



HAIDA GWAII #3

July 30, 2022 – 7 Days

Our 44th year of tours to these amazing islands off B.C.'s northwest coast!

Formerly called the Queen Charlotte Islands until 2010, Haida Gwaii is an archipelago of more than 150 islands located about 80 km off the northwest coast of British Columbia. Haida Gwaii is the westernmost point of Canada and is known for its vibrant Haida culture, rugged coastlines, majestic mountains, stunning array of marine life, and giant old-growth cedars. One of the outstanding experiences is a flight to Ninstints at the south end of Moresby Island. Known by the Haida as SGang Gwaay, it is the best preserved of the abandoned Haida villages and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1981. Other highlights include: The Haida Heritage Centre at Kaay'Innagaay, a Zodiac tour around Louise Island stopping at Skedans Village, Tow Hill with its Blowhole, Balance Rock, Port Clements Museum, a studio and artisan tour, and a fabulous traditional Haida Feast.

Activity Level: 3



TOUR
25

14 Meals Included:

6 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 3 dinners

Fares per person:

\$4,150 double/twin; \$4,510 single; \$4,025 triple
Please add 5% GST.

BC Seniors (65 & over): \$6 discount with BC Services Card.

Experience Points:

Earn 90 points on this tour.

Redeem 90 points if you book by April 21, 2022.

Departure from: BC Interior



ITINERARY

Day 1: Saturday, July 30

We drive to Vancouver and stay overnight in Richmond near the airport.

Meals included: Lunch

Accommodation: Pacific Gateway Hotel

Day 2: Sunday, July 31

Our Air Canada flight takes two hours to **Sandspit** on Moresby Island. A mini-bus meets us at the airport, then we ride the 12:30 ferry over to Graham Island. The afternoon is devoted to the impressive **Haida Heritage Centre** at Kaay'Innagaay. The original Queen Charlotte Islands Museum was opened on this site in 1976 by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. Six monumental poles were raised in 2001 to signal the beginning of construction of this world-class cultural centre and, after seven years of construction costing several million dollars, this huge new complex opened to great acclaim. It tells the story of the Haida Nation and features a large collection of Haida cultural materials and native art. We stay five nights in **Queen Charlotte** at the Sea Raven Motel. Tonight, we go to Keenawaii's Kitchen in Skidegate where a Haida member, Roberta Olson, serves a fabulous **Haida Feast** in her home. Savour traditional foods, possibly consisting of smoked salmon, halibut, venison, herring roe on kelp, salad, and a berry dessert (the menu may change).

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Sea Raven Motel

Day 3: Monday, August 1

Known by the Haida as SGang Gwaay, **Ninstints** is the best preserved of the abandoned Haida villages and was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1981. The Haida deserted Ninstints about 1885 and today the dignified poles along the beach seem like phantoms of the past. We fly there in a Beaver floatplane from the Village of Queen Charlotte. The flight lasts about an hour and follows the rugged San Christoval Mountains down the spine of Moresby Island into **Gwaii Haanas National Park**. After landing at Rose Harbour, a former whaling station, we don protective gear and transfer from the plane to a Zodiac for the ride through Stewart Channel to Anthony Island. During the guided walk among the ruins of



old longhouses and tilted totem poles, you may feel the spiritual presence of Haida history and culture. Then the Zodiac returns to Rose Harbour and the hour-long flight back to Queen Charlotte follows a different route along Moresby Island, depending on weather conditions. The total trip time is about six hours. During free time today, you may want to go to the Visitor Centre and watch some films there, browse the town's shops, or rent a kayak or bicycle.

Note: August 1 and August 3 may be reversed, depending on the Ninstints flight you choose. See Tour Notes for more details.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Sea Raven Motel

Day 4: Tuesday, August 2

A local guide joins us for the day. We drive to Masset on the north coast of Graham Island and visit the **Haida village of Old Massett** including the church and Sarah Davidson's craft shop selling silver, wood, and argillite carvings. This afternoon, we drive along the scenic North Beach to



Naikoon Provincial Park. You can walk to the top of volcanic Tow Hill for a magnificent view of the coast (and sometimes Alaska), admire the ocean's power when the Blowhole erupts, and search for treasures along Agate Beach.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Sea Raven Motel

Day 5: Wednesday, August 3

In the arts community of **Tlell**, we visit two interesting craft shops. Other stops are made at extraordinary **Balance Rock**, St. Mary's Spring, and the Port Clements Museum. Two walks are featured today: Masset Inlet Shoreline Trail and the remains of the famous **Golden Spruce**, felled by a vandal in 1997. We see some trees that are over 500 years old.

Note: If you choose today for your Ninstints trip, you will do the above activities on August 1.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Sea Raven Motel

Day 6: Thursday, August 4

We take the ferry to Moresby Island, then ride in vans on back roads to Moresby Camp at the head of Cumshewa Inlet. This is the farthest point that a road penetrates the South Moresby wilderness which is mostly protected by Gwaii Haanas National Park. Here we board large Zodiacs for an

all-day excursion around **Louise Island**, exploring secluded coves and narrow passages, and watching for wildlife such as seals, sea lions, peregrine falcons, and eagles. A stop is made at **Skedans**, a village abandoned over a century ago, where we walk amid standing Haida totem poles. Weather and tides permitting, the return trip goes through Louise Narrows.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Sea Raven Motel



Day 7: Friday, August 5

Our Air Canada flight leaves Sandspit in mid-morning to return to Vancouver, then we fly on to Kelowna or Kamloops. Transfers are provided to home cities.

Meals included: Breakfast

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Coach transportation from Kamloops, Salmon Arm and Okanagan to Vancouver Airport
- Air Canada flight from Vancouver to Sandspit
- Current air transport taxes and security fees
- 6 days of mini-bus travel on Haida Gwaii
- 6 nights of accommodation & hotel taxes
- Ferry between Moresby and Graham Islands four times
- Haida Heritage Centre at Kaay'llnagaay with Haida guide
- Haida Feast with visit to a Skidegate home
- Return flight Queen Charlotte to Rose Harbour
- Zodiac from Rose Harbour to Ninstints return
- Walk with Haida guide at Ninstints
- Gwaii Haanas National Park fee
- Haida Gwaii local guide for 1 day
- Naikoon Provincial Park fee
- Balance Rock
- Port Clements Museum
- Zodiac tour around Louise Island to Skedans
- Skedans Village Watchman fee
- Gratuities for Haida Gwaii guides, Zodiac pilots, and drivers
- Air Canada flight from Sandspit to Kelowna or Kamloops
- Transfer from airport to other home cities
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Luggage handling at hotels
- **14 meals:** 6 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 3 dinners

HAIDA GWAI – Formerly the Queen Charlotte Islands

Officially renamed from the Queen Charlotte Islands in 2010, Haida Gwaii is an archipelago of more than 150 islands located about 80 km off the northwest coast of British Columbia. The islands stretch nearly 300 km from Langara Island at the northwest tip to the Kerouard Islands, strung out like a sentinel off the south end. Haida Gwaii is the westernmost point of Canada and is known for its vibrant Haida culture, rugged coastlines, majestic mountains, stunning array of marine life, and giant cedars. About 5,000 residents are scattered between several communities on the two largest islands, Graham and Moresby, in an eclectic mix of cultures and lifestyles. The islands enjoy a mild climate with no great extremes in temperature and more sunshine than given credit for.

The Haida have lived there for thousands of years. Their culture is seemingly marked on every tree and rock. Their stories, language, and history entwine with Xuya (raven), Taan (bear), Guud (eagle), and Chiina (salmon).

The Islands were discovered by Europeans in 1774. Juan Perez sailed up the west coast looking for new lands to claim for Spain and trying to cut off the southern advance of the Russians. The land he spotted was Langara Island and was named Cape Santa Margarita. In 1787, Captain George Dixon realized that these were islands and not a part of the mainland as earlier believed. In true seafaring tradition, Dixon named them for his ship *Queen Charlotte* which honoured the wife of King George III.

Haida Gwaii is nicknamed “Canadian Galapagos”, a reference to the diverse natural history of the Galapagos Islands as noted by Charles Darwin in 1859. The isolation of Haida Gwaii and the fact it was not glaciated during the Ice Age has made the islands a showcase of evolution with species found here that are non-existent elsewhere. Several areas have been set aside in their natural condition. Gwaii Haanas National Park is the largest, covering half of Moresby Island, and resulted from a hard-won battle with forest companies. Naikoon Provincial Park protects the northeast of Graham Island including volcanic Tow Hill, Rose Spit, and miles of wilderness beaches.

Wells Gray has offered tours to Haida Gwaii every year since 1978. We hope you can join us in 2022 which will be our 44th year of arranging tours to these amazing islands!

TOUR NOTES

Flights are on Air Canada from Vancouver to Sandspit and return to Kelowna or Kamloops. Airline schedules could change prior to tour departure. All current air transportation taxes and security fees are included in the tour price, but these could change even after final tour payment, in which case a fare adjustment will be made. Airline luggage fees are not included as Air Canada requires these to be paid individually at the airport. Cost is about \$30 for one suitcase each way. We will be pleased to quote a fare for departure or return at another airport. The tour drives to Vancouver on the first day because the flight from Vancouver to Sandspit leaves at 8:15 am and a same-day connection could be risky.

Mini-bus transportation: There are no full-size motorcoaches on Haida Gwaii. Your transportation is in a 23-passenger mini-bus, operated by Eagle Transit based on Haida Gwaii. There is no on-board restroom, but facilities are available at frequent intervals and there are no long driving distances.

Accommodation is very limited with a few small motels in the Village of Queen Charlotte and Masset. Wells Gray Tours books rooms two years in advance to ensure availability. This tour stays five nights at the Sea Raven Motel in Queen Charlotte. Please do not expect deluxe lodging on Haida Gwaii. There is no elevator to the second floor. Rooms are clean and comfortable, but certainly not up to the standard that Wells Gray uses in the rest of British Columbia.

Identification: You must bring government-issued photo ID with you, such as a passport or BC Services Card / Driver's Licence. Otherwise, you will not be allowed to board the Air Canada flights.

Ninstints flights: Two flights are scheduled on August 1 and 3, morning and afternoon, with five people on each. When you book the tour, please choose which day you wish to fly and whether you want morning or afternoon. If inclement weather occurs and the plane cannot depart, the cost of the flight and Ninstints visit will be refunded (approx. \$730 per person); it will not be possible to reschedule your Ninstints flight to a different day. If you do not want to see Ninstints, please book the August 9 departure.



This is a Tour 25 departure, meaning capacity of the tour is limited to 25 participants or less, a more intimate travel experience. For this tour, capacity is actually 20 due to the size of the mini-bus and the visitor limit imposed at Skedans. Early booking is strongly recommended as five tours each year pre-Covid were typically sold out long before departure.



Activity Level 3: Tour includes walking over uneven surfaces, some steep terrain, stairs, sandy or pebbly beaches, and boardwalks that may be slippery. The trip to Ninstints requires climbing in and out of a float plane and transferring from the plane's pontoon into a Zodiac with assistance from crew. The optional hike up Tow Hill is strenuous. Seeing everything requires active participation. The tour director and driver have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance. Prior to Wells Gray accepting your booking, you will be required to sign a declaration that you are capable of travelling on an Activity Level 3 tour. 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.

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$500 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due April 21, 2022. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

Discounts: BC seniors (65 & over) receive \$6 discount extended by BC Ferries, so you must bring your BC Services Card.

Cancellation Policy: Up to March 24, 2022, your payments will be refunded less a fee of \$100 per person. From March 25 to April 21, the cancellation charge is \$300 per person. From April 22 to May 24, the cancellation charge is 50% of tour fare. From May 25 to June 24, the cancellation charge is 80% of tour fare. After June 24, there is no refund.

Fare Changes: Changes to taxes and surcharges from the airline 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 until departure.

Food Allergies: You must notify us no later than at final payment if you have a food allergy. This tour goes to a remote destination where restaurants may not be able to satisfy all food allergies. For some allergies, please consider bringing your own snacks or food items so you are not dependent on what restaurants are able to serve.

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: Adobe Stock (longhouse, boardwalk, canoe), Roland Neave (Ninstints, beach), Haida Gwaii Tourism (zodiac)

Experience Points: This tour earns 90 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 21, 2022.

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

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WE PLAN. YOU PACK. NO WORRIES!

www.wellsgraytours.com

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HAIDA GWAII #3 — July 30, 2022

This tour is rated "Activity Level 3" by the tour planners at Wells Gray Tours. This rating is the highest activity level assigned to a tour, meaning that there is a lot of activity which could include one or more of (but is not limited to) the following:

- You can walk 3 kilometres in 1 hour.
- You can climb into and out of a float plane and a Zodiac with assistance from crew.
- You can walk on beaches with sand or rock, and on boardwalks that may be wet or slippery.
- You can climb one flight of stairs to your motel room on Haida Gwaii.
- You can carry your own luggage in airports.

Since a few people who are not capable of doing the above activities can hold up the entire group, Wells Gray Tours expects everybody booking a tour with "Activity Level 3" to be reasonably fit. You must be able to participate in activities without the assistance of the tour director, driver or other travellers.

Please read the following and sign acknowledging that these statements are true. The tour deposit will be due after you have signed this statement.

- I want to travel on a Wells Gray tour with a rating of "Activity Level 3".
- I have read the brochure with the full itinerary and description of the activities that are typical on this tour.
- I understand that this is the highest activity level that a Wells Gray tour can be rated.
- I am confident that I can participate in tour activities at this level and I will not hold up or delay the other members of the tour.
- I do not require the use of a wheelchair or a walker.

If my physical condition changes between booking and departure date such that I can no longer do this level of activity, I will notify the Wells Gray office or agent. The specified penalties will apply for cancelling and travel insurance may cover this.

If I am not capable of keeping up with the group or I require frequent assistance, I understand that the Wells Gray tour director has the right to not allow me to participate in some activities or some days of the tour. In extreme situations, I acknowledge that I may be required to leave the tour and travel home at my own expense, and that travel insurance will probably not cover me.

This statement has been implemented by Wells Gray Tours to maintain high quality itineraries, accurate timing, and the enjoyment of all tour participants. Each person booking this tour must sign this statement. Thank you for your understanding.

Signature _____ Name _____ Date _____