

why you shouldn't feed deer in winter • the anatomy of the outhouse



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SALTSCAPES

10th ANNIVERSARY

canada's east coast magazine

Love the light

- See stunning sunsets over water
- 4 tips to snap the sun like a pro

Living on Sable Island

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our annual Recipe Contest Winners

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Eastern Sol

Enthralled by the play of light against Newfoundland's large landscape

Photography and text by David Tilley



Our island of Newfoundland, positioned precariously at the edge of a continent from which it has borrowed but a piece of its fractured conglomerate, looks eastward across a vast ocean. At dawn, the first rays of sunlight warm the cliffs of Cape Spear, North America's easternmost point, while the rest of the continent remains cloaked in darkness.

This spectacular, if rare, event is heralded with as much enthusiasm by late-night patrons of downtown bars in nearby St. John's as it is by early risers out for a morning jog. The same sun that bakes the earth dry and sends life scurrying to the margins in the equatorial regions of Africa is often no match for the dense fog that covers a northern ocean where its rays seldom penetrate. In a part of the island that holds the national record for the most rain, drizzle and fog, a brilliant sunrise can be truly inspiring.

The sun's power to bring light and life to the earth has inspired cultures from the dawn of creation to live their lives and dream their mythology. Taken from the Latin *Sol*, for the Roman deity, the sun is barely a statistic in the sea of stars that make up the Milky Way Galaxy, itself but a point of light in an endless universe.



The setting sun paints a swath of vivid hues across low clouds. Left: Sunrise over a peatland pond near Pistolet Bay on the Great Northern Peninsula. Pages 28-29: The morning sun rises over a blanket of fog off Cape Bonavista.

“Tomorrow is always fresh, with no mistakes in it”

~L.M. Montgomery

Being average on a galactic scale doesn't diminish the colossal influence it has in this corner of the universe. With a volume a million times that of our planet, the sun has an immense pressure of gravity that fuels a nuclear reaction, generating heat to a temperature of 15,000,000°C. Power captured from sunlight reaching the Earth's surface has the potential to supply much of our energy needs into the distant future.

Our sun is truly a star of prehistory; the mythical beliefs of ancient cultures universally pay homage to this all-powerful giver of life. Not being content with one deity to represent the sun, the ancient Egyptians employed many, the most famous and powerful being Ra or Re, who sailed the sky battling foes by day and returned to light the underworld by night. The sun as “god” has many aliases, whether it is the Greek Helios, Hindu Surya, Aztec Tonatiuh, Roman Apollo, or a host of others.

The common thread of human experience can be found woven through the telling of these myths. Many of the ancients held great knowledge of the heavens, constructing tools that measured time and the passing of the seasons. Sundials are still in use today, while more elaborate means, like the precise alignment of stone monoliths to measure the path of light throughout the year, is a piece of the puzzle surrounding the mystery of Stonehenge.

In more recent times but predating the arrival of Europeans, the eight-pointed star occurs in Mi'kmaq hieroglyphic writing as a symbol for the sun.

Of course, the sun is prominent in agrarian cultures, both



A place in the sun

You don't have to ride off into the sunset to live ever after in a technicolour dream—here's how to take it home with you.

1. Atmospheric dust filters sunlight to create vivid hues at sunset. Point your camera away from the sun to meter the brightest part of the sky and lock the exposure; then reframe the shot to include the sun, thus avoiding underexposure.

2. Sky colour reaches peak intensity several minutes after the sun drops beneath the horizon—this is a good time to find interesting foreground shapes to expose in a silhouette against a vivid sky.

3. Use natural filters. A mid-day sun diffused by fog or cloud adds a whole new dimension to an otherwise bland sky. In winter, drifting snow provides a natural filter.

4. If you're using an SLR camera, using an aperture setting of f22 produces a starburst effect, working well in wide shots of bright, snowy landscapes .

ancient and modern. "Make hay while the sun shines" is an oft-repeated refrain that, as the earth wobbles along its annual solar circumnavigation, we in the temperate latitudes are wise to heed.

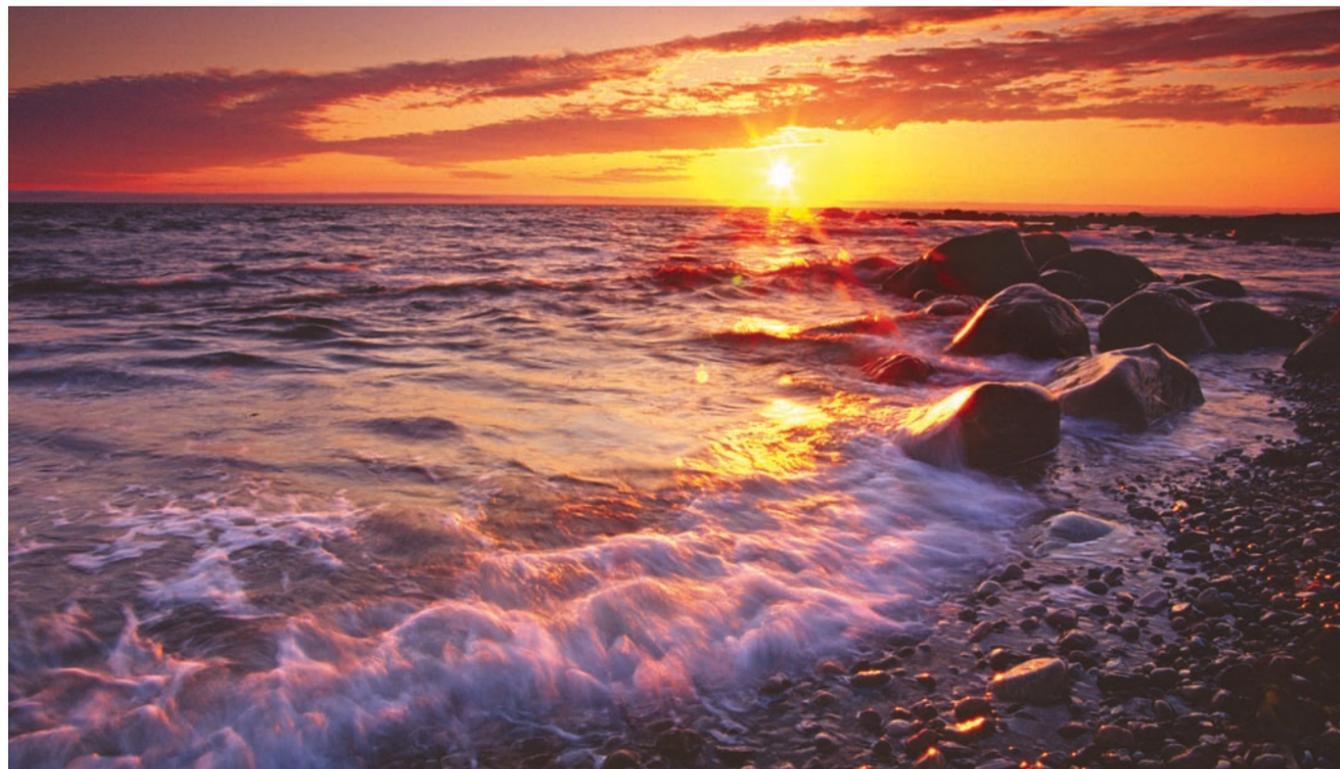
The glacier-ground remnants of alluvial soils on Newfoundland are challenging enough to local farmers, but the shortness of the season and almost year-round risk of frost favour fishing as a means to make a living.

Cod was king in bygone days, and the outports bustled with the activity of catching and salting fish for international markets. Hot, dry summers along the northeast coast were perfect for spreading the split fish on flakes—large wire racks with wooden frames—to dry in the sun. Capelin are still dried today in the sun for food and to fertilize gardens.

Even before the island was colonized the migrant French fishing fleet used the cobblestone beach at Point La Haye to dry cod in a simpler manner, one of the first recorded activities to occur on the island.

Following the receding fog edge around St. Mary's Bay as the sun warms the land, I can appreciate the irony that early Europeans walking on these shores were sun seekers. They could escape their toil on those damp foggy banks to bask in the sun's heat and preserve their catch, the currency of the day for the long journey home and a hungry world.

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Sunset over the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Gros Morne National Park. Top left: Steps to sand dunes at Western Brook, near St. Paul's in Gros Morne. Right: clouds diffuse the dying light over the Serpentine River.

