

# Useful Information for Delegates

## **Cape Breton Island & Sydney**

*Travel + Leisure* Magazine ranked Cape Breton the #1 island to visit in continental North America and #3 in the world. Condé Nast Traveler has called it the most scenic island in the world. Cape Breton is famous for its stunning scenery (particularly along the Cabot Trail), lobster dinners, and its traditional cultures, especially the Celtic-derived fiddling and step dancing traditions and the Scottish Gaelic language, which is still spoken on the island, but also French Acadian and indigenous Mi'kmaq cultures.

Sydney is Nova Scotia's second largest city and Cape Breton Island's only urban area. The population of Cape Breton Island is approximately 150,000, most of which is in relatively close proximity to Sydney. Sydney is a diverse post-industrial city. Immigrants from all over Europe, particularly Italians, Greeks, Lebanese, Jews, Poles, and Ukrainians, settled in Sydney to work in the mines or steel plant. Sydney still has the largest Italian population and only Ukrainian Catholic Church east of Montreal. At one time, it boasted four synagogues. There is a growing Muslim population.

For help planning your visit, you may wish to consult the following websites:

<http://cbisland.com/>  
[www.novascotia.com](http://www.novascotia.com)

For local events, visit:

[whatsgoinson.ca](http://whatsgoinson.ca)  
[cbchoices.com](http://cbchoices.com)

## **Language**

Although Canada is a bilingual country (English and French), English is the main language spoken in Sydney.

## **Currency**

The currency in Canada is the Canadian Dollar (Cdn\$). There are no exchange bureaus at the airport or in the city so we recommend that you arrive in Canada with some Canadian currency in hand. However, you may be able to exchange currency at other airports en route to Sydney. Most banks offer currency exchange, although they may be limited to Euros (€), Pounds Sterling (£) or American Dollars. Credit cards are widely accepted and vendors will probably require you to use your PIN number. ATMs provide cash in Canadian dollars only.

### **Time Zone**

Sydney is in the Atlantic Standard Time Zone, 4 hours behind Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). It is 1 hour ahead of Eastern Standard Time.

### **Electricity**

Electrical sockets (outlets) in Canada are the "Type B" North American NEMA 5-15 standard, 110-120 volts.

### **Telephone**

When dialling from abroad, the country code for Canada is 00+1; and the area/city code is 902. The code for international outgoing calls is 011. Pay phones are located in several spots around the city; you may make local calls for 25-cents or long-distance calls by credit card. Long distance calling cards are available for purchase at local supermarkets, convenience stores, and drugstores.

### **Internet Access**

The Delta hotel provides complimentary wireless internet access. Local cafés also offer internet access, and the McConnell Public Library offers free access to computers and the internet.

### **Health Insurance and Medications**

All visitors to Canada are strongly urged to obtain health insurance before leaving their home country. Canadian hospital and medical services are excellent, but a hospital stay can cost in excess of \$500 a day, and the cost of an extended stay can be prohibitive. Be sure you are covered. If you are a resident of Canada, you should carry your provincial health card just in case you need medical attention. Please bring all medications with you, and if you are taking medicine prescribed by your doctor, it is a good idea to make a list of what you are taking in case of emergency. Bring along a copy of your prescription in the event that you need to have it renewed by a doctor in Nova Scotia.

### **Emergencies**

To report an emergency of any type (e.g., medical, safety, fire), call 911.

### **Food & Drink**

Canada enjoys a high standard of food safety. You can drink tap water without risk. Milk and dairy products are pasteurized, and all meats, seafood, fruits and vegetables are

generally safe to eat. A grocery store is located within walking distance of the conference hotel. There are numerous restaurants within walking distance as well. Late night food and drink consumers may enjoy Bunkers, the upstairs area of the Governor's Inn, which features live music.

Please note that TIPS are expected for food and beverage service in restaurants and bars/pubs alike. Tips are at the discretion of the customer, but 15% is fairly standard and considered appropriate for good service. Be prepared! The combination of tips and taxes means that customers should anticipate paying an additional 30% *on top* of the advertised menu prices.

### **Shop Hours**

Most downtown shops are open 9:00am-5pm, Monday to Saturday. Malls are open 10am-9pm Monday to Saturday and 11am-5pm on Sundays. Wine, beer, and spirits can only be purchased at Liquor Stores. Delegates may like to visit the Cape Breton Centre for Craft and Design or the Cape Breton Curiosity Shop for local art, music, and other souvenirs. Both are within walking distance of the Delta Hotel.

### **Climate**

Cape Breton's location on the Atlantic Seaboard means that its weather can be variable, so please come prepared for changes. Temperatures still tend to be cool in early June and you can anticipate daytime temperatures in the range of 10-20 degrees Celsius. It can also often be rainy. I recommend that you bring a sweater and rain jacket as well as an umbrella. Be prepared for cooler temperatures on the Cabot Trail and if you take a boating excursion.

### **Security**

Sydney is a very safe city; personal security is normally unproblematic, but as a common precaution, we encourage you to walk in groups after dark.

### **Getting Around Town**

Sydney, being a small city, is very walkable. However, public transportation is also available. Cabs are inexpensive and plentiful. Note that taxi drivers are typically tipped, usually 10-15%.

### **Smoking**

Smoking is not allowed in public buildings, public transport areas, restaurants and pubs, but generally allowed in open-air areas.