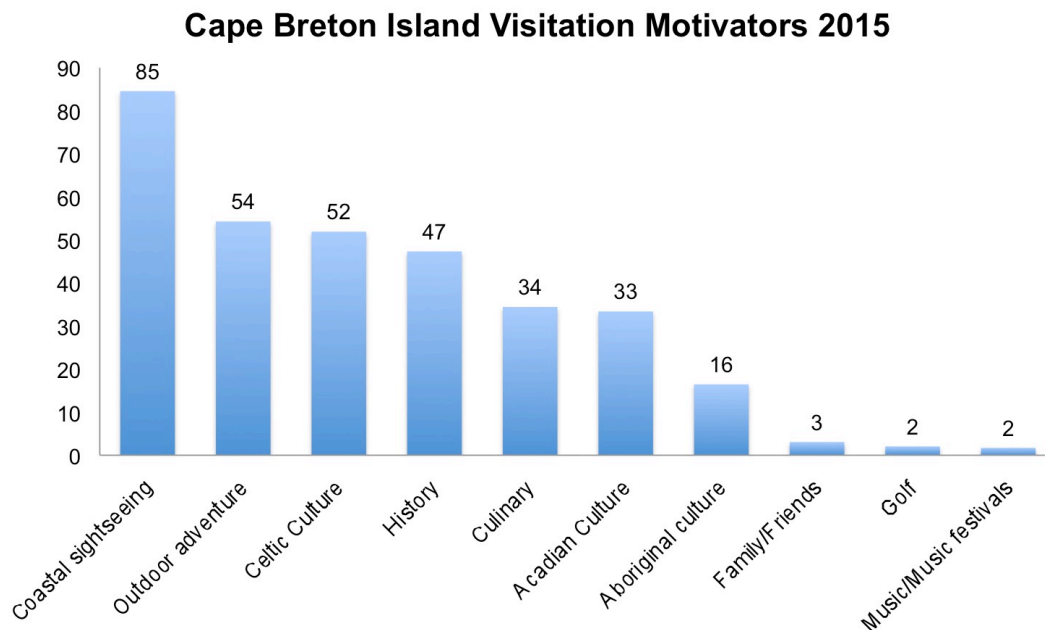
Segment	Typical activities	Relative size
Dining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dining at high-end restaurants • Restaurants featuring local ingredients • Cafes 	40.2%
Celebrating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food festivals 	24.6%
Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day visits and tasting at wineries • Day visits and tasting at breweries 	16.4%
Rural experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers markets • Farm gate sales • U-pick operations 	12.9%
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooking or wine courses 	5.7%

In the Canadian Tourism Commission's *EQ (Explorer Quotient) Profiles*, there are two psychographic segments that are targeted by Destination Cape Breton Association and Tourism Nova Scotia: Cultural Explorers and Authentic Experiencers. Following is a brief description of each:

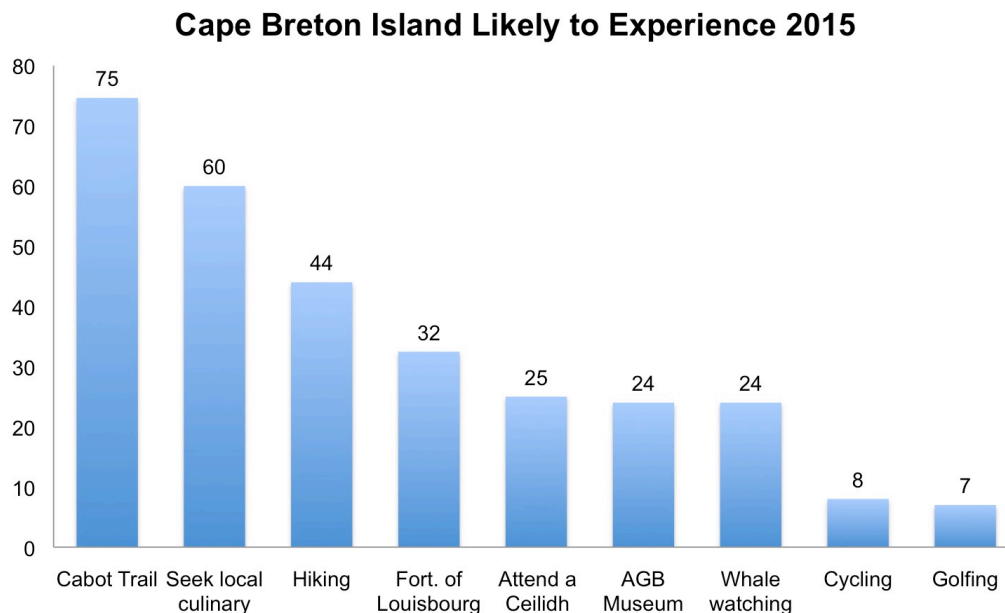
- Cultural Explorers are defined by their love of constant travel and continuous opportunities to embrace, discover and immerse themselves in the culture, people and settings of the places they visit.
- Authentic Experiencers are typically understated travellers looking for authentic, tangible engagement with destinations they seek, with a particular interest in understanding the history of the places they visit.

The EQ profiles for each segment indicate that they have an interest in Shopping, Dining and Other Food-related Activities. Both segments are motivated by authentic experiences and being immersed in local culture. It is likely that there is cross-over between these segments and culinary enthusiasts.

In the 2015 Cape Breton Island Travel Intention Survey, preliminary results have shown that the culinary experience is a key component to the overall travel experience that is expected by visitors. As illustrated in the chart below, when prospective visitors were asked what was motivating them to want to visit Cape Breton Island, culinary was within the top five motivators, as cited by 34% of respondents.



When asked which activities they were likely to experience during their Cape Breton Island visit, seeking local culinary was the second highest response, as cited by 60% of respondents. This clearly demonstrates that the culinary experience is both a primary and secondary motivator for visitors to Cape Breton Island.



The Culinary Tourism Product

As previously stated, culinary tourism goes well beyond the dining experience. It can range from food festivals to farm visits. The following examples of culinary tourism activities show the diverse range of products or experiences available on Cape Breton Island.

Culinary activity	Example
Food-themed festivals	Louisbourg Crabfest
Agri-tours	Rock Loaf Farm, Arichat
Culinary packages	Chanterelle Inn, North River Bridge
Unique dining experiences	The Bite House, Baddeck
Unique culinary experiences	Jam making at Celtic Country Market, Bras d'Or
Distillery tours and whisky tasting	Glenora Distillery, Glenville
Fishing tours	Gillis Lobster Tours, Port Hood
Historical dinner theatre	Beggar's Banquet, Louisbourg
Farmers markets	Mabou Farmers' Market, Mabou
Visits to artisan food producers	Galloping Cows, Port Hood
Craft breweries	Big Spruce Brewing, Nyanza
Cultural tours including food	Eskasoni Cultural Journeys
Fish hatchery visit	Margaree Fish Hatchery, Margaree Valley
Cafes	Frog Pond Café, Cheticamp
Rum tasting	Fortress of Louisbourg
Traditional meals	Codfish Supper at Highland Village, Iona
U-pick	Rendell's Farm, Little Bras d'Or
Vineyard	Eileanan Brèagha Vineyards, Marble Mountain
Traditional pub	Governor's Pub, Sydney

III. NOVA SCOTIA CULINARY DIRECTION

Nova Scotia has been involved in culinary tourism for many years to varying degrees of activity; however, a stronger emphasis was placed on culinary in the 2015 tourism season. A number of organizations are involved in this sector, including:

- Taste of Nova Scotia;
- Tourism Nova Scotia;
- Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia (RANS); and
- Nova Scotia Association of Chefs and Cooks.

As well, the Right Some Good Festival is examined, as it was a significant culinary event for Nova Scotia.

Taste of Nova Scotia

Taste of Nova Scotia is a province-wide co-operative marketing organization that presents “the most exceptional local culinary experiences our province has to offer.” The organization was launched in 1989 with the mandate of facilitating “the growth of our members while promoting the unique quality of our Nova Scotia food and beverage products to consumers, both locally and around the world.”

The organization has more than 150 members, including producers, processors and a variety of restaurants. There are 17 members in Cape Breton and they may be viewed here: <http://tasteofnovascotia.com/member-region/cape-breton-island/>. Anecdotally, some restaurants and food producers have stated that they have not joined Taste of Nova Scotia due to the cost of membership and concern about the return on the investment.

In 2010, Taste of Nova Scotia launched “Adventures in Taste”, a culinary tourism program developed in joint partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and the Winery Association of Nova Scotia. Modelled after the Prince Edward County “Taste Trail” (see Best Practices section), it was a collection of culinary experiences that included producers, fisheries/agri-tourism providers, wineries, restaurants, and accommodations throughout the province. This program was later discontinued in favour of two product-themed trails: the Chowder Trail and the Good Cheer Trail.

- *The Chowder Trail*
The Chowder Trail was launched in 2013 with 30 participating restaurants across the province offering up their unique recipes of distinct Nova Scotia chowder. A passport was developed for consumers whereby they would collect stamps when buying one of the chowders. Three stamps would make them eligible for a prize and there were scalable levels for those who collected 10 or 20 stamps. The initiative was deemed to be a hit with consumers and the number of participating restaurants doubled in year two. The Chowder Trail currently includes 11 restaurants from Cape Breton.
<http://tasteofnovascotia.com/the-chowder-trail/>
- *The Good Cheer Trail*
Taste of Nova Scotia and Tourism Nova Scotia partnered with operators to launch the Good Cheer Trail. The trail seeks to attract culinary enthusiasts to the

province, encouraging them to visit local wineries, breweries and distilleries through a stamp-able Good Cheer passport, similar to the one for the Chowder Trail. The name dates back to 1606, when Samuel de Champlain established the Order of Good Cheer in Port Royal. There are over 35 participating operators in this inaugural year for the Good Cheer Trail, including four from Cape Breton: Glenora Distillery, Big Spruce Brewing, Breton Brewing, and the Rum Tasting experience at the Fortress of Louisbourg.

<http://www.novascotia.com/eat-drink/good-cheer-trail>

A third culinary trail is in the planning stages and will be revealed in the coming months.

In conversations with some of the Island operators who are participating in the two culinary trails, they have reported positive results with one operator stating that the Good Cheer Trail has been a “home run” for them. Although numbers have not yet been released, the results of The Good Cheer Trail are reported to be very positive. The Good Cheer Trail concept was also incorporated into various wine tours.

Tourism Nova Scotia

Tourism Nova Scotia placed an increased focus on culinary tourism this year with a goal of “strengthening Nova Scotia’s reputation as a place to enjoy authentic, quality food experiences and food culture.” They outlined the following objectives for this focus:

1. To raise awareness of Nova Scotia’s unique, quality culinary product and generate a ‘buzz’;
2. To attract visitors to Nova Scotia through the marketing of Nova Scotia’s best culinary products and experiences;
3. To assist industry in the creation of new and enhanced market-ready culinary experiences;
4. To provide training opportunities to help industry enhance or incorporate culinary experiences as part of their offering; and
5. To enhance content for Tourism Nova Scotia and other stakeholders to use in promotions and visitor servicing.

Culinary tourism has been identified in the Nova Scotia Tourism Strategy as an opportunity for growth – to differentiate Nova Scotia from other travel destinations in Canada and beyond. Tourism Nova Scotia’s research shows that 6% of visitors indicated that the Nova Scotia food culture was critically important for their decision to visit, while a further 60% indicated that it was important, but not critical. Tourism Nova Scotia reports that if every visitor spends \$5 more on food and drink, tourism revenues could increase by \$10 million. Also, if 3% of visitors spend one more day in the province to take part in a culinary experience, tourism revenues could increase by \$11 million.

In addition to launching and promoting the Good Cheer Trail in partnership with Taste of Nova Scotia and operators, Tourism Nova Scotia launched the “Dining on the Ocean Floor” culinary experience in partnership with a culinary operator, The Flying Apron. This concept was conceived in-house at Tourism Nova Scotia and tested with their online

panel of previous visitors. The Flying Apron then took the concept and enhanced the idea to provide a truly unique dining experience where visitors had the opportunity to dine on the floor of the Bay of Fundy at Burnt Coat Head, a location that would be completely submerged by 25 to 40 foot tides a few hours later. The experience included a tour of the shore area and a four course meal with pairings of local beer and wine. The concept was a tremendous success, as it sold out every time it was offered and extended visitor stay in the local area.

Tourism Nova Scotia provided a strong presence to culinary experiences on NovaScotia.com, through social media, and in the Doers and Dreamers Guide. The landing page for culinary on NovaScotia.com (<http://www.novascotia.com/eat-drink>) currently features The Beggar's Banquet and a "Lobster! Lobster!" package from the Bras d'Or Lakes Inn. The site lists Nova Scotia's Top 10 Culinary Adventures, which includes three Cape Breton Experiences (The Beggar's Banquet, Fortress of Louisbourg's Chocolate Treats Workshop, and Baddeck Culinary Creations: A 100KM Menu) plus two groupings (The Good Cheer Trail and Culinary Creations) which feature Cape Breton restaurants and experiences. A number of Road Trip itineraries were added to the site that highlighted culinary experiences, a few of which included Cape Breton operators or experiences.

Tourism Nova Scotia also launched a series of culinary workshops in conjunction with the Bonavista Institute for Cultural Tourism, including:

- An Introduction to Signature Menus;
- Lobster: Beyond the Boil; and
- Breakfast of Champions.

The agency reported that attendance was good for some workshops and modest for others.

Overall, Tourism Nova Scotia reports that they saw positive results from their culinary focus during the 2015 season and quantifiable results will be forthcoming. They feel that the culinary experience will continue to be a key element for generating incremental revenue for the industry. In 2016, the focus will turn toward designing and matching culinary experiences to selected Explorer Quotient segments.

Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia (RANS)

RANS is a non-profit association that seeks to promote the food and beverage sector and impact the operating environment of the industry in a positive way. It does so through government advocacy, marketing, promotion, partnerships, education and outreach. It has represented the food and beverage sector since 1947.

In terms of culinary tourism, RANS is the presenter of the Savour Food & Wine Festival which takes place from late January to early March in Halifax. The festival includes the following events:

- *The Savour Food & Wine Show*
Held annually in March, RANS calls the Savour show Atlantic Canada's premier food and wine event. It showcases "Nova Scotia's finest restaurants, wines and beverages".

- *Decadence*
Decadence is a late January event focused on artisanal cheese, chocolate and pairing with wine, beer and cocktails.
- *Imbibe*
Imbibe is a February event focused on cocktails.
- *Rare and Fine*
Rare and Fine is a February focused on wine.
- *Dine Around*
During the month of February, participating RANS member restaurants offer special three-course prix-fixe meals for \$25, \$35 or \$45.

RANS, in partnership with Destination Cape Breton, presented the Savour Food & Wine Show annually in Sydney from 2011 to 2013. The show was held each May during that period to showcase of restaurants, wines, beverages and food products from across the province. It aimed to profile the best of the sector to resident and visitor foodies as well as food and travel writers. The event was discontinued in 2014 due to a lack of participation by restaurants, many of which are smaller operations who would be forced to close and lose revenues in order to participate in the show.

It should also be noted that RANS only has three Cape Breton food service operations as members, including Big Spruce Brewing, Cabot Links and NSCC Marconi Campus. While the organization does have members from across the province, its base is concentrated in Halifax.

Nova Scotia Association of Chefs and Cooks

While not directly active in culinary tourism as an organization, the Nova Scotia Association of Chefs and Cooks (NSACC) plays a supporting role. As the Nova Scotia branch of the Canadian Culinary Federation, its purpose is “to uphold the dignity of our profession and to help educate our membership in changes to our profession”. NSACC works closely with partners to improve the culinary industry in Nova Scotia.

Right Some Good

Right Some Good is defined as a pop-up dining food festival, and was the first food festival of its kind in the world. The event combined some of the world’s top-ranked chefs with local chefs and aspiring apprentice chefs to provide dining experiences inspired by local ingredients and themes in impromptu locations staged in beautiful settings. Each dinner embraced the culture of the province through its natural beauty and local music, creating evenings that can never be recreated. It featured many interesting dining experiences from modern Aboriginal cuisine to innovative seafood held in diverse locations such as the Orangedale Railway Station, St. Peter’s Canal and the Fortress of Louisbourg.

The festival operated for four years from 2011 to 2014, with the first three years being held in Cape Breton and the fourth with events in both Cape Breton and Halifax. Through its events in Cape Breton, Right Some Good highlighted a number of local chefs and provided the opportunity for them to work alongside some of the world’s most renowned

talents. Pearleen Mofford, the founder of Right Some Good, provided the following results:

- Over \$3 million in economic impact generated;
- Visitors to the festival stayed an average of four nights and attended two or more events;
- 95% of festival attendees came specifically for Right Some Good; and
- Over 50% of attendees came from off-Island.

The event also garnered significant media attention for the Island and the Province. A feature on the festival was broadcast on the Cooking Channel in the United States and the event was covered by the Huffington Post, to name just two examples of media coverage.

The festival was not presented in 2015, but may be re-introduced at some point in the future. Ms. Mofford cites a lack of key infrastructure as the main challenge for the event. For example, a mobile kitchen had to be brought in from Toronto at a high cost, as no such kitchen is available in Nova Scotia. Another challenge was securing sufficient stable, multi-year funding to maintain the high quality vision for the festival. Despite such challenges, the event demonstrated that a high quality culinary festival in Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia can generate visitation from culinary tourists.

IV. BEST PRACTICES FROM OTHER JURISDICTIONS

A number of jurisdictions in North America have taken steps to position themselves as culinary tourism destinations. Nova Scotia has examined Prince Edward County in Ontario as a model and this example has been reviewed. Given the specific characteristics of Cape Breton, three other jurisdictions have been examined for best practices, including:

- Coastal Maine;
- Prince Edward Island; and
- Vancouver Island.

Each of the jurisdictions is explored below and on the following pages.

Prince Edward County, ON

Prince Edward County is a rural area of Ontario, located three hours east of Toronto and just outside of Belleville on the shores of Lake Ontario. The region's economy has traditionally been agriculture and, while much of southern Ontario was being transformed by significant growth and development from the 60s to the 80s, the area maintained its heritage and rural character.

Wineries began to be established in the county and now it is one of three appellations or designated wine regions in Ontario with over 20 wineries. Along with the wine came the relocation of a number of established chefs from Toronto, several of them famous with active followings. To take advantage of this burgeoning culinary product, an organization called Taste the County was established in 1999 to promote the area as a culinary destination. Taste the County had a mandate to stimulate agricultural and tourism economic growth through sustainable event marketing and project management in Prince Edward County.

Taste the County has pursued this mandate through two main strategies: 1) organizing the culinary experiences in "The Taste Trail", a self-guided tour route; and 2) organizing culinary events.

The Taste Trail includes 27 food and beverage operators, including wineries, restaurants, producers, a cider company, and a food truck. The Trail has a set of criteria for participating businesses:

- They must be open for the majority of the year (6-8+ months);
- They must provide a value-added experience;
- They must operate regular hours for the public;
- Restaurants must feature and promote county ingredients and menu items, including county wines and cider; and
- Manufactured or retail goods must be from local ingredients or have a unique county offering.

The Taste Trail is marked with visible signage for visitors travelling through the county. Other promotional efforts include signage for the destination on the 401 Highway, a print guide book, a website (<http://tastetrail.ca>), billboards, and media relations (e.g. familiarization tours).

Research conducted on the Taste Trail found that:

- Visiting the Taste Trail was the primary trip purpose for 40% of visitors;
- Visitors spent an average of \$130 on wine, \$143 on meals, \$123 on arts/crafts, and \$43 on prepared food;
- 83% of visitors stayed overnight in the county;
- 60% spent one half to one day on the Taste Trail and visited an average of seven businesses.

In addition to the Taste Trail, Taste the County has also developed a number of culinary focused events, including:

- *Maple in the County*
This is a two-day event in late March that is organized around the maple harvest. The event includes visits to sugarbushes, pancake breakfasts with fresh maple syrup, taffy on snow, a lumberjack show, artisan vendors, and the opportunity to purchase maple products like maple syrup, maple butter or granulated maple sugar.
- *Countylicious*
Held in the spring and fall, this event features restaurants in the region that create unique three-course prix fixe menus consisting of an appetizer, entrée and dessert, offered at a great price of \$30 or \$35 per person. Many of the accommodations in the county offer packages during these events.
- *Terroir Wine & Farmers Market*
Terroir is a one-day, farm-to-table event in May that showcases local food, handcrafted wine, artisan bread, preserves and other one-of-a-kind products from local farmers.
- *The Great Canadian Cheese Festival*
This event, held in June, is the only pan-Canadian showcase of artisan cheese and features some of Canada's finest cheesemakers from coast to coast offering more than 125 different cheeses to taste and buy. The festival attracts thousands of visitors to learn about, taste and buy the best in Canadian artisan cheese and to sample fine wine, craft beer and cider.
- *Taste! Community Grown*
This is a one-day epicurean event in late September that brings together some of the region's finest chefs, winemakers, beer, spirits and cider masters. Visitors may sample gourmet food from top local restaurants and artisan food producers and buy fresh produce and wines in the farmer's market.
- *Wassail*
Scheduled over three weekends in late November and early December, Wassail is a unique wine celebration that pays tribute to the age old tradition of celebrating the harvest before the arrival of winter. Merrymakers would travel from house to house singing, feasting and quenching their thirst with local grog. Visitors can take a self-guided tour or register for bus tours that visit five wineries.

Coastal Maine

Maine is positioned as a destination that is synonymous with lobster. Restaurants throughout the United States will often specify that the lobster on their menu is “Maine lobster” and the state provides 80% of the lobster that is consumed in the country. The following description is offered on the Visit Maine website:

Okay, one word. Lobstah. It may not be in the dictionary, but it's in the hearts and minds of all Mainers. And, in the waters off the Maine Coast, in abundance. Of course, these are not just any lobsters. They're Maine lobsters. And they know it. Anyone who's tasted a Maine lobster knows it too. What some folks may not know is that there's also a softer side to Maine lobsters. You may have heard of it—the soft-shell lobstah, otherwise known as new shell lobster. Once a year, during August and September, mature lobsters shed their hard shells for a new, softer one. When harvested, these soft-shell lobsters are easier to eat (you can crack the shell by hand). They also have a taste described by many as succulent, more flavorful and sweeter. Or should we say sweetah?

Lobster is fished in Maine throughout the year, but as noted above, they promote soft-shell lobster as their premier product. Soft-shell lobster is available from mid June to November, but is most plentiful when the water is warmer in August and September. Hard-shell lobsters are more densely packed with meat, as the lobster has grown to near its maximum size for that shell. Soft-shell lobsters appear smaller within the new shell, but some consider the taste to be sweeter and more tender due to its increased moisture content. [Note: The season in Cape Breton is scheduled prior to the lobsters molting, so fresh Cape Breton lobster is hard-shell.]

Maine has successfully branded its “New Shell Lobster” and actively promotes this differentiation as its unique selling proposition. The Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative was founded in 2013 to grow demand for whole live lobster as well as value-added products. They have a website that promotes their lobster and includes preparation methods, recipes, profiles of fishers, profiles of seafood chefs, and information on where to buy Maine lobster. <http://www.lobsterfrommaine.com>

Along with lobster, Maine promotes a “sea-to-table” movement that also includes locally harvested oysters, clams and seaweed. As a seafood-focused culinary destination, they actively promote experiences such as lobster boat tours where tourists can haul traps and take some of the catch to cook for themselves, foodie tours that include fine dining and cooking classes, and a range of food focused events. These events include:

- *The Maine Lobster Festival*
This festival takes place annually during the first weekend of August, from Wednesday through Sunday. It started as an idea for a local marine festival to revive Midcoast Maine communities, but has turned into an internationally-recognized celebration of local seafood. The 2015 festival cooked and served 17,000 pounds of lobster. In addition to lobster, visitors can choose from steamed and fried clams, fried shrimp, shrimp cocktail, steamed mussels in wine and vegetable sauce, and many varieties of traditional summer fair food, all prepared in a traditional Maine way.

- *Lobsterpalooza*
Lobsterpalooza is a week-long celebration of lobster that takes place in mid-September throughout the Penobscot Bay Region. Restaurants in the region celebrate the lobster harvest by offering specials on lobster dishes. There are fun competitions for professional and amateur chefs, such as the lobster mac and cheese competition.
- *Claw Down*
Claw Down is a competition for local chefs who strive to create the tastiest gourmet lobster hors d'oeuvres. Attendees get to sample all the entries and vote on their favourites.

Prince Edward Island

Of course, PEI is most known for its potatoes, but it has also positioned itself as destination for lobster as well as oysters and mussels. PEI lobster suppers are a tradition that many visitors include within their itineraries.

The PEI Culinary Alliance was recently formed to promote the island as a culinary tourism destination and to support their four key food exports – potatoes, lobster, oysters and mussels. They do so under the “PEI Flavours” brand and operate a website: <http://peiflavours.ca>.

The Alliance has three main initiatives:

- *The Culinary Trail*
This trail is an inventory of the wide variety of culinary experiences and operators across the island. It includes culinary experiences, fishers, restaurants, authentic PEI products, local markets, and farmers. The inventory is presented as an interactive database on their website, as well as in print form as a guide.
- *Fall Flavours Festival*
The Fall Flavours Festival is a month-long culinary celebration highlighting authentic PEI tastes and traditions that takes place from early September to early October in communities across the island. The festival features a variety of acclaimed guest chefs hosting a wide range of unique culinary experiences. Participating restaurants develop menus exclusively for the festival. There are also a range of participatory events where attendees may pick potatoes, catch lobsters, harvest oysters or participate in a culinary boot camp.
- *Prince Edward Island International Shellfish Festival*
Actually included within Fall Flavours is the Prince Edward Island International Shellfish Festival. This event has grown to be a significant culinary event that celebrates PEI shellfish. It includes celebrity chefs, culinary activities, and live competitions during the day and entertainment in the evening.

Vancouver Island

Vancouver Island has been a leader in the slow food movement in Canada, as demonstrated by its website www.slowisland.ca. As part of that movement, they have been involved with such projects as:

- *Slow Fish*
This is a program that aims to raise awareness of where seafood comes from, the practices used to harvest it, the fishery's impact on the environment, and its overall sustainability. Vancouver Island has hosted events that focus on sustainable seafood and promotes the consumption of local, sustainable seafood.
- *Taste Education*
The Slow Food Vancouver Island Convivium hosts events regularly to highlight locally-sourced foods, farms and wineries and bring taste education to their members and the community. They have also been involved in establishing Victoria's first downtown permanent public market in 50 years, which has provided a direct connection between consumers and producers.
- *Ark of Taste*
The Convivium has contributed to the international Ark of Taste project, which seeks to develop a collection of heritage foods from around the world. To be on the ark, an item must be a food product (e.g. domestic species, wild species or processed product) that is of distinctive taste, linked to a specific area and local traditions, produced in a limited quantity and at risk of extinction.

Communities around Vancouver Island have been contributing to the "Slow Island" brand by promoting their own slow food programs. Cowichan Bay, about one hour north of Victoria, became North America's first Cittaslow community in 2009. According to their website (<http://www.slowcowichan.com>), "Cittaslow communities are characterized by people who take time to build community relationships, celebrate the community's unique history and traditions, promote craftsmanship and environmental stewardship, maintain the community's distinct character, and engage residents and visitors by sharing in high quality living."

As part of this slow movement, Cowichan Bay promotes traditional and sustainable methods of producing food and beverages that are rooted in local culture and traditions. They encourage residents and visitors to purchase food directly from local farmers, fishers, producers, and artisans at farm gates, the fishermen's wharf, local shops, markets and events around the community.

The community hosts a number of culinary events, including the Savour Cowichan Festival. This is a 10-day event held annually in late September-early October that celebrates and showcases the region's locally grown and produced food and beverages. Producers and restaurants partner to provide over 60 events that include visits to local operations, themed dining events, and talks with master winemakers, cider makers, brewmasters and sommeliers.

Farther up the east coast of Vancouver Island, approximately two and a half hours north of Victoria, is Comox Valley. The area produces approximately half of the shellfish in BC.

There is a culture of eating and living sustainably in the area and many restaurants feature locally grown food in their menu items. Shellfish and seafood is the main attraction, particularly oysters, clams, mussels, and crab. The region's website (<http://www.discovercomoxvalley.com>) includes a variety of culinary experiences and itineraries.

The area hosts the BC Shellfish and Seafood Festival each June. The inaugural event was a dinner and one-day event presented by the BC Shellfish Growers Association, but it has grown over the past nine years to be a ten-day festival that includes gala dinners with celebrity chefs, culinary events, producer farm tours, an oyster shucking competition, a chowder challenge, and educational workshops.

In conjunction with the festival, they host the BC Seafood Expo. This is a two-day conference that includes presentations by subject matter experts, cooking demonstrations, and industry seminars.

Comox Valley also hosts Flavour, a one-day culinary event in mid-September that showcases the region's finest chefs, wineries, craft breweries, and producers. The event is a fundraiser to support scholarships and bursaries for Culinary Arts and Tourism & Hospitality students at North Island College.

V. PAN CAPE BRETON FOOD HUB

The 2015 season marked the launch of the Pan Cape Breton Food Hub Co-operative Limited, which has been established with the vision to create a robust local food economy on Cape Breton Island. The mission of the Food Hub Co-operative is to create the infrastructure to market, aggregate and distribute food produced across the Island. In order to fill this mandate the food hub plans to work with partners at every level of the logistics chain to develop a business model that is effective and sustainable.

The Food Hub Co-operative is incorporated as a non-profit, multi-stakeholder co-op with both producer and consumer members. In the initial pilot project year of 2015, the food hub provided service to 10 member restaurants and 50 household consumers, with products coming from 30 producer members. Through this plan, producers provide the hub with a list of products for sale each week and the food hub lists these on its website for consumers to order. The food hub then arranges for the transportation and distribution of the products and takes care of the financial transactions between producers and consumers.

The food hub has formed an important partnership with a local trucking company to pick-up and deliver product, while maintaining the cold-chain and ensuring the safety of product transportation. The food hub will also be partnering with companies that provide software for ordering and reporting orders, as well as the back-end financial management side of the business. Local organizations are providing space for consumers to pick-up orders and other organizations are partnering to provide marketing and connections to local consumers.

The Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture, along with several municipalities and community health boards, has jointly funded the food hub project. The focus of the first two years is for the food hub to develop a model that is scalable to ensure that when the funding is exhausted the food hub will remain viable through its operations. Total revenue is created by mark-ups on products sold through the hub, grants and by membership fees. Each year, the food hub projects a small surplus in operational funds and by year three will be able to operate without substantial grants. The food hub is projected to generate nearly \$1.5 million in sales of Cape Breton products over the next three years.

Another important role of the food hub is to work on broad consumer education and marketing of locally sourced foods. To pursue this goal the food hub is partnering with local organizations and festivals to increase the profile of local food in various events. For example, in 2015, the food hub has partnered with the Gaelic College's KitchenFest to incorporate local food into the agenda and also has partnered with the Celtic Colours International Festival to showcase and feature a variety of local food elements into the food-related events within the festival.

Source: Cape Breton Food Hub Draft Business Plan 2015

For culinary tourism, the food hub could play a vital role, as it will create a supply chain for locally grown, whole, chemically-free and free range foods and speciality items to reach restaurants and food outlets that will serve the touring public. This could position the Island as a slow food destination similar to the Vancouver Island example provided. With an increased focus on attracting the culinary enthusiast, there will be a demand and an expectation for menus to feature local food.

VI. CAPE BRETON'S UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION

A unique selling proposition (USP) is a factor that differentiates a product from its competitors, such as the lowest cost, the highest quality or the first-ever product of its kind. A USP could be thought of as “what you have that competitors don't.”

While Cape Breton's culinary experience has a number of key differentiators, it is important to note that the Island must be positioned in alignment with the overall positioning of Nova Scotia's culinary product. That positioning is likely to continue to focus on the province's connection to the sea with an emphasis on seafood, as well as its complementary focus on Nova Scotia's wines, craft beers, and spirits.

Shellfish

If a person asked a tourist who is coming to visit Nova Scotia to describe the cuisine they would expect to experience, they will most likely say seafood. In fact, Tourism Nova Scotia's research indicates a significant consumer demand for authentic seafood experiences, particularly lobster. Being next to the Atlantic Ocean, much of our region was settled to harvest the bounty from the sea. In Cape Breton, the seafood is usually shellfish, particularly lobster and snow crab, but also mussels, surf clams, oysters, and shrimp.

As a distinction from the Maine 'New Shell' lobster, Cape Breton lobster is known for its hard shell, which is more densely packed with meat. Thanks to Dorothy Cann Hamilton of the International Culinary Center, a world-renowned chef who has family roots in Cape Breton, the name “Fourchu lobster” has been gaining recognition in food circles, particularly in New York City. An article on *Gothamist* (http://gothamist.com/2013/06/11/the_rolls_royce_of_lobster_rolls_is.php), a popular New York cultural website, states:

The Fourchu Lobster (labelled the Rolls Royce of lobsters) has returned to New York City. The rare creatures—which hail from the freezing cold waters off the tiny village of Fourchu on Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia—are rich and delicious, and have been compared to delicacies like Wagyu Beef and Italian White Truffles.

Not sold yet? Dorothy Cann Hamilton, founder of the International Culinary Center, says they are "without question, the very best lobsters in the world." She has been working hand-in-hand with local fishermen, "who catch these lobsters safely and sustainably, to bring this exciting opportunity to New Yorkers."

Similarly, an article on *Departures* (<http://www.departures.com/travel/travel/nova-scotia's-perfect-lobster>), a luxury lifestyle website that is produced by the same media company that published *Travel + Leisure*, contained this note:

The finest lobsters in the world come from the cold coastal waters off the town of Fourchu, on Nova Scotia's Cape Breton Island. At least that's what the locals—most of whom make a living catching and selling the creatures—claim. And if the determination and savvy of one resourceful woman have anything to do with it, this densely meaty crustacean might well become the next Wagyu beef, Chilean

sea bass, or jamón ibérico. Twenty years ago no one had heard of these now well-known name-brand delicacies, either.

That woman is Dorothy Cann Hamilton, the founder and CEO of New York's French Culinary Institute and a descendant of a line of Fourchu natives that stretches back to 1760, when her Scottish forebears wrested this land from the French colonists who settled it. A longtime Fourchu booster, Cann Hamilton recently realized that she could do her ancestral home a great service by inducing top New York restaurants to serve Fourchu lobster at a premium price.

It should be noted that despite the emphasis that Cann Hamilton has placed on Fourchu lobster in New York, local lobster fishers and seafood companies would argue that the same premium characteristics are true about all lobster landed in Cape Breton. Therefore, the Fourchu lobster brand name, or a similar branding approach, could possibly be applied to all Cape Breton lobster.

Cann Hamilton, in conjunction with NSCC, is currently exploring the concept of a culinary training centre dedicated to shellfish that may be based in Cape Breton.

The LFA27 Management Board has taken the initiative to develop a very informative website (capebretonlobster.com) and accompanying social media channels about Cape Breton lobster, as well as other key species. The program educates its audience about Cape Breton lobster, the people who fish it, sustainable harvesting practices, and other related news.

Along with lobster, snow crab is one of the most important species of shellfish harvested in Cape Breton. It thrives in the icy cold, pristine waters of Eastern Canada. With a hard shell encasing sweet meat, snow crab is prized around the world. Most of the snow crab caught in Cape Breton is exported to the United States and may end up in restaurant chains like Red Lobster. Louisbourg Seafoods' snow crab has been recognized with the prestigious iTQi Crystal Award, as it has achieved the highest 3-star rating for exceptional taste for three or more consecutive years.

For culinary tourism, snow crab is not as ubiquitous as lobster on the menus of local restaurants, but it does have potential to take a more prominent place and to be a main differentiator for Cape Breton Island. The Louisbourg Crabfest has been running for 22 years, serving up thousands of servings of snow crab, along with other seafood dishes. Bay St. Lawrence also hosts an annual crab festival that is one of the longest running in the region.

Mussels are farmed in St. Ann's Bay, Baddeck and in Richmond County, mainly to serve an increasing demand from the United States market. Englishtown hosts an annual Mussel Fest and the Louisbourg Crabfest has designated their Friday night as Mussel Night. Mussels are served in many restaurants on the Island, although they may not always be locally harvested. Many, if not most, restaurants in Cape Breton serve mussels as an appetizer or to accompany a lobster dish.

Arctic surf clams have been harvested off the coast of Cape Breton by Clearwater Seafoods for many years and, recently, Louisbourg Seafoods has also begun to harvest them. The vast majority of these surf clams are exported to Asia where they are utilized in sushi cuisine.

Oysters have previously been a fishery of the Mi'kmaq and are now gaining recognition at two areas on the Island. Mabou Harbour has become known for its oysters and a number of restaurants on the Island feature “Mabou Harbour Oysters” on their menus. Local harvesters have been selling Mabou Harbour oysters to local restaurants, farmers markets, and now through the Pan Cape Breton Food Hub. Oysters are also harvested in Dingwall where a local operator sells them to restaurants around the Cabot Trail and in the Toronto market. They have branded their oysters as “Aspy Bay Oysters”. This operator also offers tours of their oyster operation at the Hide Away Campground and Oyster Market.

Northern shrimp is also harvested in the waters off of Cape Breton by Louisbourg Seafoods, Premium Seafoods, and MV Osprey. It is mainly exported to Canadian, US and UK markets. Shrimp will often appear on menus at local restaurants, but is rarely indicated to be local. Louisbourg Seafoods’ shrimp product has achieved a 2-star superior taste award at the iTQi Superior Taste Awards in Europe. The cold water shrimp is much smaller than the typical cocktail shrimp that many chefs are familiar with, however it is said to have a far superior taste and texture.

Given all of this evidence, it is clear that shellfish is a strength of food production in Cape Breton, but is it a point of differentiation? PEI and Maine have established themselves as culinary destinations that feature shellfish, so Cape Breton needs to further differentiate itself from those destinations while keeping in alignment to the Nova Scotia positioning. The branding example of the Fourchu lobster may hold potential, although care must be taken not to discount lobster caught in other communities around the Island.

Naturally Pristine Environment

It’s not well known, but the vast majority of farming on Cape Breton Island is conducted by small producers using organic practices. This cannot be said of PEI, New Brunswick or even the Annapolis Valley. In Cape Breton there are approximately 225 farms ranging from vegetable production, to dairy, to grass fed and free-range beef, chicken and lamb operations, to artisanal cheese production.

Small scale farming has a positive impact on the fishery surrounding the island as well, as fishers tell us that there is very little chemical runoff from pesticides or fertilizers that finds its way into our coastal waters. As a result, the food produced on the Island and in the waters around the Island is grown in a naturally pristine environment.

Given that there has been a growing trend among culinary enthusiasts to seek sustainable food options such as slow food, the 100 mile diet, organic foods, free range, etc., knowing that food is produced in a naturally pristine environment should be an appealing quality. However, little research has been done on the purity of our soil and waters in Cape Breton to substantiate this claim. We also have very few certified organic producers in Cape Breton, but this is something that could be explored further.

An Artisanal Industry

Given the size of many of our food producers and harvesters, restaurants, and culinary experience providers, there is a very hands-on and smaller scale approach to our culinary industry. From lobster fishers, many of whom still use wooden traps and employ

fishing practices that have been passed down through generations, to recent craft beer start-ups, who are designing innovative products such as a new Celtic Colours Maple Lager, there is an artisanal approach that permeates much of the industry. Compared to large scale farming and fishing or the commercially processed foods that line the aisles of most grocery stores, the culinary industry in Cape Breton is differentiated by its artisanal qualities.

Sustainable Seafood

In terms of lobster, Cape Breton has a sustainability edge over Maine lobster. The Maine lobster fishery has been criticized for its fishing practices that many experts find troubling from a sustainability standpoint. The first reason for this concern is the year-round lobster fishing season in Maine. While fishing areas in Canada are coordinated with set seasons to prevent overfishing and to avoid the vulnerable molting period for lobsters, Maine does not have such restrictions. Secondly, Maine has a trap limit of 800 traps per vessel compared to 250-275 per vessel in the designated lobster fishing areas around Cape Breton. Clearly, the Cape Breton fishery is managed in a more sustainable way.

Another significant reason for concern is the Maine lobster fishery's impact on right whales. The Maine fishery intersects with the migratory route of right whales, an endangered species that is known to get caught in fishing ropes and gear. The method of fishing lobster in Maine may be problematic as well, as they use vertical lines to link multiple traps on the seabed. Some experts say that this method is optimal for right whales as there is only one buoy line for multiple traps, while other experts say that right whales can often be bottom feeders, thus placing vertical lines directly in their paths. Regardless of the fishing method, a year-round fishery with more traps in the water means there is a greater chance for right whales to get caught in the ropes and gear.

As a result of these concerns with the Maine lobster fishery, there may be an opportunity for Cape Breton to position itself as a sustainable fishing area. Following the philosophies of the Slow Fish program of Slow Food International (<http://www.slowfood.com/slowfish>), the Island could possibly stake a claim as the first Slow Fish region in Canada.

To support the positioning of Cape Breton Island's shellfish as being sustainable, many seafood suppliers on the Island have become certified with the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), the world's leading certification and ecolabelling program for sustainable seafood. This certification guarantees that the seafood they sell has been harvested using sustainable practices. In addition to individual companies, MSC has also certified the lobster, snow crab, surf clam and northern shrimp fisheries in Cape Breton waters (Scotian Shelf and Gulf of St. Lawrence). MSC has a symbol (right) that is utilized to label certified sustainable seafood.



To summarize, the USP for Cape Breton Island may be formed around these four points of differentiation:

1. The finest shellfish in the world, featuring our premium lobster, snow crab and other shelled delights;

2. A naturally pristine environment that celebrates small scale and sustainable agriculture;
3. An artisanal culinary industry that is characterized by hands-on, traditional and/or creative practices in food harvesting, production and preparation; and
4. A certified sustainable seafood, or Slow Fish, region.

VII. INDUSTRY CONSULTATION

As part of the Culinary Tourism Roadmap process, an industry stakeholder consultation session was held on November 10, 2015 at the Gaelic College in St. Ann's. Twenty-two participants attended the session representing restaurants, culinary experiences, food producers and harvesters, festivals, culinary and tourism education, industry associations, and relevant government departments and agencies.

Following presentations by the consultants, Tourism Nova Scotia, and Taste of Nova Scotia, the participants were divided into four working groups and led through a facilitated process that asked them to discuss three questions. A summary of the session responses is provided below and on the following pages.

Discussion Point 1:

What is the unique selling proposition (USP) for Cape Breton Island's culinary tourism experience?

There was an emphasis on the fact that Cape Breton is an island. The past isolation has led to authenticity and a strong sense of tradition. There is a connection to the land and sea, the food and the people who make it happen. Visitors may experience both ends of the culinary spectrum from foraging for mushrooms or hauling lobster traps to fine dining of culinary creations.

Each group indicated that Cape Breton Island has world-class seafood, with some noting that the Island's lobster and snow crab is the "best in the world". It was noted by a number of the groups that the quality of seafood is tied to the pristine waters surrounding the Island.

Another common thread was the diversity of foods available on the Island. This diversity is seen in seafood (lobster, snow crab, oysters, mussels, surf clams, Atlantic salmon, haddock, halibut, etc.) and in local or wild produce (apples, chanterelle mushrooms, cranberries, blueberries, etc.). As well, it was noted that there is a growing industry of distilleries, craft breweries, and a winery.

The groups recognized that there is a connection between the food of the Island and the natural environment. Besides the pristine waters, this includes organic farming, the beauty of the scenery, and the rich cultures of the Island. Stemming from the cultures is a tradition of community spirit and hospitality that extends to the culinary tourism experience.

Discussion Point 2:

What is your vision for Cape Breton Island's culinary tourism experience five years from now?

There was an emphasis on creating more authentic culinary experiences that feature the diversity of the Island's food. It was noted that there could be a greater connection between the rich culture and culinary experiences, such as Aboriginal food experiences or culture-infused food. It was also noted that there could be a greater connection between the scenery and culinary experiences, including food in unique settings. The participants envision more artisanal producers, including wine, beer, spirits, cheese, etc.

that tie in to culinary experiences. It was noted that more community suppers could be part of the culinary landscape.

Most of the groups noted the need for a distribution network/supply chain that connects local producers and harvesters with restaurants. One group noted that a comprehensive schedule of when products are available throughout the season would allow better planning to incorporate local products into their menus.

Seasonality was addressed by most of the groups and they felt that it was key to ensure that visitors may experience food services throughout the entire defined tourism season.

A number of the groups noted that there was a need to improve the quality and consistency of culinary experiences. This may be addressed through training and education programs.

It was noted that there are government regulations that are detrimental to the growth of the food sector. These regulations should be addressed through advocacy efforts.

One of the groups emphasized that the industry needs to focus on doing “what we do well”. That would include creating unique items and specialized menus, rather than a generic approach.

Another group noted that there is an opportunity to brand Cape Breton as “The Wild Island”, making the connection between the rugged beauty and the diversity of wild food that is available naturally.

Discussion Point 3: What steps need to be taken and what challenges/gaps addressed to achieve that vision?

Among the groups, a common thread was greater collaboration is needed to overcome the challenges. Knowledge may be shared, experiences may be grouped in a theme for promotional purposes, and industry members may support each other’s operations (e.g. dining in locally-owned restaurants). It was also noted that communication should be enhanced among those within the culinary sector.

There needs to be an investment in training and education. This would include mentoring programs and establishing standards for quality and consistency. It could also include programs for succession planning.

For community suppers, a template may be established to guide and support the hosting organizations. As well, a calendar of community suppers may be developed

The infrastructure for an Island-side distribution network must be put in place to encourage the use of local products and ingredients.

Steps should be taken to address the seasonality issue. Steps will also need to be taken to address access to labour, which may become a greater issue in the years to come.

VIII. FINDINGS

The following findings have been drawn from the research and consultations conducted:

1. *There is a growing interest in culinary travel that is driven by the explosion of food-focused media, farm-to-table movements, and culinary events.*

Approximately 15% of adult Canadian travellers stated that wine and cuisine activities was a primary trip motivator, approximately three-quarters participated in at least one type of activity associated with wine and cuisine while on an out-of-town overnight trip.

2. *Culinary enthusiasts match the demographic that is already being targeted by Destination Cape Breton.*

Culinary Enthusiasts are primarily comprised of couples who have higher levels of education and higher incomes compared to all pleasure visitors. They are more likely to be 55+.

3. *It is likely that there is cross-over between the Cultural Explorer and Authentic Experienter EQ segments and culinary enthusiasts.*

The EQ profiles for Cultural Explorers and Authentic Experiencers indicates that they have an interest in Shopping, Dining and Other Food-related Activities. Both segments are motivated by authentic experiences and being immersed in local culture.

4. *Product-themed culinary trails appear to work well in Nova Scotia.*

The Chowder Trail has been deemed a success and, while still in its inaugural year, the Good Cheer Trail may follow suit. These product-themed trails appear to work better in Nova Scotia than the previous Adventures in Taste program, which was more generic.

5. *Nova Scotia is placing a strong emphasis on culinary tourism and Cape Breton culinary experiences are featured in their promotional efforts.*

The Beggar's Banquet, the Bras d'Or Lakes Inn, Fortress of Louisbourg's Chocolate Treats Workshop, and Baddeck Culinary Creations: A 100KM Menu have all been featured as culinary experiences on NovaScotia.com. Additionally, other Cape Breton operators and experiences are included within the Good Cheer Trail.

6. *Cape Breton culinary-related operations are not widely represented within provincial culinary organizations.*

Only 17, a fraction of the culinary-related operations and experiences on the Island, are members of Taste of Nova Scotia. Some notable operators such as the Beggar's Banquet, the Bite House, the Dancing Goat, and Big Spruce Brewery are not members and cost of membership and concern about return on investment have

been cited as reasons for not joining. Only 3 culinary-related operations and experiences on the Island are members of RANS.

7. *Culinary festivals and events can motivate visitation to Cape Breton by culinary enthusiasts.*

With approximately 50% of their attendees coming from off-Island and 95% of surveyed attendees coming specifically for the festival, Right Some Good demonstrated that a high quality food festival can attract culinary tourists.

8. *Successful culinary destinations have used signature culinary events to build their brand.*

Prince Edward County, Coastal Maine, PEI and Vancouver Island have all organized culinary events that attract culinary enthusiasts while also reinforcing their brand position.

9. *Culinary events in Cape Breton that draw restaurants away from their regular operations may not be sustainable.*

The Savour Food & Wine Show in Sydney, although having great audience appeal, struggled to get restaurants on the Island to participate. Many of the restaurants are smaller operations who felt they could not afford to close their restaurant to participate in the event. Culinary events that tie in local restaurants at their own operations may have more success, such as “Countylicious” in Prince Edward County or “Dine Around” in Halifax.

10. *Culinary events at other jurisdictions celebrated local chefs.*

Rather than bringing in celebrity or international chefs, the culinary events at the best practice jurisdictions featured local chefs and aimed to raise their profiles.

11. *The best practice jurisdictions have close relationships between harvesters/producers and restaurants.*

In all cases, there is a strong link between those producing or harvesting the food and those preparing the food for consumers. There is a supply chain that enables a farm-to-table or sea-to-table process that fosters the use of local ingredients.

12. *The newly formed Pan Cape Breton Food Hub Co-operative has the potential to create a supply chain to support a farm-to-table and sea-to-table process.*

With an increased focus on attracting the culinary enthusiast, there will be a demand and an expectation for menus to feature local food. The Food Hub will allow restaurants to be provided with coordinated access to a supply of locally produced foods.

13. While Maine has successfully branded its New Shell lobster, Cape Breton lobster is differentiated by its hard shell which is more densely packed with meat.

The spring/early summer lobster season on Cape Breton Island is scheduled at a time when lobsters are at their largest size before molting into a new shell. While Maine states that its soft shell lobsters are more sweet and tender, this is a matter of personal taste and can be debated. Dorothy Cann Hamilton has been successful in gaining recognition for Fourchu lobster in New York City food circles where it is sold at a premium price.

14. Cape Breton has the potential to be positioned as a shellfish culinary destination within the overall Nova Scotia culinary destination.

With a shellfish culinary centre being explored by NSCC, the demonstrated success of the Fourchu lobster brand, a thriving crab fishery, and additional harvesting of mussels, surf clams, oysters and shrimp, Cape Breton has a strong foundation upon which it may be developed as a shellfish culinary destination. Nova Scotia focuses on the finest authentic seafood experiences and Cape Breton shellfish may be well positioned within that focus.

15. Given that its farming is small scale and sustainable, the food produced on the Island and in the waters around the Island is grown in a naturally pristine environment.

Since farming on the Island uses small scale and organic practices, there is very little chemical runoff from pesticides or fertilizers that finds its way into our coastal waters. Given the growing trend among culinary enthusiasts to seek sustainable food options, a naturally pristine growing environment could be a strong point of differentiation for Cape Breton.

16. There is little research available to add credibility to the naturally pristine environment positioning.

While there have been anecdotal claims that the soil and the coastal waters are cleaner than most other areas, research is needed to add credibility to those claims and to support this aspect of the unique selling proposition.

17. The culinary industry on the Island can be characterized as artisanal.

With an industry comprised of smaller scale operators who employ hands-on, traditional, and/or creative approaches, the term 'artisanal' may aptly be used to describe the sector, as it differentiates the industry from large scale farming and fishing or commercial food processors in other jurisdictions.

18. There are sustainable designations that may provide credibility to Cape Breton's naturally pristine environment and sustainable fisheries.

Designations such as the Marine Stewardship Council may be further expanded in Cape Breton to add weight and credibility to the positioning as a naturally pristine and sustainable culinary destination.

19. There may be an opportunity for Cape Breton to pursue and capitalize on a Slow Food or Slow Fish designation.

Following the example of Vancouver Island and Cowichan Bay, Cape Breton has many advantages that lend themselves to the Island being positioned as a Slow Food and/or Slow Fish region. Provincial initiatives like the “50% Local September” program were started in Cape Breton and grew to 4000 members, so there is a base upon which a Slow Food convivium may be founded.

PART 2: CULINARY TOURISM ROADMAP

IX. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

In his ground breaking business strategy book, Good to Great, Jim Collins outlines a “hedgehog concept” as a way to understand the strategies followed by organizations with the strongest and most enduring track records of success. He defines the concept as follows:

Picture two animals: a fox and a hedgehog. Which are you? An ancient Greek parable distinguishes between foxes, which know many small things, and hedgehogs, which know one big thing. All good-to-great [organizations], it turns out, are hedgehogs. They know how to simplify a complex world into a single, organizing idea — the kind of basic principle that unifies, organizes, and guides all decisions. That’s not to say hedgehogs are simplistic. Like great thinkers, who take complexities and boil them down into simple, yet profound, ideas, leaders of good-to-great [organizations] develop a Hedgehog Concept that is simple but that reflects penetrating insight and deep understanding.

You’ll know that you’re getting closer to your Hedgehog Concept when you align three intersecting circles that represent three pivotal questions: What can we be the best in the world at? (And equally important—what can we not be the best at?) What is the economic denominator that best drives our economic engine (profit or cash flow per “x”)? And what are our core people deeply passionate about? Answer those three questions honestly, facing the brutal facts without blinking, and you’ll begin to see your Hedgehog Concept emerge.

For Cape Breton Island’s culinary experience, the Hedgehog Concept may be defined as:



Each of these elements is explained further:

We have a passion for creating and sharing exceptional culinary experiences that highlight the best of Cape Breton Island – food, hospitality and natural beauty.

Cape Breton Island has garnered accolades as one of the most beautiful islands in the world and is well known for its warm hospitality. There are many operators on the Island who are already sharing exceptional culinary experiences and their passion is clearly demonstrated within these experiences. There is a passion to continue to enhance these existing experiences, create new experiences and share the very best of Cape Breton Island with visitors.

Cape Breton Island can become the best in the world in shellfish cuisine that is accentuated with local and wild natural ingredients.

There is a credible claim to be made that Cape Breton Island's shellfish, particularly lobster and snow crab, is the finest in the world due to the natural advantages of our location and pristine environment. With a focus on enhancing the shellfish cuisine and positioning the shellfish strengths within Cape Breton Island and Nova Scotia destination marketing, the Island may become recognized as a world leader in this area. As well, there is an array of high quality wild, local and artisanal food and beverage products that are demanded by culinary enthusiasts and serve as a strong complement to shellfish.

Our economic engine is driven by attracting more culinary enthusiast visitors and increasing the spend per visitor.

The research shows that culinary enthusiasts have a significantly higher spend than the average tourist. By attracting more of these visitors and providing experiences that encourage increased spending, the culinary component of the tourism sector will drive economic growth.

These three elements form the basic understanding upon which the rest of the Culinary Tourism Roadmap is developed. As Jim Collins states, the intersection of these three elements should unify, organize and guide all decisions.

The Envisioned Future 2021

The vision input from the industry consultation session and the Hedgehog Concept lead to creation of a five-year vision for the Cape Breton Island culinary experience. This vision is presented as present tense, as if it has already been achieved, as follows:

Cape Breton Island is recognized among culinary enthusiasts as a must-see region of Nova Scotia for its renowned shellfish culinary experience. Culinary enthusiasts are further enticed to visit the region for the local, wild and artisanal food and beverage products and ingredients that complement the shellfish strength.

Cape Breton Island's tourism industry has worked in partnership with Destination Cape Breton and Tourism Nova Scotia to develop an impressive array of world-class culinary experiences. These experiences range from exceptional dining to hands-on harvesting to collectively demonstrate the full range of the food preparation process. The experiences build upon the Island's natural beauty, rich culture and warm hospitality.

The culinary experience is effectively marketed through channels offered by Destination Cape Breton, Tourism Nova Scotia and industry to reach culinary enthusiasts. The culinary experience has garnered acclaim from tourists and the travel media.

The culinary sector is supported by an effective supply chain that promotes and fosters the use of local products and ingredients within the culinary experience. The industry has been educated and has bought-in to the advantages of optimizing the use of local products and ingredients.

The culinary sector continues to experience renewal through educational training and product development programs that produce talented new chefs and culinary entrepreneurs while providing continuing education to those already in the sector. Industry works in close partnership with Destination Cape Breton, Tourism Nova Scotia, Taste of Nova Scotia, NSCC, Cape Breton University and other partners to shape the education and product development plans.

Seasonality issues have been addressed to ensure that visitors can experience Cape Breton Island's culinary experience throughout the Island from May 1st to October 31st.

There is a measurement program in place that clearly shows that the culinary sector is experiencing growth in attracting new culinary enthusiasts and in the average spend per culinary visitor. This economic growth contributes to a financially healthy culinary sector and ongoing re-investment in the culinary experience.

The Research/Product/Marketing Continuum

The Research/Product/Marketing Continuum is a process that was formulated by Harvey Sawler of Forerunner Creative and Tourism Strategies, an Atlantic Canada-based tourism specialist who has worked extensively within the region's tourism industry. Sawler defines the Continuum as follows:

The Research/Product/Marketing Continuum is a never-ending process of investigation, invention and intervention. All three of these energies must work in concert to achieve optimum results in order to arrive at a true tourism economy. The Continuum illustration elaborates on the fact that tourism operators and organizations too often leapfrog from research to marketing without thinking the product challenge through. Forerunner believes that it is product – not marketing – that generates true demand: Product Drives Brand, which Drives Marketing, which Drives Demand.

The guiding principle of the continuum is illustrated in this chart:



Goals

Utilizing the Research/Product/Marketing Continuum, the following overarching goals have been defined to achieve the five-year vision:

Product Development:

1. Develop and enhance a strong inventory of world-class culinary experiences that collectively serve as a primary travel motivator for culinary enthusiasts and a secondary travel motivator for other visitors.
2. Develop industry education and product development programs that support the growth of the sector and emphasize the Island's strengths – the finest shellfish and local, wild and artisanal products and ingredients.

Brand:

3. Incorporate the culinary experience positioning, world-class shellfish cuisine that is accentuated with local and wild natural ingredients, into the branding of Cape Breton Island and Nova Scotia.

Marketing:

4. Promote the culinary experience through channels offered by Destination Cape Breton, Tourism Nova Scotia and industry to effectively reach culinary enthusiasts.

Demand Measurement/Research:

5. Develop a research program that measures the number of culinary visitors and the average spend per visitor.

The pursuit of these goals is outlined in the following sections of the roadmap.

X. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Product Development Goals:

Develop and enhance a strong inventory of world-class culinary experiences that collectively serve as a primary travel motivator for culinary enthusiasts and a secondary travel motivator for other visitors.

Develop industry education and product development programs that support the growth of the sector and emphasize the Island's strengths – the finest shellfish and local, wild and artisanal products and ingredients.

As stated in the Continuum, the Product drives the Brand, which drives Marketing, which creates Demand. To accomplish the Product Development goals, the following tactics have been defined:

- 1. Collaborate to create new culinary experiences on Cape Breton Island**
Destination Cape Breton, Tourism Nova Scotia and industry can collaborate to conceptualize and promote new culinary experiences for visitors. This may be pursued through the new TNS World Class Experience Excellerator Program.
- 2. Explore the development of a best practices mission to a recognized food destination that specializes in seafood**
Best practices missions are an excellent way to introduce industry operators and stakeholders to world-class experiences that may serve as models for their own experiences. Given the Cape Breton Island strength in shellfish, a best practices mission should be sought for destinations that are established as seafood destinations, such as Coastal Maine and Massachusetts (Boston, Cape Cod, Nantucket), Chesapeake Bay, New Orleans, or Vancouver Island.
- 3. Develop and deliver a customized culinary version of the successful Accelerated Market Readiness (AMR) program for restaurants and culinary experiences**
AMR is a successful tool that combines an assessment of an experience or operation by a qualified specialist to develop a comprehensive evaluation of the experience in terms of its state of readiness to meet the demands of today's visitors. This is followed by mentoring with the specialist to review the assessment report and discuss tactics to enhance the experience. A customized version of this program may be developed that is specific to culinary experiences and delivered to a number of culinary operators each year.
- 4. Develop a mentoring program to work with chefs and culinary entrepreneurs to enhance their culinary experiences**
Following the AMR program, an on-going mentorship program may be established to match established culinary specialists with chefs and culinary entrepreneurs to enhance their experiences and build capacity.

- 5. Support the development of the *Parks Canada Perfect Picnic Places* program**
Parks Canada has developed a new concept that they plan to offer in 2016, beginning in the Cape Breton Highlands National Park, called “Parks Canada Perfect Picnic Places”. The concept will promote a number of picnic sites within the National Park and partner restaurants where visitors may purchase picnic lunches. This program provides an excellent opportunity to marry Cape Breton’s scenic beauty with its culinary experience and the use of authentic local offerings.
- 6. Consider the development of a Slow Food chapter in Cape Breton**
Starting with a small core of chefs and gradually building capacity, a Slow Food chapter would emphasize artisanal cooking techniques and the use of local ingredients. Eventually, this movement could lead to a Slow Food designation for the Island, similar to that of Vancouver Island.
- 7. Develop culinary-themed itineraries for the Island, including the Cape Breton portions of the Good Cheer and Chowder Trails**
The themed culinary trails established by Taste of Nova Scotia and Tourism Nova Scotia have been successful in providing culinary enthusiasts with suggested itineraries for their visit to the province. DCBA may develop a series of culinary itineraries that are specific to the Island.
- 8. Establish a culinary advisory committee for Destination Cape Breton Association**
A culinary advisory committee would provide ongoing guidance to DCBA in terms of culinary experience development. The committee should include with representatives from restaurants, NSCC, Cape Breton University, producers (land and sea), Tourism Nova Scotia, Taste of Nova Scotia, RANS, and the Pan Cape Breton Food Hub. This committee may also have an advocacy role in terms of problematic regulations, as identified during the industry stakeholder session.
- 9. Support the development of an international shellfish centre of excellence at NSCC**
This concept is currently being explored by NSCC and its establishment would not only provide an excellent educational facility for Island chefs and culinary students, it would also support the proposed shellfish positioning for Cape Breton Island.
- 10. Educate local chefs and culinary students on the Pan Cape Breton Food Hub and using local ingredients**
To meet the demands of culinary enthusiasts, it is important to promote the use of local products and ingredients in the Island’s culinary experience. DCBA may partner with the Pan Cape Breton Food Hub to deliver workshops that educate the culinary sector on the wide array of local products and ingredients and the supply chain provided by the Food Hub.
- 11. Encourage NSCC and Cape Breton University to incorporate projects and assignments that involve the creation of culinary experiences for visitors into their curricula**
Through NSCC’s Culinary Arts program and CBU’s Tourism and Hospitality Management program, there may be opportunities to incorporate projects and assignments into the curricula that plant seeds in the minds of the chefs and culinary

entrepreneurs regarding the creation of culinary experiences. The hope is that some of these students will use such as assignments as launching pads for the creation of actual culinary experiences.

12. Work with CBU and NSCC to develop a culinary tourism version of existing business start-up programs

Currently, CBU and NSCC are involved in business start-up programs and events, including UIT, the Island Sandbox, and various hack-a-thon events. Most of these programs have focused on information technology to date, but they could be adapted to be used for the culinary sector. Such programs would support the on-going renewal of the sector in terms of ideas, businesses, and new experiences.

13. Encourage the creation of a shellfish-focused food festival that promotes visiting existing restaurants or culinary experiences that feature shellfish

Similar to Halifax's "Dine Around" event or Prince Edward County's "Taste the County" festival, a culinary festival may be developed which would promote visiting restaurants for special menus that feature local shellfish and are complemented with other local products and ingredients. Such a festival should be scheduled during a time of the season that historically has growth capacity, such as May-June.

14. Consider developing a Cabot Trail Food Truck Rally during the shoulder season

At a time when many restaurants are closed around the Cabot Trail, the food truck phenomenon may be utilized to create a multi-day event that positions food trucks at scenic locations around the Trail. By scheduling this very early or very late in the season, the event would serve a real need for visitors who would normally be faced with few dining options around the Trail at the specific time, while also providing culinary enthusiasts with another reason to visit.

15. Address seasonality issues by organizing a group of operators to stay open to end of October, and support them with promotion

It has been brought to the attention of DCBA that some areas of the Island are significantly underserved in terms of dining options, particularly in the last two weeks of October following the Celtic Colours International Festival. DCBA can address this issue by identifying a select group of operators who are willing to stay open and supporting them with promotion.

XI. BRAND

Brand Goal:

Incorporate the culinary experience positioning, world-class shellfish cuisine that is accentuated with local and wild natural ingredients, into the branding of Cape Breton Island and Nova Scotia.

As stated in the Continuum, the Product drives the Brand. In this case, it is important to note that there is an established brand for Cape Breton Island and that brand has been developed so that it aligns with the Nova Scotia brand and positions the Island as an amazing region within the province. Therefore, there is no need to develop a separate culinary brand; the focus should be on incorporating the culinary position into the existing brands.

Given that the USP for the Cape Breton Island Culinary Experience has been defined as “world-class shellfish cuisine that is accentuated with local and wild natural ingredients”, the following tactics have been defined to incorporate that positioning into the branding for Cape Breton Island and Nova Scotia:

16. Apply the new culinary position into the messaging and visual identity of DCBA

All current and future communication tools and channels should incorporate the new culinary position where possible and appropriate. This will include the website, social media channels, some targeted advertising, etc.

17. Acquire new photography and video that highlights the culinary experience

New professional photography and video should be acquired to use in the visual representation of the culinary position going forward. This imagery should follow Destination Canada’s image guidelines for the target EQ types, Authentic Experiencers and Cultural Explorers, of which culinary enthusiasts would be a sub-segment.

18. Provide messaging, imagery and video to Tourism Nova Scotia to support the positioning in their channels

Tourism Nova Scotia may support the Cape Breton Island culinary position by highlighting it within its existing channels (NovaScotia.com, social media channels, Doers & Dreamers Guide, etc.).

XII. MARKETING

Marketing Goal:

Promote the culinary experience through channels offered by Destination Cape Breton, Tourism Nova Scotia and industry to effectively reach culinary enthusiasts.

As stated in the Continuum, the Product drives the Brand, which drives Marketing, which creates Demand. Similar to the Brand section, the culinary experience will not have a separate marketing focus, but must be incorporated into the marketing strategies for Cape Breton Island and Nova Scotia. The following tactics have been defined to incorporate the culinary experience into the marketing for Cape Breton Island and Nova Scotia:

19. Promote the culinary experience through content marketing

Culinary itineraries, experiences and packages may be utilized as valuable content to be promoted through the websites, social media channels, and collateral materials of Destination Cape Breton and Tourism Nova Scotia.

20. DCBA and industry should partner with Tourism Nova Scotia to attract culinary-focused travel media

Given their specialized niche, culinary enthusiasts are consumers of culinary focused media. As such, they can be effectively reached through television shows, print and online articles, blogs, etc. A portion of the existing media relations programs of both DCBA and TNS may be dedicated to targeting culinary-focused media.

21. Dedicate a portion of online advertising to culinary enthusiasts

Online advertising (Google, Facebook, programmatic, etc.) can be very effective in targeting market segments by interest and can be utilized to target culinary enthusiasts. A portion of the online advertising budget of DCBA may be utilized to target this niche audience.

22. Create a culinary video as an addition to DCBA's series of unforgettable experiences videos

In 2015, DCBA launched a series of videos to promote the Island's unforgettable experiences. Once new culinary video has been captured, a new video may be developed to complement the existing videos. This may be acquired in partnership with Tourism Nova Scotia's new Inspiring Content program.

23. Incorporate culinary experiences into the annual visitor information centres (VIC) staff familiarization tour

Each year, DCBA organizes a fam tour for VIC staff to provide product knowledge education for them regarding the Cape Breton Island tourism experience. Culinary experiences may be incorporated into this tour to an even greater degree, so that VIC staff may then share their first-hand experiences with the visitors they service throughout the season.

24. Develop a Cape Breton Island Culinary Guide for on-Island distribution

The various culinary experiences would benefit greatly from a printed guide that is available at VICs, accommodation partners, restaurants, etc. The guide could provide listings of the wide variety of experiences offered and suggested itineraries, as well as editorial information about Cape Breton's amazing shellfish and local food products. The guide would serve as a tool to educate visitors on culinary options with the goal of motivating them to experience more and, thus, spend more. As well, a culinary section may be added to future editions of the Experience Cape Breton Island Guide.

25. Develop a late-season "Fall Flavours" passport promotion to encourage visitation to culinary operators who agree to stay open to October 31

The Good Sheer and Chowder Trails have demonstrated that passport promotions can be effective for driving culinary business, so this model may be utilized in conjunction with Recommendation 15 that addresses the seasonality issue with a lack of food service between the end of the Celtic Colours International Festival and the end of the promoted tourism season. A special promotion would not only help the operators who agree to stay open, it could provide another motivator for visitors to come to experience the fall colours.

XIII. DEMAND MEASUREMENT/RESEARCH

Demand Measurement/Research Goal:

Develop a research program that measures the number of culinary visitors and the average spend per visitor.

To complete the Continuum, follow-up research and measurement tracking is required to track conversion progress and to collect key data about culinary visitors. This data will inform the ongoing implementation of the roadmap in terms of what is working and what isn't, so that the strategy may be adjusted or new tactics may be introduced, as necessary, to continually refine and enhance the culinary experience. The following tactics have been defined regarding demand measurement and research:

26. Collect data on the Cape Breton Island culinary experience, as available in website analytics and other indicator tracking

Interest in the culinary experience may be measured through website analytics and other indicators, as available through cbisland.com and novascotia.com. By measuring these indicators on an ongoing basis, data will be provided that shows growth in interest, where the interest is coming from geographically, which culinary experiences receive the greatest traffic, conversion to culinary operator websites, etc.

27. Work with Tourism Nova Scotia to develop measurement methods and ongoing research for the culinary experience

Given that culinary is a key component of the development plans for Tourism Nova Scotia, they will likely be continuing to conduct research in this area. This may include adding culinary-related questions to conversion studies and exit surveys, conducting dedicated culinary research, or developing specific measurement tactics. Through working in collaboration with Tourism Nova Scotia, data may be developed or extracted that is specific to Cape Breton.

XIV. ACTION PLAN

Each of the recommendations is outlined with steps for implementation, suggested stakeholder responsibility, and suggested timing in terms of short term (in the next year), medium term (in the next two to three years), and long term (in the next four to five years or longer). This action plan may be revisited each year when determining specific plans for the upcoming year.

Recommendation	Responsibility	Timing
1. Collaborate to create new culinary experiences on Cape Breton Island		
• Organize experience development workshops with a culinary focus	DCBA/TNS	Short term
• Educate industry on the new World Class Experience Excellerator Program offered by Tourism NS	TNS/DCBA	Short term
• Develop and offer new culinary experiences	Industry	Short-medium term
2. Explore the development of a best practices mission to a recognized food destination that specializes in seafood		
• Collaborate to organize a best practices mission	DCBA/TNS/ACOA	Short-medium term
• Evaluate and identify potential destinations	DCBA/TNS/ACOA	Short-medium term
• Promote the mission to industry	DCBA/TNS/ACOA	Short-medium term
3. Develop and deliver a customized culinary version of the successful Accelerated Market Readiness (AMR) program for restaurants and culinary experiences		
• Contract consultant to customize and deliver program	DCBA/Consultant	Short-medium term
• Identify industry operators for program	DCBA/Consultant	Short-medium term
• Deliver program	Consultant	Short-medium term
• Evaluate program and adjust as necessary	DCBA/Consultant	Short-medium term
4. Develop a mentoring program to work with chefs and culinary entrepreneurs to enhance their culinary experiences		
• Explore mentorship program models	DCBA	Medium term
• Conceptualize mentorship pilot program	DCBA	Medium term
• Implement pilot program	DCBA	Medium term
• Evaluate pilot program and adjust as necessary	DCBA	Medium term
5. Support the development of the <i>Parks Canada Perfect Picnic Places</i> program		
• Outline support role	Parks/DCBA/TNS	Short term
• Identify industry partners	Parks/DCBA	Short term
• Initiate program	Parks/DCBA/TNS	Short term
• Promote program	Parks/DCBA/TNS	Short term
• Evaluate program and adjust for the following season	Parks/DCBA/TNS	Short term
6. Consider the development of a Slow Food chapter in Cape Breton		
• Identify chefs and stakeholders to explore concept	Food Hub/Industry	Medium term
• Establish movement	Food Hub/Industry	Medium term
• Seek Slow Food designation	Food Hub/Industry	Long term
7. Develop culinary-themed itineraries for the Island, including the Cape Breton portions of the Good Cheer and Chowder Trails		
• Conceptualize and develop itineraries	DCBA	Short term
• Promote itineraries through channels (web, social media, etc.)	DCBA/TNS	Short term
8. Establish a culinary advisory committee for Destination Cape Breton Association		
• Develop terms of reference for committee	DCBA	Short term
• Identify and contact potential members	DCBA	Short term
• Establish committee	DCBA/Committee	Short term

9. Support the development of an international shellfish centre of excellence at NSCC		
• Advocate for support of the concept	DCBA/Industry	Short-medium term
10. Educate local chefs and culinary students on the Pan Cape Breton Food Hub and using local ingredients		
• Develop pilot workshop	Food Hub	Short-medium term
• Deliver pilot workshop	Food Hub	Short-medium term
• Evaluate the pilot and develop larger roll-out plan	Food Hub	Short-medium term
11. Encourage NSCC and Cape Breton University to incorporate projects and assignments that involve the creation of culinary experiences for visitors into their curricula		
• Discuss concept with CBU and NSCC	DCBA/CBU/NSCC	Medium term
• If support, explore additions to the curricula	CBU/NSCC	Medium term
12. Work with CBU and NSCC to develop a culinary tourism version of existing business start-up programs		
• Discuss concept with CBU and NSCC	DCBA/CBU/NSCC	Medium term
• If support, explore development of start-up programs	DCBA/CBU/NSCC	Medium term
13. Encourage the creation of a shellfish-focused food festival that promotes visiting existing restaurants or culinary experiences that feature shellfish		
• Conceptualize event overview	DCBA/TNS	Medium term
• Discuss with industry	DCBA/Industry	Medium term
• If support, develop plan for event	DCBA/Industry	Medium term
14. Consider developing a Cabot Trail Food Truck Rally during the shoulder season		
• Conceptualize event overview	DCBA	Medium term
• Discuss with industry and food truck operators	DCBA/Industry	Medium term
• If support, develop plan for event	DCBA/Industry	Medium term
15. Address seasonality issues by organizing a group of operators to stay open to end of October, and support them with promotion		
• Communicate initiative to industry	DCBA	Short term
• Identify operators who will stay open	DCBA/Operators	Short term
• Develop promotional plan	DCBA/Operators	Short term
• Evaluate the initiative and adjust for the following season	DCBA/Operators	Short term
16. Apply the new culinary position into the messaging and visual identity of DCBA		
• Provide direction to creative agency	DCBA	Short term
• Implement position into messaging and visual identity	Creative Agency	Short term
• Adjust messaging and visual identity as necessary	DCBA/Creative	Short term
17. Acquire new photography and video that highlights the culinary experience		
• Identify experiences to capture	DCBA	Short term
• Plan shoot	DCBA	Short term
• Implement shoot and review content	DCBA	Short term
18. Provide messaging, imagery and video to Tourism Nova Scotia to support the positioning in their channels		
• Discuss messaging, imagery and video	DCBA/TNS	Short-medium term
• Deliver content	DCBA	Short-medium term
• Incorporate content in channels – website, social media, etc.	TNS	Medium term
19. Promote the culinary experience through content marketing		
• Plan promotion of the culinary experience	DCBA/TNS	Short-medium term
• Share content through designated channels	DCBA/TNS	Short-medium term
• Evaluate the initiative and adjust for the following season	DCBA/TNS	Short-medium term

20. DCBA and industry should partner with Tourism Nova Scotia to attract culinary-focused travel media		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify media to target Collaborate to plan fam trip(s) Implement fam trip(s) Evaluate the initiative and adjust for the following season 	DCBA/TNS DCBA/TNS DCBA/TNS DCBA/TNS	Short-medium term Short-medium term Short-medium term Short-medium term
21. Dedicate a portion of online advertising to culinary enthusiasts		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify online advertising opportunities for culinary (Google, Facebook, etc.) Plan campaign Implement campaign Evaluate the initiative and adjust for the following season 	DCBA DCBA DCBA DCBA	Short term Short term Short term Short term
22. Create a culinary video as an addition to DCBA's series of unforgettable experiences videos		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit application to TNS Inspiring Content Program Conceptualize video Capture video content Produce video Promote the video through the web, social media, etc. 	DCBA DCBA DCBA DCBA DCBA/TNS	Short term Short term Short term Short term Short term
23. Incorporate culinary experiences into the annual visitor information centres (VIC) staff familiarization tour		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify culinary experiences to be featured Secure buy-in from industry partners Evaluate the initiative and adjust for the following season 	DCBA DCBA/Industry DCBA/Industry	Short term Short term Short term
24. Develop a Cape Breton Island Culinary Guide for on-island distribution		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptualize the Culinary Guide Identify potential industry partners to produce the guide Develop content Print and distribute the guide Evaluate the initiative and adjust for the following season Incorporate a Culinary section in the 2017 Experience Cape Breton Island Guide 	DCBA DCBA DCBA/Partner DCBA/Partner DCBA/Partner DCBA	Medium term Medium term Medium term Medium term Medium term Medium term
25. Develop a late-season "Fall Flavours" passport promotion to encourage visitation to culinary operators who agree to stay open to October 31		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptualize promotion Print and distribute materials Promote the passport Evaluate the promotion and adjust for the following season 	DCBA DCBA DCBA DCBA	Short term Short term Short term Medium term
26. Collect data on the Cape Breton Island culinary experience, as available in website analytics and other indicator tracking		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify available data and tracking methods Establish benchmarks Monitor and report on data 	DCBA DCBA DCBA	Short term Short term Ongoing
27. Work with Tourism Nova Scotia to develop measurement methods and ongoing research for the culinary experience		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with Tourism Nova Scotia on measurement methods Implement measurement methods Monitor ongoing research needs 	DCBA/TNS DCBA/TNS DCBA/TNS	Medium term Medium term Ongoing

APPENDIX

INVENTORY OF CULINARY EXPERIENCES

Cabot Trail

Name	Type of Experience	Why we Love it	Location and Website (if available)
Chanterelle Inn	Fine Dining	For over 15 years the Chanterelle Inn has specialized in local, seasonal foods, some of which are foraged on the property. They are featured in "Where to Eat in Canada" and are a member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	48678 Cabot Trail, Baddeck, Nova Scotia, B0E 1B0 http://www.chanterelleinn.com/
Chanterelle Inn Culinary Creation	Cooking Class	This experience allows you to visit a local farmers' market with the Chanterelle Inn chef, where you will help select ingredients that will be transformed into your dinner, by you and the chef! A great chance to learn tips and tricks from an experienced chef and learn about the abundance of food Cape Breton has to offer.	http://www.novascotia.com/packages/experiences/baddeck-culinary-creations-a-100km-menu/200780
The Keltic Lodge	Fine Dining	The property is an experience of itself, situated on a small peninsula surrounded by gorgeous ocean views. The menu features maritime flair accentuated by herbs grown on site. Winner of the prestigious Wine Spectators Award of Excellence, and a member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	Middle Head Peninsula, Ingonish Beach, Nova Scotia, Canada B0C 1L0 http://www.kelticlodge.ca/dining/
Restaurant Avalon at Castle Rock Country Inn	Fine Dining	An intimate setting with a beautiful view and delicious food. They feature lots of great local foods prepared with creativity! A member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	39339 Cabot Trail Ingonish Ferry, Nova Scotia http://www.castlerockcountryinn.com/
The Markland	Fine Dining	A menu featuring the best of the sea that surrounds this beautiful setting.	802 Dingwall Road, Dingwall, NS http://www.themarkland.com/
Le Gabriel	Casual Dining	If you are looking for authentic Acadian cuisine look no further than the Acadian Specialty section of Le Gabriel menu, which features traditional staples like meat pie and fricot.	15424 Cabot Trail, Cheticamp, NS http://legabriel.com/index.php
All Aboard Restaurant	Casual Dining	A good stop for fresh seafood after viewing the ocean it comes from! A casual and homey atmosphere; expect to see lots of locals.	14925 Cabot Trail, Cheticamp, Nova Scotia B0E 1H0
The Chowder House	Casual Dining	When eating at the Chowder House you will be equally impressed with the view! Surrounded on 3 sides by ocean, while eating the freshest ocean catches, this experience allows you to eat your view!	91 Lighthouse Rd. Neil's Harbour, Nova Scotia
Island Sunset Resort	Full Service Dining	Eat seafood while watching the sun set over the ocean it came from!	19 Beach Cove Lane, Belle Cote, NS http://www.islandsunset.com/restaurant.php
Hide Away Campground and Oyster Market	Outdoor Food Adventure	If you are feeling really adventurous, a camping trip with a seafood focus is a perfect way to explore the natural beauty of northern Cape Breton. You can also get tours of the delicious Aspy Bay Oyster operation.	401 Shore Road, South Harbour http://www.campingcapebreton.com/oyster-market.html
The Frog Pond Café	French pastry and coffee café	The Frog Pond Café is the perfect spot to seek great coffee and French style pasty, and yes, you can sit overlooking an actual frog pond! This café is part of a very nice folk art gallery.	15856 Cabot Trail Cheticamp, Nova Scotia http://sunsetartgallery.ca/frog-pond-cafe/

Dancing Goat Café	Café	Popular with locals from across Cape Breton, Dancing Goat offers up gourmet soups, sandwiches and salads, along with great coffees and baking. Many local ingredients are used in the soups and salads.	Cabot Trail, Margaree Valley
Dancing Moose Café	Casual Dining	The specialty here is Pannekoek, Dutch pancakes! These are served sweet or savoury with lots of choices for additions. The Dancing Moose also has a wide variety of other choices for any meal. The café sits overlooking the ocean and space is available for picnicking.	42691 Cabot Trail http://thedancingmoosecafe.com/café.php
Big Intervale Fishing Lodge	Experience	Learn how to fish all day, and then settle into the comfortable dining room to eat fish in the evening! A culinary adventure is waiting for you by the banks of the Margaree River!	3719 Big Intervale Road, Margaree Valley http://bigintervalelodge.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3&Itemid=103
Cape North Farmers' Market	Farmers' Market – Saturdays	A great little market on the top of Cape Breton!	The Cape North Fire Hall, Cabot Trail Rd, Cape North http://www.capenorthfarmersmarket.com/
Marché des Fermiers de Chéticamp	Farmers' Market – Saturdays	A unique building makes the backdrop for this outdoor market. Look for it on the main street in Chéticamp.	Boardwalk on the main street in Chéticamp.
Cabot Shores Boat and Tour Adventures.	Experience	A scenic place to do charter fishing or learn about lobster fishing. Cabot Shores also offers unique accommodations and meals prepared on site.	http://www.cabotshores.com/boat-tours-and-adventures-5781
Normaway Inn	Full Service Dining	A beautiful setting on an old farm property. Meals are done in good taste using local ingredients.	Margaree Valley, Nova Scotia http://www.thenormawayinn.com/dining.html
English Country Garden Bed and Breakfast	Fine Dining	An intimate dining experience in a charming setting. The dining room is available for those not staying at this bed and breakfast, but reservations are required and must be made 3 days ahead.	45478 Cabot Trail, Indian Brook http://englishcountrygardenbb.ca/dining/four-course-fine-dining/

Bras d'Or Lakes Scenic Drive

Name	Type of Experience	Why we Love it	Location and Website (if available)
The Bite House	Fine Dining	This experience offers a small intimate dining room in a century –old farmhouse, with a fixed 5-course menu that changes monthly. The Bite House features locally sourced seasonal foods prepared with creativity and a taste for detail. They are consistently rated one of the top restaurants in Nova Scotia. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXyVJlUDuK4	1471 Westside Baddeck Road, Baddeck http://thebitehouse.com/
Bell Buoy Restaurant and Supper House	Family Dining	Family style dining with a view of the Bras d'Or! The menu offers a wide range of options from seafood to pasta and offers chemical free, gluten free, kosher options, and it is also nut-free. They are a member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	536 Chebucto St, Baddeck, NS B0E 1B0 http://www.bellbuoyrestaurant.com/
Inverary Inn Resort	Full Service Dining	Enjoy the beautiful setting, and casual atmosphere. A good selection of menu items and also a fully stocked bar at the pub to unwind at the end of your day. A member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	368 Shore Road, Box 190 Baddeck, NS B0E 1B0 http://capebretonresorts.com/our-resorts/inverary-resort/dining

McCurdy's at Silver Dart	Full Service Dining	An amazing view of the Bras d'Or Lake while you enjoy a tastefully prepared meal. They will also provide you with a picnic lunch if you are on your way out to explore the natural beauty of the island. A member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	257 Shore Rd Baddeck, NS B0E 1B0 http://www.maritimeinns.com/en/home/silverdartlodge/default.aspx
Big Spruce Brewing	Brewery and Tasting Patio	Big Spruce is an on-farm brewery overlooking the Bras d'Or lakes. Their micro-brewed beers are all unfiltered, unpasteurized, and organic certified and contain some ingredients grown on site. While there, sit on the charming patio and sample the beers and go for a tour of the hop yard and brew floor. If you are lucky enough to be there on a Friday you are in for a special treat - Food Truck Fridays! Each Friday all summer a food truck sells locally sourced casual meals, many featuring beer and live entertainment plays on the patio all afternoon.	64 Yankee Line Rd http://bigspruce.ca/
Charlene's Bayside	Casual Dining	One word - Chowder! Charlene's chowder is known across Cape Breton and beyond. It has been featured on, "Where to Eat in Canada."	9657 105 Hwy, Whycocomagh
Frolic and Folk Pub and Jill's Chocolate Café	Pub and Chocolate Shop	These establishments are part of the Highland Heights Inn, which is located next door to the Highland Village Museum. The pub fetures pub food with a beautiful view of the Bras d'Or lake, and live music very often. Local chocolatier Jill creates chocolates at the chocolate shop. If you hit the right time you can even watch the process through a viewing window.	4115 Hwy 223 Iona http://www.ionaheightsinn.com/on-site/
Telegraph House - Cable Room Restaurant	Fine Dining	The Telegraph House is one of the oldest Inns in Cape Breton, having served guests for over 150 years. Featuring a menu that is all local and mostly gluten-free, the Cable Room is a foodie experience in an unique historic setting.	479 Chebucto St, Baddeck http://www.baddeckhotel.com/dining.html
Auberge Giseles	Fine Dining	Come and relax after a long day of adventure. Set in the main building of a charming hotel, the dining room offers beautiful views of the garden and grounds. Many of the menu selections feature the best of Cape Breton ingredients.	387 Shore Rd, Baddeck http://www.giseles.com/dining.html
Highland Village	Museum	Come and learn how the pioneers grew food! Special events throughout the season showcase local cuisines, and everyday you can learn about the farming that fed the settlers.	4119 Hwy 223, Iona http://highlandvillage.novascotia.ca/
High Wheeler Café	Café	Offering a range of sandwiches, soups and salads this is the perfect spot in Baddeck to grab your picnic supplies before heading out on the trail!	470 Chebucto St, Baddeck http://visitbaddeck.com/highwheeler-cafe/
Goat Island Tour	Cultural Experience	Come and learn about how the first inhabitants of Cape Breton, our Mi'kmaq people, sustained themselves on the natural bounty that exists here. An informative tour takes visitors on a boat ride to an island where you will learn the ways of the Mi'kmaq and then will have a traditional feast.	http://www.eskasoniculturaljourneys.ca/
Baddeck and Area Community Market	Farmers' Market - Wednesdays	A great market featuring a variety of foods from across Cape Breton.	526 Chebucto St. Baddeck - http://baddeckcommunitymarket.net/
Cape Breton Lobster Adventure Tours	Experience	Tour the beautiful Bras d'Or Lake and learn about the lobster industry from an experienced fisher. Also offered are chartered fishing trips!	Baddeck wharf http://cblobstertours.com/?page_id=13

Fleur-de-Lis Trail

Name	Type of Experience	Why we Love it	Location and Website (if available)
Miller's Tap and Grill	Full Service Dining	Your first stop in Cape Breton; so come hungry for your first taste of the island! Featuring local specialties like lobster. A member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	771 Reeves St, Port Hawkesbury, NS B2G 2B7 http://www.maritimeinns.com/en/home/default.aspx
Bras d'Or Lakes Inn	Full Service Dining	Featuring a great variety of casual or more elegant fair, from both the land and the sea! The setting is also lovely, with a nice view of the Bras d'Or lake.	10095 Grenville Street, St. Peter's, NS http://www.brasdorklakesinn.com/dining/
Arichat Seafood Market	Market and Restaurant	Not only can you buy a variety of fresh or frozen seafood here but you can also eat in or grab a meal to go. Perfect for taking along on that perfect ocean side picnic spot that you will find all across Isle Madame! They also serve breakfast.	2392 NS-206, Arichat, NS B0E 1A0 http://www.premiumseafoods.ns.ca/market.html
Beggar's Banquet	Experience	Beggar's Banquet provides you with music, theatre, the chance to dress-up in period costume and on top of all that - dinner! It is modeled from an old tradition in Nova Scotia of holding a banquet for the poor, and is set in a replica of an 18th century working-class tavern. A lively night will be had by all!	15 Commercial Street Extension, Louisbourg, B1C 2J4 http://www.novascotia.com/packages/experiences#Region=0&Community=0&Filters=&View=Grid&Page=1&IncludeArea=1
The Grubstake Restaurant	Full Service Dining	It's close to the ocean, which is reflected in the great variety of seafood on the menu. It has been described as, "casually elegant country cuisine". A member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	7499 Main Street, Louisbourg, NS, B1C 1H8 http://www.grubstake.ca/
Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site	Experiences	The Fortress of Louisbourg is a premier historical site in North America, and the dining experiences are no exception to the excellence you can expect from the site. There are several period restaurants on site, as well as a reproduction to-period bakery and newly established chocolate making workshop. There are also many on-site gardens and livestock as well as other historically significant features that will thrill the foodie in you. Not to be missed!	Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site - 58 Wolfe Street, Louisbourg, B1C 2L2 http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/ns/louisbourg/index.aspx
Rita's Tea Room	Café	A nice spot to stop on route 4 for a hot cup of tea and a traditional Cape Breton snack like our famous oatcakes.	8077 East Bay Highway Big Pond, NS http://www.ritamacneil.com/pages/ritas-tea-room

Ceilidh Trail

Name	Type of Experience	Why we Love it	Location and Website (if available)
The Glenora Inn and Distillery	Distillery and Full Service Dining	Single malt whisky distillery, with interesting tour that includes samples. The beautiful grounds make a pleasant backdrop for lunch or dinner. The menu features lots of local specialties. Glenora has been featured in "Where to Eat in Canada", and is a member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	13727 Route 19 Glenville, NS B0E 1X0 http://www.glenoradistillery.com/
The Red Shoe Pub	Pub and Eatery	Feel like a local! Live music and a festive atmosphere meet you at the Red Shoe Pub. This pub is the creation of members of one of Cape Breton's most accomplished musical groups, the Rankins. The food is step above your average pub food, featuring lots of local seafood. A member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	11533 Route 19, Mabou, NS B0E 1X0 http://www.redshoepub.com/

The Clove Hitch	Full Service Dining	An upscale bistro serving maritime fair with a creative twist! The Clove Hitch specializes in the freshest seafood available, often plucked from the ocean earlier that day, and often prepared in a fusion fashion. They also feature a good selection of local beers and wine. Watch for specials like sushi made with lobster or crab!	8790 Route 19, Port Hood, NS http://clovehitch.ca/
Celtic Music Interpretive Centre	Music and Lunch Experience	Traditional food and traditional music pair up to make the perfect lunchtime experience!	5471 Nova Scotia Trunk 19, Judique, NS B0E 1P0 http://www.celticmusiccentre.com/about/restaurant.htm
Gillis Lobster Tours and Charter	Experience	Come and learn all about catching lobster from an experienced fisher. You can even arrange to sample the wares!	Government wharf Port Hood http://www.gltc.ca/
Cabot Links	Full Service Dining	Maritime inspired meals, overlooking a spectacular ocean view. Try the fresh lobster or other seafood dishes! They are a member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	15933 Central Ave. Inverness, NS, B0E 1N0 https://www.cabotlinks.com/
The Public House	Pub and Eatery	A casual pub on the property of Cabot Links golf course. Lots of great casual options and beers. Try the lobster pizza!	https://www.cabotlinks.com/dining/
The Downstreet	Café	A great place to grab a coffee, catch up on emails and watch people on the main street in Inverness. If you are planning a walk on near-by Inverness beach stop here for your picnic fixings!	https://www.cabotlinks.com/dining/
Mabou Farmers' Market	Farmers' Market - Sundays only	A great selection of products from across the island. Come see what our local food producers have to offer and grab a hot meal or some goodies for the road!	Mabou Athletic Centre http://www.maboufarmersmarket.ca/

Marconi Trail/Metro Cape Breton

Name	Type of Experience	Why we Love it	Location and Website (if available)
Governors Pub and Eatery	Pub and Eatery	Enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of a traditional pub with live music most evenings and also some afternoons. The menu features traditional pub fair with a local twist, and there are finer diner options served on the first floor as well. Lots of great local beers on tap! A member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	233 Esplanade Street, Sydney, NS B1P 5Y8 http://governorseatery.com/
Kijus	Full service dining	Situated in an indigenous community, Kijus offers gracious hospitality with a glimpse into local culture. The menu offers a wide range of selections, and features locally sourced and seasonal foods. A member of Taste of Nova Scotia.	50 Maillard Street, Membertou, NS http://www.kijus.com/
Lobster Pound and Moore	Full service dining	Casual dining at it's best! Foodies will love the open concept kitchen, allowing you to watch the chef's in action! Chef and owner Richard oversees his staff and personally finishes every dish before it ends up on the table. They specialize in comfort food with a gourmet twist. Come hungry, portions are large. They are a top pick by Lonely Planet.	161 Queen street, North Sydney, Nova Scotia B1S 2Y9
Black Spoon Bistro	Full service dining	A great little spot for casual high quality lunch or dinner. Locals pour into this place for the lunch specials featuring amazing soups, sandwiches and salads.	320 Commercial St, North Sydney, NS B2A 1C2 http://www.blackspoonbistro.com/default.html

Flavor Group	Full service dining	This trio of restaurants includes, Flavor Downtown, Flavor on the water and Flavor 19. Each has it's own unique character offering casual dining with a gourmet touch. Lots of local features, seafood, gluten free and vegetarian options.	Flavor Downtown - 16 Pitt Street, Downtown Sydney, Flavor 19 - 1225 Grand Lake Rd, Lingan Golf Course, Flavor on the Water - Joan Harris Cruise Pavilion. http://cbflavor.com/
Cape Breton Farmers' Market	Farmers' Market - Saturdays	The oldest and largest farmers' market in Cape Breton, featuring lots of unique products and foods from across the region. This is also a great place to find some ethnic foods not always associated with Cape Breton.	http://www.capebretonfarmersmarket.com/

Culinary Festivals and Events

Name	Type of Experience	Why we Love it	Location and Website (if available)
Englishtown Mussel Festival	Food Festival - Last Saturday in June	This is an authentic local festival to kick off the season. Mussels and Music all day, and half the night - What more could you ask for?	Main Highway, Englishtown, B0C 1H0, Cabot Trail
Kitchen Fest	Cultural Festival - Late June - Early July	Good times, good food and good drink are all part of the Kitchen Fest experience. A week-long festival featuring local musicians at popular restaurants, pubs and community spaces, which allows you to try out the house specials at each place too!	Island-wide http://www.gaeliccollege.edu/kitchenfest/eat-local/
Port Hood Lobster Picnic	Community Dinner - Early July	This experience is very traditional here in Cape Breton. Casual setting, casual dining, and the chance to talk with the locals, and all while being a stone's throw from the ocean.	45 Wharf Road, Port Hood
Bay St. Lawrence Crab Festival	Crab Festival - Mid July	This is one of the longest running crab festivals in Cape Breton. In addition to an amazing crab dinner, this festival also features a fishing derby with lots of opportunities for visitors to participate.	Bay St. Lawrence
Louisbourg Crab Festival	Crab Festival - Late July - Early August	Two days of fun, music and crab! This popular festival draws in both locals and visitors alike, with many returning year after year.	http://louisbourqcrabfest.ca/
Celtic Colours International Festival	Cultural Festival - Mid October	Although this is primarily a music festival, there are many, many opportunities during the 10-day island wide festival for foodies to really dig in to our cultural foods. Every day of the festival communities groups create traditional meals using locally sourced ingredients. There are also workshops on cooking things like Haggis, or gardening. Watch for the local food symbol on their listings to know you are getting an authentic traditional meal.	Island-wide http://www.celtic-colours.com/

Food Trucks

Name	Specialty	Location and Website (if available)
Cruisin' Cuisine	Gourmet, Local food	Baddeck, Nyanza, Sydney https://www.facebook.com/ccft2015/timeline
Little Rollin' Bistro	Gourmet, Local food	Downtown Sydney and other events http://www.lrbistro.ca/
Capt'n Kenny's Fresh Fish and Chips	Local seafood with a twist	Port Hawkesbury http://www.captnkennysfresh.com/
The Bees Knees Diner	Quality food truck fare	https://www.facebook.com/BeesKneesDiner/timeline
Free Range Bio Farm Food Truck	Offering free-range pork products from their own farm	Various locations info@free-range-bio-farm.com