

VANCOUVER ISLAND FROM TOE TO TIP

Explore Vancouver Island from end to end

June 7, 2018 - 9 Days



a world to experience



Fares Per Person:

\$2655 double/twin

\$3180 single

\$2520 triple

> Please add 5% GST.

> **Early Bookers:** \$140 discount on first 10 seats; \$70 on next 6

> **BC Seniors (65 & over):** \$6 discount with BC identification

> **Experience Points:** Earn 62 points from this tour.

Redeem **62 points** if you book by **April 12**.



Includes

- Coach transportation for 9 days
- 8 nights of accommodation & hotel taxes
- 2 Strait of Georgia ferry crossings
- Whale watching excursion with Orca Spirit to Race Rocks (south end of Vancouver Island)
- Abkhazi Garden
- Traditional Victoria afternoon tea
- Ferry to/from Quadra Island
- Nuyambalees Cultural Centre
- Private charter excursion on MV *Naiad Explorer* to Cape Sutil (north end of Vancouver Island)
- Campbell River Museum
- Strathcona Park tour
- Private charter excursion on MV *Uchuck* to Nootka Sound and Friendly Cove
- Local guide and naturalist on board *Uchuck*
- Gratuities for ships' crew and guide
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Luggage handling at hotels
- **20 meals:** 8 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 1 tea, 5 dinners

Exploring one of the world's great islands

Vancouver Island is the 11th largest island in Canada, stretching 460 km from the Strait of Juan de Fuca to Queen Charlotte Sound. Named for Captain George Vancouver who explored B.C.'s coast in 1792, the island has great diversity ranging from the capital city of Victoria to remote mountain peaks in Strathcona Park, and from the wild wind-lashed beaches of the west coast to the sandy expanse of Rathtrevor Beach. Only a handful of people have travelled from toe to tip and experienced both ends of Vancouver Island: Race Rocks off Victoria and Cape Sutil (not Cape Scott) north of Port Hardy. There are no roads to either place, so we have chartered vessels to get you there. A third boat charter travels to Nootka Sound, important to British Columbia's history because Captain James Cook landed there in 1778 and met the First Nations. In between the toe and tip, there is so much to see and do on the Island that a month would not be long enough, but we have picked some highlights for this nine-day tour that are well-known and less-known. Come and explore Vancouver Island!

Kamloops > 250-374-0831

Kelowna > 250-762-3435

www.wellsgraytours.com

Penticton > 250-493-1255

Vernon > 250-545-9197

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Highlights

Victoria

Whale watching excursion to Race Rocks
(south toe of Vancouver Island)

Abkhazi Garden with afternoon tea

Quadra Island

Tsa-Kwa-Luten Lodge

Nuyambalees Cultural Centre

Rebecca Spit

Cruise from Port McNeill to Cape Sutil
(north tip of Vancouver Island)

Strathcona Provincial Park

Gold River

Cruise to Nootka Sound & Friendly Cove

Cathedral Grove

Coombs Market

Parksville's Beach Club Resort

Itinerary

Thursday, June 7:

Meals: L,D

After driving the Coquihalla, we take the 5 pm ferry from Tsawwassen to Swartz Bay. Enjoy the extensive Pacific Dinner Buffet during the crossing. (Note: Most ferries on this route offer the buffet, but an alternative will be arranged if there is a ship change.) We stay at **Coast Harbourside Hotel** for two nights and it has a fine location on the waterfront near the Inner Harbour.

Friday, June 8:

Meals: B, Tea

During the morning, we take a boat excursion with Orca Spirit Adventures looking for whales off the coast of Victoria. Another reason is to cruise past the southernmost point of Vancouver Island (the toe) at **Race Rocks**. This protected area is home to plenty of marine wildlife and birds, and is dominated by a lighthouse built in 1860. Later, we visit one of Victoria's lesser-known beauty-spots, **Abkhazi Gardens**. This was the home of Prince Nicholas Abkhazi and his wife Peggy who came to Canada from Georgia (Russia) in 1946 and created these gardens with majestic trees and a dramatic location. A traditional **Afternoon Tea** is served in their modest home.

Saturday, June 9:

Meals: B,L,D

We start our journey up Vancouver Island and, during the next week, enjoy unique experiences along the entire 460-kilometre length of one of the world's great islands. We follow the scenic Malahat Drive north to **Nanaimo**, then the Island Freeway to Campbell River. A short ferry ride takes us over to **Quadra Island**. Our overnight accommodation is at magnificent **Tsa-Kwa-Luten Lodge**. Built by the Kwagiutl people, its vast lobby resembles a traditional "Big House" with massive tim-

bers, a soaring cathedral ceiling and huge windows overlooking Discovery Passage. Relax on your private balcony and enjoy a view of the ocean, the mountains of Vancouver Island beyond, the rapidly-moving tides, the tugboats pulling barges, and the Alaska cruise ships in the evening. This afternoon, we visit **Rebecca Spit** for a stroll along a beach with ocean on both sides, and the **Nuyambalees Cultural Centre** which has exquisite displays about Kwagiutl art. A succulent salmon buffet is served in the lodge's dining room.

Sunday, June 10:

Meals: B,L

After taking the ferry back to Campbell River, we drive north to **Port McNeill** and stay two nights at the Haida Way Motor Inn.

Monday, June 11:

Meals: B,L

We board the 55-foot **Naiad Explorer** at Port McNeill for a five-hour private charter looking for orca and minke whales, Pacific white-sided dolphins, Dall's porpoises, Steller sea lions, and a great variety of sea birds. The vessel is equipped with a hydrophone (an underwater microphone), so we can listen to the whales' vocalizations. The trip is hosted by the Mackay family who are pioneers in the whale watching industry. With a cruising speed of 30 knots, the *Naiad* is a very fast vessel and is capable of travelling great distances in a day. The voyage goes past Port Hardy at the end of the Island Highway, then through Goletas Channel to **Cape Sutil**. This is the northernmost tip of Vancouver Island where the Pacific Ocean meets Queen Charlotte Strait. Although less known than Cape Scott (the northwest point of the island), Cape Sutil is the appropriate destination of a tour like this that travels Vancouver Island

from toe to tip. Cape Sutil was first mapped in 1792 by the Spanish captains Galiano and Valdes, and named for their ship. The *Naiad* also explores the shores of Hope Island and Nigel Island before returning to Port McNeill.

Tuesday, June 12:

Meals: B,L,D

Having reached the north tip of Vancouver Island, we start heading south with some different experiences included. Back in Campbell River, we visit the Museum which shows an interesting historical film about blowing up Ripple Rock in 1958. Then we head west into **Strathcona Park**. This was British Columbia's first provincial park, established in 1911, and protects the rugged peaks of central Vancouver Island. We take short walks in the forest to see Lupine Falls and Lady Falls, and stroll a beach on Buttle Lake. Then we head across the Island to **Gold River**, once a bustling pulp mill town. Accommodation for two nights is at the Ridgeview Motel.

Wednesday, June 13:

Meals: B,L,D

Wells Gray Tours has chartered the **MV Uchuck** for a private cruise that offers splendid coastal scenery. Chuck Syme, a local historian and Nootka

expert, is with us all day to provide interpretive talks and walks. Our route follows the fjord Muchalat Inlet past Bligh Island to **Nootka Sound** where we dock at Friendly Cove, site of Captain James Cook's meeting with Chief Maquinna in 1778. Lunch is included on the boat. During the three-hour stop, you can take a walk through the village and church, stroll the beach, or visit the lighthouse. The return cruise goes past Resolution Cove and through narrow King Passage.

Thursday, June 14:

Meals: B,D

We take walks to see Little Qualicum Falls and the giant trees of Cathedral Grove. There is a shopping opportunity at unique **Coombs Market**, known for its goats grazing on the roof. We stay overnight at the **Beach Club Resort** in Parksville. It is located right on the vast sandy beach, so you can stroll at leisure on the sand or the boardwalk that runs along the waterfront.

Friday, June 15:

Meals: B

We take the 10:15 am ferry from Duke Point to Tsawwassen, then travel home to the Okanagan, Kamloops and Salmon Arm.



Activity Level: Moderate activity on some days including short distances to walk and some steps such as getting on and off the three vessels. There are optional walks at Rebecca Spit, Lupine Falls, Lady Falls, Little Qualicum Falls, and Cathedral Grove. Lupine Falls and Lady Falls are a gentle uphill walk. The other three walks are level. The ramps to the boat docks may be steep at low tide. Seeing everything mentioned in this itinerary requires participation at Activity Level 2. 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. The coach cannot carry a scooter. 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. If you are not capable of keeping up with the group or require ongoing assistance, the tour director may stop you from participating in some activities or some days of the tour. In extreme situations, you may be required to leave the tour and travel home at your own expense. Travel insurance will probably not cover you.

Tour Policies

Payments: A deposit of \$300 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due April 12, 2018. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

Discounts: Early bookers receive \$140 discount on first 10 seats and \$70 on next 6 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after April 12. Seniors (65 & over) receive \$6 discount extended by BC Ferries, so you must bring your B.C. Gold Care Card or the new Services Card.

Cancellation Policy: Up to March 12, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$50 per person. From March 13 to April 12, the cancellation charge is \$200 per person. From April 13 to May 4, the cancellation charge is 50% of the tour fare. From May 5 to May 24, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After May 24, 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.

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, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

e-points: This tour earns 62 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 April 12.

Consumer Protection BC Licences: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924