

Nanaimo & District Hospital Foundation Presents:

North Island Explorer

A Wildlife & Cultural Journey to
Northern Vancouver Island

September 12-17, 2024



Travel Arrangements By

NANAIMO &
DISTRICT
HOSPITAL
FOUNDATION



It's in our
Nature
to Give





Nanaimo & District Hospital Foundation is excited to invite you join us on our inaugural travel program, offered exclusively to Foundation donors. Experience the road less travelled on northern Vancouver Island with this 6-day guided tour from Nanaimo to Telegraph Cove, Alert Bay, and Port Hardy. Witness BC's iconic wildlife and natural beauty while connecting to the unique Indigenous cultures and history of the region, guided by our hosts from BC-based operator, Mosaic Earth Travel.

While many come to Vancouver Island inspired by its rugged beauty and temperate climate, few step out of their comfort zone and embark on a new adventure. I hope you will join me, as we explore the Island together and share experiences, creating a community among our donors that strengthens our shared commitment to care for the health of the people who live here.

- Barney Ellis-Perry, CEO of the Nanaimo & District Hospital Foundation

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

- DAY 1: Nanaimo to Telegraph Cove
- DAY 2: Sea Kayaking the Johnstone Strait
- DAY 3: Wildlife Tour, Great Bear Rainforest
- DAY 4: Alert Bay Indigenous Culture
- DAY 5: San Josef Bay tour, Cape Scott P.P.
- DAY 6: Return to Nanaimo



TOUR LEADERS



BARNEY ELLIS-PERRY
 Chief Executive Officer,
 Nanaimo & District
 Hospital Foundation

Read bio: <https://nanaimohospitalfoundation.com/staff/>



JOSH MCGAREL
 Lead Guide,
 Mosaic Earth Travel

Read bio:
<https://www.mosaicearth.ca/about/>

YOUR DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Note: Specific itinerary is subject to change.

DAY 1 | Nanaimo to Telegraph Cove

Our journey begins in Nanaimo, where your guide will provide pick-up mid-morning from a pre-arranged location. We then begin our drive north for roughly 4-5 hours, passing through Campbell River for lunch and other scenic stops along the way. Telegraph Cove is today's destination, a quaint fishing village that was established in 1912 as a one-room telegraph station and grew to include a salmon saltery, sawmill, school and general store. Many of the historic buildings still stand, built on stilts above the water and connected by a boardwalk. After we check into our lodge rooms for the night, enjoy free time to wander the village and check out the local shops and museums, including the Whale Interpretive Centre. We then gather for a welcome dinner overlooking the harbour.

Meals included: Lunch, Dinner.

DAY 2 | Kayaking the Johnstone Strait & Travel to Alert Bay



It's time to get out on the water and immerse in the coastal wilderness! Launching from Telegraph Cove, we join local guides for a half-day sea kayaking tour on the Johnstone Strait. The pace is leisurely as we paddle along the shoreline to take in the scenery. Wildlife is all around us here - from the seals bobbing alongside the kayaks, to the bald eagles soaring above and the orcas and humpbacks gliding by in the distance. After returning to Telegraph Cove, we enjoy lunch at the local pub before continuing on to Port McNeill to board the ferry to Alert Bay on Cormorant Island.

Just 5km long and barely 1km wide, this island is home to the proud and active 'Namgis First Nation community of about 500 people, along with a mix of Kwakwaka'wakw tribes and a small settler population. Alert Bay is a global centre for Indigenous culture, with highlights including the Big House for traditional gatherings, the World's Tallest Totem Pole, and the renowned U'Mista Cultural Centre which holds one of the most complete and important collections of Indigenous masks and artefacts in the world. After a brief driving tour of the small island, we settle into our family-run waterfront B&B with its expansive deck - perfect for viewing wildlife and watching the sunset. A catered dinner is provided on-site by our hosts. Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.

DAY 3 | Grizzly Bears & Wildlife Tour

Today we join local First Nations guides - experts in the area's wildlife and history - on a well-equipped vessel for a day on the water. As we head deep into the channels and many islands of the Broughton Archipelago & Great Bear Rainforest, we may witness humpback whales, orcas, dolphins, eagles, bears, and seabirds. Our experience moves from boat to Zodiac to cruise the shoreline up-close, and then on-foot in search of grizzly bears feeding on salmon in the nearby streams. *Continued...*



YOUR DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Along the way, our guides will share stories behind the scenery, of the First Nations who have called these lands home for millennia, and of their sustainable approach to wildlife viewing. We are on the water for roughly 8-10 hours this day; there is a washroom onboard and a heated cabin. Includes pick-up and drop-off from Alert Bay. Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.

DAY 4 | Alert Bay Indigenous Culture & Port Hardy

The day begins with a light hike through Alert Bay's Ecological Park, a network of trails through ancient cedar trees and other unique flora. We then visit the U'Mista Cultural Centre for a private tour through the impressive Potlatch collection and other displays, to learn about the First Nations history and culture in this region. In the afternoon there is the option to participate in a cedar weaving workshop or connect with a local carver (TBD), before travelling to Port Hardy - the last coastal community at the end of the road. Scenic stops include Fort Rupert and Storey's Beach, a historic Kwakiutl village thought to be home to the First Nations for over 8000 years, and the Quatse River Estuary. Tonight we check-in to the beautifully-appointed Kwa'Lilas Hotel, owned and operated by the local First Nations. Dinner is enjoyed at the on-site restaurant. Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.

DAY 5 | San Josef Bay, Cape Scott Provincial Park

We set off in the morning towards Cape Scott Provincial Park on the northwestern tip of Vancouver Island. Cape Scott spans 115km of scenic, rugged shoreline, with vast stretches of white sand beaches surrounded by lush old-growth forests. A logging road takes us from Port Hardy across the island to San Josef Bay, where a boardwalk through the dense forest brings us out to the beach. We spend the next few hours exploring the 2km beach and unique geology of the area - including impressive sea stacks, tidal pools, and sea caves.



Our guides share stories of the local environment and the history of the area, including attempts by the Danish to settle here in the late 1880s. Returning to Port Hardy, we gather for our final dinner at a local's favourite restaurant in town. Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.

DAY 6 | Return to Nanaimo

After breakfast at the hotel, we stop in town for any last minute souvenirs and a coffee for the road. We then begin our drive south (roughly 4-5 hours with stops), where the tour ends in Nanaimo. Meals included: Breakfast.



ACCOMMODATION

TELEGRAPH COVE RESORT

The Lodge at Telegraph Cove Resort is situated on top of the hill, overlooking the cove, and has been built with timber milled on-site. Each of the rooms has two queen beds, full bathroom, mini refrigerator and a sitting area with breathtaking views of the Johnstone Strait. The Lodge is a short walk to the main boardwalk village with restaurants, coffee shop, the Whale Interpretive Centre, and more.



NIMPKISH HOTEL, ALERT BAY

Located in the heart of picturesque Alert Bay, Cormorant Island, this family-run B&B features nine guest rooms, most with private balconies overlooking the ocean. Enjoy breakfast in the Sun Room while you scout for whales, and catch the sunset from their expansive waterfront deck. This B&B is a short walk to the main town of Alert Bay.



KWA'LILAS HOTEL, PORT HARDY

Kwa'lilas is a Kwakwaka'wakw word meaning 'a place to sleep'. A group of Elders chose this word in hopes that travellers and guests would find a peaceful rest after a day of exploration on Northern Vancouver Island. Owned and operated by the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations, this modern, chic hotel features double queen and king guest rooms with local Indigenous art throughout the hotel (most notably the 18' copper wall art in the lobby), plus on-site pub, fine-dining restaurant, and cafe.





TOUR DETAILS

Tour Cost (per person): CAD \$4,995 (double occupancy), including tax.

Supplements:

Single Occupancy Room: CAD \$612 /person

Double occupancy with two beds*: CAD \$335 /person

**One of our accommodations has only one queen bed per room, where a separate room will be booked for those who prefer two beds. All other share accommodations have the option of two beds per room.*

Group Size: 8-10 guests

What's Included:

- All accommodation for 5 nights, including 1 night in Telegraph Cove, 2 nights in Alert Bay, and 2 nights in Port Hardy. Mix of lodge, hotel and B&B.
- All meals from lunch on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 6. Beer and wine on first and last nights.
- Tours: Half-day sea kayaking, Full-day wildlife-viewing, U'Mista Cultural Centre 1-hour private tour, Indigenous cedar weaving OR artist visit (TBD), Full-day to Cape Scott Provincial Park.
- Transportation to/from Nanaimo in an air-conditioned passenger van.
- Gratuities for local guides, hotel services, and group meals.
- Applicable taxes at time of writing.
- Drinking water re-fill and snacks on the van.
- Fully escorted by Mosaic Earth Travel Guide.
- GST and other applicable taxes.

Not Included:

- Additional meals not listed.
- Alcoholic beverages with meals, other than dinners on Day 1 and Day 5.
- Travel insurance.
- Other items of a personal nature.
- Additional arrangements required due to any emergency or other situation.
- Any item not mentioned in 'what's included'.

Payment Details

A refundable deposit of 10% of the total tour cost per person is required to reserve a space on this tour. The remaining balance is due 75 days prior to departure.

View full Booking Terms & Conditions, including cancellation policy:
<https://travel.mosaicearth.ca/guided-tour-booking-terms-and-conditions.html>

WHAT TO EXPECT

JOINING LOGISTICS

This tour starts and ends in Nanaimo, where your Mosaic Earth guide will provide pick-up & drop-off at central location for all participants. If you wish to continue exploring this region, our team can provide suggestions for your future adventures based on your preferences.

FITNESS & MEDICAL

We recommend a good level of physical fitness for this itinerary. You should be comfortable walking/hiking on light trails for 1-2 hours, and paddling for 2-3 hours at a time (double kayaks are provided). Some excursions require sitting for extended periods while driving on uneven roads, and on potentially wavy ocean. You should be prepared for outdoor activities in potentially inclement weather. Please let us know if you have any medical concerns that may prevent you from participating in these activities. We will provide a more detailed medical form prior to your departure.

WEATHER

September is the start of Autumn in British Columbia and, as you know, weather on the West Coast can be changeable. Daily temperatures at this time of year average between 15-18 degrees during the day, and 7-10 degrees at night. Many of your activities take place outdoors (rain or shine!), so be sure to pack accordingly to stay comfortable in changing conditions. There is no bad weather - only bad clothing! A detailed packing list will be provided with your pre-trip documentation.

SUSTAINABILITY

We are all guests in the destination, and we want to ensure our time here has little-to-no impact on the local environment and people. We ask that you please bring your own water bottle to be refilled along the way. We will provide reusable tote bags for lunches and shopping. Please consider other ways to reduce your waste and impact while travelling - our team is here to help.

HOW TO BOOK

Please contact Pam McGarel at Mosaic Earth Travel for more information and to secure your booking.

+1 (778) 400-5299
pam@mosaicearth.ca



Photos courtesy of Destination BC & Josh McGarel/JMC Media