HAIDA GWAIII
The Queen Charlotte Islands
August 13, 2015 - 7 Days

Fares Per Person:
$2495 double/twin
$2820 single
$2415 triple
Please add 5% GST.

> Early Bookers: $140 discount on first 6 seats; $70 on next 4
>TIC Travel Insurance: Plan 1-Cancellation
    $210 double/twin, $237 single, $203 triple

Includes
- Coach transportation from Kamloops, Salmon Arm and Okanagan to Vancouver
- Air Canada flight from Vancouver to Sandspit
- Current air transport taxes and security fees
- Mini-bus or school bus transportation for 6 days on Haida Gwaii
- 6 nights of accommodation & hotel taxes
- Ferry between Moresby Island and Graham Island four times
- Haida Heritage Centre at Kaay‘lnagaay with guide
- Haida Gwaii naturalist for 2 days
- Naikoon Provincial Park fee
- Port Clements Museum
- Studio and artisan tour
- Zodiac tour around Louise Island to Skedans
- Gwaii Haanas National Park fee
- Skedans Village Watchman fee
- Air Canada flight from Sandspit to Kelowna
- Transfer from airport to home cities
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Luggage handling at hotels
- 14 meals: 6 breakfasts, 1 brunch, 4 lunches, 3 dinners

Experience Points: Earn 62 E-points

Redeem Experience Points: Book by June 11 and redeem up to 62 E-points
**Tour Notes**

**Flights** are on Air Canada from Vancouver to Sandspit and return to Kelowna. Flights were booked in November 2014, but airline schedules could change prior to tour departure. All air transportation taxes and security fees in effect in November 2014 are included in the tour price, but these could change even after final tour payment, in which case a fare adjustment will be made. We will be pleased to quote a fare for departure or return at another airport. The tour drives to Vancouver on the first day because the flight to Sandspit leaves Vancouver at 7:30 am and a same-day connection is too risky.

**Mini-bus transportation:** There are no full-size motorcoaches on Haida Gwaii. Your transportation is in a 23-passenger mini-bus on most days and one day in a school bus because of gravel roads. Both are operated by Eagle Transit based in Queen Charlotte City. There is no on-board restroom, but facilities are available at frequent intervals and there are no long driving distances.

**Accommodation** on Haida Gwaii is very limited with a few small motels in Queen Charlotte City and Masset. Wells Gray Tours books a year in advance to ensure rooms are available. Please do not expect deluxe lodging on Haida Gwaii. This tour stays five nights at the Sea Raven Motel in Queen Charlotte City. A restaurant is on the property, and breakfasts and two dinners are served there. Rooms are clean and comfortable, but certainly not up to the standard that Wells Gray uses in the rest of British Columbia. It is somewhat ironic that you are staying at two “bests” — the first night is at the Fairmont Vancouver Airport Hotel which is one of the most luxurious hotels in Vancouver, then you stay at the finest motel on Graham Island with a lot less luxury. Travel is an experience!

**Early booking** is strongly recommended because this tour is limited to only 20 people.

**Identification:** You must bring government-issued photo ID with you, otherwise you will not be allowed to board the Air Canada flights.

**Activity Level:** Tour includes walking over uneven surfaces, some steep terrain, steps, sandy or pebbly beaches, boardwalks, and getting into a zodiac on Aug 18. The optional walk up Tow Hill is strenuous. Seeing everything requires active participation. Prior to accepting your booking, you will be required to sign a declaration that you are capable of travelling on an Activity Level 3 tour.

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**Optional tour to Ninstints on August 15**

Most of August 15 is free time. An optional flight and tour to Ninstints is strongly recommended.

The best preserved of the abandoned Haida villages on Haida Gwaii, Ninstints was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1981. The Haidas deserted Ninstints about 1885 and today the dignified poles along the beach seem like phantoms of the past. Your flight is in a six-passenger Beaver floatplane (with only five people so everyone gets a window seat) and takes off from the marina in Queen Charlotte City. The flight lasts about an hour and follows the rugged San Christoval Mountains down the spine of Moresby Island. After landing at a former whaling station at Rose Harbour, you don protective rainwear for the boat ride through Stewart Channel to Anthony Island. During the guided walk among the ruins of old longhouses and tilted totem poles, you should feel the presence of Haida history and culture. Then the boat returns to Rose Harbour and the hour-long flight back to Queen Charlotte City follows a different route along Moresby Island. The total trip time is about 6 hours. **Fare: $650 per person plus GST.** Includes flight, boat to Ninstints, Haida guide and Gwaii Haanas National Park fee.

This option must have five people booked to operate. Please book at the same time as the rest of your tour since seats are very limited. It may be possible to add a second plane. If inclement weather occurs and the plane cannot depart, the cost of this option will be refunded.
Officially renamed from the Queen Charlotte Islands in 2009, Haida Gwaii is an archipelago of more than 150 islands located about 50 miles off the northwest coast of British Columbia. The islands stretch 175 miles from Langara Island at the northwest tip to Kerouard Islands, strung out like a sentinel off the south end. Haida Gwaii is the westernmost point of Canada and is known for its rugged coastlines, majestic mountains, stunning array of marine life, giant cedars and the vibrant Haida culture. About 5,000 people live scattered between several communities on the two largest islands, Graham and Moresby, in an eclectic mix of cultures and lifestyles. The islands enjoy a mild climate with no great extremes in temperature and more sunshine than given credit for.

The Haida have lived there for thousands of years. Their culture is seemingly marked on every tree and rock. Their stories, language and history entwine with Xuya (raven), Taan (bear), Guud (eagle), and Chiina (salmon).

The Islands were discovered by Europeans in 1774. Juan Perez sailed up the west coast looking for new lands to claim for Spain and especially to try to cut off the southern advance of the Russians. The land he spotted was Langara Island and was named Cape Santa Margarita. In 1787, Captain George Dixon realized that these really were a group of islands and not a part of the mainland as earlier believed. In true seafaring tradition, Dixon named them for his ship “Queen Charlotte” which was named for the Queen of England.

Haida Gwaii is nicknamed the Canadian Galapagos, a reference to the diverse natural history of the Galapagos as noted by Charles Darwin in 1859. The isolation of Haida Gwaii and the fact it was not glaciated during the Ice Age has made the islands a showcase of evolution with species found here that are non-existent elsewhere. Several areas have been set aside in their natural condition. Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve is the largest, covering much of the South Moresby area, and was the result of a hard-won battle with forest companies. Naikoon Provincial Park protects the northeast of Graham Island including volcanic Tow Hill, Rose Spit and miles of wilderness beaches.

Flights from Vancouver land at either Masset on Graham Island or Sandspit on Moresby Island and tend to be expensive — it is often cheaper to fly to Toronto than to Haida Gwaii! The ferry Northern Adventure sails from Prince Rupert to Skidegate on Graham Island five days a week in summer and it is usually a six-hour crossing of Hecate Strait. A small ferry connects Skidegate with Alliford Bay on Moresby Island and it is a 20-minute crossing. There is one paved road from Queen Charlotte City to Masset, an extension of Yellowhead Highway #16, and a paved road from Alliford Bay into Sandspit. Otherwise, roads are gravel and many are forest roads with travel restrictions.

Wells Gray has offered tours to Haida Gwaii since 1978. Come and join us in 2015!
### Itinerary

**Thursday, August 13:**  
**Meals:** L  
We drive to Vancouver Airport and stay overnight at the luxurious [Fairmont Hotel](https://www.fairmont.com). From your sound-proof window, watch all the bustle of YVR with planes landing and taking off every few minutes.

**Friday, August 14:**  
**Meals:** B, Brunch, D  
Our Air Canada flight takes about two hours to Sandspit. Our driver and mini-bus meet us at the airport. Brunch is included in Sandspit, then we take the 12:30 ferry to Graham Island. The afternoon is devoted to the impressive [Haida Heritage Centre](https://www.haidaheritage.com) at Kaay’Ilnagaay. The original Queen Charlotte Islands Museum was opened on this site in 1976 by Prime Minister Trudeau. Six monumental poles were raised in 2001 to signal the beginning of construction of this world-class cultural centre and, after seven years of construction costing several million dollars, this huge new complex opened to great acclaim in 2008. It tells the story of the Haida Nation and features a large collection of Haida cultural materials and native art. We stay five nights in [Queen Charlotte City](https://www.qc.bc.ca) at the Sea Raven Motel while we explore Haida Gwaii.

**Saturday, August 15:**  
**Meals:** B  
Today is the optional, highly-recommended flight to Ninstints (see page 2 for details). Otherwise, the day is free. You may want to go to the Visitor Centre and watch some films there, browse the town’s shops, or book an excursion for sea kayaking, fishing or whale watching.

**Sunday, August 16:**  
**Meals:** B,L  
We drive to Masset on the north coast of Graham Island and visit the [Haida village of Old Massett](https://www.parks.ca) including the church and Sarah Davidson’s craft shop selling silver, wood and argillite carvings. Naturalist Andrew Merilees joins us and talks about native culture, natural history, ecology and geology. We drive along the scenic North Beach to [Naikoon Provincial Park](https://www.parks.ca). You can walk to the top of volcanic Tow Hill for a magnificent view of the coast (and sometimes even Alaska), admire the ocean’s power at The Blowhole, or do some beachcombing.

**Monday, August 17:**  
**Meals:** B,L,D  
In the arts community of Tlell, we visit several craft shops such as Sitka Studio and Crystal Cabin. A picnic lunch is provided at Tlell Beach where you can enjoy strolling the sand and looking for agates. Stops are made at the [Bill Reid Pole](https://www.parks.ca) in Skidegate, the extraordinary [Balance Rock](https://www.parks.ca), St. Mary’s Spring, and the Port Clements Museum. Andrew accompanies us again today while we explore the ecological, cultural and historical aspects of [Masset Inlet](https://www.parks.ca). A walk on the shoreline trail is featured, as well as a stroll to the remains of the famous [Golden Spruce](https://www.parks.ca) felled by a vandal in 1997. Some of the trees seen today are over 500 years old. Tonight, we go to the [Keenawili’s Kitchen](https://www.parks.ca) in Skidegate where a Haida member, Roberta Olson, serves a fabulous [Haida Feast](https://www.parks.ca) of dried traditional foods, chowder, smoked salmon, halibut, venison, herring roe on kelp, salad and a berry dessert.

**Tuesday, August 18:**  
**Meals:** B,L,D  
We walk onto the ferry to Moresby Island, then ride in vans on back roads to Moresby Camp at the head of Cumshewa Inlet. This is the farthest point that a road penetrates the South Moresby wilderness and [Gwalli Haanas National Park](https://www.parks.ca). Here we board large Zodiacs for an all-day excursion around [Louise Island](https://www.parks.ca), exploring secluded coves and narrow passages, and watching wildlife such as seals, sea lions, peregrine falcons and eagles. A stop is made at the native village of [Skedans](https://www.parks.ca), abandoned over a century ago, where we walk amid standing Haida totem poles. Weather and tides permitting, the return trip goes through Louise Narrows. We ride the ferry back to Graham Island. A farewell dinner is planned tonight.

**Wednesday, August 19:**  
**Meals:** B  
Our Air Canada flight leaves Sandspit at 10 am to return to Vancouver, then we fly on to Kelowna. Transfers are provided to home cities.

### Tour Policies

**Payments:** A deposit of $300 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due June 11, 2015.

**Discounts:** Early bookers receive $140 discount on first 6 seats and $70 on next 4 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after June 11.

**Cancellation Policy:** Up to June 11, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of $50 per person. From June 12 to July 2, the cancellation charge is 40% of the tour fare. From July 3 to July 30, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After July 30, there is no refund.

**Fare Changes:** Changes to taxes and surcharges from airlines and other tour suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond the control of Wells Gray Tours, therefore Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes until departure.

**TIC Insurance:** Plan 1 (Cancellation) is offered on this tour since BC residents have medical insurance already and do not need a comprehensive policy. The policy can be purchased no later than at final payment.

**Experience Points:** This tour earns 62 points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points. One point equals $1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until June 11.

**Travel Wholesaler License:** Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924