



Great Bear Rainforest

A Frommer's "Trip of a Lifetime"



The Inside Passage and British Columbia's central coast is a land of fjords, mountains, rainforests and great river estuaries. It is home to grizzlies, wolves and the mysterious white Spirit Bear.

Journey into one of Earth's greatest wild places. Robert Kennedy Jr. calls it "the last stand of the great North American rainforest". Maple Leaf's trips in 3 seasons (spring, summer, fall) are timed for peak experiences of natural beauty and wildlife.

Fjords and Forests That Humble

The Pacific ocean's eastern edge breaks against BC's western islands and sandy beaches. Then it snakes down glacier-hewn valleys at the foot of the mountains: these are the Great Bear Rainforest's fjords. On Maple Leaf you'll travel past the fjords' granite flanks, where waterfalls drop hundreds of feet to the sea.

Ancient rainforest of spruce and cedar clings to mountainsides and river valleys. People have described these forests of ethereal green light as "living cathedrals". In the eighteenth century the European explorers had another word: *sublime*.

People of the Rainforest

You'll explore the worlds of several northwest First Nations: the Heiltsuk, Kitasoo-Xaixais, Haisla, Gitga'at and Henaaksiala. Everywhere there is evidence of their civilization. Fish traps, bark-stripped trees and big-house remains give testimony to a life tuned to the rhythm of nature.

You'll visit modern villages and see the ancient art traditions still in place today. Our First Nations guides will not only tell you about their culture, but they'll also chat with you one on one.

The Land of the Great Bears

At the foot of the mountains sprawl vast river estuaries. Here, you'll float in a shore boat or sit in a safe place to watch bears. B.C.'s largest population of grizzly bears visits the estuaries in spring and fall. Watch as a bear with chocolate-brown fur eats sedges and roots. Look for the white Spirit Bear, the continent's rarest bear, and for black bears.

Nature's Peak Spectacles - 3 Seasons

Our experienced crew and naturalist will take you to areas where you'll be able to witness peak wildlife events: spring bird migrations, spring and summer bears on estuaries, mountain goats, porpoises, dense intertidal life. Humpback whales arrive in spring to feast until fall. In fall, witness the return of the salmon to spawn, which draws bears to the estuaries again, along with seals, eagles and elusive wolves.

Remote Hot Springs

We often visit one of the natural, out-of-the-way hot springs that bubble up here.



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Great Bear Rainforest

"Better than billed – loved seeing the goats and bears... wonderful caring crew. Thanks for the memories."
- Marion Kerr, Comox, B.C.

Dates & Prices

2012 Great Bear Rainforest - Spring

• Great Bear Spring Explorer
Apr 27-May 5, 8 nights, 9 days C \$4180
Dep: Bella Bella, BC Retn: Kitimat, BC

• Spring Supervoyage:
Van Is. Inside Passage + Great Bear Spring
Apr. 18-May 5, 17 nights, 18 days
C \$7470
Dep: Sidney, BC; Retn: Kitimat, BC

2012 Great Bear Rainforest - Summer

• Great Bear Rainforest Summer 1
Jun 24-29, 5 nights, 6 days C \$2860*
Dep: Bella Bella, BC Retn: Prince Rupert, BC
*Plus seaplane from Hartley Bay to Prince Rupert on Day 6, approx. \$155

• Great Bear Rainforest Summer 2
Jun 30-July 5, 5 nights, 6 days C \$2860*
Dep: Prince Rupert, BC Retn: Prince Rupert, BC
*Plus seaplane from Prince Rupert to Hartley Bay on Day 1, approx. \$155

• Northern BC Whales & Wild Islands
(bears are not a feature on this trip)
Aug 2-10, 8 nights, 9 days C \$4650
Dep: Prince Rupert, BC Retn: Port McNeill, BC

2012 Great Bear Rainforest - Fall

• **Aug. 29 - Sep. 8**, 9 nights, 10 days
C \$5635
Dep: Port McNeill, BC; Retn: Bella Bella, BC

• **Sept. 10-18**, 8 nights, 9 days, C \$5000
• **Sept. 20-28**, 8 nights, 9 days, C \$5000
Depart & return: Bella Bella, BC

Maple Leaf Adventures

PO Box 8845, Stn. Central,
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local 1-250-386-7245



Spring Trips

Sail here as spring makes this world come alive. Towering mountains are capped in snow. Estuaries burst with plant life and migrating birds. Oceanic plankton blooms begin the marine life's summer feeding cycle. Newly-awakened bears graze on sedges.

Sample Itinerary - Spring

- Day 1** Board Maple Leaf, orientation, cruising & viewing whales.
- Day 2-3** Sailing to the west coast, explore west coast beach, wildlife viewing.
- Day 4-5** Fjordland and estuary (sea ducks, birds, seals, and possible bears). Exploration by zodiac and foot.
- Day 5-6** Visit community of Klemtu including intro to First Nations culture, cruising & anchorage, Inside Passage.
- Day 7-8** Cruise down coast's longest fjord, the Gardner Canal to the Kitlope, the planet's largest intact temperate rainforest and site of a special First Nations memorial pole. Rainforest walk, river and wildlife exploration, hot springs soak, optional kayaking, looking for whales, sailing.
- Day 9** Cruising to port.



Actual trip itineraries vary depending on the interests of the guests, and the actions of weather and wildlife.

Summer Trips

Enjoy the full bloom of early summer in the Great Bear Rainforest. Bears feast on sedges in river estuaries before moving upland for summer berries, long daylight hours provide plenty of time for exploration of west coast beaches, rainforest and islands.

Sample Itinerary - Summer

- Day 1** Board Maple Leaf, orientation, cruise Inside Passage, wildlife viewing.
- Day 2** Cruising to west coast, west coast beaches exploration, sailing, wildlife viewing.
- Day 3** Sailing the west coast, whales, beaches, visit to whale researchers.
- Day 4** Mainland inlet, bear viewing, rainforest walk, waterfalls. Optional evening kayak.
- Day 5** Bear viewing, rainforest hot springs.
- Day 6** Visit community of Hartley Bay, including guided tour at big house, example of First Nations artistry, culture and architecture. Seaplane for flight from Hartley Bay to Prince Rupert



*Names of key areas we visit have been left out of this itinerary to protect the wildlife from illegal trophy hunting.



Great Bear Rainforest

“What an extraordinary trip! Sea otters, black bears, spirit bears, humpback whales, magnificent scenery, great shore trips, scrumptious meals, wonderful company with lots of laughter.”

- Jean Rissman, Davis, California



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Northern BC Whales & Wild Islands (Summer)

Explore the islands, channels and beaches of the wild BC coast on this summertime supervoyage.

Long days of light and warmer temperatures enable you to sample the best of wildlife habitat, shore explorations and sailing. With the ship's expert naturalist, expect to view whales, dolphins, other marine mammals, seabirds and intertidal life.

(Note that bears are not a feature of this trip.)

Sample Itinerary - Whales & Wild Islands

- Day 1** Board Maple Leaf, orientation, cruising inside passage channels to island anchorage. Beach exploration.
- Day 2** Sailing the outer coast. Going ashore on wild islands, exploring intertidal life, sailing the schooner Maple Leaf.
- Day 3** Humpback whale viewing, visit with whale researchers, hot springs.
- Day 4** Inner islands rainforest and wildflower exploration. Visit village of Klemtu.
- Day 5** Sailing to remote island group, sea otter viewing, seabird viewing, beach combing, optional evening kayak.
- Day 6** Cruising the outer islands, scenic coastal hike with a view.
- Day 7** Rounding Cape Caution, whale watching, entering Queen Charlotte Strait.
- Day 8** Killer whale viewing, sea lion viewing, rainforest hike.
- Day 9** Cruising to Port McNeill.

September Great Bear Trips

This fall, witness one of nature's most profound events: the journey of the wild pacific salmon into the rainforest.

Rivers are thick with fish burying their eggs in gravel. The spectacle creates a feeding frenzy as bears and wolves feast on the bounty. Eagles, ravens, harlequin ducks and gulls join in.

Sample Itinerary - September

- Day 1** Board Maple Leaf, orientation, cruising. Island anchorage, river exploration, and learning about the 'salmon forest'.
- Day 2** Beach walk. Cruising into Fjordland. Massive waterfalls, spectacular inlet*, pictographs, estuary exploration and search for bears.
- Day 3** Cruising to one of the leading grizzly bear havens. Extended watching for grizzly bears. Optional evening kayak, fishing, art.
- Day 4** Morning shore walk, visit First Nations village, Klemtu. Big House tour by village guide. Intertidal life. Fjord anchorage.
- Day 5** Exploring coastal river by zodiac. Forest walk. Sea lion and black or grizzly bear viewing. Nature hike. Hot springs.
- Day 6** Spirit bear island anchorage. Shore excursion to spirit bear viewing site. Whale Channel, humpback whale watching. Optional kayak.
- Day 7** Sailing down coastal channel, Island anchorage, cultural site visit. Optional evening kayak.
- Day 8** Outer coast beach exploration, sailing and cruising the western waters, whale viewing, shore trips.
- Day 9** Cruising to port.

Actual trip itineraries vary depending on the interests of the guests, and the actions of weather and wildlife.

**Names of key areas we visit have been left out to protect wildlife from trophy hunting and unprofessional operators.*