

EXPLORING BRITISH COLUMBIA'S COAST

SPONSORED BY MAPLE LEAF ADVENTURES



Each Maple Leaf Adventures voyage is designed to create lasting connections with nature, promote ecological discovery and offer authentic interactions with Indigenous communities and their culture. JEFF BETHLOOS

Are you ready to re-engage with nature's wonders?

'We are so lucky that we can access these magical worlds'

MARK SISSONS

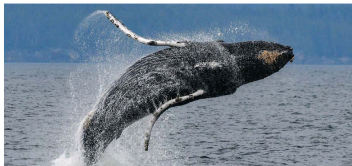
Postmedia Content Works

The call of the wild has never been louder. After an interminable year of pandemic-induced hibernation, many of us yearn to answer that call by travelling again as soon as domestic COVID-19 travel restrictions lift. What better way to re-engage with nature and rediscover your inner explorer than aboard a small luxury expedition yacht immersed in the rich marine life and spectacular natural beauty of B.C.'s coastline.

"Any time you can step aboard an expedition yacht and leave roads and trails far behind is special and unique because you're accessing a world that many people can't even imagine," says Maureen Gordon, co-owner of Victoria-based ecotourism operator Maple Leaf Adventures. "It's a world that's alive and continues without us, and that makes this coastline such a special place to visit."

For more than three decades, Maple Leaf Adventures has pioneered boutique expedition travel along B.C.'s Great Bear Rainforest and northwestern Vancouver Island and has made significant conservation contributions. Today, it has one of Canada's most sustainable track records guiding guests to the hardest-to-reach wonders of the B.C. and Alaska coast.

Crewed by veteran mariners and some of the region's most experienced naturalists and guides, the company's multi-day excursions give guests one-of-a-kind experiences, often in areas that were once under threat of destruction or in dire need of protection. Each voyage is carefully designed to foster lasting connections with nature, promote ecological discovery, offer authentic in-



The wilds of Vancouver Island and the B.C. coast are on display with Maple Leaf Adventures. PHILIPPO SPINALE

teractions with Indigenous coastal communities and their culture, and leave participants with an appreciation for Canada's fragile marine environments.

"You cannot drive or hike to these places because this coast is so rugged and remote," says Gordon. "We are so lucky that we can access these magical worlds while immersed in nature with no other human beings around."

Gordon even has a term for this mystical world — "paradisolation" — lifted, she says, from a friend who owns Nimmo Bay Resort on the coast. It's an apt description of the countless islands, inlets, fjords, waterfalls and beaches that make the coastline of B.C.'s spectacular Great Bear Rainforest such an enchanting destination. Take a Maple Leaf Adventures summer nature safari here or off the ruggedly beautiful coast of Vancouver Island, and you'll see what she means.

Wildlife wonders

Encounter astonishing numbers of humpback and fin whales and other marine mammals feeding in the rich coastal waters as the seasonal food chain reaches full bloom and squadrons of seabirds circle overhead. As salmon flood back into the

coastal waters en route to rivers, see marine mammals such as orcas and sea lions following to feast on them. And get exhilaratingly close to grizzlies feeding on sedge grasses while safe in your Zodiac shore boat.

Uncharted adventures

Race schools of white-sided pacific dolphins, snake down a rainforest draped fjord, and observe humpback whales breaching. Kayak to view an ancient cliffside petroglyph and follow fresh sea wolf tracks on the beach. Go ashore to hike forest trails and then soak in a hidden hot spring. It's all about embracing the freedom and spontaneity to "put ourselves in the path of the magic," as company co-owner Kevin Smith likes to say.

Beautiful beaches

Comb some of the countless secluded bays and sun-baked sandy beaches dotting the B.C. coastline. And stargaze around a blazing beach campfire by night, often in places where relatively few humans have ever set foot.

Fresh food from the sea and land

Enjoy exquisite cuisine



KEVIN SMITH

prepared by onboard chefs who love to infuse their creations with ingredients harvested daily by the crew and guests — whether it be Dungeness crab, fresh fish or wild edible flora identified by your trip's naturalist. Paired with the perfect wines, these intricate, multi-course meals are a gastronomic highlight of every voyage.

Nature's nourishment

Embrace learning about complex marine ecosystems, savour immersion in untamed nature, and unwind amid the grandeur of nature's timeless rhythms. And return refreshed and rejuvenated by your passage through this most spectacular part of our planet.

ONE UNIQUE FLEET

Meet the boats — unique vessels, known along the coast:



DEREK BAKER

MV Cascadia
Designed for small ship expeditions capable of reaching the wildest, most naturally rich destinations, this luxurious 138-foot catamaran embarked on her maiden British Columbia voyage in 2019. Accommodating up to 24 guests, with shore groups typically numbering just 12 guests, she provides an authentic, human-scale experience.



KEVIN SMITH

SV Maple Leaf
Constructed in 1904 at a Vancouver Shipyard, this

classic, 92-foot schooner was once the most expensive private yacht on the Pacific Coast. She's a masterful work of art with heritage decor and modern conveniences capable of easily navigating the B.C. coast's wildest, most remote corners comfortably and safely while accommodating up to eight guests in four private sleeping areas.



PHILIPPO SPINALE

MV Swell
One of British Columbia's most historic ships, this classic rugged, 88-foot beautifully converted tugboat was built in Vancouver in 1912 and has pulled the materials that created some of B.C.'s major ports. She underwent \$4 million in refits beginning in 2004, transforming her into an elegant, warm vessel that accommodates up to 12 guests in six private cabins, all with full ensuite bathrooms with showers.

— Mark Sissons

SUMMER SEASON SPECIALS

Maple Leaf Adventures' 2021 summer schedule currently includes signature trips Whales & Wild Isles of the Great Bear Rainforest (W&I), Vancouver Island's Wild Side and Great Bear Rainforest (GBR) Summer. Book by June 5 to receive:

■ Free return flights between Vancouver or Victoria and your trip's departure and return ports if booked by June 5, 2021. Value up to \$600 per person. Qualifying trips: W&I July 23-30, GBR Summer July 1-7, GBR Summer July 8-14, GBR Summer July 15-22, GBR Summer July 23-Aug 2.

■ Free one night's stay in the premier Kwá'lias Hotel in Port Hardy if booked by June 5, 2021. Port Hardy's premiere First Nations destination hotel features curated art and culture evocative of the traditional territories this wild expedition will explore. Qualifying trips: Wild Side July 9-15, Wild Side with Canadian Geographic July 16-22.

THIS STORY WAS CREATED BY CONTENT WORKS, POSTMEDIA'S COMMERCIAL CONTENT DIVISION, ON BEHALF OF MAPLE LEAF ADVENTURES.



**GREAT BEAR RAINFOREST.
HAIDA GWAIL. ALASKA.
INSIDE PASSAGE.
SALISH SEA.**

Join our boutique expeditions in B.C. and Alaska for an insider's odyssey through the nature and culture of this biodiverse region.

Contact us for 2021 & 2022 trips and special offers.

MapleLeafAdventures.com | 250-386-7245 | info@mapleleafadventures.com