



THE GLASGOW – HALIFAX CONNECTION

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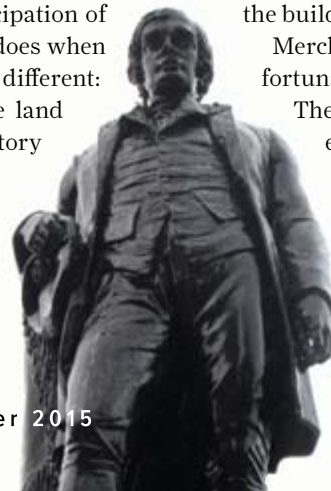
The Europe Airpost five-hour direct flight from Halifax to Glasgow tilts its bright yellow wing in an almost bird-like fashion as we begin our descent. Just minutes before I was staring wide-eyed out the window at the rolling hills and craggy cliffs of the Scottish highlands. I could feel the anticipation of discovering a new city take hold like it always does when I embark on a new journey. Yet this time was different: I was leaving New Scotland and going to the land where so much of Nova Scotia's Scottish history and heritage had started many generations ago.

When I arrive at Glasgow Airport, I am greeted by a gentleman wearing a green checkered kilt who gleefully welcomes me and puts my suitcase in a Bob's Taxi. This leads me to chuckle as five hours prior I had taken a

Bob's Taxi from downtown Dartmouth to the airport. I soon arrive at the Fraser Suites hotel in historic Merchant City. The view from my room is inspired. Old rooftops are basking in an almost terracotta hue. Seagulls swoop past my window and perch themselves on the etchings of lions that sit atop the buildings.

Merchant City is central to everything, and fortunately Glasgow's city centre is easy to navigate.

The little side streets lined with pub and restaurant exteriors remind me so much of Halifax. I recall reading somewhere that one of Glasgow's oldest pubs is called "The Scotia," and I decide to seek it out. When I arrive, the pub is filled with the sound of live music, and everyone is swaying back and forth to the famed Scottish ballad "Caledonia." I chat with some of the



crowd over a pint of locally-brewed beer and find myself becoming strangely attached to the city.

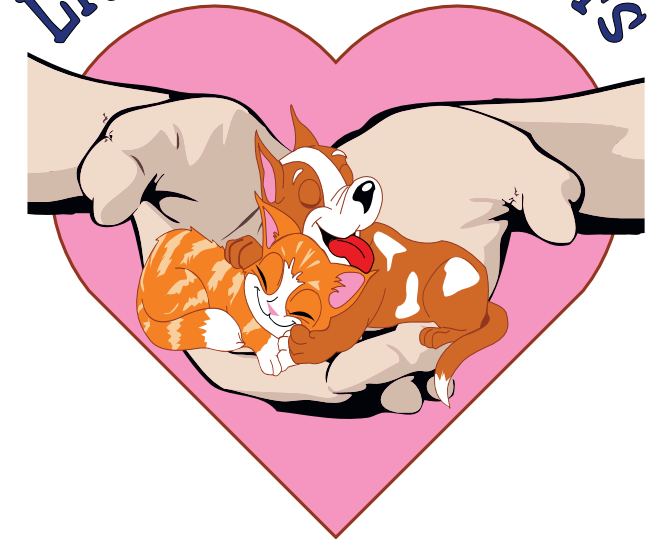
The next morning I indulge in a full Scottish breakfast, savouring my bangers and beans. The air is damp with the smells of history as I make my way to George Square. Along the way I stumble on a plaque commemorating Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, who was born in Glasgow. The square is surrounded by beautiful Georgian buildings that house Glasgow's city council. George Square has several significant statues and monuments, the tallest being of Scottish poet and novelist Sir Walter Scott; another of acclaimed poet Robbie Burns is represented there as well. It's reminiscent of Halifax's Victoria Park, which boasts the likenesses of the same two famous Scotsmen.

From George Square I walked along the main shopping hub of Sauchiehall Street, past the Halifax bank and towards Argyle Street, which forms the main route in and around the city's shopping centre. It offers up some fabulous pubs and great grub, just like its namesake in Halifax. The similarities are everywhere; even the buildings towards the west end of Argyle look uncannily like Halifax's sister street.

Glasgow is the kind of city that you could linger in for days and just scratch the surface of its mixture of alluring mystique and Glaswegian charm. This spring you will have the chance to do exactly that. WestJet's new route will be flying direct from Halifax to Glasgow, giving you the opportunity to discover the many roots of New Scotland. ■



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