



Discovering Our Planet Together



Maine Coastal Explorer

An Autumn Discovery of Maritime Maine & Acadia National Park



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Trip Details:

Days
8 Days /
Sep-Oct

Price
From \$7795

Maine Coastal Explorer

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The farthest-flung of the New England states, Maine has a wild character all its own. The sun rises in the U.S. here first, gleaming gold over the Atlantic Ocean to delight early risers atop Cadillac Mountain in Acadia National Park. Maine's crenellated coastline covers 3,478 miles—more than California's—and that's not counting its 4,600 islands offshore. To explore it properly, it's essential to slow down, weaving in and out of its long, narrow peninsulas, indented coves and rocky headlands guarded by historic lighthouses. Wander trails through hardwood forests, nature reserves and wildlife habitat protected by land trusts committed to conservation. Sail from scenic harbors on a chartered schooner and lobster boat. This is where Maine's magic lies—in a deliberate, up-close encounter with its natural features. Join us Down East for a classic New England idyll—Nat Hab style!

Trip Highlights

Savor classic coastal highlights during Maine's most colorful season, including a private schooner sail in Penobscot Bay and a chartered boat trip to Isle au Haut

Spend two nights at a historic 18th-century inn on quiet, out-of-the-way Deer Isle, and explore some of the island's dozen nature preserves and protected wild beaches

Survey Acadia's granite highlands, ocean vistas and vibrant hardwood forests, including sunrise atop Cadillac Mountain and a private lobster boat cruise around Mt. Desert Island



Itinerary At A Glance

Day 1

Bangor, Maine

Day 2

Rockland—Sail, Power & Steam
Museum / Owls Head Lighthouse
/ Camden

Day 3

Mount Battie / Private Schooner
Sail / Woodland Hike

Day 4

Penobscot Bay / Deer Isle

Day 5

Deer Isle / Private Cruise in Isle au
Haut Bay

Day 6

Acadia National Park / Bar Harbor

Day 7

Acadia—Cadillac Mountain
Sunrise / Private Lobster Boat
Cruise

Maine Coastal Explorer Itinerary

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Day 1: Bangor, Maine

Arrive in Bangor, lying just inland off Maine's central coast on the Penobscot River. The city's strategic location on this important tidal waterway ensured its status the "lumber capital of the world" in the 19th century. Make the short transfer from the airport to our downtown all-suite hotel that's an easy walk to the river and city highlights. This evening, join your Expedition Leader for a welcome dinner.





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Itinerary At A Glance

Day 8

Bar Harbor / Bangor / Depart

Day 2: Rockland—Sail, Power & Steam Museum / Owls Head Lighthouse / Camden

Drive south this morning to Rockland where we tour the Sail, Power & Steam Museum, a set of interactive exhibits on Maine maritime life located at the historic Old Snow Shipyard. Hands-on nautical displays preserve and tell stories of the rich heritage of sail, power and steam vessels along the Maine coast. After lunch, continue to Owls Head State Park where the main attraction is the Owls Head Lighthouse at the southern entrance to Rockland Harbor. One of 65 lighthouses on the Maine coast, the white tower capped with a black lantern was designed in 1826 by order of President John Quincy Adams as a navigational aid to help ships safely transport lime out of the harbor. Automated in 1989, it is still operational today.

Late this afternoon we continue to Camden, one of the most picturesque towns on the Maine coast, where we spend two nights. A popular MidCoast Maine destination, Camden hugs a snug harbor at the base of Camden Hills State Park, one of Maine's prime fall foliage areas. Our inn is optimally located in the compact downtown that's filled with well-preserved 19th-century storefronts housing boutiques, galleries, antique shops and cafes.

Day 3: Mount Battie / Private Schooner Sail / Woodland Hike

Begin the day with a drive to the top of Mount Battie in Camden Hills State Park for a panoramic view over the town, harbor and islands beyond. Looking north on a clear day, we may be able to see Cadillac Mountain in Acadia National Park. Located on Penobscot Bay, Camden is one of Maine's prized sailing meccas. Schooners, tall ships and sloops ply the bay, and this morning we take part in a thoroughly Maine adventure on a private two-hour voyage aboard a historic windjammer originally launched as a racing vessel in 1918. View the tapestry of autumn foliage on the Camden Hills behind the town, plus elegant yachts and summer estates as we sail off the rockbound coastline. Penobscot Bay, studded with forested islands, is an especially scenic spot for maritime exploring.

This afternoon, our Expedition Leader will choose an easy hike for us in the area. We may explore colorful wooded hills above the bay, walk to the Rockland Bog overlook, or follow the Rockland Harbor Trail, depending on the group's interests. The Maine Birding Trail threads through some of the grasslands in the region, and we may spy some of the 141 species at home here. Depending on the timing of our visit and the route we take, we could also see blueberry barrens that have turned bright crimson.



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Day 4: Penobscot Bay / Deer Isle

Follow Highway 1 along Penobscot Bay and down the Blue Hill Peninsula to Deer Isle. Although the distance from Camden is just 19 miles in a straight line, our route follows the nooks and crannies of the coastline for 70 scenic miles. Enjoy bucolic views of old barns in open meadows, shingled cottages that hug high bluffs, and lobster pots on docks in quiet coves. Before crossing the famous Penobscot Narrows Bridge, stop to survey the panorama over the bay and islands from the observation tower 437 feet above the Penobscot River.

Once on the other side, enter a set-apart realm on tranquil Deer Isle. With its dense woods, pink granite shorelines, salty air and squawking gulls, this is quintessential Maine. The Island Heritage Trust manages more than a dozen different nature preserves on Deer Isle and offshore islets, and we'll explore one or two this afternoon. Of special interest is Crockett Cove Woods Preserve, known as the "fog forest" because its towering fir and spruce trees trap heavy mists brought in from southwest winds over the ocean, nurturing ferns, mosses and lichens. We spend two nights at the historic, family-run Pilgrim's Inn built in 1793, one of the oldest structures on the island. Dinner is sure to feature local seafood, and Deer Isle, with a fleet of 300 lobster boats, leads the state's catch.

Day 5: Deer Isle / Private Cruise in Isle au Haut Bay

Sailing from scenic Stonington Harbor on Deer Isle this morning, take a private boat cruise in Isle au Haut Bay, weaving among a scattering of wild granite islands so emblematic of Maine's storied coast. We'll view the rugged shoreline of Isle au Haut, just 6 miles long and 2 miles wide. The far-flung island is home to a traditional community of less than a hundred year-round residents, most of whom are employed in the lobster fishing industry, which has defined the local economy for generations. A remote, roadless portion of Acadia National Park covers about half of the island. Return to Deer Isle in the afternoon for an easy hiking excursion and more foliage viewing, depending on weather and sea conditions and the group's preference.



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Day 6: Acadia National Park / Bar Harbor

The last stretch of our drive "Down East" brings us to Mount Desert Island and the most accessible portion of Acadia National Park, encompassing the highest rocky headlands along the U.S. Atlantic coast. Inhabited by the Wabanaki people for 12,000 years, the region was vied over by the French and British in the 18th century, and a century later, Mount Desert Island became a popular summer home retreat for America's wealthiest families. By the early 20th century, the impetus for conservation had established Acadia as a national park. Today, the park protects 47,000 acres of forest, mountains, lakes and ocean.

In the fall, Acadia's woodlands become a variegated tapestry of color, with maple, birch and poplar interweaving bright red, orange and yellow among the dark conifers. We drive the Park Loop, pausing for clifftop views and photos, including a stop at Thunder Hole—when sea conditions are right, waves crash against the rock and water is forced through a crevice into a cave, creating a sound like a thunderclap. We exit the park for Bar Harbor, the classic coastal resort town that is our destination for the next two nights.

Day 7: Acadia—Cadillac Mountain Sunrise / Private Lobster Boat Cruise

Rise before dawn to partake in Acadia's most iconic experience: watching the sunrise from the top of Cadillac Mountain. The highest point in the park is one of the easternmost locales in the United States, and thus one of the first to greet the sun's rays each morning. The view over Bar Harbor, Frenchman Bay, the Gulf of Maine and myriad islands is dramatic even without the pink glow of dawn, should the clouds not cooperate. We return to town for breakfast, then investigate the less-visited southwest corner of Mount Desert Island. In the afternoon, a consummate Maine experience awaits: board a working lobster boat for a cruise around the island, enjoying views of rocky coast, lighthouses and small harbors in the crisp autumn air. This evening, get your fill of fresh Maine seafood one last time at our farewell dinner in Bar Harbor.

Day 8: Bar Harbor / Bangor / Depart

After breakfast, depart Bar Harbor for the drive back to Bangor, a trip of a little over an hour. We travel directly to the Bangor airport to meet departing flights, which should be scheduled any time after 11:00 am.



Accommodation Details:

[Lord Camden Inn](#)

[Pilgrim's Inn](#)

[Bar Harbor Inn](#)

[Residence Inn by Marriott
Bangor](#)

For detailed descriptions, visit
nathab.com/us-national-parks-tours/main-acadia-autumn-leaves-trip/accommodations

Maine Coastal Explorer Accommodations

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Lord Camden Inn

Inhabiting a Victorian brick building in the heart of Camden Village, steps from the waterfront boardwalk, this elegant inn offers rooms with harbor and town views.



Pilgrim's Inn

Overlooking Northwest Harbor and Mill Pond, Pilgrim's Inn is one of Maine's most acclaimed historic lodgings, originally built in 1793 as a fine post-and-beam style home.



Bar Harbor Inn

Dating to 1887, this iconic property on Frenchman Bay has hosted many luminaries over the years and today provides casual elegance for guests exploring the Maine coast.



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Residence Inn by Marriott Bangor

Conveniently situated for the start of our Maine adventure, the Residence Inn features spacious suites in an ideal downtown location that's just a short drive from the airport.



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Find a More Authentic Experience of Maritime Maine

New England travel, especially during the autumn "leaf-peeping" season, is big business for bus tours. And that's the way most travelers see Maine—from a motorcoach, covering lots of ground in a short time, jockeying for views with scores of others. In contrast, we've gone to great lengths to create a far more intimate and in-depth experience of Maine's coastal beauty—the way it ought to be experienced. Learn more:

1 An In-Depth Week on the Maine Coast

If you compare New England trips, you'll often see an itinerary that swings hurriedly through four or five states, skimming the surface of the same few destinations. In contrast, this trip provides an immersive encounter with maritime Maine at a pace that allows you to explore mindfully.

2 Encounter Maine Less Traveled

While we don't skip essential highlights like Acadia National Park, we've crafted this itinerary to share places and experiences off the standard tourist track, for a more peaceful encounter—including two nights on peaceful Deer Isle, home to more than a dozen nature reserves.

3 Three Private Boat Trips for Intimate Exploration

Most Maine visitors who want to see the coast from offshore are packed aboard tourist vessels that cater to dozens of passengers at a time. In contrast, we've included three different private cruises aboard craft chartered exclusively for our small groups: sailing Penobscot Bay aboard a historic schooner, a lobster boat cruise around Mount Desert Island, and an excursion from Deer Isle to Isle au Haut, a tiny fishing outpost that also contains the most remote sector of Acadia National Park.

4 The Smallest Groups—No More Than 7 Travelers Per Vehicle

Our group is capped at 14, but you'll travel with no more than seven: that's the maximum we take per vehicle, and each is accompanied by an Expedition Leader, for the best guide-to-guest ratio you'll find. Not only do two guides ensure the ultimate in personal service and attention, but it gives us the ability to split our group up to pursue varied activities, accommodating different interests and physical ability levels. Two guides means more choices for you!



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5 Expert Naturalist Guides Enhance Your Experience

Our Expedition Leaders are professional naturalists with a deep passion for the wild side of Maine. They know where and when to be in order to maximize your experience of nature over crowds. They have their own "secret" spots, too, to share, which are off the most heavily touristed tracks. And they are intimately familiar with the geology, flora, wildlife and history of Maine coast. We can't emphasize enough how much difference their expertise makes to your overall experience. See **Expedition Leader bios with traveler comments** regarding the quality of our leaders.

6 Our Quality-Value Guarantee Stands Behind Your Maine Adventure

With Natural Habitat Adventures, you receive our exclusive guarantee, stating clearly that we will meet the lofty expectations we set forth in our promotional materials. We think this is the most ambitious guarantee made by any adventure travel company. .

7 Feel Good About Your Carbon-Neutral Journey

We care deeply about our planet, as we know you do. When you travel with us, the carbon emissions from your trip are 100% offset—including your round-trip flights from home. Natural Habitat Adventures has been the world's first carbon-neutral travel company since 2007.

8 Natural Habitat Adventures is WWF's Travel Partner

Because of our commitment to environmentally friendly travel, as well as the exceptional quality of our adventures, World Wildlife Fund—the world's leading environmental conservation organization—has named Natural Habitat Adventures as its worldwide travel partner, a designation that makes us exceedingly proud!



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**Dates & Pricing
Summary:**

Prices:
From \$7795

Group Size:
Limited to 14
Travelers

Maine Coastal Explorer Dates, Pricing & Info

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2026 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
Sep 17, 2026	Sep 24, 2026	\$7795 USD
Sep 19, 2026	Sep 26, 2026	\$7795 USD
Sep 21, 2026	Sep 28, 2026	\$7795 USD
Sep 25, 2026	Oct 2, 2026	\$7795 USD
Sep 27, 2026	Oct 4, 2026	\$7995 USD
Sep 29, 2026	Oct 6, 2026	\$7795 USD



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Dates & Pricing Summary:

Prices:
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Group Size:
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Departure	Return	Notes
Oct 3, 2026	Oct 10, 2026	\$7995 USD
Oct 5, 2026	Oct 12, 2026	\$7995 USD
Oct 7, 2026	Oct 14, 2026	\$7795 USD

2027 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
! Prices and dates not confirmed for 2027		
Sep 18, 2027	Sep 25, 2027	\$7795 USD
Sep 20, 2027	Sep 27, 2027	\$7795 USD
Sep 22, 2027	Sep 29, 2027	\$7795 USD
Sep 26, 2027	Oct 3, 2027	\$7795 USD
Sep 28, 2027	Oct 5, 2027	\$7795 USD
Sep 30, 2027	Oct 7, 2027	\$7795 USD
Oct 4, 2027	Oct 11, 2027	\$7795 USD
Oct 6, 2027	Oct 13, 2027	\$7795 USD
Oct 8, 2027	Oct 15, 2027	\$7795 USD



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Pricing

See <https://nathab.com/us-national-parks-tours/maine-acadia-autumn-leaves-trip/dates-fees> for the latest pricing details.

Included

Accommodations, services of Nat Hab's professional Expedition Leader(s) and local staff, transportation (including three private boat trips), all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on final day, some gratuities, airport transfers on Day 1 and final day, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees (if any), optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry and internet, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes (if any), optional travel protection and medical evacuation insurance.

Important Information About This Trip

Our dates have been chosen to align with the expected prime season for fall foliage viewing in the region covered by our itinerary. However, weather conditions, seasonal variations, climate caprices, elevation and latitude all play a role in determining when the leaves will change and peak, and prediction is an inexact science. Our Expedition Leaders will do their best to visit places where foliage color is at its height, but please understand that certain destinations on your itinerary may have passed the peak, or the leaves may have not turned yet, depending on when you are there.

Getting There & Getting Home

This trip begins and ends in Bangor. **You must arrive in Bangor by 4 pm on Day 1** in order to attend a welcome dinner and orientation beginning at 6 pm.

You may depart at any time on the final day.

Our Natural Habitat Adventures Travel Desk can best assist with your travel reservations, as our staff is familiar with the specific requirements of this program and can help arrange the most efficient itinerary. Please call us at 800-543-8917. While we offer the best available rates to us on airfare and additional nights accommodations, you may occasionally find special web rates or lower fares online.



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