



## Bluewater Adventures

### Canadian Gulf Islands Sample Itinerary

This natural history voyage explores the protected waters of the Gulf Islands, off southern Vancouver Island. Our focus will be exploring the new Gulf Islands National Park and the remote islands of this beautiful region. Sailors consider this area one of the best cruising destination in North America with scenic anchorages and fabulous weather. Passengers will be thrilled by the excitement of porpoise, hundreds of seals, and sea lions out on the rocks. The Coast Salish First Nation have lived here for thousands of years and we will see sites they once inhabited. Combine exciting wildlife, picturesque islands and the opportunity to explore Canada's newest National Park, all only a short distance from major urban centres ... and you have a recipe for a wonderful experience.

#### *Sample Itinerary*

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 5-day trip, however, activities may occur in a different order or be substituted by suitable alternatives. Wildlife are wild life and do not necessarily conform to our schedules.

**Day 1** – The trip starts and finishes in Sidney, BC. Close to Victoria, our start point is minutes away from the Victoria International Airport, the BC Ferry Swartz Bay terminal and Washington State Ferry. Participants will meet at 10:00am at the entrance to the Port Sidney Marina, on the Sidney waterfront. Upon boarding the ship, cabins will be assigned, an introductory safety briefing completed and then we set sail for the islands nearby. Our first stop is often to explore the long beaches and lagoon of Sidney Spit.

Dall's porpoise are one of the most exciting marine mammals. With speeds of almost 70 km, they burst through the waves and often come over to ride the bow wave of our ship. It is amazing to watch them in the clear waters. On some of our trips we may see orcas cruising by with their tall dorsal fins. Participants will learn about the local marine mammals, birds, and plant life as we explore by boat and on land. Each night we anchor in a different, beautiful anchorage.

**Day 2-4** - Our focus these days will be on the southern Gulf Islands – South Pender, Cabbage or Tumbo Island, the Belle Chain Islets and Galiano. We like to focus on the most remote and seldom visited areas. If we have a good wind, we expect to raise the sails and enjoy the silence and beauty of sailing. There will be time to explore the protected waters using the stable, sea kayaks that we carry onboard. With a good low tide, we will explore the shore for different species of colourful sea stars, anemone, and algae. Each day, we will hike into the coastal forest to see interesting trees, such as the arbutus or madronne, and learn about the forest plants.

**Day 5** – Mid-afternoon we return to Sidney and the completion of our voyage. Participants can easily make connections to travel to the mainland or continue exploring Vancouver Island.

For additional information specific to your trip please refer to the following pamphlets also available from Bluewater Adventures

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Canadian Gulf Islands General Information
- Trip Clothing & Equipment List
- Reading list