

TEN & TWO

# ROOM<sup>with</sup>a VIEW

NOVA SCOTIA

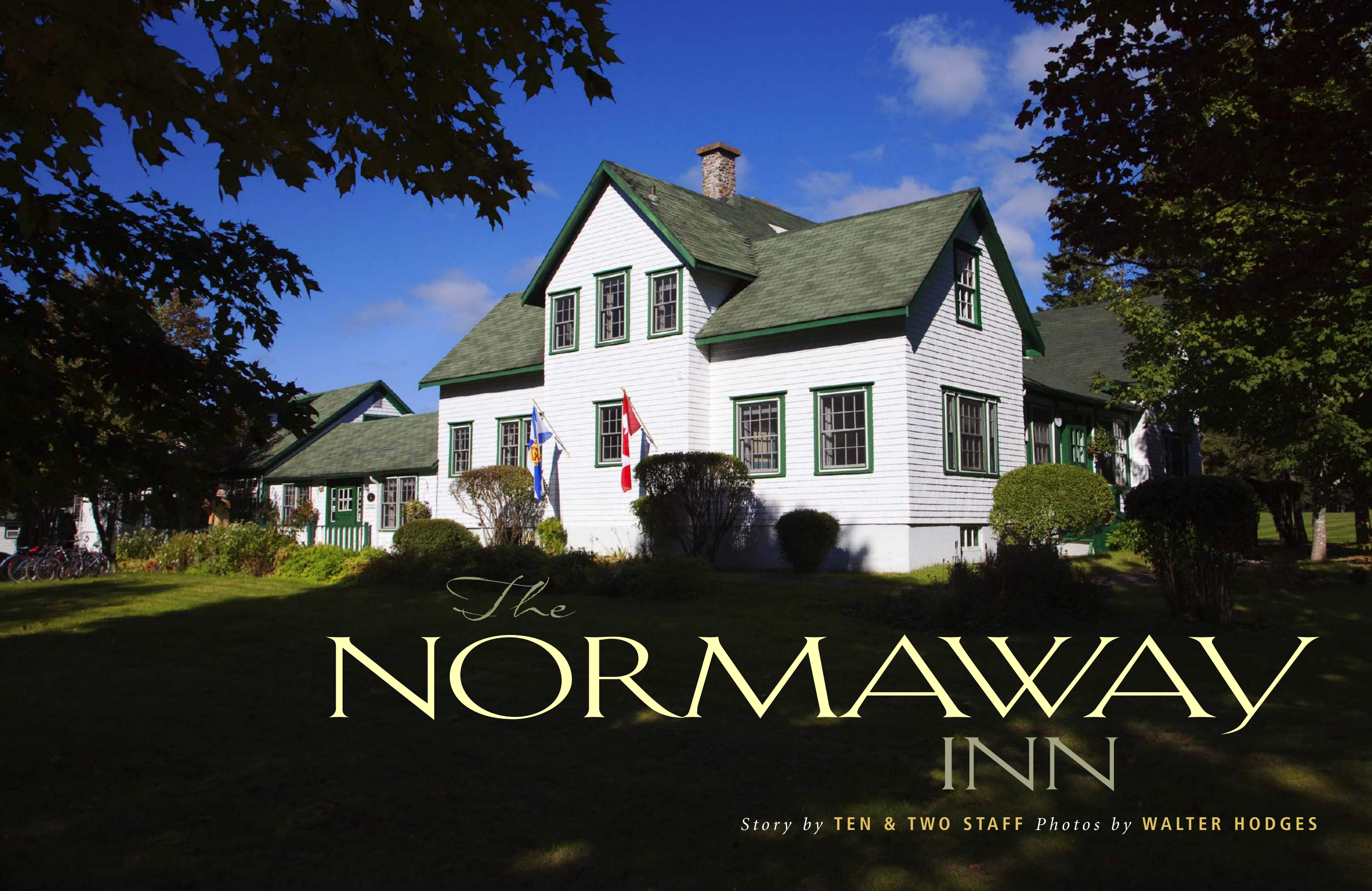
*Normaway Inn*

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*The*  
**NORMAWAY**  
INN

*Story by* **TEN & TWO STAFF** *Photos by* **WALTER HODGES**





THE CAPE BRETON HIGHLANDS scotch pines frame the driveway (allée) of the [Normaway Inn](#) as though they were live oaks bordering the entrance to a stately old Louisiana plantation. Driving the allé just before sunset in October the pines are a silhouetted soft brown/black against the surrounding mosaic of the sky and the hills of dappled leaf paints. Into the descending sun, it's an elegant 250 meters of Highlands charm. Just a couple minutes of driving from the Margaree River, the twenty-six-room inn is home for our stay in the Margaree Valley.

Dave MacDonald is part of the fabric of this valley. His family has owned the Normaway Inn for many years now. The MacPherson family built the original buildings in 1926 and the MacDonald's took over the inn around 1945. Since then its been Dave and his family sharing hospitality, food and music with friends from all over the world. Dave knows everyone in the valley and is encyclopedic on the subject of Cape Breton off the beaten path.

(Previous page) The exterior of the main lodge at Normaway Inn. The inn sits in the middle of the Margaree Valley near the Margaree River, one of the worlds great Atlantic salmon rivers. (Above) The late afternoon Nova Scotia sun backlights the scoth pines that line the driveway into the Normaway Inn.



(Top) Rustic Cottages fill the woods around the Normaway. Years ago, a young John F Kennedy stayed in one of the cottages while looking for property in the Margaree Valley. (Bottom) The interiors of the cottages are each decorated in a unique style fitting the country atmosphere, while providing comforts common to the Normaway experience.





The dining room at the Normaway Inn features dishes using local ingredients. Specialties include in season seafood like lobster, salmon and clams as well as steak and roasts.









THE MAIN BUILDING is decorated in locally inspired art from the likes of Bell Fraser and George Thomas. The inn has four antique furnished rooms in the main house as well as cabins in the surrounding woods. The restaurant is upscale and home style and good. In season, Nova Scotia lobster is a mainstay on the menu.

While in the midst of this escape from the chaos of the world in general, if it's your nature, or your job, or just your general inclination, you can get a Wi-Fi connection in the dining room, lobby or living room and connect with all that stuff you're trying hard to get away from. Seems like a simple choice, but then...

Dave MacDonald is a regular guy trying to do way too much (just like all of us), but he's really built of music. There are the concerts and dances in The Barn once a week and every night there's Celtic music in the living room being

played by a local musician. We heard fiddles and guitars every night while having a Normaway dessert of some sort, followed by a dram of Cape Breton's Glen Breton Rare whisky and then maybe a Cuban Esplanade cigar from a fishing buddy who got it at the factory in Havana. I have some serious questions about whether fly fishing can get any better than this kind of stuff. Maybe different, but not better. Not even close.

Dave's passion for sharing his love of music and the island of Cape Breton is the driving force behind the Normaway. Go fly fish the Margaree for Atlantic salmon and stay at the inn. Catch a fish. Eat a meal. Listen to the music. Watch a step dance master at work. Share in the conversation and the mood. You will be carried away by it all.

**Normaway Inn**

[www.thenormawayinn.com](http://www.thenormawayinn.com)



(Previous page) Chef Raymond Lau puts the finishing touches on a Chinese version of the famous lobster dish, lobster thermidor. (Facing page) The grounds surrounding the Normaway Inn spread out to local farms and the expanse of the Margaree Valley. (Above) The dining room is surrounded by windows set against surrounding foliage from the Highlands of Cape Breton.









(Previous page) Every weekday evening the living room is turned into a concert stage as the Normaway brings in local musicians to play music indigenous to Cape Breton Island. (Clockwise from top left) An example of a room from the main lodge decorated in period antiques. A detail of the country style common to the cottages throughout the grounds. Another example of a typical room layout from the cottages.

