



- Australia/ NZ & Pacific
- Hawaii
- USA & Canada
- Carib/Central/South America
- Europe & Israel
- Middle East & Gulf
- Africa
- Central Asia
- East Asia
- Global Issues

- eTN Hall of Fame or Shame
- Guam
- Seychelles
- Le Reunion
- Centara Hotels

Search

Submit nominations for the eTN Hall of Fame or Shame Submit News Tips

Subscribe
Free email updates



BASQUE WHALING STATION RECORDS 450 YEARS OF EUROPE IN NEW WORLD

Red Bay in Newfoundland and Canada up for UNESCO designation



Wreck of the Bernier on Saddle Island, Red Bay

Jun 03, 2013
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR, Atlantic Canada – A little known chapter in Canada's history is being recognized with the news that the Basque Whaling Station in Red Bay, Labrador, is up for a UNESCO World Heritage site designation. An official announcement of the nomination will come in June.

The whaling station established by Basque fishermen at Red Bay 450 years ago was the largest and most important port associated with the beginning of the global whaling industry. With the most complete archaeological record of the beginning of that industry, the site has 15 whale oil rendering ovens, cooperages where the barrels were made and a cemetery with the remains of 140 Basque whalers. Artifacts from the work stations along with the whalers' personal items form a collection of 16th century Basque material culture unequalled even in the Basque Country.



Northern and Greenland Right Whales once attracted fishermen to the coasts of Labrador and Quebec from the Basque regions of Spain and France. From the 1540s to the early 1600s, Basque men were making annual visits to the Strait of Belle Isle in Labrador. At one point in the mid 1500s, the south coast of Labrador was dotted with whaling stations established by Basques with as many as 2,000 fishermen whaling out of some 16 sites on Saddle Island and Red Bay.

A thriving industry for the production of whale oil, a valuable commodity for Europe, soon developed. In demand as fuel for lamps, for paints, varnishes and soaps, these millions of barrels of whale oil were as valuable as the gold the Spanish conquistadores found in other areas of the New World.

Lying in shallow waters off Red Bay is the oldest shipwreck found in Canada, reflecting the early arrival of Europeans to the New World. In 1978, marine archaeologists from Parks Canada discovered the 450-year-old San Juan, a 250-ton galleon that sunk in a storm in the Strait of Belle Isle in the fall of 1565. Six years of underwater archaeology revealed the most complete ocean-going vessel excavated to date and represented the evolution of ship design and construction for that period.

In 2016, the city of San Sebastian in the Spanish Basque Country will reign as Europe's culture capital. To celebrate, a team of marine architects are already at work constructing a full-scale, seaworthy replica of the three-masted, 52-foot vessel.

At the Orientation Center overlooking the harbor, visitors can view a 30-minute film about the underwater archaeology at Red Bay and see a 450-year-old reconstructed chalupa. Considered the work horse of 16th century boats, this small whaling vessel was used by crews to pursue and harpoon the whales and was discovered under the remains of the San Juan.

A rich collection of original artifacts including tools, household items, clothing and weapons, along with scale models and reproductions are displayed on two floors in the Interpretation Centre telling the story of the lives of these fisherman in what is considered North America's first industrial complex. Visitors can take a boat ride to Saddle Island and follow a trail to see where the Basques worked, lived and were laid to rest. Along Boney Shore Trail are fossils of 16th century whales.

This summer from August 2 to 4, 2013, a festival of Basque culture will introduce visitors to Juan, a 16th century Basque whaler and his wife Ana, who will share their stories and some pintxos, Basque snacks at the Red Bay National Historic site.

[BASQUE WHALING STATION](#) | [CANADA](#) | [LABRADOR](#) | [NEWFOUNDLAND](#) | [RED BAY](#) | [USA & CANADA](#)

[Open full page article \(no advertisement\)](#)

[Email this article](#) | [Get the news feed](#) | [Subscribe to eTN](#)

Recomendar

2

1

Tweet

0

0 comments



Leave a message...

Best

Community

Share



ALSO ON ETN GLOBAL NEWS

[What's this?](#)

President Obama visit to Africa: a boom in tourism?

2 comments • 3 days ago



toafricatours — What are you saying about bringing the animals from their natural habitat to the ...

Beware travelers to Sri Lanka of extortion scam by ...

84 comments • 22 days ago



Senanayaka — Thank you for taking the trouble to publish this. As a Sri Lankan I am ashamed ...

AirTran boots 100 misbehaving Jewish students off New ...

6 comments • 6 days ago



Mary Gallagher — I don't think the airline crews over reacted not if they are outnumbered by an ...

Chinese passenger "bullies" Philippines Airlines flight ...

5 comments • 6 days ago



Mr Lee — Everyone knows how disgracefully a lot of mainland Chinese behave when ...



Comment feed



Subscribe via email

More Articles

[WestJet named Canada's most attractive employer for second year in a row](#)

[WestJet re-commits to increase presence of women in leadership roles](#)

[The results of October 2012 Canadian Hotel Rate Report announced](#)

[Canada's airlines hoping to return to the black in 2013](#)

[Chinese tourists love Canada](#)

[Falling debris from Air Canada flight damage cars in Ontario](#)

[WestJet selects Bombardier Q400 for new regional airline](#)

[Canada passenger train derails](#)

Your feedback email
publisher@eturbonews.com