

NUCHATLITZ EXPEDITION

GUEST HANDBOOK



SPIRIT
OF THE WEST
ADVENTURES

TOUR OVERVIEW



Sunsets, sea otters, sandy beaches and sea stacks: our 6-day expedition on a remote stretch of the west coast of Vancouver Island is truly special. If you crave adventure and have a desire to paddle in an area that few ever get to, then this west coast sea kayaking expedition is for you.

Each day we will explore the sandy beaches, marvel at sea caves and stacks, and keep our eyes out for sea otters and other wildlife.



Starting in the small fishing community of Tahsis, we will transport you by water taxi west through the Esperanza Inlet, into the heart of Nuchatlitz Marine Park. The park is hard to access by both land and water, resulting in smaller crowds, even at the peak of the summer. From here, we'll paddle through enchanting islets and along the shores of Nootka Island.

This expedition involves outer coast paddling, navigating swell, and the occasional technical landing. Please contact us if you would like to discuss if this trip is suitable for you.

The area we share with you on this tour is the traditional territory of the Nuu-chah-nulth. Learn more about the Nuu-chah-nulth people, land, and language on the [Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council website](#), [First Voices](#), and the [First Peoples' Map of BC](#).

KEY DETAILS

OVERVIEW

TRIP TYPE: Expedition

GROUP SIZE: 9 guests, 2 guides

TRIP DURATION: 6 days / 5 nights

WHEN WE GO: June - August

[Click here for dates, prices, and more information](#)

MEETING DETAILS

DEPARTURE POINT: Tahsis, BC

DAY 1 MEETING TIME: 8:30 am the Tahsis Municipal Dock

DAY 6 RETURN TIME: between 10 am - noon *

PRE-TRIP MEETING: 7 pm at the Westview Marina Grillhouse Restaurant the evening before the tour begins (Day 0)

**Due to the unpredictable nature of wilderness travel, return times cannot be guaranteed. Please plan transport and accommodation so you arriving the day before and leaving the day after your tour.*

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

INCLUDED: Expert guides, paddling & camping equipment (except for your sleeping bag), all meals and snacks from lunch day 1 to a lunch on the final day, water taxi transport, park permits & land use permissions

NOT INCLUDED: Personal clothing, sleeping bag & rain gear (rentals available), transport to/from departure point, accommodation before & after the trip, travel insurance, guide team gratuity



WHAT TO EXPECT



KAYAKING

On this 6-day expedition, we will move camp most days, occasionally staying at one site for two nights. Each day on the water, we typically paddle for 4-6 hours and cover 7-10 nautical miles per day. This expedition involves outer coast paddling, navigating swell, and the occasional technical landing.

A fleet of good quality fibreglass kayaks will join your expedition. Typically, your group will have at least two double kayaks and the rest singles. Please be prepared to paddle different boats throughout your trip. Your group will be carrying everything you need in your kayaks, there is no support crew or resupply. For this reason, it is important to pack well and pack light. We will help you with this!

Our expeditions require everyone to work together as a team. Your assistance will be needed with loading, carrying and unloading kayaks as well as setting up and taking down camp. If you need help at anytime, please let us know.

CAMPING

Most sites are remote wilderness campsites without established facilities. There will be few built toilets and no running water for the duration of your journey. Your guides will carry a portable toilet that will be placed in a private area at each backcountry sites. We practice **Leave No Trace** camping and encourage you to refresh yourself on the seven principles before arrival.

There is limited access to fresh water on this route. Handwashing stations will be set up at each lunch spot and campsite. Saltwater ocean dips can be used for bathing (be prepared for cold water!) You can also bring a face cloth to use with a bit of fresh water or wipes (must be packed out).

Upon leaving Tahsis, we will be off-grid for the remainder of the expedition. There will be no wifi, cell service or charging stations. Please bring extra batteries or battery packs for phones and cameras. Your guides will have satellite communication devices in case of emergencies.

Pacific coastal air is cool and moist. While some days are warm, once the sun goes down, the air temperature drops. Please pack clothing accordingly.

FOOD

All meals and snacks are included, from lunch day one to a lunch on your final day. We aim to serve healthy, hearty and delicious food. We are happy to accommodate many dietary restrictions with advance notice (please let us know 60 days in advance of tour start date; some dietary needs are subject to an additional fee). Learn more on our [Food Page](#).

EXAMPLE ITINERARY

This example itinerary is flexible and may be adapted based on weather and group ability. On this expedition, we typically move camp between 3-5 times during the 6 days of paddling.

DAY 0

Journey to Tahsis (an adventure in itself!) Find up-to-date transport options and recommendations on our [**Getting Here page**](#).

Once you have arrived and settled into your accommodation for the evening, head to the Westview Marina to meet your guides for a pre-trip welcome meeting at the Grillhouse Restaurant at 7 pm. You'll meet the rest of your group, receive your waterproof drybags for packing, and have the opportunity to ask any last minute questions.

DAY 1

Please arrive at the Tahsis Municipal Dock at 8:30 am for departure around 9 am.

After a quick safety briefing, you'll grab your bags and jump aboard our water taxi for a scenic 1 hr boat journey. Once you've landed on one of the remote islands within the park, your guides will make lunch and give an orientation to the kayaks. When everyone feels comfortable in their boats, you'll head out for your first afternoon of exploration.

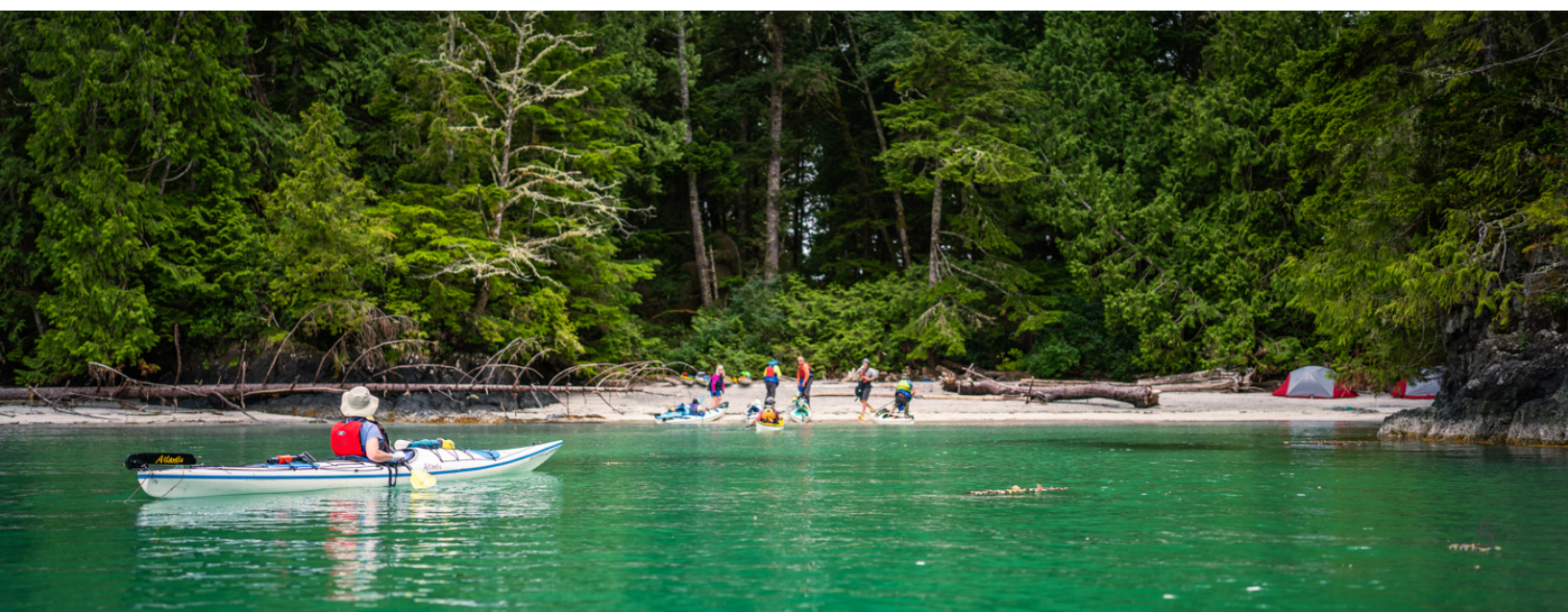
DAYS 2-5

You'll begin the day with a delicious breakfast, prepared by your multi-talented guides. The plan and route for the day will depend on weather conditions and the group's desires. After packing up camp, you'll spend the morning exploring picturesque islands, beaches, and on some days even sea caves. A picnic lunch will be prepared en-route and the afternoon might involve paddling further, beach combing, or simply taking in the magnificent surroundings. After a hearty dinner, you will have time to relax and watch the stunning west coast sunset.

We describe this tour as an exploratory expedition, meaning we are less focused on paddling from point A to B, but rather thoroughly exploring this amazing region.

DAY 6

On your final day, you'll meet our water taxi at your end destination, which will transport the group and all the gear back to your start point in Tahsis. There will be two consecutive water taxi runs to transport the whole group and you will arrive in Tahsis between 10 am - noon.



PACKING FOR YOUR ADVENTURE



At your pre-trip meeting the day before your tour, your guides will provide you with waterproof dry bags to pack your clothing and personal items into. We typically provide three dry bags per person. Two of these dry bags (typically a 20L and 10L bag) will be for your personal items, like your clothes. Your sleeping bag and shoes will be packed separately. An additional 10L bag will be your lap bag, which you'll keep in your cockpit with you for anything you want easy access to when you are on the water. Your guides will help you pack when you arrive.

Spirit of the West provides the following: sleeping pad, inflatable pillow and pillowcase, tents, paddling equipment (220 cm paddles, Nimbus Kiska and Werner Baja), lightweight camp chair, drybags, mini deckchart, and travel mug.

Spirit of the West does **not** provide a sleeping bag or raingear (rentals are available if ordered in advance, please contact us at least 30 days before your tour to rent).

THE GOLDEN RULES OF WILDERNESS CLOTHING

- Synthetic, wool & fleece are preferred for kayaking as they stay warm, even when wet.
- Dress in layers! Plan to have options to adjust for warmer or cooler weather.
- Be sure to check that your raingear is waterproof before arriving.
- Athletic gear you already own is often very suitable for kayaking. Ski base layers, yoga pants, hiking pants & running shirts are great options.
- Please note that in our coastal environment, wet clothing is unlikely to dry. Assume that once something is wet, it will stay wet or at least damp for the remainder of the trip, please plan accordingly.

WEATHER & WILDLIFE

Average daytime temperatures in June, July and August are around 21°C and overnight temperatures sit at around 10°C - but an ocean breeze and cold water upwelling can make it feel a little chillier when the sun goes down. Rain, winds and swell can be expected at any time of year in the Nuchatlitz region, so please be prepared with well waterproofed rain gear. These lush forests and nutrient-rich waters are the perfect habitat for wildlife to thrive. Sea otters, wolf tracks, and eagles are often spotted in the region.

PRINTABLE PACKING LIST

To print only this page, select page 7 from the print dialog box that pops up when you press "Print".

CLOTHING FOR PADDLING

- ☐ A full set of rain gear - jacket & pants
(rentals available with advance notice)
- ☐ 2 x long-sleeved synthetic shirts
- ☐ 1 x long-sleeved fleece or mid-weight layer
- ☐ 1 x quick-dry or synthetic pants
- ☐ A pair of water shoes *(Gumboots, crocs, neoprene booties or sandals with straps. No flip flops.)*
- ☐ 1 x sun hat
- ☐ A pair of sunglasses

CLOTHING FOR CAMP

- ☐ 2 x shirts
- ☐ 1 x fleece or sweatshirt
- ☐ 1 x camp pants *(yoga pants or synthetic/quick dry)*
- ☐ 2 x long underwear or base layers *(keep 1 pair for sleeping)*
- ☐ 1 x pair of shorts
- ☐ 4 x warm socks
- ☐ Underwear *(a mix of cotton and synthetic)*
- ☐ 1 x bathing suit
- ☐ 1 x toque/beanie
- ☐ A pair of camp shoes *(runners, light hikers, sturdy sandals)*

OTHER ITEMS

- ☐ Sleeping bag: 3 season bag in a compression sack *(rentals available with advance notice)*
- ☐ Headlamp & spare batteries
- ☐ Personal toiletries *(ecofriendly/biodegradable)*
- ☐ Quick dry compact towel, face cloth & wipes
- ☐ Sunscreen & bug spray
- ☐ Hand sanitizer and mask
- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ A few Ziplocs and garbage bags *(for extra waterproofing)*

OPTIONAL

- ☐ Binoculars, camera & spare batteries
- ☐ Book, journal, cards or small games
- ☐ Phone charging battery bank
- ☐ Paddling gloves
- ☐ Spare eye glasses & contact lenses
- ☐ Medication *(if flying, please pack necessary medication in your carry-on luggage)*
- ☐ Fishing gear & license *(you need a recreational fishing license to fish, [more info here](#))*
- ☐ Carbonated or alcoholic beverages *(we have a no alcohol on the water policy, please refrain from consuming alcohol until we are done kayaking for the day)*
- ☐ Guide team gratuity *(cash or credit card - there is a 3% transaction surcharge on credit card gratuities)*

PLANNING CHECKLIST

- ☐ Read our **Terms and Conditions** and pay deposit to confirm your reservation
- ☐ Provide details for other members of your group through the links in your confirmation email
- ☐ Inform Spirit of the West about any dietary or medical requirements (at least 60 days in advance)
- ☐ Purchase **Travel Insurance**
- ☐ If needed, request rain gear rentals from Spirit of the West
- ☐ Organize **Transportation** to/from Tahsis
- ☐ **Book Your Accommodation** for the night before & after your trip
- ☐ Complete all Spirit of the West paperwork through the blue 'Complete Guest Details' button on your invoice or links in your confirmation email
- ☐ 60 days before the tour, final payment is due (automatically charged to card on file)
- ☐ Update us with any dietary changes or rental requests at least 30 days before tour start date
- ☐ Get excited for the adventure!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

To fully immerse yourself in the environment, we highly encourage you to learn about the local ecology and First Nations culture. Here are some great resources to help you get started:

- [Cedar: Tree of Life to the Northwest Coast](#) - Hilary Stewart
- [Staying the Course, Staying Alive: Coastal First Nations](#) - Frank & Kathy Brown
- [British Columbia: A Natural History](#) - Cannings & Cannings
- Our blog on [responsible wildlife viewing](#) and our suggestions of ways to [minimize the impact of your travel](#)

[MORE RECOMMENDED RESOURCES](#)

QUICK LINK BUTTONS

[TOUR PAGE](#)

A tour overview including gallery, itinerary, FAQ and reviews

[FAQ](#)

Commonly asked questions about our tours

[ACCOMMODATION](#)

A list of options, accommodation fills fast, please book in advance

[GETTING HERE](#)

Directions on how to get to Tahsis

[INSURANCE](#)

More detail on why we strongly recommend travel insurance

[TERMS & CONDITIONS](#)

Our terms & conditions with full cancellation policy

[BOOK NOW](#)

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