



SPIRIT  
OF THE WEST  
ADVENTURES

# GREAT BEAR RAINFOREST EXPEDITION RESERVATION PACKAGE

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# THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!

## 7 NIGHTS / 8 DAYS SEA KAYAK EXPEDITION & WILDERNESS CAMPING

**Please read through this package of information to help you to prepare for your tour.** Please also remember to return your completed medical information form as soon as possible and read and understand the liability waiver which you will be asked to sign upon arrival. We hope you are getting excited for your adventure!

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## ITINERARY

### THE TOUR

This is the proposed itinerary for our trip, but it is flexible and may be adapted to suit the interests of those who join the trip as well as weather conditions. On this tour we can expect a combination of exposed open coastline and more protected inner passageways. As this is an expedition-style tour, we usually move campsites each night. We may have an opportunity to stay in the same place for two nights, if conditions allow.

### DAY PRIOR

Start your travel towards Bella Bella. We have conveniently scheduled the start and end dates of the trip so you may arrive in Bella Bella the day before the tour starts either via ferry from Port Hardy on Vancouver Island or plane from Vancouver or Port Hardy. Please note: If you are traveling by ferry you will likely need to spend the night before in Port Hardy as the ferry leaves Port Hardy at 7:30am, arriving in Bella Bella at 12:50pm, leaving a bit of time to explore Bella Bella before meeting your guides.

**At 6pm your guides will meet you at the Fisherman's Grill at Shearwater Resort on Denny Island.**

### DAY 1

Meet your guides at 9am in the morning in Bella Bella, in the heart of BC's Central Coast. After an introduction to the area and Heiltsuk First Nation with a cultural interpreter, we will sort our gear and then set off on our water taxi. Once at the first beach we will begin with an orientation to the kayaks and gear, learning efficient paddling techniques and safety procedures. Once

everyone is comfortable with their boats we'll launch and have an afternoon intro paddle for our first strokes in the Great Bear Sea (*time and weather dependent*).

### DAYS 2-7

This is a beautiful area to paddle and we work with the conditions and remain open to adventure. Each day, your guides will assess the weather, tides, and sea state to determine the destination for the day. Flexibility is key. Paddling options abound, and we'll generally travel north-south to take advantage of the prevailing northwesterlies. We'll aim to paddle among the Tribal, Admiralty, McMullin and McNaughton Island groups, with the hope to get out in the remote Goose Islands if weather allows. Moving southeast we'll enter the spectacular islands and beaches of the Hakai Conservancy.

### DAY 8

We will meet a water taxi about mid-day for transport back to Bella Bella. We expect to arrive in Bella Bella by mid-late afternoon, allowing us time to relax in the village before heading south by air or ferry the following day. ***Please do not book any flight for the last day of your trip.***

On the day following your trip, there are several flight options to Port Hardy or Vancouver. The return ferry to Port Hardy departs Bella Bella at 6:10pm and arrives in Port Hardy at 11:30pm. Ferry reservations highly recommended. (Times accurate at time of publication - please double check before planning your travel).



## MEETING LOCATION

### DAY PRIOR TO TRIP START

**6pm at the Fisherman's Grill at Shearwater Resort on Denny Island.**

Meet your guides for a welcome to the Great Bear. We'll give an overview of the trip with the charts in front of us, discuss the weather and what to expect on the trip, make sure everyone is prepared and answer any last-minute questions. You'll receive your dry bags for the trip as well, so you may pack that evening and be ready to go in the morning.

### DAY 1 OF TRIP

**9am at the top of the main public dock in the town of Bella Bella.**

*(NOT the BC Ferries terminal in McLoughlin Bay).*

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

Professional guiding service, all kayaking equipment (including kayaks, PFDs, paddles, pumps, ropes and sponges), meals (dinner day 1 to breakfast day 8), cooking equipment, camping equipment including tents and Thermo-rest sleeping pads, water taxi service, park and land use permits are included in your tour package. If you are planning on bringing any of your own equipment please double-check the packing list to ensure you have the appropriate gear and please let our office know in advance of the tour to avoid us bringing duplicates.

## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Not included in the tour cost are accommodation prior to your trip, flights, airport transfers, ferries, taxis, travel/medical insurance, alcoholic or carbonated beverages, rain gear, sleeping bags or personal items (toiletries, clothing, etc.). Sleeping bags may be rented if you prefer not to travel with them (please reserve in

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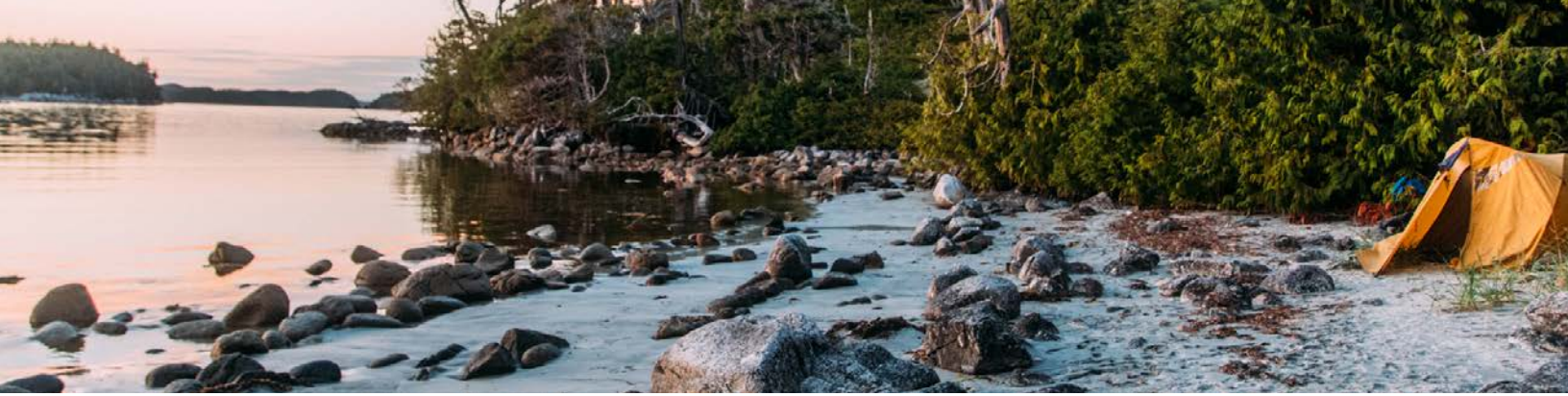
## SANITATION IN THE WILDERNESS

The kayak cuts no grooves and leaves no scars, as it travels freely through the waters. However, on land, especially with the increasing number of kayakers venturing into new territory and seeking the un-traveled path, we must respect our surroundings and be aware of our impact on these environmentally sensitive areas. Spirit of the West Adventures makes every effort to ensure we leave our area as we found it, if not better.

Where do we wash? Are there toilets? These are some of the most common concerns but questions not always asked. All of our camping sites are in wilderness settings and therefore are basic and rustic – a true

wilderness experience. On our expedition style tours we use a portable toilet system set up in a private location in conjunction with pit toilets when available. We use salt water for washing as fresh water is limited and reserved for drinking.

Your guide will discuss proper elimination techniques and suggest a suitable private area. Your guide will carry a toiletry bag complete with toilet paper, Ziploc and paper bags as well as hand sanitizer. If you have any concerns while on tour please do not be shy to ask your guide – they are very used to making sure everyone feels comfortable while in the wilderness.



## WHAT TO BRING

On the Great Bear Rainforest Tour we will be packing everything into our kayaks each day in order to travel to our next campsite. While space is limited, please ensure you bring enough to stay warm and dry. The following is a list of suggested items that should keep you a happy camper. The key is to pack into small compact bags which we will provide. We will also provide some tips and tricks for packing when you arrive.

Sea kayaks are basically watertight, although small amounts of water may get in through the rudder lines and hatches. In the event of rain or dropping gear in the water we try to keep things as waterproof as possible. We provide you with waterproof storage bags also known as 'dry bags' (these will be given to you when we meet in Bella Bella). If you prefer to bring your own dry bags, please note; the largest bag should not be larger than a sleeping bag or 20 litres, several small bags are best. We will provide one 5 litre, two 10 litre and one 20 litre dry bags for you to pack into. Additional bags may be available depending on space in the kayaks. The 5 litre bag is good for storing small items such as cameras, sunscreen, glasses, etc. The larger ones will be used for storing the rest of your clothing. Please see our suggestions for waterproofing your sleeping bag. Shoes can generally be packed loose in the kayak. All participants will also pack some of the group gear and food in their kayak. Don't worry, it always looks like an impossible mountain of stuff to fit in the kayaks, but with some perseverance and coaching from your guides we always manage to fit everything.

### TEMPERATURES

Please note that our summer temperatures from July until September are generally quite comfortable with temperatures from 18-30 degrees Celsius / 70-85 degrees Fahrenheit. It's not uncommon to find mid day summers hot enough to want to cool off in the ocean! ANY TIME OF YEAR we can have rain & wind, with tem-

peratures occasionally as low as 13 C / 55 F. So, we say it is best to come prepared for any type of weather.

### PLEASE NOTE WHAT WE PROVIDE

- ALL KAYAK AND SAFETY GEAR
- TENTS & SLEEPING PADS
- DRY BAGS
- SMALL CAMP PILLOW

If you have your own gear and would prefer to use it on your tour, please call our office in advance of the tour to let us know, to ensure it is appropriate and to avoid us bringing duplicates.

The following is a list of suggested items to bring along. If you have any concerns or questions about the list, please do not hesitate to contact us.

- ❑ **Sleeping bag** – A 3-season synthetic bag is recommended. Down bags will work but please take extra care to waterproof. If you are uncertain about whether or not you have the appropriate bag just give us a call or check with your local outdoor store. If you do not have a sleeping bag or would prefer not to travel with one, these may be rented for \$25 plus tax. Please reserve in advance. To waterproof your sleeping bag line a compression sack with a heavy duty garbage bag. Press the air out of the bag with your knee and then keep compact with the compression sac which can be purchased at any outdoor shop. This also helps keep your bag small for travel.
- ❑ **Wetshoes** – A pair that can get wet such as sturdy full strapped sandals (such as Keens, Tevas or Chacos), neoprene booties, crocs, or rubber boots. Please avoid flip-flops/thongs.
- ❑ **Camp footwear** – An additional pair of footwear that you plan to keep dry. Runners, trainers or light hikers are great.

- ❑ **Hat** – A sun hat such as a baseball hat or full-brimmed hat as well as a wool or fleece warm hat for evenings or cooler days.
- ❑ **Sunglasses & sunscreen** (stored in a Ziploc bag) – A must for protection from sun and glare off of the water. Safety cords on your glasses are highly recommended.
- ❑ **Bathing suit**
- ❑ **Medication** – If you are bringing medication please ensure that... 1) The name and expiry date of drug is on the container; 2) You have the detailed instructions of your dosage and frequency; 3) It is packed in a water and sunproof container; 4) You bring a full extra dosage of your medication in a separate container to leave with your guide, in case you misplace or lose yours, or are weathered in. If you are flying, **please pack all necessary medication in your carry-on luggage**. This will help eliminate some stress should your checked bags be misplaced in transit.
- ❑ **Personal items** – Toothbrush, toothpaste, biodegradable soap/shampoo, washcloth, feminine hygiene products, hairbrush, etc.
- ❑ **Mosquito repellent** – Insects are not a significant concern for us in our coastal ecosystem, however for those unused to insects or with particular sensitivities some repellent may come in handy.
- ❑ **Ziploc bags & several large garbage bags** – We will provide you with dry bags, but these come in handy for transporting laundry and/or wet clothing.
- ❑ **Small flashlight or headlamp** – With spare batteries. Headlamps are preferable as they allow for hands free operation
- ❑ **Water bottle** – Bike bottles or Nalgene-style bottles work best.
- ❑ **Camera** – In a waterproof bag or case, or you may use our dry bags.
- ❑ **Gloves** (optional) – Biking gloves work well to protect your hands from blisters. If you are really concerned about cold hands, and are paddling in the spring or fall seasons, you may want to invest in neoprene gloves or pogies.
- ❑ **Beverages** – We supply a wide range of teas and coffee as well as juices. You are welcome to bring along soda pops or alcoholic beverages if you choose to. Please note however that we do expect our guests to consume alcoholic beverages responsibly and strictly enforce a no alcohol on the water policy.

- ❑ **Fishing gear (optional)** – Make sure you have a valid B.C. fishing license. These can be purchased on-line at <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/licence-permis/index-eng.htm>
- ❑ **Book or journal**
- ❑ **Binoculars** (optional)
- ❑ **Gratuity for your guides** – at your own discretion.

## CLOTHING

Clothing should be suitable for the time of year, bearing in mind that it could become cold and wet at anytime of year. Layering is the best way to regulate body temperature and maintain warmth. We suggest avoiding cotton (except for those hot days). Cotton has no insulation value when wet. An inner material that wicks moisture from the body and gives a comfortable dry feeling even while wet is the best first layer (Polypropylene, Lycra, Nylon, Polyester). A synthetic material such as fleece or pile makes the best second layer to provide warmth. Wool is also suitable.

- ❑ **Rain jacket & rain pants** – For the unexpected nasty weather. To test your waterproofness – jump in the shower and see if you stay dry! (we're serious!) If you would like to rent/hire raingear from us, please reserve in advance of the tour. Tops and bottoms can be rented for \$25 plus tax for the set.
- ❑ **Light windproof jacket** (optional)
- ❑ **Long pants** – 1 pair of fleece or warm comfortable pants. 2 lighter pairs made of a quick drying, synthetic fabric. Athletic style pants (running or yoga) are generally appropriate. Jeans are NOT recommended for paddling.
- ❑ **Lightweight long underwear** – 2 pairs, helps to keep you warm at night or as a base layer during the day. We recommend one set for kayaking and one set which is reserved for sleeping and always stays dry.
- ❑ **Sweaters** – 2 warm wool or fleece sweaters (one may be all you need, but it is nice to have a spare in case one gets wet).
- ❑ **Long-sleeved non-cotton shirt** (synthetic/wool)-3
- ❑ **T-shirts** – 3 or 4.
- ❑ **Shorts** – 1-2 quick dry nylon
- ❑ **Warm socks** – 3 to 5 pairs (1 warmer pair for around camp)
- ❑ **Undergarments**
- ❑ **An extra set of clothes** that you may want to reserve for the end of the trip.



# ACCOMMODATIONS

## WHILE ON TOUR

We provide high quality expedition style tents. Generally campsites can fit enough tents to accommodate the solo and double tent preferences of the group. We will do our best to match you up with a suitable partner if we need to.

## BEFORE AND AFTER TOUR

For you stay on the Central Coast the nights before and after your tour starts, here is a list of accommodation options for Bella Bella or Denny Island. The pre-trip meeting is held at the restaurant at Shearwater Resort on Denny Island, and we meet the morning the trip starts at the Bella Bella government dock. Both locations are connected by a short sea bus ride. Some of the listed accommodations offer pick-ups from Bella Bella. Please contact them to find out more details. Otherwise see 'Getting here' on the next page for more details of the public water taxi.

## ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS IN BELLA BELLA

### BELLA GUEST CABINS

A friendly place to stay that is cozy, comfortable and tastefully decorated. The spacious decks boast a fantastic place to enjoy your morning coffee, and watch the eagles soar and ocean waves come in. Two self contained units accommodate up to 4 people each. Local & Overseas 1 250 957 8019  
bellaguestcabins@gmail.com, bellaguestcabins.com

### ANNETTE'S BEACH HOUSE

A peaceful and secluded house on the beach in central Bella Bella. Three rooms available (queen and two singles) with shared kitchen and bathroom. Wifi available. Local & Overseas 1 250 957 7423  
annettetstarr@gmail.com, annettesbeachhouse.com

## ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS ON DENNY ISLAND

### DENNY ISLAND BED & BREAKFAST

A self contained cabin nestled amongst the trees, atop a hill with stunning panoramic views of the ocean and Coast Mountain range. Accommodates up to 5. Local & Overseas 1 250 957 4248  
dennyisland-bb@explornet.com  
dennyislandbandb.com

### DRIFTER'S COVE CABIN

Hand built cabin on a large acreage with a private beach. The cabin features a master bedroom, loft, kitchen, dining area, living room, library and laundry. Accommodates up to 5. Local & Overseas 1 250 957 7177  
drifterscove@yahoo.com, drifterscove.com

### SPINDRIFT POINT CABINS

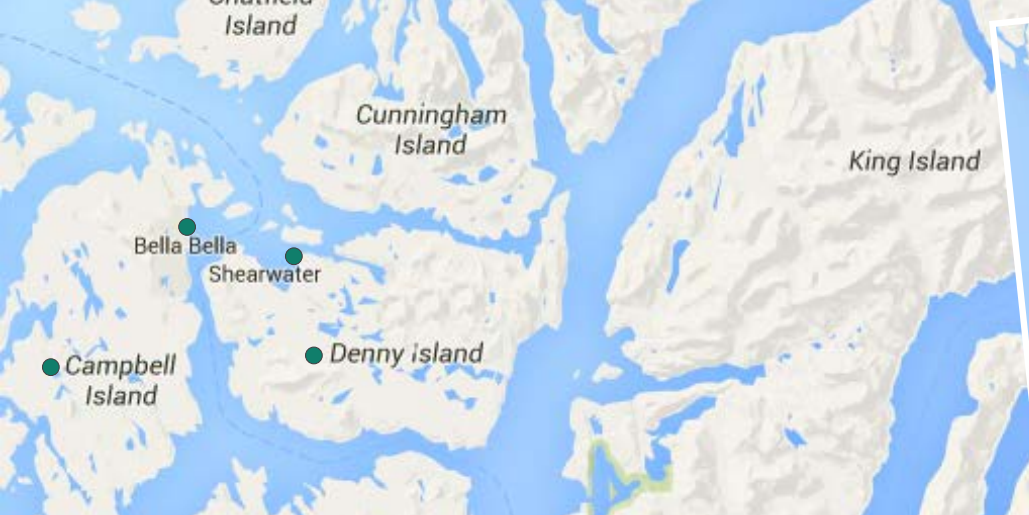
Spectacular waterfront cabin rentals, self-contained and private, in a forested setting. Accommodates up to 4. Local & Overseas 1 250 957 2920  
spindriftpoint@gmail.com, spindriftpoint.com

### INSIDE PASSAGE COTTAGES

Newly built in spring 2012, this self-contained cottage has a fantastic view of Pacific inlet. It's a perfect place to recharge and refresh before your kayaking adventure. Local & Overseas 1 250 957 2298  
info@insidepassagecottages.ca  
insidepassagecottages.ca

### SHEARWATER RESORT & MARINA

A variety of accommodation options are available at the resort, including private cottages, an upscale lodge, an RV park and campground. Local & Overseas 1 250 957 2666  
hotel@shearwater.ca, shearwater.ca/accommodations



## GETTING HERE

The Great Bear Rainforest Expedition starts and ends in Bella Bella, Central Coast of British Columbia where you meet your guides on day 1 of your tour.

Below is some detailed information on how to get to Bella Bella and Denny Island (for guests who spend the night before and after tour on Denny Island).

BELLA BELLA is located on Campbell Island on Central Coast of beautiful British Columbia. To get there, you either can fly from Vancouver or Port Hardy or take the BC ferry from Port Hardy.

DENNY ISLAND is located next to Campbell Island and only 3 km (less than 2 miles) from Bella Bella.

PORT HARDY is located on northeast VANCOUVER ISLAND. To get there you can fly from Vancouver or take the ferry from Vancouver to Victoria or Nanaimo and drive up by bus or rental car.

### AIR TRAVEL

#### FROM VANCOUVER/PORT HARDY TO BELLA BELLA

Flights from Vancouver and Port Hardy to Bella Bella are regular and provided by Pacific Coastal Airlines (departing from the South/Cargo Terminal of YVR).

Pacific Coastal Air also flies from Vancouver to Port Hardy if you want to catch the ferry from Port Hardy.

#### PACIFIC COASTAL AIR

Toll Free 1 800 663 2872 | Overseas 1 604 273-8666  
reserve@pacificcoastal.com, pacificcoastal.com

### FERRY SERVICE

#### FROM VANCOUVER TO VANCOUVER ISLAND

BC Ferries provides year-round vehicle & walk-on ferry service for routes between Vancouver and Vancouver Island. Ferry reservations on major routes in mid-summer are highly recommended.

#### FROM PORT HARDY TO BELLA BELLA

BC Ferries also has regular departures from Port Hardy to Bella Bella on the Discovery Coast Connector route. Leave Port Hardy at 7:30am the day before your trip to arrive in Bella Bella at 12:50pm on the same day, giving you a few hours to explore before meeting your guides at the pre-trip meeting. On the day following the trip, the return ferry to Port Hardy departs Bella Bella at 6:10pm and arrives in Port Hardy at 11:30pm. Ferry reservations highly recommended. (Times accurate at time of publication - please double check before planning your onward travel).

Toll Free 1 888 223 3779, Overseas 1 250 386 3431  
customerservice@bcferries.com, bcferries.com

### TAXI & WATER TAXI SERVICE

Once in Bella Bella, taxis are available to transfer you from the airport to your accommodation or the dock where you can catch the water taxi to/from Denny Island, if you are staying there.

#### FROM BELLA BELLA TO DENNY ISLAND

The water taxi of Shearwater Resort & Marina offers public transport. Please check their website for scheduling and reservations.

Toll free 1 800 663 2370, Overseas 1 250 957 2666  
northoffice@shearwater.ca, shearwater.ca

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Below is a list of commonly asked questions. Feel free to visit our website, select your tour and find an even more detailed FAQ section. Of course, feel free to contact us with any questions at all, before or during your trip. We are happy to help you find the perfect tour for you and your comfort is very important to us.**

## What is the minimum age required to join our tours?

We cater to all ages of adventurers. Kids age 5 to 12 are encouraged to join the Family Orca Tours which have been designed with the needs of younger kayakers. For all of our other regularly scheduled tours we prefer a minimum age of 12. If your child is almost 12 or your family has a good deal of experience kayaking and camping we do occasionally make exceptions. We like to assess each case individually. We can also organize private, custom style adventures. Feel free to call us and we would be happy to discuss the options.

## What is the average age of our guests?

We have guests from age 5 and up on our family tours and ages 12 to 85 joining our regularly scheduled tours. The average age ranges between age 30 to 65. Each tour and tour date is different, but we usually get a good mix of ages. For those concerned with being in 'their older years' or anyone unsure of which tour fits them best, we welcome you to contact us and we will be happy to help you find the perfect trip.

## Are there any single supplement fees if I am traveling on my own?

There are NO single supplements. We encourage solo travelers to join us and often have several solo travelers on each tour. It should be no problem to have your own tent and you will have access to both single and double kayaks.

## Can you accommodate food allergies/special diets?

Our food preparation crew are masters at accommodating dietary restrictions. We are able to offer gluten-free, vegetarian, pescatarian, dairy light and vegan menus with prior notice. Other dietary requests may involve additional charges and need to be discussed in advance with our food crew. We are NOT a nut-free facility.

## Will I comfortably fit in the kayaks?

If you are over 6ft (182cms) tall, if you are on the more petite side of things, have larger hips or weigh over 250lbs (115 kg) we have certain kayaks that may work best for you. Please give us a call and we can ensure we have the appropriate kayak available for you.

## What is included in the tour costs?

We supply everything that you will need for kayaking and camping except for a few personal items such as your clothing, toiletries, sleeping bag and rain gear (**sleeping bags and rain gear can be rented if needed**). We pick you up free of charge from your accommodation on Quadra Island on the morning the trip starts and we will drop you off there when the tour is finished.

We provide all meals from morning snack on day one to lunch on the last day. Non-alcoholic beverages including a wide variety of teas, coffee, juices, hot chocolate are provided. Alcohol is not provided and you are welcome to bring your favourite wine, beer or pop to enjoy responsibly. There is a grocery and liquor store very close to the location of the pre-trip meeting if you would like to pick up extra beverages on the evening before the tour. There are no additional costs once on our tour unless you wish to purchase souvenirs.

## What do I need to bring?

We send you a complete packing list a few weeks prior to your tour to help you prepare. If you would like to see what type of clothing and items we recommend visit **kayakingtours.com/detailed-trip-info/** and select your tour. (Please note the packing lists (**page 4**) between tours varies so choose the correct trip for the most accurate information).

## How much kayaking experience is required?

Our adventures are designed to cater to all levels of experience and abilities from first-timer to expert paddler. We have several different styles and lengths of tours so that everyone can find the perfect trip.

If you are new to kayaking and camping check out our base-camping style tours- the Whales and Wilderness Glamping and Johnstone Strait Ultimate tours.

If you are looking for more rustic camping and more paddling check out our expedition style tours; the Johnstone Strait Expedition, Orca Lite, Nuchatlitz, Desolation Sound or Great Bear Rainforest Tours.

## Do I need to be in great shape for this trip?

The Great Bear Rainforest tour is considered moderate in nature and requires a moderate level of fitness. If you are capable of a few hours of moderate exercise each day with possible short periods of increased exertion you should have no problems. Keep in mind that good general health will go a long way if we happen to encounter some strong winds or time restrictions. Most important is an adventurous spirit. Please check with your doctor if you have any particular concerns.

## How much paddling do we do each day?

Paddling time will vary depending on the trip, our destination, weather conditions and the group's abilities and desires. Generally, we travel between 4-7 hours a day on our expedition tours, not including breaks and lunch. We set a pace which is manageable and enjoyable for all.

## How stable are the kayaks? What is the likelihood of flipping over?

The kayaks we use are stable and designed for comfort. Your guides will give you thorough instruction on how to safely use and enjoy the kayaks and what to do in case of a capsizing. For those concerned about capsizing, the double kayaks are



slightly more stable than the singles and we have a variety of both singles and doubles on every trip. The likelihood of a capsize is minimal and if it does happen your well-trained guides will be there before you know it to help.

### What happens if my kayak flips over?

In the rare event of a capsize, all of our guides are trained in rescue procedures in order to quickly and efficiently get you back in your boat. At this point, we will take you to the nearest shoreline to change into some warm clothing and carry on with our journey when you are ready. While we are out on the water, it is of the utmost importance that the group stays together for safety.

### If the weather turns bad? Will I be comfy and warm?

Our weather in the Pacific Northwest is generally pleasant from May through until September. The temperatures on the Central Coast will be cooler than the Vancouver area. Fog is very common on summer mornings, however, this nearly always clears at midday. Although it is uncommon, it can rain in the summer, be prepared for any type of weather and you will stay comfortable. Layering is the key. It allows you to put on or take off layers while on the water if you need to. If you are very concerned about the weather then we recommend our base-camping style tours as these campsites have covered eating and lounge areas as well as dry tents to come home to at the end of every day. On our expedition style tours we carry tarps but we are a little more at the mercy of mother nature in these more rustic style campsites.

### What sort of wildlife might we see?

The diversity and abundance of wildlife in the Pacific Northwest is one of our great privileges. From the rich marine life of colourful plants and invertebrates, seabirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, mink, otter, seals, sea lions, dolphins, and whales, to the land animals of deer, raccoons, cougars, wolves, and bears, we are bound to see something.

For those with an eye for eagles take note that they are most prominent in the earlier months before the salmon migration in the late summer/early fall.

For those keen to see humpback whales- you are in luck. The population of humpbacks in our area is doing well and we are fortunate to often see these whales any time of the year. If Orcas are your main priority then we recommend traveling between mid-July and mid-September. While it is possible to see orcas outside of these times, we see them with the greatest abundance and frequency during this peak period.

**Please just remember that wildlife is just that wild and we cannot control sightings. That said the whales are the icing on the cake in this stunning, rich and diverse area.**

### Where is the best place to see orcas/killer whales?

On our tours to Johnstone Strait and Blackfish Sound, which includes the Whales and Wilderness Glamping Tour, the Johnstone Strait Ultimate, Family Orca Tour and Orca Lite tours, we stand a high chance of seeing whales, especially between mid-July and mid-September.

Understandably we cannot guarantee what nature will dictate, but we can tell you that this area has one of the highest concentrations of Killer Whales on earth and this is where they spend their summer holiday. Some trips view the whales from the kayaks, some while traveling on our water taxi or from our campsites on the shore and some see all of the above.

### How close to we paddle to whales & other wildlife?

We do our very best to provide awesome sightings of whales but all the while ensuring that we do not disrupt the natural behaviour of all the wildlife we encounter. We abide by the Canadian whale watching regulations which means we do **not approach killer whales (orcas) any closer than 200 meters (656 ft) and all other cetaceans no closer than 100 meters (328 ft).**

To learn more about how we do our best to minimize our impacts on whales check out [nimmsa.org](http://nimmsa.org) the North Island Marine Mammal Stewardship Association. Your trip fees help to fund whale research and conservation efforts through the NIMMSA fund which Spirit of the West Contributes too.

### What is the camp setup like?

All of our campsites are in wilderness settings, and shelter is provided by the tents and tarps we carry with us. We seek out sites with beautiful surroundings and those that offer solitude; these are all undeveloped and may be clearings in the forest or space on the beach. There may be times (on occasion) when we are camping next to another group of kayakers. Campsite choice will be based on weather conditions, route choice and group size and preference.

### Where do we wash and are there toilets?

There is very little fresh water to be found. Therefore, seawater is your best bet for washing up. **Please use biodegradable, environmentally friendly soap brands.** Toilet facilities are not common in most wilderness settings, although some areas may have pit toilets. We also carry a portable toilet system. Your guide will generally designate an area that works for ensuring your privacy. We are very accustomed to making sure all of our guests feel comfortable and informed – please feel free to ask us any questions you might have, before or during your tour.

### Where can I leave my luggage I won't need on trip?

If you are staying on Quadra Island, many of the B&Bs offer free luggage storage. Alternatively, guests staying on either Quadra Island or in Campbell River have the option of storing excess luggage at our office.

### What is the industry standard for tipping my guides?

If you would like to express your appreciation through a gratuity, such recognition would be enthusiastically received. The industry standard for tipping is approx. 10% per person of the trip cost. All tips received will be collected and disbursed amongst your guides & basecrew by the trip leader.

# OUR TERMS & CONDITIONS

*This policy applies to reservations made from Oct 15, 2020 onwards. If you reserved your tour before this, the terms and conditions that were included on your tour confirmation apply.*

## A NOTE ABOUT COVID-19

We recognise that travel has changed as a result of COVID-19 and we want to assure you we are here to help you have a safe and wonderful experience. We will work with you to help you find appropriate travel insurance protection for your adventure to give you the peace of mind to travel while protecting your hard-earned vacation dollars.

We are a small family-run company and really appreciate your understanding that we incur many expenses in preparing for these tours and our terms and conditions and cancellation policy reflect this. We are happy to provide any paperwork needed for your insurance claim if you are unable to join us and you seek to reclaim any retained travel or tour costs.

As our thank you to you for purchasing travel insurance, which helps to protect us both, we will offer you a \$50/per person credit towards your tour cost if you provide evidence of a valid Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) Insurance policy that will cover your tour costs if you had to cancel as a result of travel restrictions, advisories, quarantine, self-isolation and other COVID-19 related reasons. The credit will be applied to the final payment. For a list of policies/coverage that qualify for this credit, please click here (inserted link: <https://www.kayakingtours.com/travel-insurance/> | MVW) or call our office for more details. Please note, this insurance needs to be purchased immediately after reserving your tour to be valid; again, we are happy to help you sort out the details.

If Spirit of the West Adventures chooses to cancel a tour (NOT for reasons outside of our control; see force majeure below) then the full amount paid for the tour is refundable. Please note, expenses outside of the kayaking tour i.e. travel, hotel etc. would remain your responsibility and are another reason we strongly encourage purchasing travel insurance.

In order to participate in our tours you will need to complete and answer satisfactorily

- COVID - 19 Pre-Screening Questionnaire
- COVID - 19 Statement of Understanding
- Liability Waiver
- Medical Information Form

Please note that if you exhibit any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been ordered to self-isolate, you will be immediately isolated from the group and likely removed from the tour. There will be no refunds after tour departure and you will be responsible for the costs associated with being removed from the tour and any additional expenses incurred as a result. Please contact your travel insurance provider in order to submit a claim for expenses incurred.

Please visit our website for more details on the [Pre-Screening Questionnaire](#), [Statement of Understanding](#) and our [COVID-19 specific procedures and safety measures](#).

## HOW TO RESERVE YOUR TRIP

Reserving your adventure with Spirit of the West Adventures is simple. Just call 1-800-307-3982 to speak with one of our friendly and helpful office crew, e-mail your request to [info@kayakingtours.com](mailto:info@kayakingtours.com) or reserve your trip on the web through our [online reservation request system](#). If reserving a private bubble tour, please contact us to have special group rates applied to your reservation.

If you're not sure if a particular trip is right for you or you're looking for more information, let us know and we would be happy to answer your questions or put you in touch with a past guest who has experienced the trip before.

To reserve space on our tours we ask for a deposit as well as a completed reservation form. We require a deposit of 25% on all tours.

Payment can be made by cheque, money order, Visa, MasterCard, or Interac e-Transfer; any processing charges or fees are your responsibility.

## PAYMENT SCHEDULE

A deposit to reserve your space on a tour is due at time of booking. For tours that take place in Canada, the balance of your trip cost is due 60 days prior to departure. For tours that take place outside of Canada, the balance of your trip cost is due 90 days prior to departure. If you book and pay after the final balance due date, all monies paid are non-refundable. For your convenience, with your authorization, we automatically charge your credit card when the balance is due unless otherwise arranged.

## PRICING

All tours which take place in Canada are priced and charged in Canadian dollars; tours to Chile, the Bahamas and Greenland are priced and charged in US dollars. Any foreign currency pricing is only approximate. It is your credit card company or bank who determines your exchange rate on the day your transaction takes place. If for some reason you have to cancel and funds are refunded to your card Spirit of the West Adventures is not responsible for any differences in exchange rates. Pricing is subject to change.

For all Canadian tours there is an additional 5% Goods and Services Tax (GST). Tours that take place outside of Canada are not taxed. Non-tour add-ons (equipment rentals, merchandise) must be charged both 5% GST and 7% PST. All tours are also subject to a non-taxed voluntary \$20 per person sustainability fee which is donated to research and conservation organizations that work in the areas where we operate.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

Please understand that our trip dates and capacities are limited, and when we accept your reservation we may be turning others away from booking that trip. If you find it necessary to cancel your tour, please let us know as soon as possible. No refunds are given once tours have departed. Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. is not responsible for any additional costs that may arise in the event of a trip alteration or delay caused by circumstances beyond our control. To avoid confusion, we require written notice of cancellation, by email or mail. The following fees will apply to cancellations and are calculated as of the date we receive your written cancellation notice, which can be sent by email or standard mail.

### **Tours that take place in Canada: If you must cancel your tour, your refund is as follows:**

- 60 days or more prior to the trip departure date – Full amount is refunded less a \$150 administration fee (per person).
- 59-30 days prior to the trip departure date – 50% of total tour price is refunded.
- Less than 30 days prior to the trip departure date – No refund will be given.

### **Tours that take place outside of Canada: If you must cancel your tour, your refund is as follows:**

- 90 days or more prior to the trip departure date – Deposit is refunded less a \$250 administration fee per person and the guest is responsible for any costs incurred for cancelling any additional tours or travel arrangements.
- 90-60 days prior to the trip departure date – 50% of total tour price is refunded.
- Less than 60 days prior to the trip departure date – No refund will be given.

Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. is not responsible for ensuring the appropriate level or amount of coverage is purchased. Please contact your travel insurance provider to ensure you have appropriate coverage for your entire trip. If you use a credit card for payment for your tour expenses, you may have trip interruption insurance as part of your card benefits. This coverage, however, is often a limited dollar amount, may not cover COVID-19 related issues and does not usually include cancellation or medical coverage. Please check with your specific card provider to ensure you are adequately insured. Personal equipment, baggage and valuables (cameras, electronics, jewellery, etc.) are carried entirely at the owner's risk. Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. is not responsible for lost, damaged or delayed property.

Learn more about [Travel Insurance here](#). Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. reserves the right to cancel any trip prior to departure for any reason whatsoever, including but not limited to insufficient bookings. If we have to cancel a tour due to insufficient bookings, you may choose between an alternate trip or a full refund. We will inform participants of cancellations due to insufficient bookings at the earliest possible point and no later than 30 days prior to the tour departure. If the alternate trip chosen is of a lower value than the originally booked, then you are entitled to a refund of the difference. If the alternate tour chosen is of a higher value, then you will pay the difference in price.

If a tour has to be cancelled due to circumstances beyond our control and/or a circumstance amounting to "force majeure" such as war, threat of war, political instability, riots, civil disturbances, actual or threatened terrorist activity and its consequences, natural or nuclear disasters, fires, epidemics, health risks and pandemics, acts of God, industrial disputes, unforeseeable technical problems with transport for reasons

beyond our control or that of our suppliers, closed or congested airports or ports, hurricanes and other actual or potential adverse weather condition, and any other similar events, there will be no refund from Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. Please contact your travel insurance provider for details on how to start a claim. Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. is not responsible for expenses incurred by trip participants in preparing for a cancelled trip (for example non-refundable advance purchase plane tickets, visa fees, inoculations, equipment etc. or for any additional arrangements for other travel plans associated with your travel).

Spirit of the West will make every reasonable effort to contact you as soon as it appears that a trip may be cancelled.

### TRIP PREPARATION

Once your tour is booked and your deposit is received by us, we'll send you a detailed document that includes everything that you will need to prepare for your tour including an itinerary, packing list, transportation options, directions, meeting times and frequently asked questions. For tours outside of Canada, we also include information about topics such as passports, visas, immunizations and currency exchange. All you need to bring is your passport, a sense of adventure, your clothing and personal items. Let us know if you're planning a birthday or anniversary trip. We'll pack a surprise!

### DIETARY RESTRICTIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

We need to know as soon as possible about any dietary requirements we should consider when planning your trip menu. If you have food allergies or restrictions, we will do our best to accommodate your needs. However, people with severe food allergies may need to supply some or all of their own food as we can't entirely mitigate the risk of cross-contamination. Additionally, some specific needs can only be met if we charge you a supplemental menu fee to cover our increased costs.

Please note we are not a peanut- or nut-free facility. On Chile and Bahamas tours the availability of ingredients or restaurant kitchens outside of our control may limit the type of dietary accommodation we are able to offer.

Note: Pending a detailed discussion about a guest's specific dietary requirements, Spirit of the West Adventures may determine that a person with severe allergies and/or dietary restrictions is not suitable for our adventures due to the constraints of preparing food for groups of people in a wilderness setting.

### MEDICAL & RISK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/ LIABILITY RELEASE FORMS

Each participant is required to fully fill out the [Medical Information Form](#), [Liability Release Form](#), a [COVID-19 Pre-screening Questionnaire](#) and [Statement of Understanding](#) in order to join the tour. Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. must receive the completed Medical Information Form, Liability Release and Statement of Understanding at least 30 days prior to tour departure. Please read and understand the COVID-19 Pre-screening Questionnaire as you will be asked to complete the questionnaire the day before or day of your tour departure.

### GUEST RESPONSIBILITY

All guests will be required to complete a Pre-Screening Questionnaire and Statement of Understanding regarding COVID-19. Your honesty in self-reporting on these forms as well as compliance with our COVID-19 policies and procedures is required and will help to keep us all safe. **We highly recommend purchasing travel insurance that covers medical, interruption and cancellation as a minimum.**

Although no previous kayaking experience is required on our tours, as with any adventure there is always an element of risk. While our trips are not considered to be overly strenuous or physically demanding, we do require a moderate level of fitness and good general physical condition. If you have any physical limitations or concerns, please let us know. As we are not qualified to evaluate your level of fitness we ask that you (possibly along with your doctor) determine whether or not you are able to join one of our adventures. If you have any special medical conditions, we encourage you to check with your doctor before you reserve your trip. Please also note that all of our tours take place in remote areas and evacuations can take a great deal of time and can be expensive. Persons with physical limitations and/or disabilities are welcome on Spirit of the West tours, pending a discussion of any special needs and requirements.

You must also acknowledge that travel with Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. requires a degree of flexibility and understanding that the trip's route, itinerary, accommodation and modes of transport are subject to change without prior notice due to local circumstances. While traveling with Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. you agree to accept

the authority of the leader at all times. You need to be aware that group travel may involve compromise to accommodate the diverse desires and abilities of group members. We just ask that you welcome your adventure with an open mind and be able to laugh and have fun when encountering the unexpected. Spirit of the West is dedicated to providing safe, environmentally sensitive, well-organized, fun-filled adventures.

### PASSPORTS AND VISAS

You must carry a valid passport and/or necessary documentation and have obtained the appropriate visas when travelling with Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. Please ensure your passport is valid for 6 months beyond the duration of your trip. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of the correct visas for your travels. Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. does not accept responsibility if you are refused entry to a country because you lack the correct documentation, or the authorities deem you unsuitable for entry.

### ACCOMMODATIONS ON TOUR

Tours within Canada: Keep in mind that our [sea kayaking tours](#) are a true wilderness experience that can involve camping in established and non-established sites. Our expedition style tours involve camping at sites with minimal facilities and rustic surroundings. Basecamp style tours afford more facilities and comforts. This is all part of what we call an adventure! Tenting and lodging is generally based on double occupancy, however if you are traveling solo we do our best to provide you with your own tent, please confirm this is possible when making your reservation.

Tours outside of Canada: Hotel portions of tours are based on double occupancy. If you prefer a single room there is an additional \$100/night single supplement charge. Availability of single rooms may be limited. Single accommodation on the mothership in Chile is not possible. All tenting is also based on double occupancy, however if you are travelling solo we do our best to provide you with your own tent.

### GRATUITIES

Gratuities are not included in your tour costs. Gratuities are always appreciated. If you feel the guides and crew have done an exceptional job, tipping is a great way to show your appreciation. We also appreciate other expressions of thanks including cards, letters etc.

### STORAGE OF PERSONAL AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Due to the nature of our services, it is necessary to collect and store a certain amount of personal and financial information. By providing us with address, personal and financial information, you consent to the storage of this information for a period of time deemed appropriate by Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. Personal information includes, but is not limited to, your first name, last name, phone number, email address and billing address and date of birth. Financial information includes, but is not limited to, your card account number, card expiration date and cardholder name. Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. is PCI compliant and is committed to ensuring the safety of your information.

### PRIVACY POLICY

Spirit of the West Adventures occasionally sends out an e-newsletter and occasionally area- or activity-specific news that we think you'll want to hear about. We will assume you agree to email correspondence when you make an e-booking or provide us with your email in other situations such as competitions, promotions, prize draws and social media. We will NEVER SELL your email address to any third-party company. We do however sometimes share this information for the purpose of coordinating trip logistics, for example booking airline tickets, arranging travel and for helping with our marketing efforts. You can unsubscribe at any time by emailing or clicking on the links in newsletters. See our [privacy policy](#) for more details.

### PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE

Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. reserves the right to take photographic or film records of any of its tours. Trip members should be aware that Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. may use these photos or film for promotional and/or commercial purposes without remuneration to the trip participants.