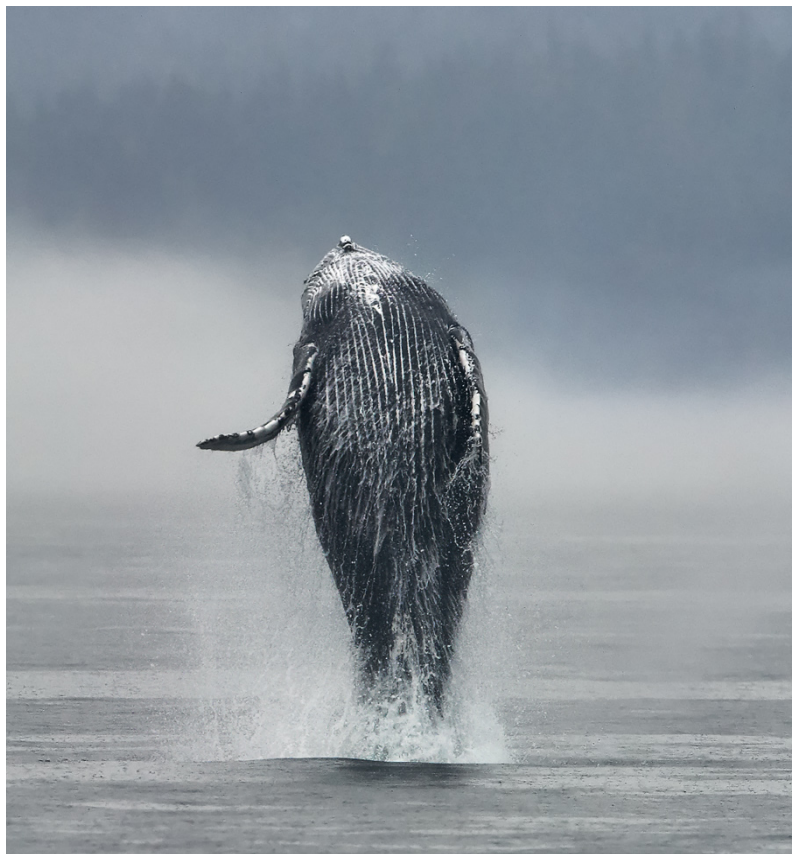


Ocean Light Adventures

MARINE MAMMAL EXPLORER

2022



Marine Mammal Explorer

2022 Dates & Prices

Marine Mammal Explorer

The northern tip of Vancouver Island is an incredibly rich and abundant wildlife area. During the summer months it is home to a wide variety of marine mammals as the Pacific Ocean delivers nutrients to the numerous channels and inlets of the region. Orcas (or Killer Whales), dolphins, porpoises and sea lions assemble to feed on the Pacific salmon that are returning to their natal rivers. Humpback Whales and coastal seabirds feed on the nutrients stirred up by the strong tidal currents. The area is also home to a strong and prosperous native culture, the Kwakwaka'wakw who have made this part of the coast their home for over ten thousand years.

The Orcas of Johnstone Strait

The waters of Johnstone Strait are considered the best place in the world to observe the orca. In the early years orcas were thought to be merciless killers and were hunted. Since the 1970's scientific research and intensive study has shown the orca to be a highly intelligent animal capable of complex vocal communication and advanced social behaviours.

Orcas have a strong sense of family and travel in matriarchal groups called pods. In the summer months when the waters are rich with salmon and other marine life, the whales congregate in large numbers. Along the western shore of Johnstone Strait is a small bay called Robson Bight where the orcas frequent for its special rubbing beaches. The orcas sink to the shallow bottom and slide along the smooth pebbles of the beach. Robson Bight itself is protected and closed to visitors but we can watch the whales from a distance as they access the Bight and move with them as they travel to other locations.

We also hope to see humpback whales as well as sea lions, sea otters, grey whales, dolphins, porpoises and more. Through the use of a submerged hydrophone we hope to hear both orcas and humpbacks vocalizing. We may encounter marine mammals at any time during the trip as they travel large distances each day. We may even have the chance to hear orcas swim past as we are anchored for the night.

Dates: • August 6 - 13 • August 20 - 27
• August 13 – 20

Availability: Please email adventure@oceanlight.ca to check availability.

Price: \$4995 CAD plus 5% GST per person from Port McNeill, BC.

No single supplement for single travelers.

Number of Participants: Maximum of 8

Number of Crew: 2

What's Included?

- The services of a fully qualified skipper and crew
- Use of all gear available on board
- All meals from Lunch Day 1 to Breakfast Day 8

What's Not?

- Gratuities for crew (optional and/or discretionary, but always appreciated!)
- Transportation between your home and Port McNeill, BC.
- Personal belongings and equipment as per "Clothing & Equipment List"
- Accommodation in Port McNeill on night prior to trip
- Excess baggage charges en route to Port McNeill



Ocean Light Adventures

Itinerary

You must arrive in Port McNeill prior to Day 1 for an early morning start on the first day of the trip. This itinerary is a sample only – the exact itinerary of your trip will be dictated by factors such as weather, tides and group interest, with the crew working within the parameters of safety, time and the highlights of the area.

(B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner)

Day 1 – L/D

Our journey will depart from the coastal resource town of Port McNeill. Once on board the *Afterglow I*, we will head towards Johnstone Strait and the Robson Bight Ecological Reserve. This area is regarded as one of the best places in the world to observe orcas in their natural habitat.

Days 2 to 4 – B/L/D

Over the next several days we will hope to see the whales hunting, feeding, and playing as they travel through these scenic waters. We may take time from whale watching to visit with the local whale researchers who make this resident population of orcas the most studied and understood in the world. The researchers can help us understand the complex social behavior of resident orcas and point out the threats facing orcas with regards to their food supply and habitat.

During the evenings we will anchor among the numerous islands and bays of the Broughton Archipelago. Here we may see a black bear foraging through the rich intertidal or great blue herons fishing atop the abundant kelp beds. These islands provide us the opportunity to paddle one of the *Afterglow* kayaks and explore our calm protected anchorage.

Visiting this area would not be complete without learning more about the history and traditions of the local native people (Kwakwaka'wakw). If there is group interest we can take a walk through one of their ancient village sites or take a tour through the U'mista Cultural Centre in the modern village of Alert Bay. The Kwakwaka'wakw proudly express their culture with breathtaking carvings, songs and dance.



Days 5 to 7 – B/L/D

We will travel toward northern Vancouver Island in search of more marine mammals. Wildlife congregates in the nutrient rich northern Johnstone Strait region where Queen Charlotte Sound meets Queen Charlotte Strait. Many marine mammals travel this route including transient killer whales, humpback whales, grey whales, sea lions, seals, porpoise and dolphins, and sea otters. We will focus on wildlife viewing but we will also have opportunities to kayak, fish, beachcomb and explore.

Day 8 – B

Our journey will end in Port McNeill and you will depart with memories of a spectacular area abundant with the wonders of nature.



More About the Trip

The Crew. Chris Tulloch will be your skipper/guide. Chris is a certified Transport Canada Master. He has been running wilderness tours since 1992 and his keen eye for wildlife ensures an exceptional experience. Assisting as crew, guide and cook is Jenn Broom. Jenn has worked on the coast since 1991 and will make you feel at home aboard her beautiful boat. Ocean Light Adventures and her crew continually contribute a tremendous amount to the conservation of our endangered wilderness areas.

The Boat. *Afterglow I* is a 60 foot Gulf Commander built in 1972 at Yamanaka Boat Works in Steveston, BC. where they specialized in building fishing boats for the BC Coast and were known for their sturdy construction and nice lines. *Afterglow* is a heavily built fiberglass vessel, and her superstructure is constructed from solid yellow cedar beams. *Afterglow I* was built for the passenger industry and has lots of space both inside and out to move about. The main deck has a very spacious salon, galley and wheelhouse with windows all around for fantastic viewing. Below deck forward there are 2 heads and 3.5 cabins with room to sleep 7 guests. Below deck aft, there is a 3rd head and 2 double cabins: 1 for crew and 1 for guests. *Afterglow I* tows a 19 ft inflatable which is used for shoreline exploration and has single kayaks on board.

More About the Trip cont'd

Meals. We take special care in preparing nutritious and delicious meals. All meals will be prepared aboard the vessel and will include fresh seafood, homemade soups, breads and salads. Wine is served with dinner, and you may bring your own drinks to be consumed in moderation and only when the anchor is down for the night. We will not tolerate excessive drinking on our vessel. Clients have the option to assist in food gathering and meal preparation. If you have particular dietary restrictions, please let us know well in advance.

What About the Weather? Weather along the coast in late summer and fall can be variable. We can expect to have all weather conditions, warm sunny days and cool rainy days. Typically, in the late summer, fog is common in the mornings. Fog and ocean breezes make it feel colder so come prepared for all conditions.

Logistics & Details

We have prepared the following information for you to help organize your end of the trip and assist in maximizing your experience.

Traveling to Port McNeill

If You're Driving. From Vancouver, take the BC Ferry between Horseshoe Bay and Nanaimo and then drive on the Island Hwy 19 north from Nanaimo, BC approximately 350 km to Port McNeill.

If You're Flying. Pacific Coastal Airlines offer daily service between Vancouver's south terminal and Port Hardy. 1-800-663-2872 or www.pacificcoastal.com.

Port McNeill is 50 km south of Port Hardy and Waivin Flags Taxi 1-250-949-2773 offers a shuttle/taxi service between the airport and Port McNeill. The cost is approximately \$50 Cdn with discounts for additional passengers (up to 5). Reserve in advance.

Traveling to/from The Afterglow I

The *Afterglow I* will be located just off the municipal dock in Port McNeill on the first morning of your trip. We will pick you up at the dock at 9 AM and transport you to the boat. The trip will finish at the same point (after breakfast on the final day).

Traveling to Port Hardy (Airport)

If you flew into Port Hardy at the beginning of the trip, your best option to get back to the airport is via Waivin' Flags Taxi 1-250-949-2773.



Baggage Weight Limits & Extra Gear

The maximum weight for personal baggage is 75 lb. per person, including camera gear. If you are traveling before or after the trip please arrange to leave extra baggage at your hotel in Vancouver or Port McNeill.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON BAGGAGE WEIGHT:

The 75 lb weight limit referred to throughout this information package applies ONLY to the portion of your trip that is aboard the *Afterglow I*. It is entirely possible that if you use an air carrier for other segments of your trip they will have different baggage regulations and weight restrictions. Please ensure you check with your airline(s) to determine your ultimate weight and baggage restrictions and DO NOT assume that the 75 lb limit applies to all legs of your journey.

Accommodation During the Trip

On Board the *Afterglow I*. Each person has a berth assigned upon arrival. There are three double cabins with single beds and one double cabin with a double bed. Single participants may be required to share a cabin with someone of the same gender.

In Port McNeill.

Black Bear Resort (1-866-956-4900) – this property is nicely appointed. It offers free parking but no on-site restaurant. It is a short walk from the municipal dock where you will start and finish your trip. It is a fine place for the night prior to your trip.

Humpback Motel (1-250-956-3131)- newly built in 2020, owned by the Black Bear and one step down in price, this motel is very close to the waterfront and the shops.

Haida Way Hotel (1-800-956-3373 and haida@pmhotels.com) – across the street from the Black Bear Resort and features rooms with 2 double beds and has free parking and a restaurant.

In Vancouver.

Coast Vancouver Airport Hotel (604-263-1555, or toll-free from Canada and the USA 1-800-663-1144).