



Global

GETAWAY CAPE BRETON



Cabot Links 11th Hole



Cabot Cliffs Golf Course



Cabot Links 18th Hole

When Cabot Links opened in 2012, nestled between Inverness and the Gulf of St Lawrence over abandoned coal mines in Cape Breton, the excitement in the golf world was palpable. Canada's first true links course, it was a beauty. Then, in 2016 when its sister course Cabot Cliffs created by one of golf's most respected architectural teams Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw opened, if the destination wasn't already on the bucket lists of serious golfers around the world, it was now.

Fairways meander over dunes, cross ravines, flirt with the edges of steep drops to the sea and tumble down from high forest-lined glades. In the latest 2018 rankings Cabot Cliffs is #9 on Golf Digest's World's 100 Greatest Golf Courses and Cabot Links is #43. In 2017, Architectural Digest named it in "8 of the World's Most Beautiful Golf Courses". It's the real deal.

Golf today is played on more than 30,000 courses worldwide but only 246 of them—less than 1 percent—may be classified as links according to the list that The Links Association has put together. Of these a whopping 210 are in the British Isles. North America boasts only five links courses of which Cabot Links is the only one in Canada.

On Cabot Links, designed by Canadian golf course architect Rod Whitman, every hole offers an ocean view and five holes play directly adjacent to the beach. Cabot Cliffs offers postcard-worthy panoramas and rolling fairways that is linksland golf at its best. With accommodation overlooking the fairways, golfers can wake up to that beckoning beauty every morning.

On my last visit to Cabot a couple of years ago, two and four bedroom villas were being built. Designed by award-winning architect Omar Gandhi, and now open, each villa features a fully customized kitchen with premium appliances, a modern open design and private deck.

My large, modern room in the main lodge with its stunning views over Cabot Links and the Gulf of St. Lawrence was less than a minute walk away from Panorama, the picturesque fine dining restaurant on-site. Local and



Cape Cliffs Golf Course



Cape Breton Scenic Roads

seasonal were key to the ever evolving menu. While the sun set in spectacular colours, I dined on snow crab salad and buttery perfectly poached Cape Breton lobster served with grilled potato salad, cheddar chive biscuit and asparagus. The wine list had over a dozen Nova Scotia wines by the bottle including the impressive champagne method Benjamin Bridge Brut.

On the ground floor of the same building is the Cabot Bar, where you can watch golfers finish their round on the 18th hole of Cabot Links while grabbing a quick post-round snack or lingering over a drink on the green-side patio. The menu includes creamy east coast seafood chowder, Canadian beef burgers, lobster rolls and freshly chucked local Mabou Harbour oysters.

Between the Lodge and the main street of Inverness, The Cabot Public House is just what you would want in a local pub: tasty food, friendly staff, live music and an outdoor patio. Dishes include a Cape Breton lobster boil, fish cakes, Nova Scotia mussels, poutine, and classic pub fare such as Buffalo wings and loaded nachos. www.cabotlinks.com

Just a short ten minute drive away is the perfect 19th hole for whisky lovers, Glenora Distillery, home to North America's first single malt whisky. Glenora Distillery, which started production in June 1990, produces their spirits in traditional copper pot stills using only barley, yeast and water from Glenora Falls which flows through their property.

All their whiskies are aged in once used bourbon casks and the Glen Breton Rare Ice is finished in ex-ice wine casks from Jost Vineyards for three months. I loved their peated product, Glen Breton 12 Year Old Cask. Extra special are Glen Breton Silver Anniversary Edition 25 Year Old and Bruce Jardine 25 Year Old, released to celebrate Glenora's 25th anniversary a couple of years ago.

The Scottish influence is strong in this part of Nova Scotia with Gaelic still being spoken and the sound of fiddles at every turn. Glenora is no exception offering daily live

music in the Washback Pub featuring Cape Breton musicians during the tourist season (about mid-May to late October). You can order up tastings of their whiskies while tapping your toes to the rhythm.

The menu at their Warehouse Restaurant is the creation of Executive Chef Patrick MacIsaac, using local ingredients and influenced by traditional Nova Scotian culture. Dishes might include harpoon caught Georges Bank swordfish, fish cakes, mariner's chowder, belted scallops, free range chicken and ribs and beef. www.glenoradistillery.com

Of course no visit to Cape Breton is complete without experiencing The Cabot Trail, a road which winds its way along the northern tip of the island revealing spectacular scenery at most every turn. Museums, galleries, and local attractions showcasing Gaelic and Acadian culture are dotted along its 298 kilometres. www.cbisland.com/cabot-trail

As their slogan goes,
"Cape Breton Island ... Your heart will never leave!"



Cabot Links Culinary Delights