



**Cape Breton Highlands
National Park of Canada**
parksCanada.gc.ca

Cultural Explorer

You seek constant opportunities to embrace, discover, and immerse yourself in the entire experience of the culture, people and settings of the places you visit. Not content to just visit historic sites and watch from the sidelines, you want to participate in the modern-day culture as well. You often attempt to converse with locals, attend local cultural festivals, or go off the beaten track to discover how people truly live.

In Chéticamp, flags and even buildings adorned with the unmistakable yellow star on the blue field make it plain to see that you are in Acadia. You step inside Saint-Pierre Church, which dominates the view. You are really lucky: the parish priest is here today, and he has the time to chat. He explains that music played an important role in the preservation of Acadian culture and tells you that the clergy in the area made special efforts to collect the traditional francophone songs you can hear today.

Further down the Cabot Trail, you find “Les Trois Pignons,” a community centre that focuses on Acadian history, including the local art of rug hooking. A lady dressed in traditional garb whose hands seem to be flying over a piece of stretched burlap welcomes you. She shows you how wool is collected and carded by hand and how the spun fibres are “hooked” to make a rug.

Acadian culinary traditions are still alive and well, as you can tell from a delicious smell wafting out from many homes and restaurants. Dishes that evolved from cooking what was available in one big pot are ubiquitous. So which will you try: hearty meat pie, hot potato pancakes, chicken “fricot”, or seafood chowder?

Speak to our Parks Canada staff to make the most of your visit!
www.canada.travel/eq

For the Cultural Explorer we suggest...

Hooked on Tapestry – Les Trois Pignons community centre is a great place to learn about Acadian culture, including the art of rug hooking – looping yarn through stretched burlap to create a tapestry. Its museum includes the work of Chéticamp’s world famous rug hooker, Elizabeth LeFort.

Cultural Geocaching – Are you up for a challenge? Check out our new geocaching opportunities, including the Middle Head-Multi Cache, with which you will explore the history and culture of the area.

Hike the Buttereau Trail – Check out the foundations of homes built by Acadian pioneers who farmed this land a few hundred years ago. Can you imagine squeezing a family of 12 into one of these houses?

Fàilte dhan a’Cholaisde Ghàidhig! (Welcome to the Gaelic College!) – Did you know that Cape Breton had the biggest population of Scots outside of Scotland in the 1800s? Visit the Gaelic College in St. Ann’s – the oldest Scottish settlement on the island – and learn about Scottish history in the Great Hall of the Clans Museum. At night, join in the square dance at a local Ceilidh!

While in the Area:

Festival de L’Escaouette – July1-August 23

Weekly *Gaelic Milling Frolic, Acadian and Scottish Concert, and Acadian Campfire* at the park – check the interpretation schedule

Celtic Colours International Festival – October 9-17

