FRASER RIVER FROM SOURCE TO MOUTH

September 9, 2015 ~ 10 Days

WELLS GRAY TOURS

a world to experience

Fares Per Person:

$2770 double/twin
$3255 single
$2625 triple
Please add 5% GST.

>**Early Bookers:** $150 discount on first 12 seats; $75 on next 8
>**TIC Travel Insurance:** Plan 1-Cancellation
$233 double/twin, $273 single, $221 triple

Redeem Experience Points: Book by **July 23** and redeem up to **69 e-points**

Includes

- Coach transportation for 10 days
- 9 nights of accommodation & hotel taxes
- Helicopter to the source of the Fraser River
- Fraser River raft float trip (no white water)
- Huble Homestead tour
- Farwell Canyon and pictographs
- Cariboo Chilcotin Museum
- Hat Creek Historic Ranch and roadhouse tour
- Lillooet Museum
- Hells Gate Airtram
- Alexandra Suspension Bridge
- St. John the Divine Church in Yale
- Harrison Hot Springs pools
- Copper Room music & dancing with Jones Boys
- Fraser River Safari boat excursion
- Paddlewheeler cruise from New Westminster to the mouth of the Fraser River
- Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Luggage handling at hotels
- **21 meals**: 8 breakfasts, 9 lunches, 4 dinners

Experience Points: Earn **69 e-points**

Activity Level

This is a unique tour with lots of activity and time outdoors while you experience many aspects of the Fraser River. The trip to the source of the Fraser requires getting in and out of a helicopter, and walking about ½ km in an alpine meadow at 2,000 metres altitude. In addition, you will be boarding a large raft and 2 boats. Walks include Farwell Canyon pictographs, Alexandra Bridge, and Othello Tunnels. This tour has activity ranging from somewhat rigorous to sedentary. It is not a suitable tour for people who depend on a walker. Seeing everything mentioned in this brochure requires active participation. If you are not able to participate in Activity Level 2, Wells Gray Tours recommends that you bring a companion to assist you. The tour director and driver have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance.

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The Mighty Fraser

"Our past, present and future are linked with the Fraser. The past saw fur-traders, the gold rush of 1858, and early settlers. The present sees waters teeming with migrating salmon and a highway and railways confined to the gorge carved by the river. The Fraser, beautiful, bountiful and powerful, must always flow in the pattern of our future."

So read one of British Columbia's stop-of-interest plaques, erected in the early 1960s by the Department of Recreation & Conservation to provide travellers with 50-word snippets of roadside history. "The Mighty Fraser" plaque was located on the Trans-Canada Highway just west of Hope and was removed years ago when the freeway was built.

The message is still true today, 50 years later, because the Fraser is truly British Columbia's great river. Flowing entirely within the province, it starts from a spring 50 km south of Yellowhead Pass and ends, 1390 km later, in the Strait of Georgia near Vancouver. Along the Fraser's tortuous route, it races past Mount Robson, highest in the Canadian Rockies; it tumbles over Rearguard Falls where salmon can swim no further; it meanders for 250 km through the broad Rocky Mountain Trench; it flows past old homesteads like the Huble Farm and under historic crossings such as Alexandra Suspension Bridge; it passes industrial cities like Prince George and Quesnel; it plunges through the awesome Fraser Canyon and squeezes through Hells Gate. At the end of its journey, the Fraser spreads out into multiple channels and carries its huge load of sediment quietly into the ocean at Steveston.

The Fraser River's intrigue is not only its geography, but the vital role it has played in British Columbia's history. First Nations tribes lived and worked on its banks long before Europeans arrived; fur traders such as Simon Fraser and Alexander Mackenzie travelled on its waters over 200 years ago; thousands of miners sought gold on its sandbars in the 1850s; a route for the Canadian Pacific Railway was blasted through its canyons in the 1880s; and Vancouver grew from hamlet to metropolis at its outlet.

The source of the Fraser River was discovered by a *Beautiful British Columbia Magazine* team in the mid-1980s. The nearest road is 50 km away and there is no trail to the site, so the only access is by a helicopter. Less than 200 people, most of them travelling with Wells Gray Tours, have seen the remarkable phenomenon of a tiny dripping spring flowing into a pond from where the Fraser River, all of six inches wide, starts its long journey to the ocean. This tour lets you experience the thrill of a helicopter ride, as well as planting your feet on each side of the not-so-mighty Fraser. You have bragging rights for a truly unique opportunity!

In the United States, there is lots of enthusiasm for its great river, the Mississippi. Coach tours follow it from source to mouth and sightseeing vessels ply its waters to the end of navigation. In 2000, Roland Neave, owner of Wells Gray Tours, reasoned that if Americans can celebrate the Mississippi, we should do the same with British Columbia's own great river, the Fraser, and so this tour was born in 2001. The tour has been offered every 3 to 4 years since and 2008 was a special year being the 200th Anniversary of Simon Fraser's journey down his namesake river in 1808. Come and join Wells Gray Tours' own celebration of Simon Fraser and the mighty Fraser as you follow it from source to mouth.

Itinerary

Wednesday, September 9: *Meals: L,D*

We follow the Yellowhead Highway along the North Thompson River with a stop at 75 metre high **Spahats Falls** in Wells Gray Park. Our first two nights are at the Super 8 Motel in **Valemount**.

Thursday, September 10: *Meals: B,L*

Our scenic helicopter flight takes us past the rugged Ramparts and the Bennington Glacier to the **source of the Fraser** high on the Continental Divide. The helicopter lands on the alpine meadows and you have about 45 minutes to stroll the area. Your tour director will guide you to the dripping spring where the river starts and you can have your picture taken straddling the "mighty" Fraser.

Friday, September 11: *Meals: B*

We board large 12-passenger rafts and float gently down 8 km of the Fraser for 1½ hours, watching for bears, moose, deer, bald eagles, beaver dams and chinook salmon. Interpretive talks are provided by a guide on each raft. Dominating the view from the river is **Mount Robson**, highest in the Canadian Rockies at nearly 4,000 metres. Back on our coach, a stop is made at Rearguard Falls, the upper limit of salmon migration on the Fraser. This afternoon, we drive west to **Prince George** and stay overnight at the Sandman Signature Hotel.

Saturday, September 12: *Meals: L*

The Fraser River rounds its "Big Bend" near Prince George and turns south. At this point, it is only 12 km to the Arctic drainage and, starting in the mid 19th century, the Giscome Portage Trail served early travellers. **Huble Homestead** was built in 1912 at this strategic bend of the Fraser. A heritage tour

is followed by lunch in the old barn. Then we follow the Cariboo Highway south through Quesnel and stay two nights in **Williams Lake** at the Coast Fraser Inn.

Sunday, September 13: *Meals: B,L*
The legendary Chilcotin Highway starts at Williams Lake and heads west to Bella Coola. We cross the Fraser River on a lofty bridge and drive across the vast ranchlands of the Chilcotin Plateau to **Riske Creek**. A highlight is the view of the glacial blue Chilcotin River as it roars through Farwell Canyon. Some native pictographs and hoodoos are nearby. Lunch is included at historic **Chilcotin Lodge**. This afternoon, we visit the Cariboo Chilcotin Museum in Williams Lake.

Monday, September 14: *Meals: B,L,D*
Our first stop is at Painted Chasm, then we go to **Hat Creek Ranch**, one of the last remaining roadhouses from the era of the Cariboo Wagon Road. We tour the old buildings, ride the stagecoach, and enjoy an authentic lunch. We drive through **Marble Canyon** and the Fraser's Fountain Canyon to **Lillooet**. After visiting the quaint museum and Seton Lake, we stay overnight at Mile 0 Motel.

Tuesday, September 15: *Meals: B,L,D*
Today features sights through the famous **Fraser Canyon**. We view the "Meeting of the Waters" in Lytton where the clear Thompson flows into the muddy Fraser. We ride the cablecar down to awesome **Hells Gate** where the Fraser squeezes between sheer rock walls. We walk across the **Alexandra Suspension Bridge**, built in 1926. We stop in Yale at St. John the Divine, B.C.'s oldest church which dates to 1863. At Hope, the Fraser emerges from its canyon into the fertile farmlands of the Fraser Valley and turns west for its final 160 km to the ocean. We stay at **Harrison Hot Springs Resort** in the west tower rooms, closest to the hot pools. Tonight, dine in elegance in the Copper Room with music and dancing by the Jones Boys.

Wednesday, September 16: *Meals: B,L*
During today's **Fraser River Safari**, we take a two-hour jet-boat excursion from Mission to the mouth of the Harrison River while viewing bird and animal life with an expert naturalist. Although the Fraser flows near cities such as Chilliwack, Abbotsford and Mission, this 40-km section is less visited because the major highways on the north and south shore are well away from the river. At Mission, we take a walk on the grounds of **Westminster Abbey** and visit the neo-Gothic church with 64 stained-glass windows. Lunch is at Mission Springs Brewery. We stay two nights in New Westminster at the **Inn at Westminster Quay**, built on a pier jutting into the Fraser River.

Thursday, September 17: *Meals: B,L,D*
We board the paddlewheeler MV Native at **New Westminster** for a four-hour excursion down the last 30 km of the Fraser River. We sail under the Pattullo Bridge, Skytrain Bridge and Alex Fraser Bridge, and over the Massey Tunnel. At **Steveston**, the Fraser finally flows into the Strait of Georgia and we cruise offshore to see its brown fresh water mingling with the blue salt water. Don't miss your tour director's "Water Ceremony" where a bottle of water collected from the Fraser's source is solemnly poured into the ocean, completing our journey along the entire river. We disembark at Steveston and tour the **Gulf of Georgia Cannery** National Historic Site, then ride our coach back to New Westminster. Tonight's farewell dinner is in the river-view Hyack Room and our guest speaker presents an illustrated talk about the Fraser.

Friday, September 18: *Meals: B,L*
We journey home with stops at Bridal Falls and **Othello Tunnels** on the old Kettle Valley Railroad.

Tour Policies

Payments: A deposit of $200 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due July 23, 2015.
Discounts: Early bookers receive $150 discount on first 12 seats and $75 on next 8 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after July 23.
Cancellation Policy: Up to July 23, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of $50 per person. From July 24 to August 6, the cancellation charge is 40% of the tour fare. From August 7 to August 26, the cancellation charge is 70% of the tour fare. After August 26, there is no refund.
Fare Changes: Changes to taxes and surcharges from 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 up until the time of 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.

e-points: This tour earns 69 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. 1 e-point equals $1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until July 23.
Consumer Protection BC Licence: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924