

# STIKINE & STEWART

With Mt Edziza/Stikine Canyon, Salmon Glacier & Nisga'a Territory  
August 5, 2017 - 14 days



a world to experience



## Fares Per Person:

**\$3875** double/twin

**\$4740** single

**\$3610** triple



- > Please add 5% GST.
- > **Early Bookers:** \$180 discount on first 10 seats; \$90 on next 6
- > **Experience Points:** Earn 81 points from this tour.  
Redeem **81 points** if you book by **June 1**.

## Includes

- Transfers to/from Victoria Airport
- Flight from Victoria to Kelowna and return
- Coach transportation for 13 days
- 13 nights accommodation and hotel taxes
- Naturalist walk at Muncho Lake
- Swim at Liard Hot Springs
- Choice of helicopter through Grand Canyon of the Stikine **OR** float plane over Mount Edziza
- Transportation with local guide in a high clearance bus to Salmon Glacier viewpoint
- Grizzly bear viewing at Hyder
- First Nations guide for a day visiting Nisga'a Territory and Nass Valley
- 'Ksan Village and Museum with guided tour
- Fort St. James National Historic Site
- Historic Ashcroft Manor
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Gratuities for local guides and pilots
- Luggage handling at hotels
- **24 meals:** 9 breakfasts, 11 lunches, 4 dinners

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## Flight options included at Dease Lake — August 11

**Mount Edziza Volcano by float plane:** Available for 12 people. One of only a few volcanoes in British Columbia, Mount Edziza last erupted 1,300 years ago and built a huge dome to 2,800 metres. After taking off from Tatogga Lake Resort, we approach Mount Edziza, skirting 150-metre high symmetrical Eve Cone (last eruption only 300 years ago), and view other amazing formations such as Coffee Crater and Cocoa Crater. Finally, we fly across the incredible Spectrum Range, named for its brilliant red, yellow, white and purple rocks, then land back at Tatogga. This flight is operated with a Cessna 206 float plane with four people on each trip at window seats. The flight lasts about 1½ hours.

**Grand Canyon of the Stikine by helicopter:** Available for 20 people. The mighty Stikine River, British Columbia's 5<sup>th</sup> largest, rises on the Spatsizi Plateau and flows west through the Coast Mountains into Alaska. The flight gives us awesome views of the Grand Canyon of the Stikine, over 300 metres deep and 100 km long. The Bell helicopter carries four people at window seats. This is a thrilling experience, because a helicopter can fly low over the white-water rapids of the wild Stikine River and maneuver within the canyon walls. If the river is not too high, a short landing on a sand bar may be possible, giving you a view of this awesome canyon that few people have seen. The flight lasts about 45 minutes.

**Please choose whether you want the float plane or the helicopter when you book this tour.** The cost is the same and is included in the tour fare.

## Flight option (extra cost) at Northern Rockies Lodge — August 9

**Nahanni National Park** is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and its centrepiece is 100-metre high **Virginia Falls**, one of Canada's mightiest cataracts and also one of the least-visited. Nahanni has no road access. The float plane takes off from Northern Rockies Lodge, flies for 1½ hours over the peaks and glaciers, and lands near the falls. You have a couple of hours to enjoy the awesome viewpoints with a picnic lunch. Downstream from the falls, the Nahanni River boils through kilometres of rapids below 900-metre high cliffs. These canyonlands were made famous by prospectors' tales in the last century of lost gold and the Headless Valley. A recommended book is Raymond Patterson's *The Dangerous River*, a gripping account of a journey into the Nahanni. Flight cost is \$700 per person plus GST and includes the \$24 national park fee and lunch. Flight requires six people to operate (other lodge guests might fill in extra seats if available). Please reserve this option when you book this tour.

## Notes about your tour

- Hotels in northern British Columbia have a limited tourist season and enormous operating expenses, so summer room rates are very high. In the North, the old saying "you get what you pay for" is very true and cheaper rooms means a much lower standard which Wells Gray travellers are not accustomed to. That is why this tour costs more per day than most Wells Gray tours.
- **Please book early!** There is high demand for rooms in the summer. Communities such as Muncho Lake, Dease Lake and Stewart have only one good quality hotel. Therefore, hotels want group rooms guaranteed early and may cancel unsold rooms from our reservation. When that happens, we may have seats on the coach but not enough rooms and the limited hotel choices mean we cannot go elsewhere.
- This tour is scheduled for August, so you can enjoy pleasantly warm days, cool nights and a minimum of mosquitoes or other insects. Some customers ask for a June tour to the north, but that is the height of bug season.
- This tour is limited to 32 passengers.



**Activity Level:** Some travelling days are long as towns are far apart in the north. There are walks to some viewpoints. There are steps or a short ladder to get into the float plane or helicopter. Some towns do not have paved streets and sidewalks, so the walking surface may be uneven. There are many stops during this tour and you must be able to get on and off the coach by yourself without delaying your fellow travellers. 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.

## Itinerary

### Saturday, August 5:

A transfer is provided this afternoon to Victoria airport. We fly to Kelowna and stay overnight at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel.

### Sunday, August 6:

*Meals: L,D*

We meet the Interior passengers during pickups through the Okanagan Valley and Kamloops. We travel north along the Cariboo Highway to **Quesnel** and overnight at Best Western Tower Inn. A get-acquainted dinner is included.

### Monday, August 7:

*Meals: L*

Beyond Prince George, we follow the Hart Highway across Pine Pass, then over the rolling farmlands of "Peace River Country". We see the **Mile 0 Post** for the Alaska Highway at Dawson Creek and overnight in **Fort St. John** at the Northern Grand Hotel.

### Tuesday, August 8:

*Meals: B,L,D*

The world-famous **Alaska Highway** was built in 1942 in just eight months and has been continually upgraded to match the growth of the north. 2017 is the highway's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and there are celebrations planned along its length. The highway is now paved all the way to Fairbanks, but it was only 25 years ago that travellers endured a thousand kilometres of gravel and dust. Beyond Fort St. John, we leave behind the grainfields and oil rigs of the Peace and journey through the vast forests of northern British Columbia to Fort Nelson. This afternoon's scenic drive winds through the barren Rocky Mountains to Muncho Lake. We stay two nights at **Northern Rockies Lodge**, one of Canada's largest log structures.

### Wednesday, August 9:

*Meals: B*

Enjoy a leisurely day! Activities include a trip to nearby **Liard Hot Springs** for a relaxing swim and a nature walk along the shore of **Muncho Lake**. An option is offered (see previous page) for a flight to mighty Virginia Falls in Nahanni National Park. If you and some others are interested, a one-hour sightseeing flight can be arranged over nearby glaciers.

### Thursday, August 10:

*Meals: B,L*

We continue on the Alaska Highway along the rushing Liard River and briefly enter the Yukon. In **Watson Lake**, we see the famous Sign Post Forest, started by a homesick roadbuilder nearly 75 years ago and now numbering several thousand city signs. Just beyond Watson Lake, we turn south on the **Stewart-Cassiar Highway** and re-enter British

Columbia. This wilderness road, completed in the 1970s and improved frequently since then, extends 700 km south to the Yellowhead Highway and traverses some magnificent scenery. We pass near the former town of Cassiar, completely dismantled since 1992 when the asbestos mine closed. Near the Cassiar site, we stop at **Jade City** where Barbara Streisand purchased the jade for her bathtub and you can buy some exquisite carvings. Northern British Columbia has four mines that supply 85% of the world's jade. Next, the road winds through the Cassiar Mountains and, at **Dease Lake**, we stay at the Northway Inn for two nights.

### Friday, August 11:

Today is one of the highlights of our tour as we board a float plane or a helicopter for a thrilling flight into the wilderness of **Mount Edziza or Stikine River Provincial Parks**. Please refer to the option box on the previous page for more details about the two flights and the highlights of each. Transportation is provided to Tatogga Lake, about 1¼ hours from Dease Lake, for the float plane departures and there will be some waiting time at the lodge for your turn in the air.

### Saturday, August 12:

*Meals: L,D*

Leaving Dease Lake, we cross the unfinished grade of the BC Railway, abandoned in the 1970s after some \$200 million of construction. The Stewart-Cassiar Highway bridges the Stikine River, then skirts Eddontenajon and Tatogga Lakes with the Skeena Mountains rising above. We follow the Iskut and Bell-Irving Rivers and lunch is included at a new multi-million dollar heli-ski resort, Bell II Lodge. At Meziadin Lake, we turn west into the rugged Coast Mountains and climb through a narrow pass to the **Bear Glacier**, truly an awesome sight as the road is built just a few hundred metres away. Soon we're in **Stewart**, Canada's most northerly ice-free port at the head of Portland Canal. We stay two nights at the King Edward Hotel.

### Sunday, August 13:

*Meals: B,L*

We switch to a low-g geared school bus for an exciting drive high into the Coast Mountains, past the old Premier Mine and the Salmon Glacier. The Premier Mine opened in 1910 and became one of the province's richest gold mines, finally closing in 1953 with sporadic operations since then. The **Salmon Glacier** is considered Canada's 5<sup>th</sup> largest and we drive alongside it for 10 km to a spectacular viewpoint at Summit Lake near the aban-

doned Granduc copper mine. Back in Stewart, there's time to visit the Museum and the giftshops across the border in **Hyder, Alaska** (no passport needed). Stewart's scenery has attracted several movie producers and we see filming locations for the movies *Bear Island*, *The Thing*, *The Iceman*, and *Insomnia*. This evening, we drive to Fish Creek and hopefully view some feasting grizzly and black bears.

**Monday, August 14:** *Meals: B,L*

We continue along the Stewart-Cassiar Highway until it meets the Yellowhead Highway. A short side trip is made at **Kitwanga** to view its old totem poles. Then we follow the Skeena River westwards to **Terrace** and stay two nights at the new Holiday Inn Express.

**Tuesday, August 15:** *Meals: B,L*

The day is devoted to touring the **Nisga'a Nation** in the Nass River Valley. After a century of negotiations, the Nisga'a people signed a land claims treaty with the federal and provincial governments in 1999. An expert First Nations guide, Brian Downie, accompanies us for the day while we visit four villages along the **Nass River**: Gitlakdamiks (New Aiyansh), Gitwinksihlkw (Canyon City), Laxqalts'ap (Greenville), and Gingolx (Kincolith), the last on the ocean at Portland Inlet. We also visit the **Nisga'a Memorial Lava Beds** where Canada's most recent volcanic eruption occurred only 300 years ago, destroying two villages and diverting the Nass River.

**Wednesday, August 16:** *Meals: B,L,D*

Near Hazelton, we view the narrow **Hagwilget Gorge** from a lofty suspension bridge over the rushing Bulkley River. **'Ksan Village** is a re-creation of the Gitanmaax village that was located at the confluence of the Bulkley and Skeena Rivers for centuries. We tour three buildings and the museum with a First Nations guide, viewing priceless artifacts. Another stop is at Moricetown Canyon where natives are often fishing from the rocks beside the Bulkley River. We leave the Coast Mountains at Smithers and enter the lake country of the vast Fraser Plateau. Our destination is **Vanderhoof** where we stay overnight at the North Country Inn.

**Thursday, August 17:** *Meals: B,L*

Originally established by Simon Fraser for the North West Company in 1806, **Fort St. James** displays the largest group of original wooden buildings representing the fur trade in Canada. Now preserved as a National Historic Site and operated as a living history museum, the fort is a fascinating glimpse into the past. We continue through Prince George and Quesnel, and our last night is at the Coast Fraser Inn in **Williams Lake**.

**Friday, August 18:** *Meals: B,L*

We follow the Cariboo Highway to Cache Creek. Lunch is included at **Ashcroft Manor**, a roadhouse built in 1862 to serve travellers on the Cariboo Wagon Road. We take an evening flight from Kelowna to Victoria and a transfer is arranged to your pickup point.

## Tour Policies

**Payments:** A deposit of \$300 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due June 1, 2017.

**Discounts:** Early bookers receive \$180 discount on first 10 seats and \$90 on next 6 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after June 1.

**Cancellation Policy:** Up to June 1, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$50 per person. From June 2 to July 3, the cancellation charge is 40% of the tour fare. From July 4 to July 17, the cancellation charge is 70% of the tour fare. After July 17, there is no refund.

**Fare Changes:** Changes to taxes and surcharges from flight companies 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 up until the time of departure.

**Travel Insurance:** A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause for medical and cancellation claims, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

**Home pickups and dropoffs** may be offered in Greater Victoria, depending on the number of people booked and the size of the chartered vehicle. Decision is made about 2 weeks before departure and you will be contacted about your pickup point and time.

**Photo Credit:** Roland Neave (Bear Glacier near Stewart)

**e-points:** This tour earns 81 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One e-point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until June 1.

**Consumer Protection BC Licence: #65842**