



Culinary Splendor in Charlottetown

By Tiffany Thornton

Canada's Prince Edward Island has long been touted as "the gentle island". With its small rolling hills, verdant potato fields and pastoral vibe, it's a place that makes you want to linger lazily and watch the purple hue of the evening sky unfold. The capital city of Charlottetown is where the birth of the Canadian nation evolved one hundred and fifty years ago. This small idyllic city is on the edge of a bustling harbour. The tree-lined streets invite you to meander. The grand old Victorian homes and colonial buildings provide a sense of old world charm.

The location on the Atlantic pretty much assures any visitor that the seafood will be a fresh catch of the day, but knowing where to go for the absolute best in town can be tricky.



Lobster tacos at the Row House Lobster Co

seeing the word “lobster” in the name of a restaurant will be temptation enough to check it out. Located on Richmond Street, possibly the quaintest street in downtown Charlottetown, the Row House Lobster Co. menu is certainly a “catchy one.” The lobster tacos are stuffed to the brim with charred corn, tomato salsa, pickled red onions and generous lobster chunks. On a lobster kick, the next must-try are the lobster lollipops, tempura-battered lobster served up with spicy mayo and cilantro lime dipping sauce. Lastly, don’t leave without trying the red rock local oysters - slurpy and sensational.

What better way to wash it all down than with a locally-brewed beer from Charlottetown’s Gahan House? They handcraft some superb ales made on site at the brewery, which you can tour. Located inside an old historic building that once was a convent, the Gahan House brewery boasts the best beer in town. The tour will take you back in time, as it includes the brewery’s history and how the name Gahan came to be. Of course, sampling of some of the top ales, like the Sir John A honey wheat and the island red amber ale are all included.

Every trip needs to be powered up by a scrumptious brunch. Leonhard’s Café in downtown Charlottetown is not just good, it’s divine. The café has an inviting ambiance, and the menu has touches of German-inspired, locally-sourced quality food. The Bavarian breakfast is out of this world and is stuffed with P.E.I. potatoes, bacon and onions, and is served with a side of greens. The smoked salmon casserole is baked with cheese and consists of more P.E.I. potatoes, spinach, onions and herbs. Make sure you save room for the freshly-baked vanilla rolls.

No visit to P.E.I. is complete without taking a piece of the island home with you. Moonsnail Soap Works is a unique and funky shop which produces over 30,000 handmade soaps per year. The soaps and body products are inspired by the land, the sea and the alluring red beach sand that surrounds the coast of Prince Edward Island. The P.E.I. Sand Scrub is so addictive it’s best to grab a few to take home with you, along with the Red Clay & Sea Kelp Soap. Each is infused with bay, lavender and cedar oils. Best of all, Moonsnail will ship anywhere, in case you wish to replenish your supply after you return home.

Charlottetown may be a small city, but it certainly has a plethora of superb dining options. Whether it’s a lobster roll lunch, or some of the best oysters you will ever indulge in, P.E.I. has several varieties that will leave your palate tingling for more.

When it comes to accommodations, The Grand Holman Hotel certainly lives up to its name. With its open airy entrance, towering ceilings and walls filled with wonderful art, it’s an inviting spot located in the heart of historic Charlottetown. The Island Suite rooms are stellar and offer modern touches, amenities and cozy comforts like the dual fireplaces (one in the bedroom, the other in the main sitting area of the suite).

For many travellers to the Maritimes,



The view from the Grand Holman Hotel in Charlottetown



Moonsnail Soap Works



A scrumptious brunch is served at Leonhard’s Café



The Gahan House’s wonderful selection of ales