



TREASURES OF VANCOUVER ISLAND

TOUR V10

The variety of landscapes is what makes Vancouver Island so attractive. Within minutes of driving there are beaches for sun bathing, surfing and swimming, easy hikes to ancient glaciers and mountaineering challenges. Just as varied is the fauna and flora on land and in the waters: forests of giant cedars and alpine meadows, cascading waterfalls, hidden lakes and wild, storm swept shores, all are home to wild creatures big and small.

Demands: hotel tour with easy and moderate day hiking with light backpack.

Included:

- ✓ 9 nights in good hotels (twin)
- ✓ transportation in mini bus
- ✓ welcome gift
- ✓ ferry to and from Vancouver Island
- ✓ electric bike rental in Victoria
- ✓ admission to National Park
- ✓ services of licensed guide who accompanies the group on all the hikes

Not included: personal equipment, meals, light day pack, gratuities, whale- or bear watching \$125.00 in Tofino, sea kayak rental \$95.00, 4-hours guided salmon fishing \$440.00 for 2 pers.

Length of tour: 10 days

Schedule 2021:

12.06. - 21.06.
26.06. - 05.07.
10.07. - 19.07.
07.08. - 16.08.
04.09. - 13.09.



FIVE MODERATE HIKES WITH LIGHT DAY PACK

VANCOUVER AND VICTORIA CITY VISITS

FUN AFTERNOON WITH E-BIKES

WILD LANDSCAPES AND BEACHES OF THE PACIFIC

ASTONISHING ABUNDANCE AND VARIETY OF MARINE LIFE

DAY HIKE INTO THE FORBIDDEN PLATEAU

TOFINO AND PACIFIC RIM NATIONAL PARK

EXPERIENCED AND ENTHUSIASTIC GUIDE

Group size: 6 to 12 passengers

Price: **CDN\$ 3270.00** including tax

Single rooms: \$4630.00 (if single is booked)

DAY 1: VANCOUVER - Transfer from the airport with the hotel-owned shuttle bus. Meet the guide and your fellow travellers in the airport hotel this evening for pre trip information.

DAY 2: VICTORIA - You board the bus for the 90-minute ferry crossing across the Strait of Georgia to the island. Now you follow the coastal highway to downtown Victoria with the picturesque Inner Harbour framed by the stately Empress Hotel and the Legislature Building. Free time for some window shopping on Government Street, stroll down to Fisherman's Wharf, the quiet of Beacon Hill Park or visit one of the museums. Hotel in downtown Victoria for the next two nights.

DAY 3: VICTORIA - A mere 16 kilometers from downtown Victoria is Goldstream Park with massive trees, majestic waterfalls, a small river where salmon return every fall in order to spawn the next generation, flowers, birds and fascinating marine life. The guide suggests the steep 4 km round trip hike with 410 m gain (2.5 mi, 1345 ft) up Mt. Finlayson, or an easier 3 km hike with 60 m gain to waterfalls. Planned for this afternoon is a fun filled outing on electric bikes (included) on the Galloping Goose Trail. The name comes from a noisy gasoline rail car a hundred years ago which ran the 60 km through several small communities between Victoria and Sooke. The trail passes through all types of terrain: forests merge to streams, rivers, and lakes as you pass close to beaches, above roaring rivers, and around pristine lakes. Highly recommended for this evening would be an oyster and sea food feast in one of the excellent restaurants. Hiking time 2 hours.

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DAY 4: PORT ALBERNI - The Juan de Fuca Marine Reserve protects a large part of the wild western shores of Vancouver Island. One of the most amazing parts is Botanical Beach at low tide. Here you can walk a long way out across flat sandstone and granite outcroppings to tide pools filled like jewel boxes with brightly coloured marine animals. Purple, red and orange starfish and sea urchins, blue mussel shells, white gooseneck barnacles, and green sea anemones and sea cucumbers. Killer whales and gray whales are often seen swimming off shore. The perfect lunch stop is by the shore of a lake during the drive through the mountains to the other side of the island. Time for a swim, or follow the guide on an easy 3.7 km loop with 115 m (2.3 mi, 377 ft) gain through craggy hills, the waters of the ocean far below, islands in the distance and mountain terrain all around you. Very impressive in the town of Duncan is the unique downtown forest of more than 40 cedar carved totem poles of the Salish First Nations. Hotel in Port Alberni for two nights. Hiking time 2 hours

DAY 5: TOFINO - A day trip to the once sleepy fishing village of Tofino offers a wide range of outdoor opportunities. The Wild Pacific Trail with vistas of the rugged shore and crashing waves. In Pacific Rim National Park you walk mysterious trails with boardwalks and stairs in a fairy tale forest of ferns, lichens, mosses and thousand year old trees. At Long Beach you admire the skills of the surfers. There is more: boutiques and small stores in the charming villages of Ucluelet and Tofino offer crafts and souvenirs made by local artists. The guide is happy to arrange optional whale or bear watching tours, sea kayaking or a boat trip to a cove where natural hot springs pour into the ocean. Back to the hotel in Port Alberni in the evening.

DAY 6: CAMPBELL RIVER - North on the coastal highway to Cathedral Cove and a walk through a remnant of an ancient Douglas Fir ecosystem on Vancouver Island. The biggest trees in the Grove are about 800 years old and measure 76 m (250 ft) in height and 9 m (29 ft) in circumference. Travelling north along the coast, the guide suggests a stop at Miracle Beach for a dip in the ocean. Campbell River is a fishermen's paradise, the town calls itself Salmon Capital of the World. Your hotel for the next two nights is a legendary luxury fishing lodge and a gateway to nature. It's a place for adventure where various excursions start to experience the wilderness. The lodge overlooks the Discovery Passage, home of bald eagles and other birds, as well as whales, dolphins, seals and sea lions. Hiking time 1 to 2 hours.

DAY 7: CAMPBELL RIVER - It is tempting to just relax and soak in the scenery at the Lodge, but there are also options of a 3-hour wildlife tour by boat, or a guided fishing adventure. Nearby Strathcona Park beckons the hikers with a 12 km and 600 m gain return hike to Bedwell Lake (7.5 mi, 1970 ft). The challenging trail is nothing short of fantastic. The hike up to the lakes is made slightly easier by the highly engineered bridges, staircases and boardwalks. The views of Big Interior Peak and Mt. Tom Taylor amidst the stunning ambiance of Bedwell Lakes is well worth the effort. For a milder but no less impressive day the group can opt to enjoy shorter walks to multiple waterfalls, some with observations platforms, like Lupin Falls, Lady Falls and more which cascade through the rugged terrain of Strathcona Park.

DAY 8: COURTENAY - The Forbidden Plateau is an absolutely stunning 645 sq km (250 sq mi) plateau of open subalpine meadows and lush forest, studded with lakes and tarns, all framed by high mountains and crisscrossed with excellent hiking trails. The Kwai Lake loop, 16 km with 600 m gain (10 mi, 1970 ft), with Paradise Meadows leads through subalpine meadows which, in season are carpeted with lupines, heathers, paintbrush, monkey-flowers and violets but can be snow covered even in July. Hotel in Courtenay.

DAY 9: VANCOUVER - Heading south to Nanaimo to board the ferry for the cruise to Horseshoe Bay and back to the mainland. The guide takes you on a short orientation tour of downtown Vancouver with Stanley Park, Canada Place, Gastown and Chinatown. The afternoon is free time with so many options: there are shuttles to Capilano Park and Grouse Mountain, city tours on bicycles or Hop-On buses, the famous Museum of Anthropology and of course last-minute shopping and restaurants along busy Robson Street. Hotel in downtown Vancouver.

Day 10: Transfer on own to the airport. The Skytrain Canada Line station is a few steps away with a 25-minute ride direct into the airport. \$8.75 per person.