



## Fall Whales & Totems of Johnstone Strait

5 day

Start and Finish in Port McNeill, BC

S/V Island Solitude

### 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!

*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.*

**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 Solitude", 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. Keep watch for the larger spout of a humpback whale – they are known to feed well into fall on the BC coast before their migration south. Each night we anchor in a secluded anchorage.

**Day 2** – 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 3-4** – 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 5** – 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 - NVI

### TRAVEL INFORMATION

#### Booking Your Flights

Any reputable travel agent can assist with your travel arrangements. Bluewater Adventures uses **Uniglobe Travelex** services. As a travel agency, they can provide competitive fares and can also assist with travel and cancellation insurance.

At Uniglobe Travelex we work with:

#### Elaine Ross

[elaine@uniglobetravelex.com](mailto:elaine@uniglobetravelex.com)

**(604) 538-2111 ext 6614**

**toll free: 1(888) 805-3093**

#### Jacquie Losier

[jacqueline@uniglobetravelex.com](mailto:jacqueline@uniglobetravelex.com)

**(604) 538-2111 ext 6611**

**toll free: 1(888) 805-3093**

From overseas, call collect on the weekdays during office hours.

***Please mention that you are a Bluewater Adventures passenger in order to receive our preferred rates.***

**PACIFIC COASTAL AIRLINES** provides daily service between Port Hardy and Vancouver International Airport **South Terminal**. 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** <http://www.pacificcoastal.com/>

#### Please Note:

***It's possible to take the early flight from Vancouver to Port Hardy and arrive at the boat 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.*

### 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.

#### Alert Bay

<b>Alert Bay Lodge</b>	(250) 974-2410	<a href="http://www.alertbaylodge.com/">http://www.alertbaylodge.com/</a>	\$109-\$119
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## BLUEWATER ADVENTURES - NVI

### ACCOMMODATION (Prices subject to change)

#### Port McNeill

<b>Black Bear Resort Hotel</b>	1 250 956 4900 1 866 956 4900	<a href="http://www.port-mcneill-accommodation.com/">http://www.port-mcneill-accommodation.com/</a>	\$145-185
<b>Haida Way Motor Inn</b>	(250) 956-3373 1 800 956 3373	<a href="http://www.pmhotels.com">www.pmhotels.com</a> staff@pmhotels.com	\$110-\$125CAD
<b>Broughton Manor</b>	(250) 956-4202		\$125-\$150
<b>At Water's Edge B &amp; B</b>	(250) 956-2912	<a href="http://www.atwatersedge.ca/">http://www.atwatersedge.ca/</a>	\$109-\$119

### EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Our vessel is equipped with a marine radio telephone and **if necessary**, telephone calls can be made from the ship. We have direct communication with the Coast Guard and essential services. Should you need to be reached during the trip, the Bluewater Adventures office can contact **"Island Solitude"** Telephone **604-980-3800** (Monday-Friday). 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 to them, leave a contact number for the boat to call back, and the Coast Guard will pass the message to Island Odyssey for you via Radio on VHF Channel 16.



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