

Haida Gwaii Sailing Itinerary

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Tour Overview

The Islands of Haida Gwaii (formerly the Queen Charlotte Islands) are one of the richest biological and cultural areas in North America. The majestic coast, wilderness, people and wildlife of coastal British Columbia are stunning; this coast has some of the most magnificent tracts of temperate rainforest remaining on the planet.

Aboard our 82' sailing vessel, we will cruise the waters of this remote archipelago seeing ancient Haida villages, an incredible abundance of wildlife and outstanding wilderness scenery. We should encounter Killer Whales, seals and sea-lions, maybe Humpback and Gray Whales, Black Bears, as well as dozens of Bald Eagles, puffins, murrets, guillemots, and murrelets. Sabine's Gulls, shearwaters, petrels and even Black-footed Albatross are possible, as are other surprises!

Our crew are experienced sailors and naturalists with extensive knowledge of Haida Gwaii. They will help you learn about the diverse natural history and about issues that made preservation of Gwaii Haanas a vital environmental battle for more than a decade. We hope you join us for what promises to be an engaging and exciting voyage of discovery!

On all our voyages we intentionally keep our itineraries flexible to take advantage of wildlife sightings, weather and tides, and the interests of the group. This sample itinerary describes a typical 10-day trip, however, activities may occur in a different order or be substituted by suitable alternatives. Itinerary

Itinerary

Day 1: Sandspit, BC

Arrive in Sandspit. Overnight at the Inn at Sandspit. Most of our guests fly with Air Canada direct from Vancouver. Transportation to The Inn is not required as it's located across the street from the Airport. It is a quick walk (approximately 150 yards), out the main doors and to your right. There are carts available to help you transport your baggage. In order to facilitate the check-in process, we have reserved a room for you under your name at the Inn's front desk. Dinner for this evening is on your own. We recommend the Inn's dining room. If you would like to venture out, Sandspit has two other restaurant choices; Dick's Wok Inn (Chinese cuisine) and the Orange Roof. Your evening's accommodation at the Inn at Sandspit and breakfast the following morning are included.

Day 2: Skidegate



Begin your day with an a la carte breakfast at The Inn's dining room prior to your journey to Skidegate. Please allow plenty of time to enjoy your breakfast, as the restaurant cooks all meals to order. The group will meet in front of The Inn at Sandspit at 8:30 am. Please be sure to check out of your hotel room with luggage in hand prior to this time. You will be greeted by our shuttle bus driver/guide for your Haida Gwaii land tour. You will be transported to the ferry landing at Alliford Bay to take the ferry across to Skidegate Landing on Graham Island. The ferry crossing takes approximately 20 minutes. Our first stop will be the newly renovated Haida Heritage Centre on Graham Island for a guided tour followed by a traditional Haida lunch at Keenawii's Kitchen hosted by a local Haida family from Skidegate. Following lunch, we may have time for a short walk around Spirit Lake before catching the ferry back to Moresby Island. Then we are off to meet up with the Island Roamer, anchored at Moresby Camp, and her Crew. Upon boarding the ship you will meet the crew, cabins will be assigned, and everyone will participate in an introductory & safety orientation with dinner to follow. We will spend our first evening anchored nearby and will depart early the next morning into the waters of Southern Moresby Island to explore the Gwaii Haanas Park Reserve.

Days 3 - 9: Moresby Island



We will spend our time exploring the eastern and southern shores of Moresby Island. Daily activities include wildlife watching, shore excursions to explore ancient Haida villages, "old growth" forests, beautiful creeks, and colorful intertidal zones. Be sure to keep an eye out and your cameras ready, as we will encounter a wealth of marine wildlife on our journey. We aim to spot humpback whales, porpoise, fin whales, sea lions and orca. We hope to capture the sight of the mighty, Gwaii Haanas black bear foraging along the shoreline for the myriad of intertidal creatures found in these nutrient-rich areas. Windy Bay is the site of the first pole raised in 130 years honouring the 20th anniversary of the Gwaii Haanas Agreement to protect the natural and marine resources. We visit the old Haida village of SGang Gwaay (Ninstints), a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site to take in the fabulous totem poles. Each evening we will anchor in a different secluded bay with time to discuss the day's wildlife sightings and opportunity to explore the shoreline by kayak.

Day 10: Sandspit



The trip will finish mid morning and you will disembark at 11:00am at Moresby Camp. There will be charter bus waiting to shuttle the group to Sandspit airport. The trip by bus takes about an hour. You can expect to arrive in Sandspit by midday. This will give you time to have lunch and do any last minute shopping at the souvenir shop located in the Sandspit Airport, prior to your afternoon flight to Vancouver.

What to Expect

Regardless, in all of our destinations our itineraries remain flexible. This allows the crew to take time to enjoy wildlife sightings, spend more time at an ancient village site, or simply cater to the interests of the group.

Usually on the Pacific Coast we have a good variety of constantly changing weather. Expect a mixture of sunshine, rain and wind on most trips. You will require waterproof rain gear and rubberboots as most of our landings will be wet, where you will be stepping into the water and onto the beach.

We travel in protected areas most of the time. On many days of the summer this coast is like sailing on a lake - flat and calm. Sometimes we cross into open water for short periods of time where we may experience greater motion. If you are prone to motion sickness it is a good idea to bring sea sickness medication. Check with your doctor.

All of our meals are served buffet style. We can usually accommodate most special dietary concerns if we are given sufficient advance notice.

Typical Day

In the morning, you might expect to have breakfast served around 8am. If you are an early riser there is always the opportunity for a morning kayak around the secluded bay we are anchored in. After the meal, a shore excursion will take place - Either to search for wildlife, look at intertidal zones, or go for a culture/nature hike. We will load into the zodiacs and take off to see what nature has in store for us. Bring your backpack, water bottle and camera! You never know what you will see on these outings.

We come back to the boat for a gourmet lunch served by one of our amazing chefs. At this time, the skipper might take us to our next destination, while we look for more wildlife along the shores, or try to find pods of whales. The crew will be explaining all the places we are passing and all the species that you might see flying, swimming, or walking near the vessel. If something is of interest we will stop or slow down to enjoy. We are never in any hurry. We travel to all of our destinations only when the weather and wildlife is consistently good - And our skippers are experts and finding exciting things to show you. A stop at an ancient village site is always a unique experience for our guests.

After lunch, we might spend some time relaxing, while the crew puts up the sails and takes you through a passage or strait. This would be a good time to reflect in a journal or take a book from our extensive reading library. If we are lucky, you may see some Humpbacks frolicking in the waters around the boat. If this happens we turn off the engines and float silently among them - quite

spectacular. Before dinner we might do a light hike to bear stands to view some grizzly or black bears feeding on the salmon, or enjoy an afternoon kayak. We serve dinner and then might go for a dip in some remote hot springs along the coast, and then come back to the boat and enjoy some BC wine.

What's Included

Tour Price Includes

- All meals from breakfast on Day 2 to breakfast on the last day
- All accommodation onboard ship; skipper, cook, naturalist;
- Full use of all onboard facilities, including kayaks.

Tour Price Does Not Include

- Transportation to the start point and from the finish point of the trip
 - Accommodation or meals prior to the start of the trip or after the completion
 - Travel or cancellation insurance
 - \$100 CAD / \$85 USD Sustainability fee
 - Taxes (5% GST)
 - Airport transfers
 - The only money participants require during the trip is for optional purchases and gratuities for the crew.
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