

BLUEWATER ADVENTURES – Orcas and Totems



Bluewater Adventures Northern Vancouver Island

Orcas & Totems – 7 day Start and Finish in Port McNeill, BC

S/V Island Odyssey

SAMPLE ITINERARY

This natural history voyage explores the protected waters of Northern Vancouver Island. Whale researchers consider this area the best place in the world to observe orcas or killer whales. In addition, we expect to see humpback whales, black bears, bald eagles and sea otters. The Kwakwaka'wakw First Nations people have lived here for thousands of years and we will explore their culture and art. Combine these incredible wildlife and cultural experiences into one week... and you have an amazing trip!

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 7-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 – This trip starts and finishes in Port McNeill, BC. Guests will meet in the morning at the top of the Cab's Fuel Dock on the Port McNeill waterfront. Upon boarding "Island Odyssey", cabins will be assigned and an introductory safety briefing will be completed.

We have chosen Port McNeill as the starting point for this voyage because it is the closest port to the core killer whale area. We expect to discover our first pod or group of whales the first afternoon. You will agree that orcas are one of the most exciting marine mammals to watch as we see them foraging for salmon, spyhopping, and breaching (leaping clear of the water). Guests will learn about the behaviour of these fascinating creatures, listen to them calling on the ship's underwater microphone, and learn how to identify individual animals. Each night we anchor in a secluded anchorage.

Day 2 – 3 We will spend this day among the islands at the western end of Queen Charlotte Strait exploring for different species of marine mammals, walking a remote beach and observing a variety of sea birds. Nearby, Pine Island has one of the largest seabird nesting colonies on the coast.

Days 4 - 6 – Our focus these days will be on the waters of Johnstone Strait, the core orca watching area. We expect to have multiple encounters with the orcas. Each experience is different. Humpback whales are usually in the area, and Dall's porpoise often come over to the boat to play on the bow wave. We will visit the modern Kwakwaka'wakw community of Alert Bay to visit the U'Mista Cultural Centre and see a fascinating collection of potlatch masks. 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 our stable, sea kayaks that we carry onboard. At the entrance to Knight Inlet is the abandoned Kwakwaka'wakw village of Mimquimlees. With permission from the local native band we will explore the old village to discover fallen totem poles and a rich heritage. With a good low tide, we may explore the shore for different species of colourful sea stars, anemone, and algae. We often hike into the coastal forest to see big trees and learn about the forest plants.

Day 7 – Mid morning we return to Port McNeill to complete our voyage. Participants can catch afternoon flights back to Vancouver. For additional information specific to your trip please refer to your Bluewater Adventures Reservation Package or contact our office.

BLUEWATER ADVENTURES – Orcas and Totems

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Booking Your Flights

Our designated Travel Agency is UNIGLOBE DIRECT TRAVEL LTD. If you need further accommodation or help with your Airfare and Insurance, please call Elaine at 604-538-2111 ext. 6614 or email elaine@uniglobedirect.com.

PACIFIC COASTAL AIRLINES provides daily service between Vancouver International Airport **South Terminal** and Port Hardy. Pacific Coastal Airlines operates a free shuttle bus between Vancouver's main air terminal and the South Terminal. Frequency is every 30 minutes. Contact Pacific Coastal Airlines for more information Toll Free: 1-800-663-2872 or 604-273-8666 www.pacificcoastal.com

Please Note:

It is possible to take an early flight from Vancouver to Port Hardy on Day 1 and arrive at the yacht on time. Historically, Port Hardy experiences fog in the morning during this time of year which can delay flights. It's recommended to arrive the day prior to the trip start and stay the night in Port McNeill.

WAVIN FLAGS operates a shuttle/taxi service between Port Hardy airport and Port McNeill. Travel between Port Hardy airport and Port McNeill takes about 40 minutes and the cost will be approx. \$50.00 CAD. You should reserve 24 hours in advance by calling Waivin Flags. **(250-230-7655)** and they will meet your incoming flight. *Prices are subject to change.*

TOFINO BUS services Port Hardy – Port McNeill – Nanaimo – Victoria – Vancouver. For schedules, call 1.866.986.3466 or 250.725.2871 or check www.tofinobus.com

SIDE TRIPS

You may wish to extend your visit to Northern Vancouver Island and explore the local area. Port McNeill is ideally situated with ferry access to Sointula and Alert Bay. Sointula was established at the turn of the century by Finnish pioneers with a utopian dream. In Finnish, Sointula means "harmony". It is a 25 minute ferry ride from Port McNeill. Alert Bay is a 40 minute ferry ride from Port McNeill. During our voyage we will be visiting Alert Bay and the U'Mista Cultural Centre, however, for those particularly interested in native culture it is worth the extra visit. There is a lovely boardwalk trail around a bog where you can enjoy interesting vegetation, bird watching and photography. Locals refer to it as 'Gator Gardens' – however, the name doesn't do it justice. It's well worth the walk.

ACCOMMODATION

Port McNeill

Black Bear Resort Hotel	(250) 956 4900 1 866 956 4900	www.port-mcneill-accommodation.com	\$151-171
Haida Way Motor Inn	(250) 956-3373 1 800 956 3373	www.pmhotels.com staff@pmhotels.com	\$99 – \$145
The Artists Point B&B	(250) 956 2449	www.theartistspoint.com info@theartistspoint.com	\$189
Ocean Comfort B&B	(250) 956 0002 (250) 230 4495	www.oceancomfort.net	\$135
Nimpkish Forest B&B	1 855 956 3464	www.airbnb.ca/rooms/1342821	\$70-\$115

BLUEWATER ADVENTURES – Orcas and Totems

Alert Bay

Alert Bay Lodge	(250) 974 2410 1 800 255 5057	www.alertbaylodge.com reservations@alertbaylodge.com	\$119-129
------------------------	----------------------------------	--	-----------

TOURIST INFORMATION

For information on what do to in Port McNeill, visit www.portmcneill.com or www.vancouverislandnorth.ca.

For general information on British Columbia's attractions, travel, restaurants, shopping, transportation and accommodation contact **Destination British Columbia**: 1-800 435 5622 or visit the Destination BC website at www.hellobc.com

BLUEWATER ADVENTURES – Orcas and Totems

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Our vessel is equipped with marine radio and satellite telephone for emergencies. We have direct communication with the Coast Guard and essential services. Cellular telephone service is sporadic and much of the trip you should expect no service. We highly recommend you take the opportunity of becoming disconnected from the electronic world. If someone back home needs to get in touch with you for an important message, instruct them to call the Bluewater Adventures office **(604) 980-3800 / Toll Free: 1-888-877-1770**. Office hours are Monday to Friday (9:00 am to 5:00 pm PST). If they are unable to speak with our office staff they should leave a detailed message which will be relayed at the first opportunity.

In the event of an **emergency** they should first call the Bluewater Adventures office and speak with our staff, or call the emergency telephone number provided through the recorded message. If time is of the essence, the office is closed and the call is urgent contact Comox Coast Guard Radio at **250-339-3613**. Explain the situation and request assistance in contacting a passenger aboard Island Odyssey sailing the Johnstone Strait area. If Coast Guard deems the situation to be sufficiently urgent they will then issue a radio alert for Island Odyssey to contact Coast Guard on Channel 16 for an urgent message. However, it still may take some time to establish contact.



Bluewater Adventures
#3 - 252 East First Street
North Vancouver, BC
Canada V7L 1B3

Phone: (604) 980-3800
Fax: (604) 980-1800
Toll Free: 1 (888) 877-1770
www.bluewateradventures.ca
explore@bluewateradventures.ca