

Hello,

It is full on summer here in the Canadian Maritimes. I'd like to think that summer means I hang out at the coast all the time, and that there is sunshine and soft breeze and birdsong. Instead, it is more like I go to work, come home, notice that it's raining, misting, or cool, and hear the crows wreaking havoc in the garden. But then, there is vacation. Ahh, vacation...



When I go **on** vacation, I invariably imagine myself living in the vacation spot. I imagine what my life would be like there, with time, space and beauty laid out before me. It is a pleasant fantasy, and it doesn't matter if the vacation spot is New York City, or Havana, or St. Andrews, New Brunswick.

St. Andrews is closest to me geographically, and most likely. In fact, St. Andrews is half of the inspiration for Stella Mare, the village location in my book, *A Talisman of Home*. The other half of the inspiration came from another Bay of Fundy village, east of St. Andrews. That one is called St. Martins. St. Andrews has the proximity to Maine, the cute shops and restaurants, and the touristy feeling, while St. Martins has the nitty gritty fishing village feel to it, complete with **russet-coloured** cliffs, massive tides that leave boats aground for half the day, and an active community of fishing folk.

Both places are absolutely soaked in Maritime flavour, both real and metaphorical. Real includes seafood in all its forms, chowders and biscuits, a plethora of potato recipes, and bars and squares and pies and cobblers, all those wonderful old-fashioned desserts. I do like to eat.

FOOD FROM HERE

Mackie made caramel squares for the kitchen party in *A Talisman of Home*. I actually just imagined caramel squares because they sounded delicious to me. I have no idea about really making them, so I found some recipes and will be exploring this weekend. While looking for caramel squares, I found out that the iconic – and heart-stopping – Canadian dessert, Nanaimo bars, were first publicized by

Mabel of the Maritimes. Look out, everyone, this American is going to try to make Nanaimo bars. But that's for another weekend.

RECIPE OF THE DAY

And here is this weekend's recipe. This one is from Newfoundland, at The Rock Recipes: <https://www.rockrecipes.com/brown-sugar-shortbread-caramel-bars/>

Let me know how YOUR experiment turns out.

MUSIC OF THE DAY

Here's some music I love: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2kZASM8OX7s>

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