



Paddlewheeler MV Native



Inn at Westminster Quay

CRUISING THE LOWER FRASER RIVER

May 10, 2021 – 5 Days

3 Cruises in the Fraser Valley

See the Fraser Valley from a vantage point that few people can enjoy – from the water. All three cruises are on gently-flowing sections of the Fraser River with no white water or rough water. The Fraser River Safari boat carries 22 passengers, so our group is split in two; half cruises upstream from Mission to Kilby Store near the mouth of the Harrison River, and the other half cruises downstream, each for two hours. We cruise on the paddlewheeler *Native* twice – from Fort Langley to New Westminster, then the next day from New Westminster to the mouth of the Fraser west of Steveston. The cruises are one-way and the coach meets you at the other end. Come and cruise the last 120 km of B.C.'s mighty Fraser.

Activity Level: 1



10 Meals Included:

4 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 1 dinner

Fares per person:

\$1,895 double/twin; \$2,265 single; \$1,800 triple
Please add 5% GST.

Early Bookers:

\$100 discount on first 12 seats; \$50 on next 8

Experience Points:

Earn 44 points on this tour.

Redeem 44 points if you book by March 10, 2021



Harrison Hot Springs

ITINERARY

Day 1: Monday, May 10

We drive along the Nicola River from Merritt to Spences Bridge, where it joins the Thompson. At the narrowest point of the Fraser Canyon, we ride



the cablecar down to awesome **Hells Gate**. 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 two nights at **Harrison Hot Springs Resort** in the east tower rooms. Tonight, dine in elegance in the **Copper Room** with music by Hayley & the Lefties Band and dancing.

Meals included: Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Harrison Hot Springs Resort

Day 2: Tuesday, May 11

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 50-km section is less visited because the major highways on the north and south shore are well away from the river. The trip ends at **Kilby Store**, a wonderful restoration of a century-old general store. An interior tour is provided as well as a walking tour of the farm. *Note:* Half the group travels upstream and half downstream.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Harrison Hot Springs Resort

Day 3: Wednesday, May 12

The Hudson's Bay Company built **Fort Langley** beside the Fraser River in 1827. It traded furs with the natives and shipped them to Europe via Cape Horn, as well as providing produce to Russia and California. In 1858, the Fraser River gold rush caused a huge influx of Americans, so Governor

James Douglas proclaimed a Crown Colony here. Today, Fort Langley National Historic Site interprets the influence of this strategic post on the province's history. After a tour of the Fort, we board the **MV Native paddlewheeler** for a three-hour excursion on the Fraser River. We sail along Barnston Island, up part of the Pitt River, and underneath five bridges, including **Golden Ears, Port Mann and Pattullo Bridges**. An expert guide is on board with lots of stories to tell about sights and historical places along the way. We dock at the **Inn at Westminster Quay**, a unique hotel built on a pier jutting into the Fraser River. We stay two nights here, enjoying a view of the river from every room.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Inn at Westminster Quay

Day 4: Thursday, May 13

We board the paddlewheeler and continue cruising down the last 30 km of the Fraser River, enjoying the benefit of an expert narrator again. We sail under the Alex Fraser Bridge and over the Massey Tunnel. At **Steveston**, the Fraser finally flows into the Strait of Georgia and we cruise a few km offshore to see its brown fresh water mingling with the blue salt water. We disembark at Steveston and tour the **Gulf of Georgia Cannery**, built in 1894. During its peak production at the turn of the 20th century, the cannery produced 2½ million cans of salmon and employed several hundred workers. It has been a National Historic Site since 1984. We ride our coach back to New Westminster.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Inn at Westminster Quay

Day 5: Friday, May 14

We take a tour of the **Stave Falls Powerhouse** which was built in 1908 and generated power for nearly a century. After lunch in Chilliwack, we travel home via the Coquihalla.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

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 reads 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 relocated to the riverside park in Hope when the freeway was built in the 1980s.

The message is still true today, 60 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 the Lillooet and Alexandra Suspension Bridges; 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.

During three cruises, this tour explores the last 120 km of the Fraser from its confluence with the Harrison River to its mouth at Steveston. The first is a nature-oriented trip from Mission to the historic Kilby Store at Harrison Mills, viewing bird and animal life with the benefit of an expert naturalist. The second cruise is on board the *MV Native*, an authentic replica of a paddlewheeler, from Fort Langley to New Westminister, passing under five bridges. A second excursion on the *Native* continues downstream into the Strait of Georgia. These cruises are unique experiences because they are available only to groups.



WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Coach transportation for 5 days
- 4 nights of accommodation & hotel taxes
- Hells Gate Airtram
- Harrison Hot Springs pools
- Copper Room dinner, music with Hayley & the Lefties Band, and dancing
- Fraser River Safari boat from Mission to Kilby with local naturalist
- Kilby Historic Store and farm tour
- Fort Langley National Historic Site
- *MV Native* paddlewheeler cruise from Fort Langley to New Westminister
- Paddlewheeler cruise from New Westminister to the mouth of the Fraser River
- Guide on the paddlewheeler
- Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site
- Stave Falls Powerhouse tour
- Gratuities for boat crew and Stave guide
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Luggage handling at hotels
- **10 meals:** 4 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 1 dinner

TOUR NOTES

The cruises — All three cruises are on gently-flowing sections of the Fraser with no white water or rough water. The Fraser River Safari boat carries 22 passengers; half of our group cruises upstream from Mission to Kilby Store and the other half cruises downstream, each for two hours. The paddlewheeler *Native* has two decks. The lower deck is indoors with seating at tables, and the upper deck is outdoors with a variety of seating. The paddlewheeler is equipped with restrooms, but the Safari boat is not. All cruises are one-way and the coach meets you at the other end.



Activity Level 1: Light activity including short distances to walk and some stairs. There is a level walk of less than ½ km from the boat to Kilby Store or reverse. Depending on the river's height, there may be a pebbly beach to walk across near Kilby. There are steps or ramps to get on or off each vessel and sometimes the ramps are steep. The coach cannot carry a scooter. There are many stops during this tour and you must be able to get on and off the coach or vessels by yourself without delaying your fellow travellers. If you think you may have difficulty participating in Activity Level 1, 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 frequent assistance, the tour director may stop you from participating in some activities or some days of the tour.

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$150 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due March 10, 2021. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

Discounts: Early bookers receive \$100 discount on first 12 seats and \$50 on next 8 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after March 10.

Cancellation Policy: Up to February 10, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$50 per person. From February 11 to March 10, the cancellation charge is \$100 per person. From March 11 to March 31, the cancellation charge is 40% of the tour fare. From April 1 to April 19, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After April 19, 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 for medical and cancellation claims, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than final payment. Please contact us for details.

Photo Credits: Paddlewheeler Riverboat Tours

Experience Points: This tour earns 44 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 March 10, 2021.

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

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