AFAR

By Bailey Berg • Edited by Michelle Baran • November 4, 2026

This Scenic Island in Canada's Easternmost Province Will Be Easier to Reach with United's New Flights

You can easily build an entire travel itinerary around this forthcoming route. Here's how.



Take advantage of United Airlines' renewed Newfoundland service to carve out an adventurous summer stay. Photo by Erik McLean/Unsplash

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With humpback whales feeding offshore, puffins nesting on windswept cliffs, and icebergs drifting past centuries-old fishing villages, Newfoundland, Canada's easternmost province, has some of the most remarkable coastal scenery in North America. Add hiking trails that skirt the Atlantic, brightly painted saltbox houses, and a capital city with a lively pub scene, and there are countless reasons to make the trip. And starting next summer, getting there will be easier, too.

On June 24, 2027, United Airlines is bringing back nonstop flights between Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) and St. John's International Airport (YYT) in Newfoundland, restoring a route it last operated in 2016.

The seasonal service will offer daily flights through September aboard a 76-seat Embraer E175 aircraft. Under United's currently published schedule, flights will depart Newark at 5:15 p.m. and arrive in St. John's at 10:01 p.m. local time. Return flights are scheduled to leave St. John's at 10:30 a.m. and land at Newark at 12:41 p.m.

The route is particularly welcome news for travelers interested in exploring northeast Canada. While St. John's has year-round flights to and from major Canadian cities, including Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax, nonstop options from the United States have been limited.

"Re-establishing non-stop service to the eastern U.S. seaboard is a strategic priority for our airport and represents a significant air access milestone," Dennis Hogan, CEO of St. John's International Airport, said in a statement announcing the route.

This area of Canada offers plenty to fill an itinerary, whether you have a long weekend in St. John's or a week or more to explore the island. Here's where to start.

What to do in Newfoundland



Head inland to experience the otherworldly landscapes of Gros Morne National Park. Photo by J Lynn Stapleton/Unsplash

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Start in St. John's, North America's easternmost city, where rows of houses painted in shades of red, turquoise, yellow, and purple climb the steep streets above a busy harbor. Downtown, Water Street is lined with independent shops, restaurants serving freshly caught Atlantic seafood, and historic buildings dating to the city's days as a major fishing port.

For a bird's-eye view, head to Signal Hill National Historic Site, where the stone Cabot Tower overlooks the harbor's narrow entrance to the Atlantic. From there, the 1.1-mile North Head Trail descends along exposed cliffs, with wooden staircases and sweeping ocean views.

Some of the island's best wildlife encounters are a short drive from the capital. At Cape Spear, about 20 minutes away, visitors can stand at Canada's easternmost point, explore a lighthouse dating to 1836, and scan the Atlantic for passing whales. Farther south, in Bay Bulls, O'Brien's Whale and Bird Tours offers two-hour cruises to Witless Bay Ecological Reserve, where more than 260,000 pairs of Atlantic puffins nest on grassy offshore islands in the summer.

For those who prefer exploring on foot, the East Coast Trail stretches 209 miles along the Avalon Peninsula, passing sea stacks, lighthouses, abandoned settlements, and cliffs that plunge into the Atlantic.

If you're interested in a slightly longer road trip, head to the Bonavista Peninsula, about three to four hours from St. John's. In Trinity, restored 19th-century houses, churches, and fishing establishments offer a look at Newfoundland's maritime past, when salt cod was the backbone of the local economy. Nearby, the 3.3-mile Skerwink Trail loops around a narrow peninsula with views of wave-carved sea stacks and sheltered coves. In Elliston, a short walk leads to one of North America's best land-based puffin-viewing sites, where visitors can watch the birds tending their burrows on a small offshore island.

On the island's western coast, Gros Morne National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, has some of Canada's most remarkable geology. At the Tablelands, a vast expanse of rust-colored rock from Earth's mantle has been exposed by tectonic forces, creating a martian-like landscape. Elsewhere in the park, a two-hour boat tour takes visitors through Western Brook Pond, a glacier-carved freshwater fjord surrounded by cliffs nearly 2,000 feet tall.

Travelers who would rather leave the logistics to someone else have several guided options. G Adventures' eight-day Newfoundland trip offers a cross-island introduction, beginning in St. John's and heading west through communities such as Brigus, Trinity, Elliston, and Twillingate. Backroads' six-day Newfoundland Walking & Hiking Tour focuses on Trinity Bay and Fogo Island. Similarly, Adventure Canada's 12-day "Newfoundland Circumnavigation" sails round-trip from St. John's, with stops at Gros Morne, the 1,000-year-old Norse settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows, and the tiny, boat-access-only community of François.

Where to stay in Newfoundland



For a stay with dramatic coastline views, book Fogo Island Inn. Photo by Erik Mclean/Pexels

Fogo Island Inn

On a remote island off Newfoundland's northeast coast, Fogo Island Inn rises on stilts above the rocky shoreline, with 29 rooms overlooking the North Atlantic. Designed by Newfoundland-born architect Todd Saunders, the hotel with three Michelin Keys celebrates local craftsmanship, from hand-stitched quilts to furniture made by island artisans. Stays include meals with locally caught cod and seasonal ingredients foraged from the island, along with experiences such as guided hikes and tours of Fogo's historic communities, museums, and artists' studios, led by local residents. In his review, Afar cofounder and CEO Greg Sullivan wrote, "I stayed three nights and felt that was too short."

Gros Morne Inn

Near the village of Woody Point, Gros Morne Inn makes an excellent base for exploring its namesake national park. The 15-room property overlooks Bonne Bay and the surrounding mountains, with outdoor cedar soaking tubs and a panoramic sauna that's particularly welcome after a day of hiking. The restaurant, Taste, draws on local seafood and seasonal ingredients. The inn's commitment to sustainability, including its use of renewable energy and reclaimed materials, earned it a spot on Afar's 2022 Best New Hotels List.

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