Discovering Our Planet Together



# Maine Coastal Explorer

*An Autumn Discovery of Maritime Maine & Acadia National Park*

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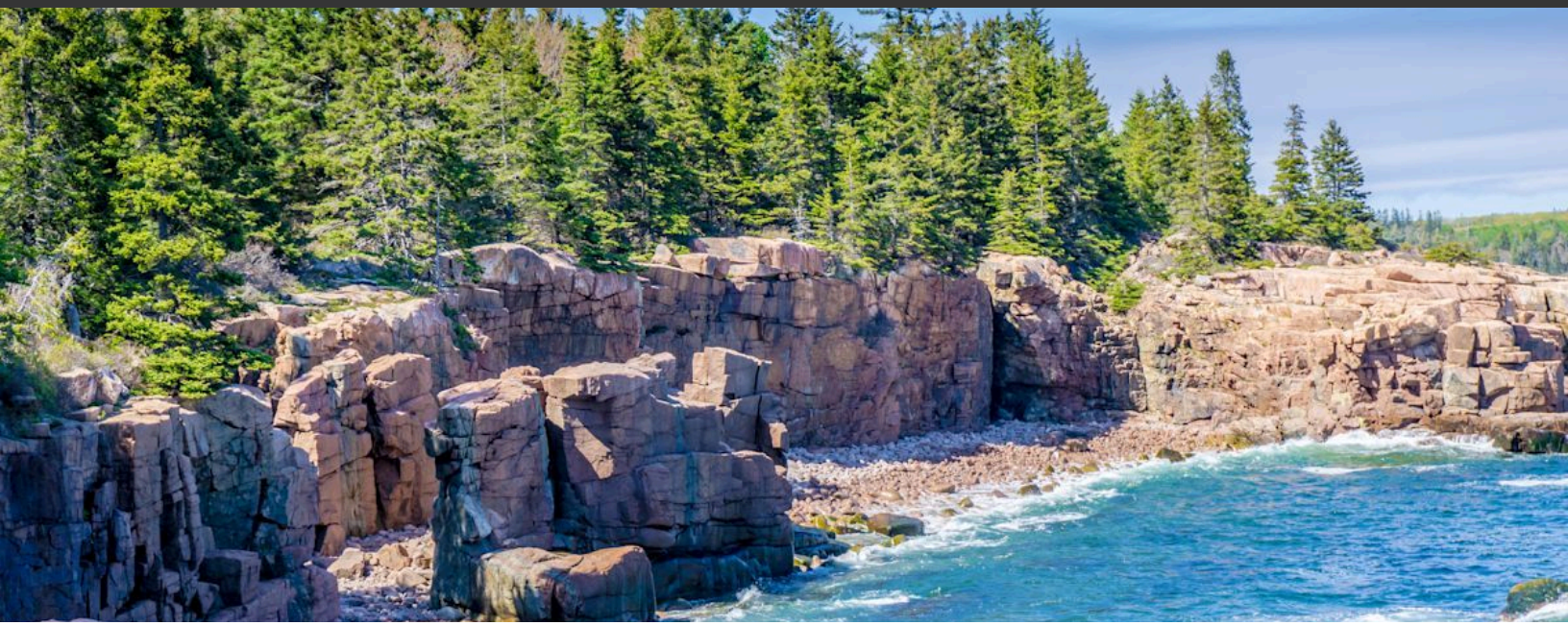
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**Trip Details:**

Days
8 Days / Sep–Oct

Price
From $7995

# Maine Coastal Explorer

*An Autumn Discovery of Maritime Maine & Acadia National Park*

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

### Discover the Maine Coast on Private Excursions

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

### Retreat to Peaceful, Less-Visited Deer Isle

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

### Explore Acadia National Park by Land & Sea

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



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# Maine Coastal Explorer Itinerary

*An Autumn Discovery of Maritime Maine & Acadia National Park*

### Itinerary at a Glance

| | |
|---|---|
| **Day 1** | Bangor |
| **Day 2** | Rockland / Owls Head / Camden |
| **Day 3** | Mount Battie |
| **Day 4** | Penobscot Bay / Deer Isle |
| **Day 5** | Deer Isle / Isle au Haut Bay |
| **Day 6** | Acadia National Park / Bar Harbor |
| **Day 7** | Acadia |
| **Day 8** | Bar Harbor / Bangor |




Day 1

Bangor

## Begin along the Penobscot River near Maine's central coast

- Settle into a downtown Bangor hotel within walking distance of the Penobscot River
- Join your Expedition Leader and fellow travelers for a welcome dinner in Bangor

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



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Day 2

Rockland / Owls Head / Camden

## Trace Maine's maritime history from Rockland to Camden

- Explore hands-on exhibits on sailing, steam power and shipbuilding at Rockland's maritime museum
- Visit the 1826 Owls Head Lighthouse above the entrance to Rockland Harbor
- Walk Camden's compact downtown among 19th-century storefronts, galleries and antique shops

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

## Sail Penobscot Bay beneath the Camden Hills

- Look across Camden Harbor and Penobscot Bay from the summit of Mount Battie
- Sail aboard a historic 1918 windjammer past forested islands and autumn foliage
- Hike wooded hills above the bay, watching for birds along the Maine Birding Trail

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.

Day 4

Penobscot Bay / Deer Isle

## Cross Penobscot Bay to the forests and granite shores of Deer Isle

- Survey the bay and its islands from the Penobscot Narrows Bridge observation tower
- Settle into a family-run inn on Deer Isle, where lobster boats still shape island life

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. We spend two nights at The Ark, a historic, family-run 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 count.



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Day 5

Deer Isle / Isle au Haut Bay

## Cruise among the granite islands of Isle au Haut Bay

- Travel by private boat from Stonington Harbor among forested islands and rocky coves
- View Isle au Haut's granite shoreline and remote Acadia National Park lands
- Hike Deer Isle's wooded trails beneath changing autumn foliage

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.

Day 6

Acadia National Park / Bar Harbor

## Follow Acadia's coast through autumn forest

- See red maples, birches and poplars turning among Acadia's dark conifers
- Watch waves surge into the sea cave at Thunder Hole when conditions are right
- Reach Bar Harbor on Mount Desert Island after exploring Acadia's Park Loop Road

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

## Watch sunrise from Cadillac Mountain and cruise Mount Desert Island's coast

- Rise before dawn for sunrise views across Frenchman Bay and the Gulf of Maine
- Explore the quieter, less-visited southwest corner of Mount Desert Island
- Board a working lobster boat to pass rocky shores, lighthouses and small harbors

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.



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Day 8

Bar Harbor / Bangor

## Leave the Maine coast and depart from Bangor

- Drive from Bar Harbor to Bangor after breakfast
- Connect with homeward flights from Bangor

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.



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# Maine Coastal Explorer Accommodations

*An Autumn Discovery of Maritime Maine & Acadia National Park*



## 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.




## The Ark

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.



## 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.

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

# Find a More Authentic Experience of Maritime Maine

*Maine Coastal Explorer*

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 excursion around Mount Desert Island, and a cruise from Deer Isle into Isle au Haut Bay, with shoreline views of this tiny island that is a longtime fishing outpost and 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!

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.



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**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. **Read our important promise**.

**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:**

Price
From $7995

Group Size
Limited to 14 Travelers

# Maine Coastal Explorer Dates, Pricing & Info

*An Autumn Discovery of Maritime Maine & Acadia National Park*

## 2027 Departures

| Departure – Return | Pricing | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| **Sep 18 - Sep 25, 2027** | **$7995** | |
| **Sep 20 - Sep 27, 2027** | **$8195** | Natural Habitat Explorers Pricing Available |
| **Sep 22 - Sep 29, 2027** | **$7995** | |
| **Sep 26 - Oct 3, 2027** | **$7995** | |
| **Sep 28 - Oct 5, 2027** | **$8195** | |
| **Sep 30 - Oct 7, 2027** | **$7995** | |
| **Oct 4 - Oct 11, 2027** | **$7995** | |
| **Oct 6 - Oct 13, 2027** | **$8195** | |
| **Oct 8 - Oct 15, 2027** | **$8195** | |



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## 2028 Departures

| Departure – Return | Pricing | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| Prices and dates not confirmed for 2028 | | |
| **Sep 23 - Sep 30, 2028** | **From $7995** | |
| **Sep 25 - Oct 2, 2028** | **From $7995** | |
| **Oct 1 - Oct 8, 2028** | **From $7995** | |
| **Oct 3 - Oct 10, 2028** | **From $7995** | |
| **Oct 5 - Oct 12, 2028** | **From $7995** | |
| **Oct 9 - Oct 16, 2028** | **From $7995** | |
| **Oct 11 - Oct 18, 2028** | **From $7995** | |
| **Oct 13 - Oct 20, 2028** | **From $7995** | |

See https://www.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, 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.**



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**Natural Habitat & WWF: Discovering Our Planet Together**

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