

MAGDELEN ISLANDS



The Magdalen Islands are a charming archipelago in the Gulf of St. Lawrence covering an area of about 200 km². Administratively, the islands are part of the Gaspé region, but they are unique and unlike any other place in Québec! This little corner of paradise abounds in activities and experiences of all kinds, combining culture, nature and the flavours of the sea. The main islands of the archipelago are Havre Aubert, Grande Entrée, Cap-aux-Meules, Grosse-Île, Havre aux Maisons, Pointe-Aux-Loups, Entry Island and Brion. It also includes other small islands: Rocher aux Oiseaux, Loups-Marins Island, Paquet Island and Rocher du Corps Mort. Let yourself be carried away by the gentle sea breeze in this magnificent open-air playground! It is sure to be love at first sight!

MAGDELEN ISLANDS

WHAT TO DO

CAP-AUX-MEULES ★★

Cap-aux-Meules Island is the gateway to the archipelago. You will be charmed as soon as you arrive at the port. With its three villages (Fatima, Cap-aux-Meules and L'Étang-du-Nord), it is more "urbanized" than the other islands and is the service and administrative centre for the archipelago. The name, Cap-aux-Meules (Grindstone Cape), comes from the presence of grindstone in the hill overlooking the port.

LA BELLE ANSE DE FATIMA ★★

Exposed to northerly winds, the Fatima coastline is lined with spectacularly steep, jagged cliffs. Unfortunately, year after year, the coast is retreating as a result of erosion. **La Belle Anse** ("beautiful cove") offers a striking example of cliffs sculpted by the sea. There is a parking area nearby. It is a lovely place to take pictures, watch the birds and admire the view.

L'ANSE-AUX-BALEINIERS ★

L'Anse-aux-Baleiniers in Fatima is an attractive recreational tourism site with wooden walkways leading directly to **Dune du Nord Beach**. It features picnic tables, a playground, washrooms, an ice cream shop, a snack bar, and a showroom with a whale skeleton. A great place to visit with the family.

HIKING IN CAP-AUX-MEULES ★

Parc des Buck park offers good hiking and magnificent viewpoints. Or take the 2-km **Sentier du Littoral** (coastal trail), which winds along beaches and capes and leads to an **observation deck overlooking the port** of Cap-aux-Meules. Climb the 185 steps at **chemin du Quai** to enjoy a magnificent panoramic view.

ARCHIPELAGO PASS

Visitors to the Magdalen Islands will have to pay a fee to access municipal services. This new initiative, called *Passe Archipel*, will apply to people over 13 years of age and will be in effect until October 14 of each year.

The main objective of this measure is to finance environmental preservation and improve the archipelago's recreational and tourism infrastructures. It aims to share the cost of tourism developments on an equitable basis.

A BIT HISTORY

In 1534, Jacques Cartier was the first European to set foot on the islands, although the Mi'kmaq had been going there for hundreds of years to hunt walrus. The archipelago was named in 1663 by François Doublet, then owner of the territory, in homage to his wife, Madeleine Fontaine. In 1765, the islands were inhabited by about twenty French-speaking Acadians and their families. Many of the Magdalen Islanders still fly the Acadian flag today.



BELLE ANSE

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RECREATIONAL TOURISM SITE OF L'ANSE-AUX-BALEINIERS

© AuthentikCanada, Maryline Fauvelle

**SANDCASTLE WORKSHOP
IN PARC DE GROS-CAP ★** 

There is no better place than the Magdalen Islands to learn how to build sandcastles. Magdalen Islanders (known as "Madelinots") have made quite a name for themselves: their expertise is recognized throughout Québec! To prepare yourself for the famous Islands sandcastle contest, or just for fun, you can attend a one-of-a-kind workshop at **Parc de Gros-Cap! Master builder Claude Bourque** will demonstrate basic building techniques so you can build your own castle like a pro! Reservations necessary.

**KAYAKING AROUND THE CLIFFS
AND CAVES OF PARC DE GROS-CAP ★★★**

A sea kayaking tour is the perfect way to explore the majestic red cliffs and illustrious caves of Cap-Aux-Meules! If you're lucky you may even see some seals... You can rent a kayak and reserve your guided tour at the entrance to Parc de Gros-Cap campground.

THE WIND

The wind is omnipresent in the Magdalen Islands. Strong sea breezes have always been a part of the lives of their inhabitants. This makes the archipelago the ideal place to enjoy **wind sports and activities!** Discover the wonderful world of **acrobatic kite flying** and **kitesurfing!** Expert instructors are just waiting to share their knowledge and passion to help you live an experience you will never forget!

Introduction to acrobatic kite flying: **Boutique Au Gré du Vent** offers a wide array of products and courses (499 Boisville ouest, Place du Marché, Site La Côte, l'Étang-du-Nord / 418-937-8450)

Introduction to kitesurfing: There are a number of kite schools on the Islands. **Aerosport** was the first. They offer a number of options including "à la carte" private or semi-private lessons (1390 Chemin de la Vernière, Étang-du-Nord / 418-986-6677 / iles.aerosport.ca).

TOP 5 MOST BEAUTIFUL BEACHES ON THE ISLANDS 

With more than 300 km of white sand beaches, you will have more than one opportunity to relax, walk, go swimming, build a sandcastle, collect shells, or fly a kite. Authentik tip: The wind will influence your beach experience, so choose the beach according to the experience you want to have

- **Dune de l'Ouest Beach (Havre Aubert)**, also known as **Corfu Beach** in honour of the Corfu Island, which was shipwrecked here in 1963, is 8.7 km long. Note that it is usually very windy!
- **Dune du Havre Aubert Beach**, commonly known to the Madelinots as **Sandy Hook Beach** or **Bout du Banc Beach**, is simply magnificent. It is the site of the famous Magdalen Islands sandcastle competition.
- **Dune-du-Sud Beach (Havre aux Maisons)** offers 22 km of fine sand. The southern end of the beach features red cliffs with caves that can be explored at low tide. There is a rest stop with parking nearby.
- **Pointe-aux-Loups Island**, the smallest inhabited island, is known for its abundance of molluscs (lagoon side) and for its surf (ocean side) on **Dune du Nord Beach**. Beware of strong sea currents.
- **Grande Échouerie Beach (Grosse-Île)** is one of the most beautiful beaches on the Islands and seems to go on forever. The site offers paid parking, picnic tables and washroom facilities (showers and toilets).



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KAYAKING AROUND THE CLIFF

HAVRE AUBERT ★★

You will quickly understand why Havre Aubert is a member of the Association des plus beaux villages du Québec (most beautiful villages of Québec). This island is also the most forested of the entire archipelago and offers great hiking opportunities. It is here that the first Acadians to arrive on the Islands settled. You will love its beautiful scenery, fine dining, cultural activities, boutiques and casual cafés.

MARTINIQUE BEACH ★

On your way to Havre Aubert, make a stop at **Martinique Beach**. It's the perfect spot to **fly your new kite!** Keep your eyes on the ground: you could pick up a nice collection of **sand dollars!** Families also appreciate the small waves of this pretty beach.

CHEMIN DU BASSIN ★★

Chemin du Bassin is a scenic road that winds its way from **Portage-du-Cap to L'Étang-des-Caps**. The solitary rock you will see on the horizon is known as **Corps Mort** (dead body). Be sure to take a good look at the beautiful traditional architecture of the typical houses with their barns and sheds. The **Bassin Church** and its presbytery are also outstanding. The **L'Anse-à-la-Cabane lighthouse** offers beautiful views of the cove and the fishing port.

LA GRAVE HISTORICAL SITE ★★★

This pebbly beach was a favourite spot for the fishing trade and still retains its maritime flavour. Designated as an historical site by the Minister of Cultural Affairs in

1983, **La Grave** has preserved its original purpose as a meeting place. Its **many arts and crafts shops, businesses, cafés and restaurants** make La Grave THE place to go for both Madelinots and visitors alike.

MUSÉE DE LA MER ★

This interesting museum showcases the rich history and maritime culture of the Magdalen Islands: shipbuilding, navigation instruments, fishing techniques, traditional know-how and heritage treasures. A place to discover.
MUSEEDELAMER-IM.COM

SANDCASTLE COMPETITION

If you are on the archipelago around **mid-August**, come build your most beautiful castle on Havre Aubert Beach during the famous Magdalen Islands sandcastle competition, the largest amateur sandcastle contest in the world! You will also be able to admire the talent of true professionals! The event also features several artists, workshops, games, musicians and local producers. Registration is free! (418-986-6863 / www.chateauxdesable.com)



LIGHTHOUSE OF L'ANSE-À-LA-CABANE

© shutterstock_1127607527_Jane Rix



VIEW ON HAVRE AUBERT

© AuthentikCanada, Marylene Fauvelle

HAVRE AUX MAISONS ★★★

Havre aux Maisons Island is often considered one of the most beautiful in the archipelago. You will fall under the charm of its country feel and its beautiful treeless panoramas dotted with colorful houses that are a source of pride for its inhabitants. The district is composed of several townships, the most typical of which are **La Pointe, Pointe-Basse, Dune-du-Sud, Petite-Baie** and **Cap-Rouge**.

LA POINTE ★★

Near the bridge linking Havre aux Maisons Island to Cap-au-Meules Island is La Pointe. With its marina, wharves, and fishing infrastructures, it has always been a business and meeting point for the fishing trade. For a view of the beautiful **La Pointe** site reflected in the calm waters of the bay at the end of the day, take the scenic **Chemin de la Petite-Baie** and **Chemin des Cyr**. It is a wonderful place to enjoy **unforgettable sunsets!**

PADDLEBOARDING ON THE LAGOON ★

Explore the **Havre aux Maisons lagoon** by **SUP** (Stand Up Paddle) at your own pace or with a guided tour. This delightful experience will allow you to live the moment to its fullest! In the bay, you will see Paquet Island, also called "**Pig Island**" because long ago it served as a place to raise pigs. Now the Island is home to many species of birds like terns, gulls and herons. **Cindyhook Sports Aventures** rents SUPs and other watercraft. **CINDYHOOK.COM**

CHEMIN DE LA POINTE-BASSE ★

Walk, drive or cycle along scenic **Chemin de la Pointe-Basse**. You will see more lovely examples of brightly-coloured houses with their traditional architecture. The small **fishing harbour at Pointe-Basse** used to be

an important location for smoking herring. Continue along to the end of **Chemin des Échoueries**. Stop by the **Alright Cape lighthouse** where you will have a spectacular view over the cliffs and the bay.

DUNE-DU-SUD BEACH ★★★

The roadside rest area at Dune-du-Sud gives access to a beautiful beach with picnic tables and toilets. **Red cliffs sculpted by the sea** shelter one side of the beach. Don't

hesitate to explore the caves at low tide. With its calm waters, this is the perfect beach for families. On the other side is the long Dune du Sud, also named **La Cormorandière**, where you can walk for hours.



© Wikipédia, Claude Brochu

HAVRE AUX MAISONS



© iStock-1170795491, pabradyphoto

DUNE-DU-SUD BEACH



Family

★ Noteworthy ★★ Worth the detour ★★★ Must see

GRANDE ENTRÉE ISLAND ★

Designated as Québec's Lobster Capital in 1994, Grande-Entrée accounts for more than half of the Magdalen Islands' total annual lobster catch. Its colonization dates back to the 1870's, and since then its fishing port has been a vital part of Island life.

GRANDE ENTRÉE PORT ★

The port harbours **more than 100 brightly coloured fishing boats**. Go down to the pier and hang out for a while with the fishermen. You'll get a good feel for the importance of fishing in the lives of the people here.

WALK TO BOUDREAU ISLAND ★

Be sure to take a walk to **Boudreau Island**, one of the most beautiful views you will see in the Magdalen Islands. Visit the **Bassin aux Huitres** and explore its **lovely beaches** and footpaths. You can reach it by following Chemin du Bassin Ouest.

ENTRY ISLAND ★★★

The only inhabited island not connected to the rest of the archipelago, **Entry Island** is a charming little island of rolling green hills. A few families of **Scottish and Irish descent** live there with their dogs and their cows.

The main economic activity of the Island is fishing. This tiny **7 km²** island is easily explored on foot. You will see an Anglican church, a lighthouse, a small museum, a restaurant-bar and a convenience store, but above all, you will love the unspoiled

landscapes! The summit of **Big Hill**, the highest point of the archipelago, offers a truly breathtaking view! To get to Entry Island, you must take a ferry from the Cap-Aux-Meules port. Some companies offer excursions for walking tours of the island.

GET TO KNOW THE MADELINOTS!

Madelinots are renowned for their warm and generous hospitality. They are proud of their origins and, through the years, they have preserved their distinctive accents, which vary from island to island. Madelinots are also known for their fun-loving spirit, their artistic talents, and a joie de vivre they will happily share with you during one of their lively evening gatherings, accompanied by Island music... Give it a try!



VIEW ON ENTRY ISLAND

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WALK TO BOUDREAU ISLAND

© AuthentikCanada, Maryline Fauvelle

WHERE TO EAT

CAP-AUX-MEULES ISLAND

1 À L'ABRI DE LA TEMPÊTE (\$\$)

The Islands' brewing history began in a former crab processing plant overlooking the West Dune in l'Étang-du-Nord (Cap-aux-Meules). Today, this microbrewery is the pride of the inhabitants, showcasing the distinctive terroir of the archipelago through its beers and its menu.

ALABRIDELATEMPETE.COM

2 LES PAS PERDUS (\$-\$-\$)

Les Pas Perdus bar, restaurant and show venue is just outside the Cap-aux-Meule port. Relaxed, trendy and lively, it serves delicious, inventive and unpretentious bistro cuisine. The Poutine du Boss is a must try! There are several good wines on the menu and a good selection of beer, including a tasty red beer called "Pas Perdus" brewed by "À l'Abri de la Tempête". Enjoy the pleasant patio with fireplace. Live music some evenings.

PASPERDUS.COM

3 EVA (\$-\$-\$)

This new bistro-style restaurant, located on the past La Côte restaurant site, offers delicious seasonal meals with private import wine list and homemade cocktails. The atmosphere is friendly and relaxed. You can even eat on the patio, by the water, in an enchanting setting. You will see beautiful sunset here for sure!

4 LA RENAISSANCE DES ÎLES (\$-\$-\$)

If you wish to cook, drop by the fishmonger's for some high quality seafood. They also offer a variety of fast food options. Their lobster poutine is said to be the best in the world! You can eat on site or take your order to



LA GRAVE HISTORICAL SITE

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LOBSTER CAGE

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go for a picnic. The canteen is open daily in summer.

LRDI.CA/FR

5 LA TABLE DES ROY (\$\$\$\$)

Located in l'Étang-du-Nord, this restaurant is one of the oldest and most revered in the Magdalen Islands. It serves excellent regional terroir cuisine that showcases local products. An explosion of flavors from appetizer to dessert! The menu features smoked herring, mackerel, sweetbreads, lobster tails and much more. The reception, service and food live up to their reputation. Reservations recommended.

The chef Johanna Vigneau is also the owner of **Gourmand de nature** (1912, chemin de l'Étang-du-Nord).
RESTAURANTLATABLEDERROY.COM

HAVRE AUX MAISONS ISLAND

6 PIZZA D'LA POINTE (\$-\$-\$)

Small friendly restaurant in a rustic and colorful decor offering an extensive selection of pizzas and some side dishes. You can eat there or take it to go. The fisherman's pizza

is to try! To be enjoyed while admiring the view of Petite Baie!
PIZZADLAPOINTE.CA

HAVRE AUBERT ISLAND

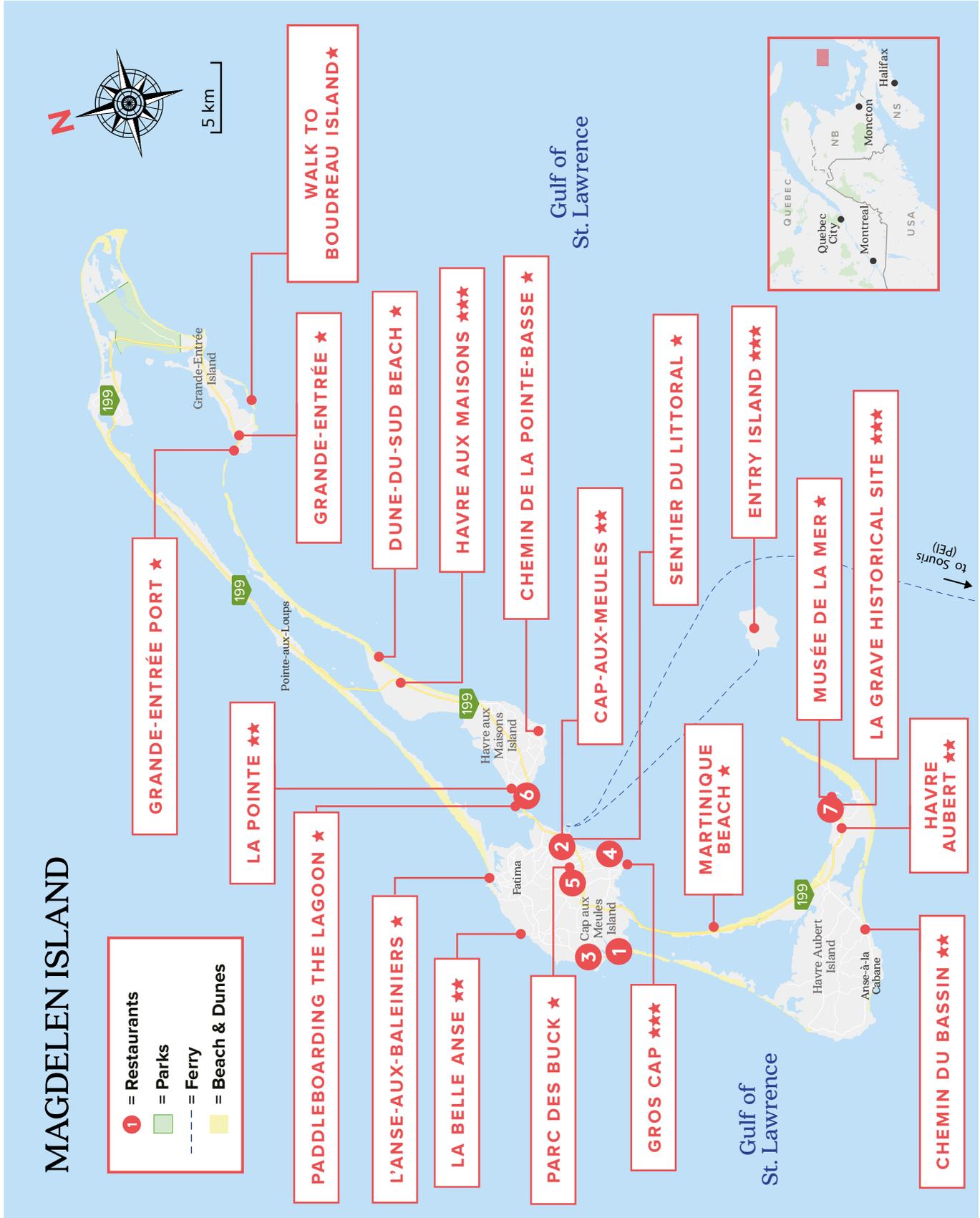
7 LE CAFÉ DE LA GRAVE (\$-\$-\$)

Café de la Grave in Havre Aubert has become a local landmark and a popular eatery for Madelinots and tourists alike. Housed in a historic building dating back more than 150 years, it offers delicious meals cooked with local products and live music in the evenings.
CAFEDELAGRAVE.COM



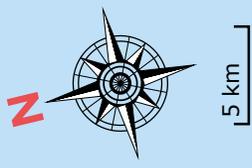
Microbrewery

\$ Inexpensive \$\$ Moderate \$\$\$ Upscale \$\$\$\$ Fine dining



MAGDELEN ISLAND

- 1 = Restaurants
- = Parks
- - - = Ferry
- = Beach & Dunes



Gulf of St. Lawrence

Gulf of St. Lawrence

to Souris (PEI)