

*“Learning how much I didn’t know motivated me to actively search out local activities and events—revealing that my initially perceived ignorance was just the tip of the proverbial iceberg”*

## THE GREEN, GREEN GRASS OF HOME

Editing this particular issue hit me like a smack in the face.

See, I long ago decided I’d never vacation outside of Atlantic Canada during June, July or August. The sunny season is so short here—why in the world would I risk missing a second of it? So I happily stay close to home every summer... yet I continue to miss out all the time.

When I go somewhere, anywhere, other than home? I scour the Internet for things to do, places to see and foods to devour. What concerts are in town? Which restaurants do I want to try? Where are the best hikes? What shows are on at the theatre? What places must I visit? What experiences can’t I miss? When I travel, I’m determined to make the most of every minute by digesting as much of the destination as I possibly can.

That time I went to New York for four days? I went to three Broadway shows and one comedy club, did four hop-on tours, walked tens of thousands of steps, visited the top of the Empire State Building, drooled over the designer purses at Macy’s, and sampled a seam-stretching variety of eats.

During 48 hours in Vegas, I walked the strip, took in a show, enjoyed a fancy steak dinner in a rooftop restaurant, strolled the Forum shops (laughed at the prices in Louis Vuitton), checked out an outlet mall, goggled at the betting crowd, spent a couple of hours in the hotel pool, marveled at the Bellagio fountains and visited Caesar’s Palace, Paris and The Venetian—the one thing I didn’t do was gamble.

When I stay home? Like most people, I have a tendency to get wrapped up in life’s daily routine. Go to work, run errands, come home, do chores, eat, sleep, rinse and repeat. I don’t experience as much in an entire summer as I do in one week outside the province. Granted, when I’m home I don’t usually have entire weeks at my disposal—but even when I don’t schedule time off, I still have evenings and weekends to fill. Putting this issue together showed me that I haven’t been making the most of my down time.

The missed ‘for-instances’ are embarrassing. How did I not know about the Mi’kmaq Starlight Reserve’s preservation

of artificial-light-free skies? Or the Roots, Rants and Roars annual foodie-hike-with-celebrity-chef adventures? I’d never heard of Cape LeHave Island Glamping (ideal for non-campers like me!) or gourmet dinners on the ocean floor of the Bay of Fundy. I had no idea that fall was the new high season for P.E.I. flavours, or that two N.B. restaurants are among the top 100 in the country. I was completely in the dark about Rigolet’s creative use of tourism to both boost their economy and introduce the world to the Inuit culture. And, am I the only one who knew nothing about the international equestrian event that happens in Lower Jemseg, N.B. over the Labour Day weekend?

Learning how much I didn’t know motivated me to actively search out local activities and events—revealing that my initially perceived ignorance was just the tip of the proverbial iceberg (like the ones I don’t appreciate nearly enough on my way to work each morning). Looking online, I quickly found 15 events that are taking place in my immediate area this coming weekend. Do you know how many I had planned on attending? None. That’s about to change.

This issue has taught me that staying home isn’t the same as ‘being’ here. We have experiences here in Atlantic Canada that make us a must-visit destination for people from all over the world. The greenest grass isn’t always on the other side of the fence—sometimes, it’s in your own backyard.

DAWN CHAFE started with *Atlantic Business Magazine* as a freelancer 24 years ago, becoming editor in 1998.

#### FEEDBACK

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