



■ Clockwise from left: Signal Hill overlooking the region's capital, St John's; A whale breaching during a tour with O'Brien's Whale and Bird Tours in Newfoundland and Lanrador; The charming fishing village of Quidi Vidi.  
PHOTOGRAPHS: DESTINATION ST JOHN'S

owned head chef Jeremy Charles in the kitchen, that night's meal was the best I have ever eaten. It's fine dining using local, wild and organic ingredients and my tasting menu included moose and cod's tongue and cheek. Each dish was paired with a glass of wine, and after a magnificent seven I was ready to explore the city's nightlife.

George's Street in St John's is a bit like a great night out in Galway during summer – bars running into bars and live music in each of them. O'Reilly's is a huge venue and the heartbeat of "the craic". Yes, they say it here too. Brenda O'Reilly became the first female bar owner on the street in 1996, and now runs the bar with Craig Flynn.

The following day I had an early dinner in Mussels on the Corner, which is also owned by O'Reilly, and serves traditional Newfoundland food. The region's most traditional dish of all is called "Jiggs dinner" which is essentially an Irish stew.

That evening, my last in Newfoundland, there was one thing I wouldn't be allowed leave without doing. The "screech-in" is a ceremony performed on outsiders who "come from away". It involves a shot of screech (Newfoundland rum), a short recitation of some local lingo, the kissing of a cod, and the wearing of a mad hat. At least that's the way mine went in the Inne of Olde. I headed back to George Street to enjoy my last night – disappointed I wasn't staying for longer but glad I'd discovered this new, nearby world.

## How to ...

### Get there

WestJet fly direct and daily from Dublin to St John's from May to the end of October.

### Where to stay

Alt Hotel: Queen bed room with harbour view from €101 per night  
The Inn by Mallard Cottage: King Suite ranges from €170 per night.

### Where to eat

The Merchant Tavern: Starters from €5/mains from €15  
Mallard Cottage: Dishes from €5-€21  
Mussels on the Corner: 1lb of selected mussels dish €10  
Raymond's: Seven-course tasting menu is €88pp

### What to do

O'Brien's Whale and Bird Tours: Daily tours May-September from €39  
Lighthouse Picnics: Lunch and entry from €17pp  
Sullivans Songhouse: Wednesday and Saturday 3-5pm, €16pp  
Mobile Goat Excursions: St John's to Salmonier Nature Park and Cape St Mary's Ecological Reserve, €118pp.  
The Rooms: €6 adult entry

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