

HANDPICKED HALIFAX

GETTING INVOLVED + MEETING THE CRITERIA

Initiated in 2019, Handpicked Halifax is a brand-new initiative and webpage focused on showcasing Halifax’s best experiences to potential and visiting tourists in one easy-to-use place!

In a global trend, leading tourism organizations have been shifting their strategies from showing “things to do” and “places to go” to “experiences”. Discover Halifax seized this opportunity and now it’s time for our members to get involved to showcase THEIR experiences!

WHAT IS A HANDPICKED HALIFAX EXPERIENCE?

A Handpicked Halifax experience is a combination of activities, locations and personal interactions that connects visitors with the destination. It’s something that is unique to Halifax, entirely authentic and of a high quality or proven standards.

WHY GET INVOLVED?

All leisure, Halifax-based members of Discover Halifax are eligible to submit a Handpicked Halifax experience.

We want our visitors to have a diverse range of experiences to choose from, which is why we need our members to get involved! We want to feature experiences happening across the entire Halifax region from the Eastern Shore to the North End. We also want to ensure our “categories” are evenly and robustly filled from “Entertainment Enthusiast” to “Family First”.

Before submitting your experience and learning the step-by-step submission process outlined on page 4, it’s important to understand what criteria your experience needs to meet to qualify as “Handpicked”.



Questions? Contact our Director of Membership and Visitor Solutions at 1-902-422-1014 or go to discoverhalifaxns.com/members/member-resource-centre

MEETING THE CRITERIA

Not just any experience is considered a Handpicked Halifax experience. We have built a rating system and criteria list for your experience to classify as “Handpicked”. Your experience must meet an 85% Handpicked Halifax rating. We will be judging your experience on the following:

PRIMARY

PROVEN:

Delivery of a proven exceptional experience, based on positive review. Through online consumer review forums, such as Trip Advisor, Facebook and Google, your experience must have an overall 3.5+ rating on a 5-star scale.

UNIQUELY HALIFAX:

Delivery of an experience that is unique to the Halifax region. Through our research, we know consumers interested in visiting Halifax want to purchase an experience unique to our region versus one they can get at any other destination.

TIPS & TRICKS:

When developing an experience, consider creating something that completely sets your offering apart or elevates it! More on page 6.

EASE OF ACCESS:

Experiences with secure online booking platform or ease of access. Through online purchasing trends, we know consumers have an expectation that they should be able to instantly and easily book their experiences and products online or have extreme ease of access when online booking isn't available.

SECONDARY

DISCOVERY QUALITY:

The experience has a “Discovery Quality” considered on asset. Experiences that provide guests with new or “little-known” information or interesting facts about Halifax are considered an asset.

EXPERIENCE ENGAGEMENT:

Consumer participation or engagement considered on asset. Engaging experiences are about giving consumers meaningful opportunities to connect with the destination, creating long-lasting memories of their experience and their trip.

RECOGNIZED:

Proven recognition and awards are considered an asset. If your business has any awards, certifications or badges that indicate your experience has either **a)** exceptional service or ratings, **b)** is authentic, or **c)** is unique to Halifax, this is considered an asset.

TIPS & TRICKS:

Some of the best experiences are self-guided versus guided! We want to give visitors a wide range of ways to experience Halifax.

NEED-TO-KNOWS + MANDATORIES

To participate in Handpicked Halifax:

1. You must be a member of Discover Halifax.
2. Your experience must take place in the Halifax region.
3. Aside from actual experiences in the Ultimate Foodie “Bucket” (brewery tours, culinary sailing adventures, music + food experience) restaurants who want to be featured have had to have won gold, silver or bronze in at least one of the following The Coast Best Of Awards categories: Best Restaurant, Best Regional Restaurant or Best Use of Local Ingredients categories.
 - a. You must have won in the last 3 years.
 - b. There can only be 15 restaurants featured on Handpicked Halifax at any given time.
 - c. No restaurant can be up for more than 6 months.
4. When uploading an experience, your experience can only be included in two categories.
5. Examples of what a Handpicked Halifax experience is not: Hotels packages, products (i.e. souvenirs), basic services (i.e. hair cuts).

WHAT ARE THE HANDPICKED HALIFAX CATEGORIES OR “BUCKETS”?

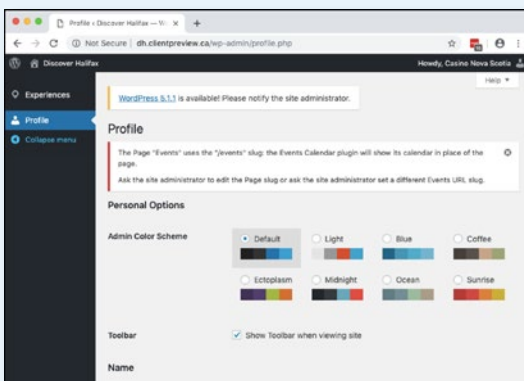
The Highlight Hitter	Highlight Hitter experiences are highly rated and known as the “must-see” things to see and do. They are experiences that iconically represent Halifax.
The Ultimate Foodie	An Ultimate Foodie experience involves local culinary product, from enjoying Haligonian-owned eateries to dining on locally sourced ingredients.
The Epic Explorer	An Epic Explorer experience is typically outdoors and allows the visitor to enjoy Halifax’s unique coastal setting and Maritime landscape.
Family First	Family First experiences are kid-friendly and can accommodate at least 4 people. They are entertaining and accessible for guests of all ages and abilities.
The Bargain Hunter	Bargain Hunter experiences are priced at \$10 or less per person. They are authentic and accessible to all visitors, and make visitors feel like locals without having to spend a large amount of money.
Halifax History	Halifax History experiences are filled with interesting details and fun facts about Halifax’s unique heritage.
The Entertainment Enthusiast	Entertainment Enthusiast experiences bring the energy of Halifax to life through unique and memorable events and performances.
Local Favourites	Local Favourites are experiences that go beyond the traditional must-sees, guided tours, and iconic attractions. These are experiences that allow visitors to become immersed in the local culture, creating an authentic connection that will last long after they’ve returned home from their trip.

STEPS TO UPLOAD AN EXPERIENCE

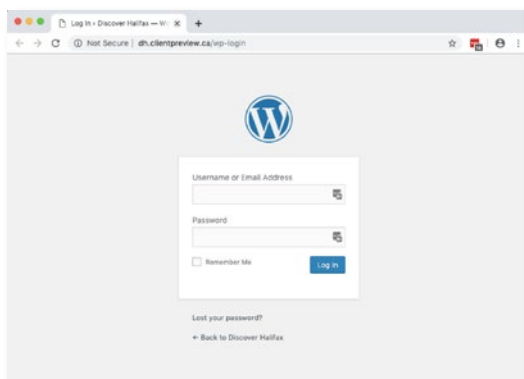
Uploading an experience is easy with 5 simple steps!

WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO GET STARTED

An understanding of Handpicked Halifax's criteria and manual.

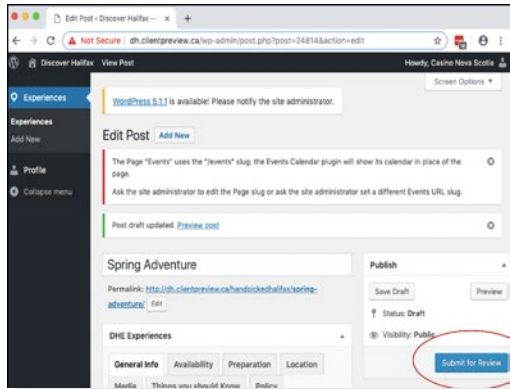


STEP 1:
Become a member



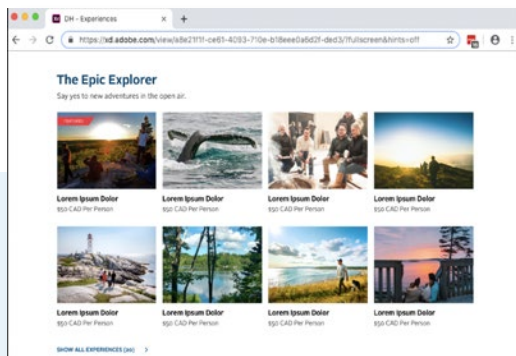
STEP 2:
Login

- **URL login:** discoverhalifaxns.com/wp-login.php
- **Email:** If you haven't already logged-in and updated the email associated with your Handpicked Halifax Wordpress account, the default username is the primary email address listed in your IDSS account.
- **Password:** If you haven't already logged in and updated your password associated with your Handpicked Halifax Wordpress account, the default password is **TestPass123!**
- **NOTE:** You are logging into WordPress not IDSS.



STEP 3:

Upload your experience to the Handpicked Halifax website using guidance from the Handpicked Halifax manual. This can be found online at discoverhalifaxns.com/members/member-resource-centre.



STEP 4:

Wait for your experience to be approved/rejected. This can take up to 5 days.

STEP 5A:

If your experience is approved, you will be notified. This experience can now be edited by you anytime without the need for additional approvals.

STEP 5B:

If your experience is rejected, you will be notified. We will advise what your criteria rating was and how you can adjust your experience to meet the criteria if applicable.

OPTIONAL STEP:

Promote your experience. See the Handpicked Halifax Advertising and Content Matching program rate card for more details. This is located on the Discover Halifax website in the resources page. discoverhalifaxns.com/members/member-resource-centre.



TIPS & TRICKS:

“ The tourism product is what the customer buys, the tourism experience is what they remember. ”

TAKING AN EXPERIENCE TO THE NEXT LEVEL

There are experiences... and then there are EXPERIENCES. What we mean by this is that there are amazing experiences that will meet our criteria, but why stop at meeting the criteria when you can go above and beyond? These can involve the most simple or extravagant of add-ons.



Here's an example:

EXPERIENCE

A 45-minute walking tour of Downtown Dartmouth.



SIMPLE WAY TO ELEVATE THE TOUR

A polaroid photo of the traveler experiencing the tour as a souvenir or a complimentary Halifax Transit ferry ticket . We want visitors to LOVE these experiences and to exceed their expectations.



DON'T HAVE E-COMMERCE ON YOUR WEBSITE? CONSIDER ADDING IT IN!

Through online purchasing trends, we know consumers have an expectation that they should be able to instantly and easily book their experiences and products online. We want to make buying a Handpicked Halifax experience as easy as possible, and that usually means implementing a “book now” button.

NOTE:

Members who don't have e-commerce set up can still participate.



FAQS:

How long will it take for my experience to be approved?

It can take up to 5 days for your experience to be approved.

How can I gain additional exposure for my Handpicked Halifax experience?

See the Handpicked Halifax Advertising and Content Matching program rate card for more details. This document can be found online at discoverhalifaxns.com/members/member-resource-centre.

Who should I contact if I am having difficulties?

Contact our Director of Membership and Visitor Solutions at 1-902-422-1014.

How can I become a member?

To become a member, simply sign-up online at discoverhalifaxns.com/member-signup.

What if my experience is located outside of the HRM?

If your experience is located outside of the HRM, you do not qualify to be part of the Handpicked Halifax program. However, we recommend discovering what opportunities exist with Tourism Nova Scotia, such as their “Experience Development” program: tourismns.ca/development/experience-development

How do I update the password associated to my Handpicked Halifax WordPress account?

See page 5 of the Handpicked Halifax Website User Manual located at discoverhalifaxns.com/members/member-resource-centre.

How do I update the email address associated to my Handpicked Halifax WordPress account?

See page 5 of the Handpicked Halifax Website User Manual located at discoverhalifaxns.com/members/member-resource-centre.

What if my experience gets rejected?

If your experience is rejected, you will be notified. We will advise what your criteria rating was and how you can adjust your experience to meet the criteria if applicable.

How can a member upload an experience?

As long as you have your login credentials (see page 4 for details on your username and password), you can follow the easy steps to upload an experience by using the Handpicked Halifax Website User Manual, which can be found online at discoverhalifaxns.com/members/member-resource-centre.

What if my experience is new or not rated, and therefore doesn't meet the “proven” criteria?

We will review un-rated or new experiences on a case by case basis.