

Welcome to the Halifax Citadel National Historic Site

Step through the gate of the Halifax Citadel and back in time! Discover what life was like for the British troops who lived here in **the year 1869**, when Queen Victoria reigned and the new nation of Canada was just two years old. Explore the ramparts and tunnels and visit our interactive environments to experience what life was like in a bygone era.

You will also encounter other time periods, for the Citadel was active for **two hundred years**. Founded in 1749 as a strategic **base for the British Royal Navy**, Halifax has been home to four Citadels, all constructed on the high ground above the original town plot. The first three forts were built of earth and logs and served through the Seven Years War, the American Revolution, Napoleonic Wars and the War of 1812, but after 1815, British authorities decided that the old wooden forts defending Canada's strategic strong points, including the Citadel, should be replaced by more powerful and permanent works of stone. Construction of a new Citadel began in 1828 and continued until 1856.

Though the Citadel was never attacked, as a military deterrent, it was a success.

In 1867, British North America became the Dominion of Canada, but the continuing importance of Halifax as a port for the Royal Navy saw British troops remain here until 1906. After that the Citadel was occupied by the Canadian military and remained active through two World Wars until 1951, when it was transferred from the Department of National Defence to Parks Canada.

Please visit our many exhibits to learn more.



Halifax Citadel
National Historic Site

Who We Are

Parks Canada manages one of the largest national park systems in the world. This system includes national parks, historic sites, heritage canals and marine conservation areas. Parks Canada strives to present these resources in a manner that fosters understanding of their value to all Canadians while protecting them for future generations.

Our Partners

The Army Museum first opened at the Halifax Citadel in 1953. A non-profit institution, it was created to preserve the memory of Atlantic Canada's soldiers.

Tel. 902-422-5979 Fax. 902-426-4228
www.armymuseumhalifax.ca

The Halifax Citadel Regimental Association was created in 1993 to foster public appreciation of Halifax's Military History resources and their importance for Canadians. A charitable non-profit organization, the HCRA now also oversees the Regimental Shop, Coffee Shop, Meeting and Event Facilities, on-site Catering, site fee collection and visitor orientation, and the School of Piping and Drumming.

Tel. 902-426-1990 | Fax. 902-426-7806
Email: info@regimental.com
www.regimental.ca

Hours of Operation

May 7 to June 30 - 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
July 1 to August 31 - 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
September 1 to October 31 - 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
From November 1 to May 6, the grounds are open
9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with limited services.

Contact Us

Halifax Defence Complex,
PO Box 9080, Station A,
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 5M7
Tel. 902-426-5080 | Fax. 902-426-4228
Email: halifax.citadel@pc.gc.ca
parkscanada.gc.ca/halifaxcitadel

Thanks!

Proceeds from admission and retail operations are reinvested in the site and its operation. Thank you for helping us preserve an important piece of our country's heritage.

By ensuring the Citadel's legacy we aren't just preserving our past, we're enriching our future.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français.



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Halifax Citadel National Historic Site

Exhibits and Attractions

Self-guided Tour

- 1 Information Centre
 - 2 The Army Museum
 - 3 A Harbour Worth Defending (Film)
 - 4 Barracks
 - 5 North Viewing Platform
 - 6 Fortress Halifax - Warden of the North
 - 7 Seven-inch Rifled Guns
 - 8 Guard Room & Main Gate
 - 9 Engineer Store
 - 10 Orderly Room
 - 11 Tailor Shop
 - 12 Noon Gun
 - 13 Sally Port No 1 (Entry/Exit to Dry Ditch)
 - 14 Musketry Gallery
 - 15 South Ravelin
 - 16 Sally Port No 2 (Entry/Exit to Dry Ditch)
 - 17 Echoes of War
 - 18 Signal Post
 - 19 South Viewing Platform
 - 20 Expense Magazine
 - 21 Defence Casemates and Garrison Cells
 - 22 32-pounder Gun Battery
 - 23 South Magazine
 - 24 School Room
 - 25 Military Heritage Centre – *Opening in 2017!*
 - 26 WWI Trench Exhibit
- | | |
|---|--|
|  Regimental Shop |  Elevator |
|  Coffee Shop |  Parking |
|  Entrance/Exit |  Accessible Parking |

For more detailed information about each location, **LOOK INSIDE.**



Cavalier Building Detail



For Your Safety

The Halifax Citadel is a 19th-century fortification with steep masonry walls surrounded by a ditch up to 9 metres deep.

To have a safe visit, please observe the following:

Please use North and South viewing platforms to enjoy the site's most impressive views. The top of all earthen walls, stone inner walls, and gun openings are "do not enter" spaces based on the high level of falling risk they present, especially when wet.

Watch out for low doorways, steep stairways, water gutters, and uneven ground and floors.

Site requires all young children to be under close adult supervision at all times.

Exhibits and Attractions

Self-guided Tour - Follow the numbers in this guide.

1 Information Centre

Begin your visit here for a general overview of the site.

Tours begin here throughout the day. Hosted tours last from 45 to 60 minutes and provide an overview of the site's vibrant history and its many attractions.

Minimum Time Recommended: tours run 45-60 minutes.

2 The Army Museum

Nova Scotia's military past presented through exhibits of artifacts, photographs and documents dating from the First World War to the present.



The Road to Vimy and Beyond - Opened in 2014, the Army Museum is pleased to present this exhibit commemorating the 100th anniversary of the First World War.

Trail of the Canadian Army 1939-1945 - New for 2016, this exhibit tells the story of Nova Scotia's contribution to Canada's war effort during the Second World War.

Minimum Time Recommended: 20 minutes

3 A Harbour Worth Defending (Film)

A 15 minute film telling the entire story of Halifax as a key British and Canadian naval base.

Minimum Time Recommended: 15 minutes

4 Barracks

This was home for the Citadel's soldiers. See where they ate and slept, and discover what they owned and carried. Try out a barrack cot and heft a full knapsack.



Minimum Time Recommended: 10 minutes

5 North Viewing Platform

A clear view of the naval dockyard which the Citadel was built to protect. Ground zero for the 1917 Halifax Explosion is also visible, marked by the farthest suspension bridge.

Minimum Time Recommended: 5 minutes

6 Fortress Halifax – Warden of the North

This award winning exhibit tells the story of the Halifax defences and their influence on surrounding community, region, and the Canadian landscape.

Minimum Time Recommended: 20 minutes

7 Seven-inch Rifled Guns

In the 1870s, the Citadel re-armed with these massive rifled muzzle-loading guns, which had a range of over a mile and were capable of sinking the ironclad warships of their day.

Minimum Time Recommended: 2 minutes

8 Guard Room & Main Gate

Take a turn in the lock-up cells in what was once the main entrance and security office for the Citadel.

Minimum Time Recommended: 5 minutes

9 Engineer Store

Find out what the Royal Engineers kept on hand to ensure the Citadel was maintained in good repair.

Minimum Time Recommended: 2 minutes

10 Orderly Room

Try your hand at using a dip pen with India ink as you "enlist" in the British Army here in the garrison's administrative office.



Minimum Time Recommended: 5 minutes

11 Tailor Shop

Assist the regimental tailor in this shop where uniforms were made and repaired. Try on a uniform coat and have your picture taken.

Minimum Time Recommended: 10 minutes

12 Noon Gun

This reproduction 1809 12 pounder gun is used as the Citadel's traditional daily "noon gun," and also for firing artillery salutes at other times.



Minimum Time Recommended: 2 minutes

13 Sally Port No 1 (Entry/Exit to Dry Ditch)

Follow the sally port, a long tunnel through the Citadel's thick main wall, to the dry ditch, which served as an obstacle to potential attackers.

Minimum Time Recommended: 10 minutes

14 Musketry Gallery

Explore this dark tunnel that was built to allow soldiers to fire into the dry ditch while under cover.

Minimum Time Recommended: 5 minutes

15 South Ravelin

This triangular outlying fort, one of three, protected the Citadel's walls from artillery fire and was another potential obstacle for an attacking army.

Minimum Time Recommended: 2 minutes

16 Sally Port No 2 (Entry/Exit to Dry Ditch)

One of six tunnels under the Citadel's walls that allow access to the dry ditch.

17 Echoes of War

Examine the detailed models and exhibits that tell the story of the Citadel during the War of 1812, its causes and aftermath.

Minimum Time Recommended: 15 minutes

18 Signal Post

Find out how the Citadel's tall masts were used for sending coded signals to both the citizens of Halifax and to the other forts that protected the harbour.

Minimum Time Recommended: 2 minutes

19 South Viewing Platform

Take in the spectacular view of the harbour mouth and of



McNab's Island, location of Fort McNab National Historic Site, and the smaller Georges Island, location of Fort Charlotte, both key harbour defences.

Minimum Time Recommended: 2 minutes

20 Expense Magazine

Explore this tiny dark "bomb proof" room where cartridges for the artillery were stored.

Minimum Time Recommended: 2 minutes

21 Defence Casemates and Garrison Cells

Descend the thirty-three steps to these dank rooms that were designed to allow cannon to fire into the citadel's defensive ditch, but were also used to house military prisoners.

Minimum Time Recommended: 10 minutes

22 32-pounder Gun Battery

More than thirty of these large smoothbore guns comprised the Citadel's primary armament from the 1830s to the early 1870s.

Minimum Time Recommended: 2 minutes

23 South Magazine

Count the barrels in this reinforced structure where the Citadel's gunpowder was stored.

Minimum Time Recommended: 5 minutes

24 School Room

Soldiers and their children alike were educated by the Regimental School Master.



Stop here to take a lesson and see a "Magic Lantern" show.

Minimum Time Recommended: 10 minutes

25 Military Heritage Centre – Opening in 2017!

26 WWI Trench Exhibit

Get a sense of life in the trenches on the Western Front in this 200 foot simulation of a Canadian trench during the First World War. This special immersive exhibit runs until 2018.

Minimum Time Recommended: 15 minutes

Activities and Performances

Our living history program brings to life various elements of the Citadel's garrison, including the famous 78th Highlanders and the 3rd Brigade, Royal Artillery, 1869 to 1871, and the 25th Battalion (Nova Scotia Rifles), 1914-1918.

Sentry Changes Every hour, the sentry at the main gate is changed in a formal ceremony.

The Noon Gun Noon in Halifax is announced by the firing of the Noon Gun, a tradition that has continued, every day at least since 1856.

Drill Demonstrations Inspections, troop reviews, squad drills and larger maneuvers occur on the Citadel's parade square.

Performances of the Pipes and Drums Bagpipers and drummers of the 78th Highlanders perform favourite traditional regimental tunes at various times during the day.

Rifle and Cannon Firing Demonstrations Individual rifle firing demonstrations are carried out several times each day, with larger demonstrations of massed rifles, muskets, and cannon fire between mid-June and August 31.

On Site Services

Coffee Shop Stop in for refreshments or a light meal in the "Coffee Bar" adjacent to the historic Soldiers' Library.

Regimental Shop Located on the ground floor of the Cavalier Building, the Regimental Shop provides a unique shopping experience for visitors.



Special Programs during Operational Hours



Ready, Aim, Fire! Fire an original Snider-Enfield rifle! Available daily between 10 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. (*Age restriction and additional fee apply*).

A Soldier's Life Enlist in the British Army and learn how to march, drum, and hoist a signal. Available daily in July & August at 2:00 p.m. For ages 6-12. (*Additional fee applies*).

Citadel Adventures: the Great War An interactive comic book adventure for older kids, following several characters through the trials of the First World War. Ages 10 and up.

Take the Citadel Adventure! With your interactive comic book and spy kit, search the Citadel to find the clues that will help you complete your secret mission. Ages 6-13.

Parks Canada "Xplorers" Citadel activity booklets perfect for kids ages 6-11. Explore the fort and do the activities, then collect your special souvenir.

Facility Rentals

The Halifax Citadel offers a unique setting for meetings, weddings, dinners and receptions for groups large and small. We offer on-site catering and can add colour to your event with private tours, bagpipers and cannon firings.

Indoor events: 902-426-7665 or facility@regimental.com
Outdoor events: 902-426-1995 or halifax.citadel@pc.gc.ca

Special Programs by Reservation



Ghost Tours
An evening tour featuring ghost stories and folklore of the Citadel. Pre-booked group tours available from April 1 to December 1. Public tours available Friday and Saturday nights, July 8 to October 29, starting at 8:30 p.m.

Citadel Time Detectives
Interactive school programming is now available for grade levels Primary to 12. Great for field trips.

Birthday Parties
Let the 78th Highlanders host your child's next birthday party! Recommended for ages 6 to 12.

Soldier for a Day
Enlist as a soldier in Queen Victoria's army. Learn about the customs and traditions of soldiering in a bygone era. This is a three hour immersion program available by pre-booking from May until October.

Music School
Offering lessons year round on the great highland bagpipe. Individual or group instruction. Online lessons and summer music camps are available. Recommended for all ages.

For more information or to make a reservation, call 902-426-1990 or email info@regimental.com

Services for Visitors with Disabilities

The grounds, main floor of the **Cavalier Building**, the **Army Museum**, most of the exhibits and the washrooms are all wheelchair accessible.

Elevator There is a self-service elevator in the new Military Heritage Centre that gives wheelchair access to the upper level of the walls. The Army Museum can be accessed with Information Centre staff assistance by the lift located next to the Information Centre.

A Harbour Worth Defending (Film) has closed captioning on request.

Smoking is not permitted in buildings.

Pets on a leash are permitted on the grounds; identified service animals are permitted inside the buildings. We ask pet owners to pick up after their pets and not leave them unattended.