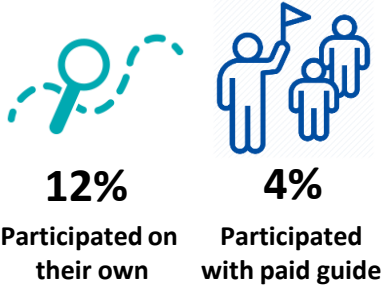


# GEOLOGICAL & FOSSIL-BASED EXPERIENCES

A profile of visitors who participate in **geological tours/fossil observation** in Newfoundland and Labrador

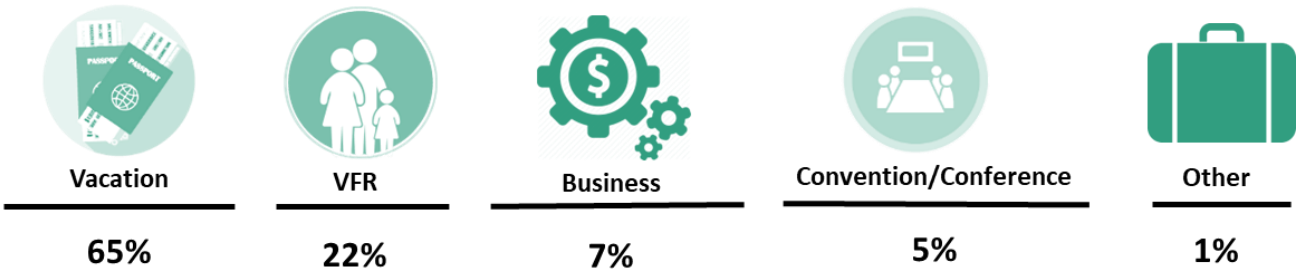


During the peak season May to October, 15% of all visitors to Newfoundland and Labrador took part in geological tours or fossil observation during their trip to the province. Participation is higher among visitors who are in the province for *vacation* at **29%**. Since 2011, the share of visitors participating these experiences has increased notably.



- Visitors who engage in geological tours and fossil observation during their trip to Newfoundland and Labrador are most likely to be travelling for vacation purposes, with a large share of these travellers also in the province to visit friends and relatives (VFR). Those taking part in geological/fossil-based activities during their trip tend to have larger travel parties and are most likely to be travelling as couples with no children. They also tend to have longer stays, averaging over 12 nights in the province, and spend more on average than the typical vacationer. Like most visitors to the province, the largest share of these visitors are from Ontario and Other Canada (BC, Alberta, the Prairies, & Territories), with notable shares from the United States and overseas. Interestingly, US visitors show higher rates of participation in geological/fossil-based experiences during their stay than visitors from other markets.
- Travellers who take in geological/fossil-based experiences immerse themselves in the province’s natural environment and culture, as evidenced by notably high levels of participation in a range of other outdoor and cultural experiences. They walk around communities, hike, view seabirds, and visit our parks and reserves at significantly higher rates than typical visitors. They are also more likely than typical travellers to visit historic sites and museums, explore small communities, visit lighthouses, experience local cuisine and visit local galleries and exhibits.

## TRIP PURPOSE



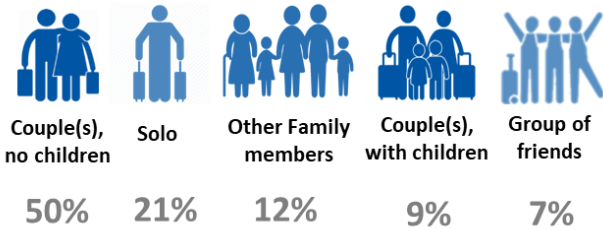
The majority of visitors who go on geological tours/observe fossils while in the province are here for vacation (65%). Nearly one quarter of these visitors are here to visit friends and relatives (VFR; 22%), while relatively few business and conference visitors participate in that particular activity.

## PARTY SIZE & COMPOSITION



At 2.3, the average party size of visitors who engage in geological tours or fossil observation during their trip is notably larger than that of visitors overall (1.8), and slightly higher than the typical *vacation* travel party (2.2).

Half of visitor parties who take part in geological tours or fossil observation during their stay are travelling as couples with no children, while just over one fifth are travelling solo. A smaller share of these visitors are travelling with other family members (12%), as couples with children (9%) and with a group of friends (7%), which is reflective of the typical vacation visitor.



## LENGTH OF STAY



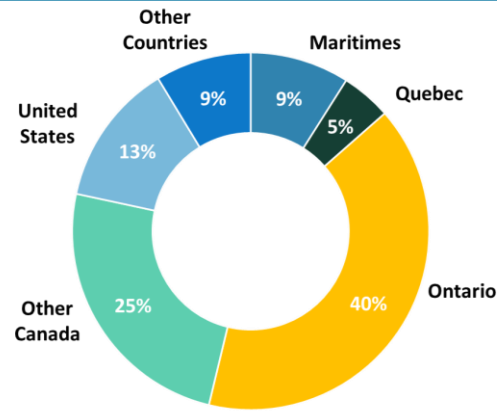
10.8 nights



12.1 nights

Visitors engaging in geological tours or fossil observation while visiting Newfoundland and Labrador tend to have longer stays than the typical visitor. These visitors average just over 12 nights in the province, compared to visitors overall who stay 10.8 nights. These visitors also stay longer than typical *vacation* visitors who spend an average of 10.4 nights in the province.

ORIGIN



The origin of visitors who take part in geological tours or fossil observation during their stay in the province is generally reflective of our visitors overall, particularly our vacation visitors. The majority of these visitors are from Ontario (40%) and Other Canada (BC, Alberta, the Prairies and the Territories [25%]). Smaller shares are from Quebec (5%) and the Maritimes (9%). From an international perspective, 13% of visitors who engage in geological/fossil-based experiences are from the United States while 9% are from overseas.

PARTICIPATION RATE BY ORIGIN

Overall, 15% of *all* visitors to the province, and 29% of all *vacation* visitors, reported participating in geological tour/fossil observation during their trip. When looking at the extent of participation by visitor origin, it is worth noting that visitors from the US (both in terms of *all* US visitors and US *vacation* visitors) took part in these activities at above average rates compared to visitors from other markets. Visitors from Ontario, Other Canada and other countries show similar levels of participation, while participation is lower than average among visitors from Quebec and the Maritimes.

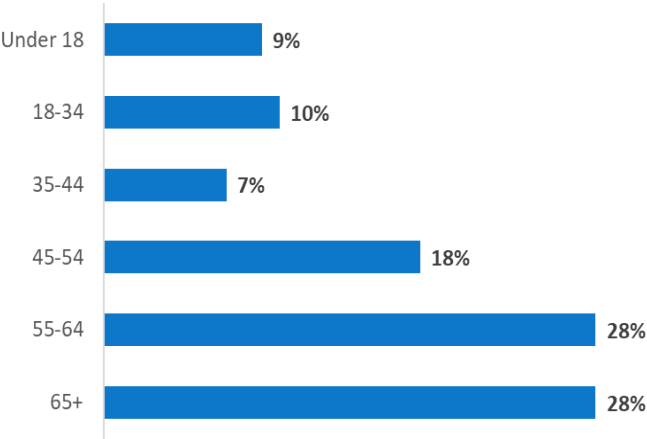
While a high share of business travellers from Quebec and the Maritimes undoubtedly contributes to lower levels of participation among all visitors, *vacation* visitors from these markets also show relatively lower levels of participation in geological tours/fossil observation.

Rate of participation in geological tours/fossil observation by origin (% parties)

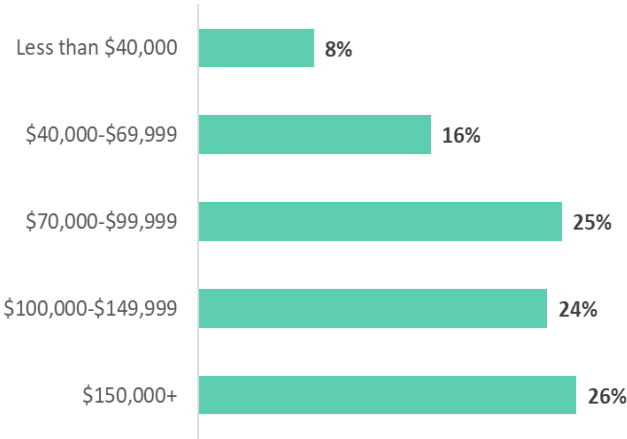
Origin	Overall Visitors	Vacation Visitors
All origins	15%	29%
Maritimes	5%	17%
Quebec	13%	24%
Ontario	18%	30%
Other Canada	18%	32%
United States	25%	33%
Other Countries	21%	31%

DEMOGRAPHICS

Age



Household income (% parties)



**84%** of visitors who engage in geological tours/fossil observation during their trip to Newfoundland and Labrador have **post-secondary level education**

From a demographic perspective, visitors who take in a geological tour or view fossils during their stay are similar to our visitors overall, particularly those visitors who are vacationing in the province. Over half are aged 55 or older and report household incomes of \$100,000 or above while more than 8 in 10 have post-secondary level education.

TRIP MOTIVATORS



Bucket List  
26%



Nature & Wildlife  
22%



Specific Site  
15%



Culture, People, Heritage  
10%

Visitors who took part in geological tours/fossil viewing while in Newfoundland and Labrador for *vacation* were motivated to visit the province by a range of factors. Reflective of our typical vacation visitors, this particular segment of vacation visitors was most likely to choose to visit the province because it was on their bucket list (26%). Another top trip motivator was the province's nature and wildlife, mentioned by 22% of these travellers.

The desire to see a specific site or area was a motivator for 15% of this group of visitors, who cited Gros Morne, L'Anse aux Meadows, Fogo Island/Fogo Island Inn and the West Coast/Western NL as top areas motivating their visit. Mentioned by 10% of vacation visitors, *culture, people, and heritage* was more of a motivating factor among visitors engaging in geological/fossil-based experiences than it was for typical vacation visitors at 7%.

# OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

## Top 5 outdoor activities (% Parties)



Pleasure walking  
**96%**



Hiking  
**91%**



Seabird watching  
**67%**



Visiting National Parks  
**65%**



Parks, Nature Parks, Reserves  
**63%**

Visitors who take part in geological tours or view fossils while in the province show notably higher rates of participation in many other outdoor and nature-based activities compared to our visitors *overall*, as well as our typical *vacation* visitors. Nearly all of these visitors go pleasure walking (96%) and 9 in 10 go hiking during their stay. Two thirds also go seabird watching while our National Parks and other parks and reserves are visited by 65% and 63% of these visitors, respectively. Wildlife viewing, whale watching and sightseeing boat tours are also favourites among this segment of visitors.

# CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

## Top 5 cultural experiences (% Parties)



Historic Sites, museums  
**88%**



Exploring small communities  
**84%**



Lighthouse experiences  
**82%**



Culinary experiences  
**80%**



Galleries, exhibits  
**67%**

Visitors who take in geological/fossil-oriented experiences while in the province also show significantly higher levels of participation in a range of cultural experiences. Close to 9 in 10 of these visitors take in historic sites and museums, while 80% or more explore small communities, take in experiences at our lighthouses and enjoy local culinary experiences. They also visit galleries and exhibits at higher rates than our typical visitors, and are significantly more likely to take in archaeological sites, to participate in special programming at various attractions, to watch/participate in creating arts and crafts as well as to attend a local or community event.

# SPENDING



**\$3,572**  
(per party)

**\$1,715**  
(per person)

**\$172**  
(per person per night)

At \$3,572 per travel party, visitors who take part in geological tours or fossil observation experiences spend more on average compared to our typical visitors *overall* (\$2,095) and *vacation* visitors (\$3,470) during their trip in the province.

While the average spending *per person* (\$1,715) is comparable to the average per person spending of typical *vacation* visitors, the average *per person per night* spending in the province is below the typical visitor spending due to larger party sizes and longer in-province stays.

Expenditure patterns for travellers who participate in geological/fossil-based experiences are consistent with those of visitors overall – the largest share of spending in the province by these visitors goes towards accommodations (40%), with spending on restaurants (22%) and in-province transportation (19%) rounding out the top 3 expenditure categories.



Accommodations  
**40%**



Restaurants  
**22%**



Transportation  
(within NL)  
**19%**



Arts, Crafts, Souvenirs  
**7%**



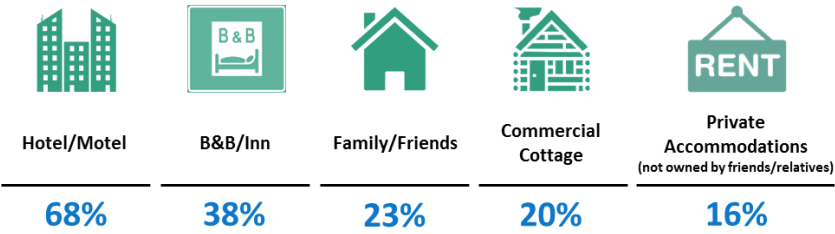
Activities, Experiences  
**7%**



Groceries  
**5%**

# ACCOMMODATIONS

## Share of parties using type of accommodation



**89%** of travellers who took part in geological tours/fossil observation during their trip **spent at least 1 night in paid accommodations.**

## Share of party nights spent in type of accommodation

Accommodation Type	
Hotels/motels	32%
Houses/cabins of relatives/friends	18%
B&B/Country inns	16%
Own home/residence	8%
Private accommodations (not owned by relatives/friends)	8%
Commercial cabins/cottages	6%
Campgrounds – all types	6%
All other types of accommodations	5%

As is the case for all our visitors, hotels/motels are the most popular type of accommodations where visitors who take part in geological tours/fossil observation stayed during their trip. Nearly 7 in 10 of these visitors stayed in hotels/motels, spending 32% of their nights in the province in this form of accommodations. B&Bs were the second most common type of accommodation used by these visitors, with 38% reporting that they stayed in B&Bs during their trip, which accounted for 16% of nights in the province. Twenty-three percent of this segment of visitors stayed with family or friends where they spent 18% of nights in the province.

# REGIONAL VISITATION & ATTRACTIONS

## Visits to regions (% parties) and top visited regional attractions

### LABRADOR

- 1 Red Bay
- 2 Southern Labrador communities
- 3 Point Amour Lighthouse
- 4 Labrador Coastal Drive
- 5 Regional hiking/walking trails

10%  
LABRADOR

### EASTERN

- 1 Bonavista
- 2 Trinity
- 3 Clarendville
- 4 Cape Bonavista
- 5 Elliston

53%  
EASTERN

### WESTERN

- 1 Gros Morne National Park
- 2 Regional hiking/walking trails
- 3 Western Brook Pond
- 4 Corner Brook
- 5 L'Anse aux Meadows

62%  
WESTERN

81%  
ST. JOHN'S

### ST. JOHN'S

- 1 Downtown St. John's
- 2 Signal Hill
- 3 Cape Spear
- 4 Quidi Vidi Village
- 5 George Street

53%  
CENTRAL

### CENTRAL

- 1 Twillingate
- 2 Gander
- 3 Regional hiking/walking trails
- 4 Terra Nova National Park
- 5 Fogo Island/Change Islands

63%  
AVALON

### AVALON

- 1 Witless Bay Ecological Reserve
- 2 East Coast Trail
- 3 Colony of Avalon (Ferryland)
- 4 Brigus
- 5 Cape St. Mary's

Over 80% of visitors who took part in geological/fossil-based experiences during their trip reported a visit to St. John's and nearly two thirds also visited the Avalon region. Over half visited the Central (53%) and Eastern (53%) regions while over 60% visited the Western region, 10% of parties spending time in Labrador.

These visitors take in the whole province, and compared to visitors overall, they show higher rates of visitation to all regions. Because 65% of those who take part in geological/fossil-oriented experiences during their visit are travelling here for *vacation*, it is no surprise that their regional visitation patterns resemble those of typical vacation visitors, with even higher levels of visitation reported among this group to St. John's and the Avalon region. This segment of visitors is highly engaged in taking in the various regional attractions, with a higher share of them reporting visits to top places and sites in each region. Also not surprisingly, geological points of interest such as the Johnson Geo Centre and Mistaken Point were visited at notably higher rates by these visitors – 42% of St. John's visitors who took in geological tours or fossil-related activities during their trip visited the Johnson Geo Centre, compared to just 16% of St. John's visitors overall and 23% of St. John's vacation visitors. Other sites showing much higher visitation levels by those participating in geological experiences include Mistaken Point, The Rooms, the Colony of Avalon (Ferryland), Cape St. Mary's, Terra Nova National Park, Gros Morne National Park, Port-Aux-Choix, Red Bay and Point Amour Lighthouse.