Beat: Travel

VIA Rail Train 15, The Ocean

Halifax To Montreal

Halifax, Nova Scotia, 02.07.2024, 19:03 Time

USPA NEWS - The Ocean provides service from Halifax to Montreal and in reverse 3 days a week.
The Ocean's route provides service to the following communities; Halifax, Truro, Amherst, Moncton, Miramichi, Bathurst, Campbellton, Matapedia, Mont-Joli, Rimouski, Rivière-du-Loup, Sainte Foy and Montreal. In Montreal, passengers are able to make connections with other trains for many destinations throughout Canada.

The VIA Train 15, currently leaves Halifax(Friday, Sunday, and Wednesday) at 1130, and arrives in Montreal the morning of the following day. The journey covers 1,346 km.

Recently, I had the privilege of taking the VIA Train 15, The Ocean, from Halifax, Nova Scotia to Moncton, New Brunswick.
The train departed on time at 1130 from the Halifax VIA Station which is located in the southend of the city. The Halifax VIA station is the oldest named train station in North America and the VIA Train 15 the Ocean is the oldest named train in North America.
As a person with mobility challenges I was interested to find out what polices that VIA Rail has for the disabled. I must admit I was very pleasantly surprised.
For the short 4.5 hour trip I choose Econamy Class as there was no need for sleeping accommodations.
Upon arrival I checked in my one piece of luggage and was able to keep my camera equipment with me on board the train.
When the baggage attendant checked my electronic boarding pass he noticed my walker and advised that they would drive me to my car with the golf card and there would be attendants to help me board the train. To my delight I was placed in one of the 1950's refurbished Budd cars. Class and character all the way.

Back in the 1990's there was a major overhaul and the entire Ocean train set would consist of Budd equipment, but today the Ocean consists of both classic Budd along with modern Renaissance equipment.

During the relaxing train trip to Moncton , I spoke with a gentleman who said that he has made at least twenty round trips between Halifax and Montreal on the Ocean over the years. I asked him why he chose the Ocean over other faster ways of completing the journey. He answered, "The geographical landscapes, the relaxed pace, meeting new people all with an interesting story, and the world class service by a staff that goes above and beyond the call of duty to help weave train travel into the fabric of our nation. Many others that I spoke with shared interesting stories and memories of the Ocean service. These stories are a testament to the deep roots that the Ocean passenger service has established within our region.

I also spoke with a lady who said that she has made dozens of round trips between Halifax and Montreal on the Ocean over the years. I asked her why she chose the Ocean over other faster ways of completing the journey. She answered, "It is a great way to step out of a world where everyone seems to be in such a hurry that they miss out on the little moments that are often overlooked in our fast paced, technology driven society."

During the 4.5 hour journey from Halifax to Moncton, while watching the world go by, time seemed to stand still. As the train roared through small town Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, through the large windows one could see many train spotters, cars stopped at crossings, and people walking around going about their daily lives without considering that many onboard were watching with fascination.
It seems there is a type of romance and sense of wonder when passing through an area that you would never see or didn't even know existed from traveling by many other modes of transportation.
Throughout the trip I engaged in conversation with pleasant individuals who were enjoying the surroundings just as I was.
When my journey concluded in Moncton, the helpful staff assisted me from the train, into the station, helped me collect my luggage, and assisted me in obtaining ground transportation.
First Class service which went above and beyond!

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UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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