

VICTORIA WHALE WATCHING

August 25, 2021 – 3 Days

Featuring 3 cruises to view marine life

Board Prince of Whales' *Salish Sea Dream* for two thrilling eco-adventure excursions in the sheltered waters around the Gulf Islands. This catamaran is fast, stable, quiet, and whale-friendly. Move freely between the open air outer decks and the interior cabin, watching incredible wildlife and learning about the eco-system from the on-board naturalist. The vessel is equipped with hydrophones to hear the whale vocalizations. Next day, enjoy another cruise, from Victoria to Race Rocks, with opportunities for spotting more whales and marine life. Stroll through Butchart Gardens and Abkhazi Garden to admire the fabulous summer blooms. Then return to the mainland on *Sea Dream*. This tour is a wonderful summer getaway for those who love the ocean.

Activity Level: 1



3 Meals Included:

2 breakfasts, 1 lunch

Fares per person:

\$1,725 double/twin; \$1,935 single; \$1,665 triple
Please add 5% GST.

Early Bookers:

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

Experience Points:

Earn 45 points on this tour.

Redeem 45 points if you book by July 6, 2021.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Wednesday, August 25

At 8:30, we board our vessel, *Salish Sea Dream*, at Granville Island for a four-hour exploration of the southern Gulf Islands. Our route is flexible as our captain and the onboard naturalist take us on an eco-adventure wherever the whales and wildlife are. Look for resident orca pods, migrating grays, or maybe minke or humpbacks if we are lucky. The boat's speed allows the captain to easily respond to sightings, and its stable, quiet presence in the water allows for close-up observation. The cruise arrives about 12:30 pm in Victoria's busy **Inner Harbour**. Our coach meets us for the short trip to one of Victoria's lesser-known beauty spots, **Abkhazi Garden**. 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. Lunch is served in their modest home. We stay two nights at the downtown Chateau Victoria which has a great location near the Inner Harbour.

Meals included: Lunch

Accommodation: Chateau Victoria



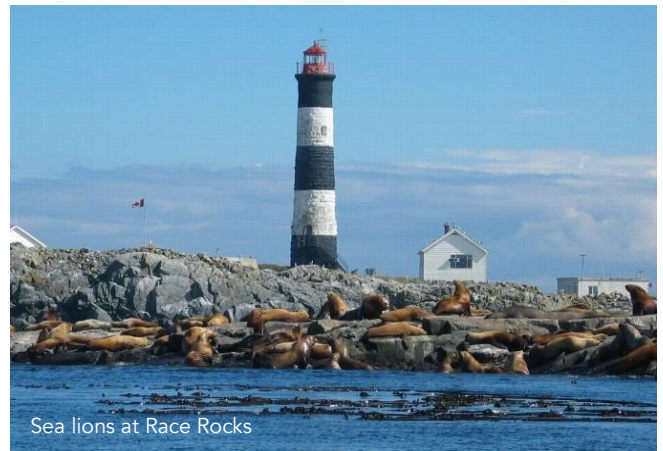
Abkhazi Garden

Day 2: Thursday, August 26

During the morning, we take a three-hour boat excursion with Prince of Whales looking for marine life off the coast of Victoria. The cruise circles around **Race Rocks**, the southernmost point of Vancouver Island. This protected area is home to plenty of wildlife and birds, and is dominated by a lighthouse built in 1860. Enjoy a free afternoon browsing shops on Government Street, visiting the Royal BC Museum or Robert Bateman Gallery, relaxing during a spa treatment, or checking out the street entertainment on the waterfront.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Chateau Victoria



Sea lions at Race Rocks

Day 3: Friday, August 27

This morning, we stroll around the renowned **Butchart Gardens**. In 1909, Jennie Butchart set about converting her husband's limestone quarry into the Sunken Garden. In 1939, the Butcharts gave the gardens to their grandson, Ian Ross, who spent the rest of his life creating and promoting this popular attraction. Admire all the colourful displays in many garden locales. At 1:30, the *Salish Sea Dream* picks us up at the Butchart Gardens dock (subject to change) and we head across the Strait of Georgia to Vancouver.

Meals included: Breakfast

SALISH SEA DREAM

The *Salish Sea Dream* is owned and operated by Prince of Whales in Victoria. The vessel has recently been refitted with jet propulsion engines instead of propellers, so the boat is quieter, it can travel up to 34 knots per hour, and with no propellers there is nothing in the water to injure the marine life. The vessel is equipped with hydrophones to listen to underwater sounds which can be broadcast over the PA system. Snacks and beverages are available on board, and the indoor and outdoor decks provide choices for comfort. *Sea Dream's* capacity is 95 passengers, but this is a private charter with about 40 Wells Gray travellers on board. This vessel is used for the two excursions between Granville Island and Victoria.



WHAT'S INCLUDED

- 2 nights of accommodation & hotel taxes
- 4-hour whale watching cruise on *Salish Sea Dream* from Granville Island through southern Gulf Islands to Victoria Inner Harbour
- Abkhazi Garden
- Whale-watching excursion to Race Rocks
- Transfer from hotel to Butchart Gardens
- Butchart Gardens
- Cruise on *Salish Sea Dream* from Butchart Gardens dock to Granville Island
- Gratuities for crew on 3 boat excursions
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Luggage handling at hotel
- **3 meals:** 2 breakfasts, 1 lunch

TOUR NOTES



Activity Level 1: Light activity including short distances to walk and some stairs. There is a walk of 2 blocks from the Victoria dock to Chateau Victoria on August 25, and the same on August 26 (both directions). Another short walk is through Butchart Gardens, ending at the boat dock. There are steps or ramps to get on or off each vessel and sometimes the ramps are steep at low tide. The coach and vessels cannot carry a scooter. 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.

Home pickups are available within Greater Vancouver for an additional charge of \$40 per person round trip. This transfer is to and from Granville Island. Please request no later than at final payment.

New Westminster meeting point: The BC Interior travellers are staying at the Inn at the Quay on the nights of August 24 and August 27. If it is more convenient, you can meet the tour there on August 25 and travel to Granville Island on the coach. You can also return to New Westminster from Granville Island on August 27. Please notify us no later than at final payment.

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$200 per person is requested at the time of booking and balance is due July 6, 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 July 6, 2021.

Cancellation Policy: Up to June 4, 2021, the cancellation charge is \$50 per person. From June 5 to July 6, the cancellation charge is \$150 per person. From July 7 to July 29, the cancellation charge is 50% of the tour fare. After July 29, 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 until 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.

Photo Credits: Tourism Vancouver Island (page 1 whales & boat), Prince of Whales (page 1 Orcas photo by George Hamilton, *Sea Dream*, sea lions by Anthony Kaulfuss), Roland Neave (Butchart), Abkhazi Garden, Wikimedia (Race Rocks)

Experience Points: This tour earns 45 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 July 6, 2021.

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

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