

GREAT LAKES CRUISE

8 days on *Victory I* from Toronto to Chicago
August 27, 2020 - 13 Days



a world to experience



Fares Per Person: based on double/twin

\$10,050 Category E

\$10,715 Category C

\$12,845 Category AA



- > Please add 0.3% GST.
- > Single fares and other categories also available.
- > **Early Bookers:** \$220 discount on first 10 seats; \$110 on next 6
- > **Experience Points:** Earn 110 points from this tour.
Redeem **110 points** if you book by **April 23.**

Includes

- Transportation to/from Victoria Airport
- WestJet flight from Victoria to Toronto
- Current air transport taxes and fees
- One piece of checked luggage on WestJet
- 3 nights of hotel accommodation & taxes
- Transfer from Toronto airport to hotel and to ship
- 9 days and 8 nights on board *Victory I*
- Cruise gratuities
- Port charges, cruise taxes and lock fees
- Locally-guided tour to Niagara Falls
- Hornblower cruise to bottom of Niagara Falls
- Cleveland Museum of Art
- Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
- Detroit Institute of Arts
- Motown Museum
- West Canfield Historic District
- Ojibwe Cultural Foundation
- Lake freighter *SS Valley Camp* Museum
- Insider's look at the Soo Locks
- Horse-drawn carriage tour of Mackinac Island
- Fort Mackinac
- Visit to Grand Hotel with lunch buffet
- Transportation for 2 days in Chicago
- Locally-guided tour of Chicago
- 360 Chicago Observatory
- Chicago Architecture Cruise
- Tommy Gun's Garage dinner theatre
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers
- Transfer from hotel to Chicago airport
- Alaska Airlines flight from Chicago to Victoria
- Knowledgeable Wells Gray tour director
- Luggage handling at hotels and ship
- **29 meals:** 10 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 11 dinners

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MV Victory I

The ship was built in 2001 in Florida and named *Cape May Light*. Subsequent owners renamed her *Sea Voyager* and *Saint Laurent*. Victory Cruise Lines was formed in 2016 and acquired the ship, naming her *Victory I*. The following year, the company bought her sister ship and renamed her *Victory II*. In 2019, the American Queen Steamboat Company which operates vessels on the Mississippi and Columbia Rivers purchased Victory Cruise Lines and will continue cruises on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.

Victory I is 87 metres long with a 15-metre beam and a draft of 4 metres. She carries only 200 passengers in 105 staterooms. There are five passenger decks. Deck 1 is the lowest and has Category E staterooms and the dining room. Deck 2 has Category C staterooms, the Compass Lounge, Tavern, and gift shop. Deck 3 has Category B and A staterooms. Deck 4 has Category AA staterooms and the Outdoor Grill restaurant. The Sun Deck has lots of outdoor seating. All staterooms have two twin beds or a queen bed, toilet, shower, sink, and window(s). Stateroom sizes are about 15 square metres (160 square feet). There is daily housekeeping service. You will likely spend most daylight time away from your stateroom in the public rooms or on deck enjoying the scenery. Nightly entertainment is provided, usually by a local group or person, and can include music, singing or magic. Three meals a day plus afternoon tea and in-between treats are served in the dining room or grill. Cocktails, wine and beer are complimentary.

Come and experience lake cruising with Wells Gray Tours on board an intimate ship!

Cruise & Tour Notes

Shore excursions included. On many cruises, shore excursions are a significant additional expense. On this cruise, a shore excursion is included at most ports. Usually a bus picks you up beside the ship and takes you to a local attraction. Sometimes a premium excursion is offered at additional cost.

Please book early. Victory Cruise Lines has confirmed a block of staterooms for this tour in a variety of categories. These are normally held until 90 days before sailing. However, any unsold cabins can be taken away from us at any time if the ship fills. This tour is limited to 30 people.



Activity Level: Moderate activity including short distances to walk during the shore excursions. There is an elevator on the ship which serves decks 1 to 4 but not the Sun Deck. This tour is not suitable for people who depend on walkers or have mobility challenges with a flight of stairs. There can be longer walks in the airports; request a cart or wheelchair in advance if this could be an issue for you. The coaches and ship cannot carry a scooter. If you think you may have difficulty participating in Activity Level 2, Wells Gray Tours recommends that you bring a companion to assist you. The tour director, local guides, drivers and ship's crew 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 frequent 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.

The Great Lakes

This cruise visits all five of the Great Lakes, although it only touches on Lake Superior at its outlet in the Soo Locks. The other four lakes (in order of the route) are Ontario, Erie, Huron, and Michigan. Hydrologically, there are only four lakes, because Lakes Michigan and Huron join at the Straits of Mackinac.

The Great Lakes are the largest group of freshwater lakes on Earth by total area, and second-largest by total volume, containing 21% of the world's surface fresh water by volume. The total surface is 244,106 sq km and total volume (measured at low water) is 22,671 cubic km, slightly less than the volume of Russia's Lake Baikal. Due to their sea-like characteristics (rolling waves, sustained winds, strong currents, great depths, and distant horizons) the five Great Lakes have also long been referred to as inland seas. Lake Superior is the largest freshwater lake in the world by area. Lake Michigan is the largest lake entirely within one country.

The Great Lakes coast measures about 16,900 km. Of the total shoreline, Canada borders about 8,400 km and the USA 8,500 km. Michigan has the longest shoreline of the states with roughly 5,292 km, followed by Wisconsin (1,320 km), New York (761 km), and Ohio (502 km). Traversing the shoreline of all the lakes would cover a distance similar to travelling half-way around the world at the equator.

Dispersed throughout the Great Lakes are approximately 35,000 islands. The largest is Manitoulin Island in Lake Huron, the largest island in any inland body of water in the world.

The Great Lakes began to form at the end of the last glacial period around 14,000 years ago, as retreating ice sheets exposed the basins they had carved into the land which then filled with meltwater.

Itinerary

Thursday, August 27:

Meals: D

A transfer is provided to Victoria airport. We fly on WestJet to **Toronto**. A transfer is arranged to downtown and we stay overnight at the Hilton (subject to change as it is booked by Victory). A get-acquainted dinner is planned.

Friday, August 28:

Meals: B,D

Considered Canada's premier metropolitan centre, diverse Toronto provides options for any taste. The flavour of the city comes alive in historic St. Lawrence Market, a source of authentic artisan foods and crafts for more than 200 years. A visit to this modern metropolis with 19th century flair becomes a cultural kaleidoscope that emerges as a singular and unique experience. Most of the day is leisure time. The Hilton has an excellent location near Nathan Phillips Square and the Eaton Centre. We board the **Victory I** this afternoon and watch Toronto's dramatic skyline as we cruise out into Lake Ontario.

Saturday, August 29:

Meals: B,L,D

Overnight, we cross Lake Ontario to St. Catharines and enter the **Welland Canal**. This is the fourth canal built to bypass Niagara Falls and was completed in 1932. The canal has eight locks which lift our ship 100 metres to Lake Erie. An average transit time is 11 hours. We dock at Port Colborne at the southern entrance to the canal. A tour is offered to **Niagara Falls**, one of the world's mightiest waterfalls, measured by its great width of over 1,000 metres, its water volume of about 2.8 million litres per second, and its height of 50 metres. We cruise on a Hornblower vessel (formerly **Maid of the Mist**) for an awesome view of the Horseshoe and American Falls from the river, and stand at Table Rock.

Sunday, August 30:

Meals: B,L,D

Lake Erie is 388 km long and the shallowest of the Great Lakes at a maximum depth of 64 metres. We dock at **Cleveland, Ohio**, sometimes called America's "North Coast". Clevelanders are fiercely proud of their home which has been transformed from a grimy city to one that reverberates with vitality and new atmosphere. We visit the world-class Cleveland Museum of Art with over 45,000 works, and feel the backbeat at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, devoted to one of America's finest gifts to the world.

Monday, August 31:

Meals: B,L,D

We follow the Detroit River upstream from Lake Erie and dock in **Detroit**. Here in the Motor City, we can explore the captivating history of the automotive industry. An included excursion visits the Detroit Institute of Arts and its 100-plus galleries, the Motown Museum, and the West Canfield Historic District. A paid excursion goes to the vast Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation where you are sure to be astounded by the huge collection of American heritage that chronicles the lifespan of a nation. Leaving Detroit, we cruise through **Lake St. Clair**, then the St. Clair River north to Lake Huron.

Tuesday, September 1:

Meals: B,L,D

Lake Huron is the second largest of the Great Lakes with an area of 59,590 sq km and a length of 332 km. The lake is shared by Ontario and Michigan. This is a cruising day travelling north across Lake Huron.

Wednesday, September 2:

Meals: B,L,D

We arrive at Little Current on the north shore of **Manitoulin Island**, the world's largest freshwater island. An excursion is included to visit the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation which was established in 1974 to preserve and revitalize the language, culture, arts, and traditions of the Anishinaabe people.

Thursday, September 3:

Meals: B,L,D

After cruising along the north side of Manitoulin Island, we enter the St. Mary's River and dock in **Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan**. Across the river to the north is the twin city of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. A locally-guided tour showcases the retired lake freighter *SS Valley Camp* which sailed the Great Lakes for 50 years until 1967 and is now a museum. We also enjoy an insider's look at the engineering spectacle of the **Soo Locks**, the world's busiest canal in terms of tonnage. After departing, we travel through the locks into **Lake Superior** and return down the St. Mary's River.

Friday, September 4:

Meals: B,L,D

Victory I arrives at **Mackinac Island** (pronounced MACK-inaw), situated in Lake Huron just east of the Straits of Mackinac which connect Lake Huron with Lake Michigan. The island is a major summer resort, but it is very unique because cars are not allowed and horse-drawn carriages are the common way to get around. We take a sedate carriage tour around the island, ending at Fort Mackinac where there are many historical exhibits. Built in 1887, the **Grand Hotel** is one of the USA's most renowned hotels and was named a National His-

toric Landmark in 1989. The Grand Luncheon Buffet is included with a vast tantalizing selection of dishes. Afterwards, relax in a rocking chair on the 200-metre long front porch and admire the view of Lake Huron and the Straits. After departure, we cruise under the 8-km long **Mackinac Bridge** and enter Lake Michigan.

Saturday, September 5: Meals: B,L,D

This is a day of leisure while we cruise most of the length of **Lake Michigan**. The third largest of the Great Lakes is 494 km long and 190 km wide.

Sunday, September 6: Meals: B,D

Welcome to Chicago! We arrive at historic Navy Pier and disembark the *Victory I*. With a local certified Chicago guide, we explore the city, driving along Lake Michigan for a terrific view of the skyline. Discover why Chicago is the Windy City and why the river runs backwards. See fabulous outdoor art, drive the Magnificent Mile, and admire stunning **Millennium Park**. Stops include Planetarium Point with its Picasso sculpture and landmark Water Tow-

er, and Grant Park with splendid formal gardens and Buckingham Fountain. Chicago is full of major outdoor works of art, such as the Calder Flamingo, the Miro Statue, and the Chagall mosaic "Four Seasons". We stay two nights at the Hilton Chicago, a landmark hotel on South Michigan Avenue. Tonight, we go to **Tommy Guns Garage** for dinner and a musical comedy review with da gangsters, da flappers and YOU!

Monday, September 7:

The Chicago tour continues as we ride fast elevators up the John Hancock Tower to the **360 Chicago Observatory** for a splendid view of the city and the open-air Skywalk experience. Next is a narrated **cruise on the Chicago River** which focuses on the city's architecture and why Chicago is the centre of modern architecture.

Tuesday, September 8:

We fly with Alaska Airlines via Seattle and arrive in Victoria in mid-afternoon. A transfer is provided to your pickup point.

Tour Policies

Payments: A deposit of \$800 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due April 23, 2020. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

Discounts: Early bookers receive \$220 discount on first 10 seats and \$110 on next 6 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after April 23.

Cancellation Policy: Up to April 23, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$400 per person. From April 24 to May 22, the cancellation charge is 30% of the tour fare. From May 23 to June 23, the cancellation charge is 60% of the tour fare. From June 24 to July 23, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After July 23, there is no refund.

Fare Changes: Changes to currency exchange rates and taxes, and surcharges from airlines, cruise ship 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 may be offered in Greater Victoria, depending on the number of people booked and coach size. Decision is made about 2 weeks before departure and you will be contacted about your pickup point and time.

Photo Credit: Victory Cruise Lines

e-points: This tour earns 110 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until April 23.

Consumer Protection BC licences: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924, Victoria 65842

