



## CANADA

# BEARS, WHALES & THE WILD WEST COAST SELF-DRIVE

(TOUR CODE: 11836)

### STARTS AND ENDS

in Vancouver

### TRAVEL PERIODS

21 May 26 - 12 Oct 26

### EXPERIENCE

Indigenous  
Wildlife  
Self-Drive

### TRAVEL STYLE

Independent Holiday Packages

From grizzly bears in remote rainforest inlets to whales off the wild Pacific coast, this self-drive adventure takes you deep into British Columbia's untamed beauty – with ferries, floatplanes, and unforgettable wildlife encounters along the way.

## Highlights

- Spend two nights at Knight Inlet Lodge, a remote floating lodge with world-class grizzly bear viewing and wilderness excursions
- Perfect self-drive experience for nature lovers and wildlife enthusiasts alike
- Freedom of Choice days in both Tofino and Victoria
- Cruise across the Strait of Georgia and explore Vancouver Island's picturesque east coast

This unforgettable 8-day self-drive itinerary takes you from the vibrant city of Vancouver to the remote wilderness of Knight Inlet, the coastal beauty of Tofino, and the charming capital city of Victoria.

Your journey begins with a scenic ferry crossing from Horseshoe Bay to Vancouver Island, travelling north to Campbell River – the "Salmon Capital of the World" – surrounded by stunning mountain and ocean vistas. From here, board a floatplane to Knight Inlet Lodge, set in the pristine wilderness of the Great Bear Rainforest. Over two incredible days, enjoy unparalleled wildlife encounters – from grizzly bear viewing at Glendale Cove to guided rainforest walks, wildlife tracking, or panoramic hikes above the inlet.

Returning to Campbell River, continue your drive west to the rugged Pacific Rim and the laid-back surf town of Tofino. Here, you can choose from two exhilarating marine adventures: a coastal bear-watching cruise along tidal shores or a whale-watching excursion through the breathtaking Clayoquot Sound.

Travel south to Victoria, taking in the artisan murals of Chemainus, the totem poles of Duncan, and the rich Indigenous heritage of the Cowichan

Valley. In Victoria, personalise your stay with a choice of activities: wander the famed Butchart Gardens, enjoy a Canadian culinary walking tour, embark on a whale-watching cruise, or indulge in High Tea at the iconic Fairmont Empress.

Your adventure ends with a scenic drive to Swartz Bay and a ferry ride through the picturesque Gulf Islands back to Vancouver, where your Pacific Coast wildlife journey comes to a close.



- ✓ ENTIRE Cooling-Off Period
- ✓ ENTIRE Change of Mind
- ✓ ENTIRE On Ground Support
- ✓ ENTIRE AUD Prices
- ✓ ENTIRE Industry Accredited
- ✓ ENTIRE Australian Owned

## INCLUSIONS

- 1 night in Campbell River at the Comfort Inn & Suites
- 2 nights at Knight Inlet Lodge
- 2 nights in Ucluelet at Black Rock Resort
- 2 nights in Victoria at Inn at Laurel Point
- Return Floatplane from Campbell River to Knight Inlet
- Return BC Ferries to Vancouver Island
- 8 days intermediate size car rental
- Meals included as per itinerary

Freedom of Choice Days

## Freedom of Choice



Our Freedom of Choice program offers flexibility, by allowing you to choose from different options on pre-selected days.

Our per person price includes one tour on each Freedom of Choice day, as follows:

- One "Freedom of Choice" tour on day 5
- One "Freedom of Choice" tour on day 7

Expand the itinerary below for more details.

Please note, if more than one room is selected during the booking process, our team will contact you afterwards to discuss options.

## ITINERARY

Day 1 Vancouver Campbell River

Depart Vancouver for Horseshoe Bay and sail on BC Ferries to Vancouver Island. Upon departing BC Ferries head north through Vancouver Island's second largest city, Nanaimo, known as the Harbour City, and Parksville, the beginning of Beach Country and home of the annual International Sandcastle Competition. Your destination today is the city of Campbell River, historically renowned as the "Salmon Capital of the World," lying at the heart of neighbouring Strathcona Park, Desolation Sound, Mount Washington and Robson Bight. Surrounded by the backdrop of Strathcona Provincial Park to the west and the Coastal Mountain range to the east, massive cruise ships pass right by Campbell River's doorstep, and their parade of lights is best viewed from world-famous Discovery Pier as they venture up the Inside Passage for Alaskan destinations.

Overnight in Campbell River at **Comfort Inn & Suites**



Day **2**

## Campbell River Knight Inlet Lodge

This morning, enjoy a scenic floatplane flight to Knight Inlet, a remote fjord and natural habitat of the grizzly bear. After a safety briefing and morning tea, join your guide in search of the many bears that frequent the area. During the spring and summer season viewing is done from small boats that allow you to get close without disturbing the bears. During the fall season, viewing takes place from secure platforms overlooking the Glendale River, where grizzlies gather to feast on salmon. From your elevated vantage point, observe these majestic animals fishing, socializing, and preparing for winter.

There is more time for bear viewing after lunch, plus a cruise that takes in the natural wonders of Knight Inlet – tremendous waterfalls plummeting out of sheer rock faces, ancient glaciers with trails carving through the mountains and wild and remote rivers teeming with life.

Overnight at **Knight Inlet Lodge**

Lunch, Dinner



Day **3**

## Knight Inlet Lodge

Each day at the Lodge you will experience one bear viewing tour, along with a choice of excursions for other wildlife viewing, depending on location and availability. Choices may include:

### **Scenic Cruise of Knight Inlet**

Take a spectacular 2-hour scenic cruise through Knight Inlet, enjoying its natural wonders – waterfalls plummeting out of sheer rock faces, ancient glaciers carving through the mountains, and wild rivers teeming with life.

### **Interpretive Forest Walks**

Take a walk in an ancient, old-growth rainforest in the pristine Kwalate valley, a 20-minute boat ride from the lodge. We will walk up the valley along the beautiful Kwalate River to see giant moss-covered trees and stunning waterfalls, and learn about the rainforest and the various plants and wildlife that abound here.

### **Sea Kayaking in Glendale Cove**

Drifting quietly in your sea kayak, you will see grizzly bears foraging along the shoreline near our lodge. Never kayaked before? No problem. We operate in a sheltered cove in calm water, and our trained guides will coach you in the fundamentals of sea kayaking so that you feel confident to paddle these seaworthy craft.

### **Overnight stay at Knight Inlet Lodge**

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



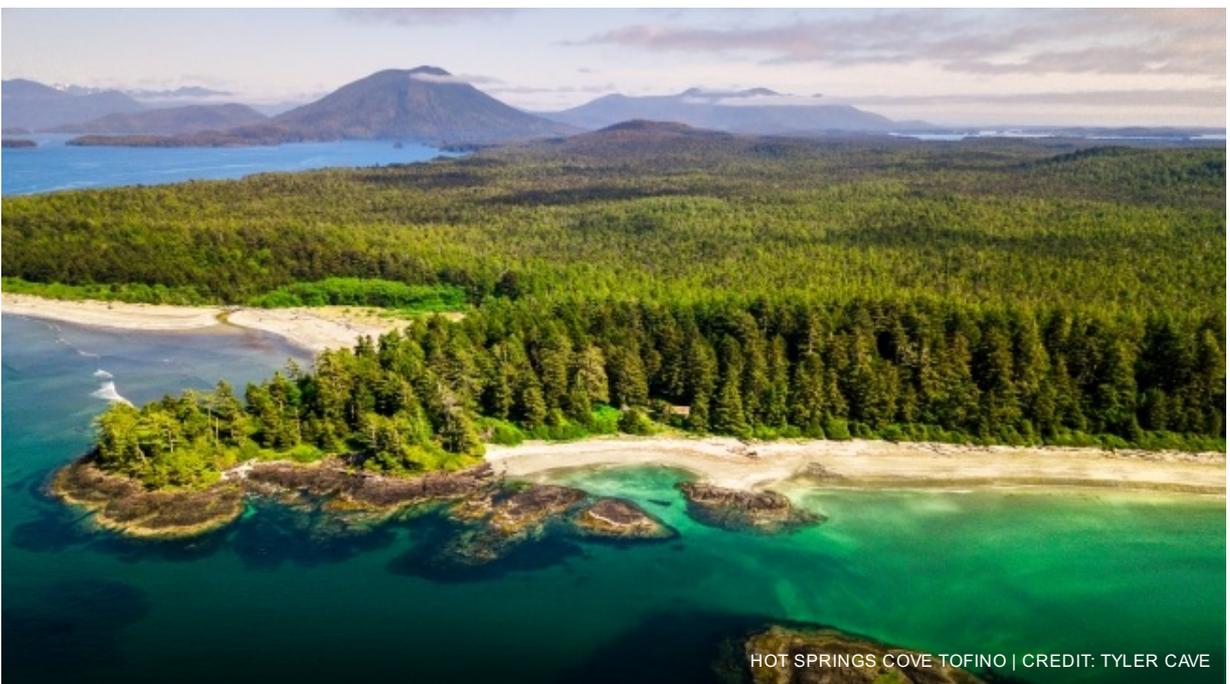
CREDIT: KNIGHT INLET LODGE

Day **4** Knight Inlet Lodge Tofino/Ucluelet

Early this morning return to the Bear Viewing platforms for a last photo opportunity before departing for Campbell River by floatplane. Arrival time is between 10.30am - 11.00am. Collect your car and head south west to Tofino on the rugged West Coast. En route, picture stops should be made at Cathedral Grove to enjoy the splendour of 800-year-old Douglas Fir and Cedar and the Mars Water-Bombers at Sproat Lake, the world's two largest water-bombers used for the sole purpose of putting out forest fires. After the Mars Water-Bombers, drive through the majestic Sutton Pass and the Sawtooth Range of the Cascade Mountains to arrive in Tofino around mid-afternoon.

Overnight in Ucluelet at **Black Rock Oceanfront Resort**

Breakfast



HOT SPRINGS COVE TOFINO | CREDIT: TYLER CAVE

Day **5** Tofino/Ucluelet

Today you can personalise your day with a pre-selected tour from our **Freedom of Choice** options below.

Overnight in Ucluelet at **Black Rock Oceanfront Resort**

#### Freedom of Choice Options

- **Coastal Bear Watch Cruise:**

Search for foraging bears from the comfort and safety of a 24' Zodiac vessel. Abundant on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, black bears roam the shores at low tide in search of their favourite delicacy, the Rock Crab.

OR

- **Whale Watching Cruise:**

Cruise through the pristine waters of Clayoquot Sound to view beautiful scenery and wildlife. Depending on the time of year, you may encounter grey whales, humpback whales, sea lions, sea birds and resident bald eagles.



Day **6**

## Tofino/Ucluelet Victoria

Travel back to the East Coast of Vancouver Island and head south to Victoria. En route stops should be made at the artist community of Chemainus, where you can admire the giant murals which adorn the exterior walls throughout the town, and Duncan the "City of Totems". If time permits visit the Quw'utsun' Heritage Village which provides you with an insight into the lives of the northwest coast people (seasonal hours - admission not included).

Overnight in Victoria at **Inn at Laurel Point**



VICTORIA INNER HARBOUR | CREDIT: DESTINATION BC / REUBEN KRABBE

Day **7**

## Victoria

It's time to explore Victoria with a pre-selected tour from our **Freedom of Choice** options below.

Overnight in Victoria at **Inn at Laurel Point**

### **Freedom of Choice Options**

- **Butchart Gardens Admission:**

On its 100th birthday in 2004, the Butchart Gardens was named a National Historic Site of Canada. Explore 22 hectares/55 acres of breathtaking gardens on the 53-hectare/130-acre estate.

**OR**

- **Eat like a Canadian Food Tour:**

Not many people can define exactly what Canadian food is. From local ingredients to historic dishes, this tour is the best way to experience Canadian culinary culture. Sip and savour local cuisine, explore the iconic Inner Harbour, and meet the chefs and owners that make Victoria such an exciting culinary hot spot.

**OR**

- **High Tea at the Fairmont Empress:**

Enjoy High tea at the Fairmont Empress Hotel is a delightful, traditional experience. Indulge in a lavish array of tea, finger sandwiches, pastries, and scones, served in an elegant setting, enhancing the allure of this historic Victoria, British Columbia landmark.

**OR**

- **Whale Watch Cruise:**

Get up close with the killer whales on the Salish Sea with this guided, 3.5-hour whale-watching cruise from Victoria. Climb aboard a covered or open boat equipped with hydrophones to hear the whales and bring the underwater experience to light.



Day 8

## Victoria Vancouver

Leaving Victoria, drive north to Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal for a 90-minute ferry ride to Tsawwassen. On-board BC Ferries enjoy the scenery of the Gulf Islands as you cross the Strait of Georgia. From Tsawwassen, continue on to downtown Vancouver where your self-drive package ends.



## ACCOMMODATION

### Comfort Inn & Suites

#### Campbell River

The Comfort Inn & Suites in Campbell River offers a welcoming stay on Vancouver Island's scenic waterfront. Located in downtown Campbell River, this 100% smoke-free, pet-friendly hotel is a short walk from local shops, restaurants, and attractions. Guests can enjoy a complimentary

hot breakfast, relax in the indoor pool and hot tub, or maintain their fitness routine in the on-site gym.

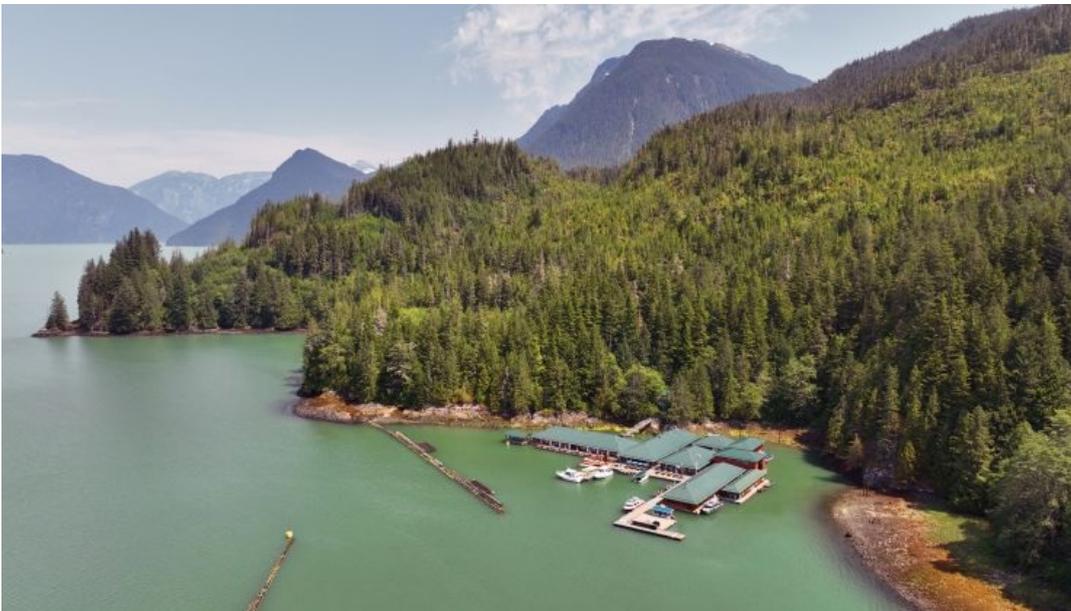


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## Knights Inlet Lodge

### Knights Inlet

Situated 60 kilometres from the mouth of the inlet is Knights Inlet Lodge. Our floating resort is tucked into Glendale Cove, which offers one of the few protected anchorages in the inlet, and it is here that you will begin each day's adventure. The lodge is a modern one story facility consisting of 5 cement floats, we like to call ourselves a floating village, plus support buildings. All guest rooms feature comfortable queen size beds plus private washrooms with showers. The resort is finished with western cedar board and batten siding to give it a real west coast British Columbia look and feel. There are 2 outside deck areas, one complete with gas fireplace, for relaxing on those warm summer evenings.



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## Black Rock Oceanfront Resort

### Ucluelet

A 6-minute stroll from the Wild Pacific Trail, this chic oceanfront hotel built from granite and glass is also a 14-minute walk from downtown Ucluelet. Amenities include an ultrahip bar and restaurant with floor-to-ceiling windows and a seasonal patio overlooking the Pacific Ocean. There's also a serene spa with 2 hot tubs, a lounge and a seasonal plunge pool.



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## Inn at Laurel Point

### Victoria

Overlooking Laurel Point Park, this waterfront hotel is a 5-minute walk from the Black Ball Ferry Line and a 10-minute walk from the Royal BC Museum. Featuring private balconies with water views, the airy rooms include flat-screen TVs and free Wi-Fi, plus minibridges, and tea and coffeemaking equipment. There's a heated indoor pool, an exercise room and a Japanese garden, plus a Pacific Rim-inspired restaurant with a patio and harbour views.



# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGE**

French & English

**LOCAL CURRENCY**

Canadian Dollars

## Excluded

- International airfares and taxes
- Domestic airfares and taxes, unless otherwise specified in our holiday package
- Visa expenses, processing and issuance fees
- Meals other than as specified in our holiday package
- Travel Insurance or expenses of a personal nature (mini-bar, phone call, laundry, etc.)
- Tips or gratuities to guides, drivers, porters, hotel, restaurant or boat staff, etc.
- Or any other travel expense that has not been included in our holiday package
- Car rental rates exclude optional coverage such as Personal Accident Insurance Plus (PAI Plus) and Personal Effects Protection (PEP)
- GPS rental is not included and can be requested (at an additional supplement paid locally) if required