

By Kari Bodnarchuk
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

The US-Canada border fully reopened Nov. 8, and the United States began welcoming vaccinated international travelers, but what does it take for US citizens to visit Canada by car, train, boat, or plane? Due to the ongoing pandemic, Americans must navigate strict guidelines to cross the border, yet with proper planning and a healthy dose of patience you can enjoy smooth travels to Canada — and back home again.

Whether you're traveling to reunite with family, ski in Whistler, or shop for holiday gifts in Montreal, here are a few tips for the journey.

To be exempt from a 14-day quarantine upon arrival, all US citizens 12 and older must be fully vaccinated and show proof of vaccination at land borders or at the airport before boarding their flight. Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated travelers 5 and older need to show results of a negative COVID molecular test taken within 72 hours before arriving in Canada.

It's relatively easy to schedule a drive-thru test at a pharmacy such as Walgreens, Rite-Aid, or CVS, unless demand is high due to holiday travel or close proximity to the US-Canada border. However, check the fine print: Not all testing sites can deliver results within 72 hours, especially in rural border areas, and some sites are closed on weekends, causing further delays.

"We originally planned to cross into Canada from Idaho after our visit to Glacier National Park" to visit friends who lived right over the border in Christina Lake, says Cynthia Matthews von Berg of Connecticut, who was traveling with her husband and two daughters, ages 4 and 6, in late September. "However, we couldn't find any testing options that would guarantee us results in the required 72 hours, so we completely rerouted our trip. We drove to Seattle, where we could book guaranteed tests ahead of time, crossed at Douglas/Peace Arch into Vancouver, and then drove back out to Christina Lake," a three-day detour including waiting for results in Seattle.

When selecting a Walgreens test for Canada, make sure you choose the approved Rapid Diagnostic Test (ID NOW) so you can



ELAINE THOMPSON/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Oh Canada, so good to be back

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get results within 24 hours — ideal for travel. I have made the mistake of choosing the PCR test (also approved), the results of which took 60 hours to receive, meaning a bit too close for comfort to meet that 72-hour cutoff.

Before departing for Canada, download the easy-to-use ArriveCAN app on your Apple or Android device or set up an account using ArriveCAN's Web version.

Upon arriving in Canada, you may be randomly selected to take a COVID test, which can be completed at an airport for free or with a self-swab kit you can take with you. You can still continue on your travels but must complete this mandatory test within 24 hours.

Angela Essington, a travel blogger from Chicago who drove to Canada in August and returned home in October, recommends that you proactively open

I or V next to it — print it out. In fact, it's best to carry card copies of all your paperwork in addition to any electronic documents, just in case.

With all your documents in hand — vaccination card, negative test results, QR code from ArriveCAN, and your usual passport or Nexus card — you're ready to travel.

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a SwitchHealth Account before you travel, as she did, in case you're flagged for the random COVID screening test.

"We were selected, and already having an account open helped the whole process go smoothly," says Essington. "It only took 10 additional minutes for the random test on our travel day."

Unvaccinated children between ages 5 and 11 also need to take a COVID test upon arrival, as happened with von Berg's daughter. "Our 6-year-old was required to do a Day 1 test at the border ... and we were given a Day 8 test for our child in case we chose to stay that long," she says.

Here's the great news for drivers: You don't need to take an antigen test if you return to the United States by car (this applies when traveling by boat and

train, too). For those flying back, a rapid test — also called an antigen test — is required. Vaccinated travelers must receive a negative test result within 72 hours of boarding their return flight, while unvaccinated or partially vaccinated Americans must get their negative results within 24 hours before takeoff.

The golden question: Where to get an antigen test? Research your destination for test availability and cost since rules and rates vary from province to province.

Visitors generally have to pay for this test in Canada if it's for travel and costs can range from \$40 to hundreds of dollars (some insurance companies may reimburse for this, so ask before you travel and keep your receipt). Go Rapid Test has opened drive-or-walk-thru testing sites in Mon-

treau, Banff, Calgary, and Vancouver for visitors passing through these areas.

"We used Go Rapid Test, paid online, and at our convenience went to a walk-thru testing site in Banff," says Michelle Steinhart, who was flying home to Los Angeles. "We were in and out of the testing site in less than five minutes and received our results via e-mail about 30 minutes later."

In popular travel destinations, clinics, pharmacies, and traveling doctors offer antigen tests; some require advance booking, whereas others welcome walk-ins. In Whistler, a physician with Airwolf Medical will come to your accommodations and provide a rapid antigen test before you fly home, providing results within about 30 minutes.

Some hotels also offer their guests access to an on-site rapid test, such as the Fairmont Banff Springs and Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise in Alberta. Ask about this service when booking your room — at any hotel — especially if you're traveling during a busy period.

One of the easiest and cheapest ways to get tested before travel is by using an approved home test kit, such as select ones made by BinaxNOW, Ellume, and Qured, which range from about \$50 to \$70. Patrick Smith, an airline pilot from Somerville, recently used a Qured kit before flying back home from Toronto. He scheduled a video call with a Qured representative who guided him through the process of swabbing his nose, putting the swab in a tube with a sealant, and a paper strip, and then photographing and e-mailing the results to be verified.

"The test can be completed in the privacy of your hotel room and takes no more than 10 minutes," says Smith. "All you need is Wi-Fi and a phone. I had my e-mail confirmation less than 15 minutes after the call," and then he was on his way.

Just remember: Rules change quickly, test prices and availability fluctuate, and technology can add to the challenge when traveling, but navigating the nitty-gritty details is part of the journey and, dare we say, the fun.

Kari Bodnarchuk can be reached at travelwriter@karib.us.

Holiday strolls for after the feast

WALKS
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sidewalks to reach the Arnold Arboretum. While most deciduous trees have shed their leaves by now, the curving Willow Path (just inside the arboretum gate) makes a charming conclusion for the holiday stroll. The Forest Hills MBTA station is right up the street.

BATTLE ROAD TRAIL, CONCORD TO LEXINGTON
nps.gov/mina

It's a lot more pleasant to stroll this roughly 5-mile route now than it was for the British soldiers who literally ran for their lives on April 19, 1775. The Battle Road Trail starts at Meriam's Corner. Shortly after noon, 400 Colonial militia used the cover of the Meriam house and barn to attack the flanks of the column of 700 soldiers marching back to Boston from the skirmishes at Lexington and Concord.

You won't walk far between interpretive signs. Posted by Minute Man National Historical Park, they make those now-remote events seem almost palpable. The marshlands, fields, and woods have changed significantly over the centuries, yet they remain eerily evocative of the struggle of Colonial farmers against an occupying military force. By the time the battle had reached Hartwell Tavern (closed until spring), militia from nearby towns had swelled the Colonial forces to 1,500.

You can't miss the rather grand marker at the site where Paul Revere was captured on his midnight ride, but look more closely for trailside stones with small plaques reading "Near here is buried a British soldier."



PHOTOS BY DAVID LYON FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE



Olmsted Park connects the Riverway to Jamaica Pond on the Emerald Necklace. Meriam's Corner (left) is the starting point of the Battle Road Trail, which traces the retreat of British forces on April 19, 1775.

The walk begins at Boot Cotton Mills, where canal outlets create small estuaries frequented by splashing ducks and sur-reptitious herons. Park Service signage hits the historical highlights while setting the river, the canals, and the industry in a human context. At its height, Lowell attracted immigrants from more than 40 nations to work in the mills. One of the largest population groups were French-speaking Canadians, as fans of Ti Jean (Jack Kerouac) know well.

An air of industrial majesty still clings to the route, especially where a giant brick chimney reaches into the sky, or where you can look across the Merrimack rapids to the site of the former Lowell Textile School, known as the Industrial West Point. (It was a predecessor to the University of Massachusetts Lowell.)

The route concludes at the guard locks and Francis gate of the Pawtucket Canal, near the Nelson Mandela Overlook on the university campus. The 1-mile walk back to the free parking lot at the National Park Visitor Center cuts through neighborhoods where the mill workers once lived.

The trail concludes at Fiske Hill, where the British forces received reinforcements to enable a more orderly retreat. If you have two vehicles, leave one at the Fiske Hill parking lot so you don't have to walk the trail in reverse to get back to your ride.

RIVERWALK RAMBLE, LOWELL
go.usa.gov/YDe9

Nearly two centuries ago, industrialists dug roughly six miles of canals in the Lowell landscape to provide power for the textile mills that jump-started America's Industrial Revolution. The Lowell National Historical Park focuses on those canals and mills, but it's worth remembering that the power really came from the mighty Merrimack River. Of the four Lowell Waterways walks created by the National Park Service, the 1.6-mile Riverwalk Ramble is the most scenic and inspiring.

PROVINCETOWN INSTAGRAM TOUR
ptowninsider.co

P-town pops. We all know it. The tiny community at the very tip of Cape Cod is so full of color and scenic views that it must be one of the most Instagrammed places in New England. Ptown Insider Tours has branched out from its guided cycling and walking tours to a handful of self-guided tours that rely on the Built Story mobile app. The Provincetown Instagram Tour (\$10) covers 2.3 miles, mostly along Commercial Street, from Fanizzi's Restaurant in the East End to the Pilgrims landing site and the Provincetown breakwater in the West End.

More than just a list of 15 sites, the app walks you down the route with history and anecdotes as well as advice on where to get the best Instagram shot. We're dubious that these are necessarily the most Instagrammed spots in P-town ("Bubbles the Whale"? Really?) but have to confess that following the tour led us to things we'd never seen before and reminded us of old-favorite sites like the Flag House. It's an especially good approach to Provincetown in the off-season, when fewer shops and galleries might be open to distract you and fewer tourists will walk in front of your photo.

ROCKY NECK HISTORIC ART TRAIL, GLOUCESTER
trail.rockyneckartcolony.org

If you're on the North Shore and looking for an easy stroll between football games, this trail of 15 sites associated with Gloucester artists between 1850 and 1950 could be right up your alley. Truth is, Rocky Neck remains a thriving art colony, though plain air painting gets a little iffy in the November chill. The online map of this well-developed trail integrates well with Google Maps and has site-specific information for each stop along the roughly 1.5-mile route. (There's a good paper brochure with the same information — minus the Google Maps integration and the now/then compar-

ative photos. Sometimes the brochure is available at a kiosk at one end of the free Rocky Neck municipal parking lot.)

Like Provincetown, Gloucester is a traditional fishing community where the ocean light attracted many artists. Stops include a shoreline view of Ten Pound Island (a favorite of Winslow Homer), the Breckenridge School of Art, and the house where Marsden Hartley had his studio. Although many sites lie along the main road to the boat-

yard at the tip of the peninsula, the trail circles back to the parking lot by passing through the municipal ridge-top streets. Some houses are grand — like the home Edward Hopper painted in "The Mansard Roof" (1923) — while others sport small Gloucester Historical Commission signs identifying the 19th century fishermen who built them.

Patricia Harris and Davis Lyon can be reached at harrislyon@gmail.com.

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