



VANCOUVER ISLAND WITH SMALL SHIPS

September 18, 2022 – 6 Days

Includes 3 cruises – Gold River to Zeballos, Telegraph Cove and Alberni Inlet

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 narrow fjords that slice into the west coast to secluded harbours like Telegraph Cove. To explore Vancouver Island properly, you have to get out of your car (or coach) and head out on the water. This tour features a private cruise on the *MV Uchuck III* from Gold River to Zeballos, a whale-watching excursion at Telegraph Cove, and a cruise on *MV Frances Barkley* from Port Alberni to Bamfield through Alberni Inlet.

Activity Level: 2



12 Meals Included:

5 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 3 dinners

Fares per person:

\$2,535 double/twin; \$3,005 single; \$2,395 triple
Please add 5% GST.

Early Bookers:

\$120 discount on first 12 seats; \$60 on next 10

Experience Points:

Earn 62 points on this tour.

Redeem 62 points if you book by July 28, 2022.

Departure from: Lower Mainland



ITINERARY

Day 1: Sunday, September 18

We take the ferry to Nanaimo, then drive the Island Highway to Campbell River. Here, we meet our guide and historian, Catherine Gilbert, who provides interpretive talks and walks during an afternoon tour of **Strathcona Park**. This was British Columbia's first provincial park, established in 1911, and it protects the rugged peaks of central Vancouver Island. We take short walks in the forest to see Lupin Falls and Lady Falls, and stroll a beach on Buttle Lake. We stay overnight in Gold River.

Meals included: Dinner

Accommodation: Ridgeview Motor Inn

Day 2: Monday, September 19

This morning, we board the *MV Uchuck III* for a private five-hour cruise from Gold River to Zeballos with splendid coastal scenery. We cruise along Muchalat Inlet into **Nootka Sound**, then along the north side of Bligh Island, named for the *Mutiny on the Bounty* captain who was in these waters with Captain Vancouver in 1792. Catherine is on board to talk about First Nations and the early explorers of the west coast. Leaving Nootka Sound, our route follows a maze of narrow waterways such as Tahsis Inlet, Esperanza Narrows, and Zeballos Inlet. Lunch is on board. We dock at the tiny community of **Zeballos**, named for Lt. Ciriaco Ceballos, a crew member on board the Malaspina expedition of 1789-1794. A gold rush in the 1930s established a mining camp spelled "Zeballos" and that name became official when a post office opened in 1946. Zeballos may have had a population of over 5,000 during the peak of the gold rush when \$13 million worth of gold bricks were shipped from here. Forestry replaced mining in the 1950s. Today, Zeballos has shrunk to about 100 residents. Our coach is waiting for us at the dock, then we drive to **Telegraph Cove**, a charming village surrounding a narrow harbour off Johnstone Strait. This was the northern terminus of the telegraph line built on Vancouver Island in 1912. A sawmill and

commercial fishery supported the village for many years, but 30 years ago it transitioned into tourism. Telegraph Cove Resort owns most of the village and has renovated the old buildings into lodging, restaurant, shops, and a museum. Whale-watching cruises are the big draw with Robson Bight located nearby. Our accommodation is in two buildings, the Lodge and the Dockside. A welcome dinner is at the Whale Café on the waterfront.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Telegraph Cove Resort

Day 3: Tuesday, September 20

At Telegraph Cove, we board a 70-person semi-covered, custom-built vessel for a three-hour fully-guided **whale and marine wildlife viewing** excursion. We head out into Johnstone Strait and navigate the Broughton Archipelago in search of orcas and humpback whales. Marine mammal experts are on board to bring the animals' stories to life from the comfort of the cruiser. This afternoon, be sure to visit the Whale Interpretive Centre on Telegraph Cove's boardwalk. It was founded in 2002 to increase public awareness about the biology of marine mammals and the threats facing their populations. The Centre is home to one of the best collections of marine mammal skeletons in British Columbia. The exhibits focus on orca whales, fin whales, humpback whales, and sea otters. There are also several shops to browse nearby.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Telegraph Cove Resort

Day 4: Wednesday, September 21

We stop at the Campbell River Museum which offers an interesting film about the Ripple Rock explosion in 1958. This afternoon, we see Little Qualicum Falls and take a walk among towering trees at **Cathedral Grove**. The next two nights are in **Port Alberni**.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Best Western Barclay Hotel

Day 5: Thursday, September 22

On board the *MV Frances Barkley*, we cruise 40-km long Alberni Inlet, the longest fjord on Vancouver Island. After it widens into Barkley Sound, the ship weaves through a maze of little islands, some protected by Pacific Rim National Park. We dock at **Bamfield** for an hour, giving time to explore the historic buildings. The cable station, designed by Francis Rattenbury, opened in 1902

when Bamfield became the terminus for the trans-Pacific telegraph cable. Our cruise leaves Port Alberni at 8 am and returns at 5 pm.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Best Western Barclay Hotel

Day 6: Friday, September 23

We take the ferry from Duke Point to Tsawwassen.

Meals included: Breakfast

MV UCHUCK III

MV Uchuck III derives her name from the First Nations Nootkan word for "healing waters" and has been serving the west coast of Vancouver Island area for nearly 70 years. She was built in 1942 in Oregon as a mine-sweeper, then was converted to passenger and freight service in Barkley Sound. By 1961, she was operating in Nootka Sound, supplying remote logging camps and fishing villages. More recently, *Uchuck III* was fully renovated with a comfortable wood-finished lounge, coffee shop, bathrooms, and lots of seating on the open-air upper deck. She is 41 metres long and carries 100 passengers on public cruises, but this is a private charter with only Wells Gray customers on board.



MV FRANCES BARKLEY

MV Frances Barkley is another heritage vessel, built in Norway in 1958 and operated as a ferry from Stavanger. She was purchased by Alberni Marine Transportation in 1990 and sailed through the Panama Canal to her new home. There she joined the famous *Lady Rose* (retired in 2004) providing service to Bamfield, Ucluelet, and Barkley Sound. The ship's name honours Frances Barkley, the wife of Captain Charles Barkley. She travelled with the captain in the 1780s and is believed to be the first European woman to visit Canada's west coast. The ship is 39 metres long and has a comfortable lounge, snack bar, bathrooms, and lots of indoor or outdoor seating.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Coach transportation for 6 days
- 5 nights of accommodation & hotel taxes
- 2 Strait of Georgia ferry crossings
- Private charter excursion on *MV Uchuck III* from Gold River to Zeballos
- Whale-watching excursion at Telegraph Cove
- Whale Interpretive Centre
- Campbell River Museum
- Excursion on *MV Frances Barkley* through Alberni Inlet to Bamfield and return
- Local guide / historian on board *Uchuck* and in Strathcona Park
- Gratuities for *Uchuck*, *Frances Barkley* and whale-watching crews and historian
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Luggage handling at hotels
- **12 meals:** 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 3 dinners



Activity Level 2: Moderate activity on some days including short distances to walk and some stairs or gangways getting on and off the three vessels. The ramps to the boat docks may be steep at low tide. A shuttle with limited seating is available between the Lodge rooms at Telegraph Cove and the dock where the restaurant, shops, and boat are located, or you can walk (about 10 mins). Telegraph Cove is a compact village with a boardwalk that accesses businesses, and the coach cannot drive there. The coach cannot carry a scooter or motorized wheelchair. If Activity Level 2 could be challenging, you are urged to 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 \$200 per person is requested at the time of booking and balance is due July 28, 2022. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

Discounts: Early bookers receive \$120 discount on first 12 seats and \$60 on next 10 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after July 28, 2022.

Cancellation Policy: Up to June 28, 2022, the cancellation charge is \$50 per person. From June 29 to July 28, the cancellation charge is \$150 per person. From July 29 to August 15, the cancellation charge is 60% of the tour fare. After August 15, 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.

Food Allergies: You must notify us no later than at final payment if you have a food allergy. This tour goes to remote places 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.

Home pickups are available within Greater Vancouver for an additional charge of \$50 per person round trip. Transfer is to and from the coach route along Highways #1 and #17 to Tsawwassen. Please request no later than at final payment.

Photo Credits: Telegraph Cove Resort, Lady Rose Marine Services (*Frances Barkley*), Tourism Vancouver Island (whales), Roland Neave (*Uchuck*)

Experience 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 July 28, 2022.

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

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