

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Haida Gwaii

### Trip Preparation

#### **What is the nature of expedition travel?**

No two expeditions are alike. Wildlife, weather, sea conditions, and changes in policy are beyond our control and affect the day-to-day schedule of each trip; your itinerary is therefore flexible and subject to change without notice. This is, however, not a setback—it is an advantage. Expedition travel is characterized by its dynamic, fluid nature and we pride ourselves on our unparalleled adaptability. Necessary detours can provide unique opportunities and unexpected highlights—and we encourage you to see them as such.

Each day you will wake to the promise of new experiences, such as bird colonies, whale-viewing opportunities, community visits, Zodiac cruises, and wonderful walking and hiking. We hope that those travelling to this exciting area of the world take with them our company's desire to explore and enjoy these regions respectfully and sustainably. We are sure this voyage will prove to be the journey of a lifetime. Thank you for joining us!

#### **Will my itinerary change from what was advertised?**

In a word? Probably. Adventure Canada expeditions take place in some of the world's wildest and most remote destinations. While this means we have access to unparalleled beauty and isolation, it comes with a price. We are very often at the mercy of weather. Because safety is, and always will be, our primary concern, we are often forced to adjust our itineraries in order to ensure the safe operation of our vessels. Our Captain reserves the right to alter the itinerary at any time. Our highly knowledgeable team is experienced in planning alternative routes and excursions that provide the best possible option for our guests, crew, vessel, and host communities.

#### **Do I need boating or sailing experience?**

You don't need any boating or sailing experience to enjoy travelling. If you are interested in learning about boat operation our crew would be happy to involve you in navigation or helping on deck.

**What will the weather be like?**

Usually on the Pacific Coast we have a good variety of constantly changing weather. Expect a mixture of sunshine, rain, and wind on most trips.

**How rough will the water be?**

We travel in protected areas most of the time. On many days of the summer this coast is like sailing on a lake - flat and calm. Sometimes we cross into open water for short periods of time where we may experience greater motion.

**What are the luggage and carry-on regulations and restrictions for this expedition?**

Be sure to pack only what you truly need, as weight restrictions apply on flights and storage space aboard the ship is limited. Suitcases cannot be accommodated on board; instead, we recommend bringing clothing and equipment in soft-sided, compressible bags that can be easily stowed. Ensure all luggage is clearly labeled with your full contact details. As baggage regulations vary by airline, we recommend checking with your carrier for the most up-to-date guidelines on carry-on and checked luggage. To avoid surprises at the airport, weigh your bags before departure. Please also review FAA restrictions regarding hazardous or prohibited items, and check with any connecting carriers to confirm their specific policies.

**How much storage is there in the cabins?**

There is limited but adequate storage for the amount of gear you will need on our trips. Soft luggage, like a duffel bag, is most easily stowed as it is compressible.

**Do I really need to bring rubber boots?**

Yes! The closer they are to knee height the better and they should be comfortable. There are very few places that we travel where there are docks so you will be stepping into the water and onto the beach. Your boots will be very useful for walking in west coast rainforest as well. If you are not comfortable hiking in your boots you can change into other footwear once you are on shore.

**Is waterproof clothing mandatory for this expedition?**

Yes. Our expeditions take place out on the land, where staying warm and dry is important. You will be required to dress appropriately for the weather conditions. You must provide your own rain waterproof jacket with hat or attached hood and waterproof pants, GoreTex is recommended.

## Health and Travel Documents

### **What medical considerations should I be making?**

Adventure Canada expeditions travel to remote areas of the world where medical care is either unavailable or not up to modern standards. Adventure Canada will request your medical details prior to your trip. If you have any health concerns, we strongly recommend a pre-voyage appointment with your health care professional. Adventure Canada programs are designed for active participation and require travellers to transfer from ship to Zodiac and walk up and down one flight stairs unaided, at a minimum. Dental care is also recommended before travel and travellers are advised not to travel with temporary fillings, caps, or unfinished root canals. It is the travellers' responsibility to know the entry requirements of the nations they are visiting.

### **What should I do about my prescription medication while on the expedition?**

Please make sure you bring an adequate supply of prescribed medication for the trip until your return home. It is recommended to bring at least one week's additional medication in the event of a delay. IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO REPLACE OR REFILL PRESCRIPTIONS DURING THE EXPEDITION. PLEASE TAKE ADEQUATE CARE TO ENSURE THE SAFE TRANSPORTATION OF YOUR MEDICATION. It is vital that your prescription medicines travel with you in your carry-on luggage and not in your checked bag. You must have a doctor's note or proof of requirement in order to carry needles for medical reasons in your carry-on baggage. If you have special requirements surrounding your medications while on board, please inform Adventure Canada as soon as possible.

### **What if I am prone to motion sickness?**

There can be transit days during your Haida Gwaii trip that may include some rolling seas. Our sailing vessels are equipped to stabilize to these conditions and our Crew can provide some helpful remedies if you are prone to motion sickness.

### **What should I be considering with regards to travel insurance?**

Adventure Canada travels to remote destinations where emergency medical treatment may be difficult to access. Emergency medical and evacuation insurance to the minimum value of \$500,000 USD PER PERSON IS MANDATORY for participation in all Adventure Canada expeditions. This may not cover the full cost of a medical emergency. Any additional expenses are the responsibility of the passenger.

Adventure Canada strongly advises all passengers to obtain travel insurance as loss of deposits and cancellation terms and conditions come into effect upon receipt of a confirmed booking. Adventure Canada recommends that travel insurance be in place no later than 120 days prior to departure. If you require assistance in obtaining further insurance information, please contact Adventure Canada or your travel agent.

**Do I require a passport to travel with Adventure Canada? What about a visa?**

All passengers require a valid, current passport. Passengers holding passports issued by countries other than Canada should carefully check for visa requirements. Passports must be original, government issue, and signed.

## **On-Board Experiences and General Services**

**What are excursions like?**

Guests can expect to be onshore anywhere from 45 minutes to a few hours and thus should be able to stand and walk for that amount of time. We do not travel far during our shore excursions – a few kilometres at most – and guests should expect a variety of trail conditions, anywhere from flat, maintained, forest paths to undulating and unkept rainforest exploration which could include unsteady footing or stepping over fallen logs. We will also venture into estuaries and rocky islets aboard our zodiacs or in kayaks, for those who are interested in a paddle.

**How much do we sail?**

The amount of sailing we do depends on the wind, where we are headed, and the interests of the group. We try to sail when we can, however our interest is in wildlife viewing first of all.

**What is a Zodiac like?**

Guests should expect to be getting in and out of the zodiacs at least once a day. This includes getting in/out from the boat as well as in/out on shore. Unloading onto shore could include bigger steps down, stepping onto slippery rocks, or stepping out in wavy conditions. Assistance will always be provided. When coming back onto the boat, guests should be able to pull themselves up onto what we call the 'swim grid' with the assistance of a crew member's arm or on their own with the ladder handrails.

**What is the hiking like?**

We offer a variety of walks and hikes on our trips. Often there is more than one option at a stop.

**How often do we get off the boat?**

We try to get off the boat at least once a day depending on the trip.

**How crowded is the boat?**

The boats are well designed for our purpose. Guests comment that there is more room than they expected and that they don't feel crowded.

**Can I recharge my video batteries?**

Yes, we have regular 110v household current available in all cabins when the generator is on (usually in the morning and late afternoon). It is a good idea to bring an extra video battery.

**Can I use my cellular phone?**

Cellular coverage is poor to non-existent in the areas in which we travel. Our guests comment on how much they enjoy the simplicity of ship-board life and a break from technological demands.

**How often can I shower?**

We carry a good supply of water, but it is important to remember that a boat is totally self-contained and in wilderness areas not always near a water supply. We ask that people not shower every day to help conserve water.

**Do you offer vegetarian or special diet menus?**

All of our meals are served buffet style. We can usually accommodate most special dietary concerns if we are given sufficient advance notice.

**What money should I bring?**

You may want to bring cash and your cheque book. We have some items available on board that you may wish to purchase. On some of our trips we may stop in small communities where local crafts are available and where credit cards are not accepted.

**Can I bring my drone?**

We do not permit the use of UAVs by passengers. No exceptions will be made.

**Is Cannabis or CBD products allowed on board?**

Although British Columbia laws permit the legal use of cannabis, we do not permit any cannabis or CBD products for personal or prescribed use. Our vessels sail in International waters and must

adhere to International laws at all times. Guests will not be permitted to board with any cannabis/ cannabis or CBD products at any time.

**Is smoking allowed on board?**

There is no smoking permitted onboard the vessels. E-cigarettes are included in this policy.

## Crew and Safety

**What qualifications do the crew have?**

Our skippers are all Coast Guard and Ministry of Transport licensed Captains, and our crew are all highly qualified with experience and training in emergency procedures, boat handling and first aid.

**How safe is the boat?**

Our boats are Coast Guard certified passenger vessels and undergo strict yearly inspections.

**What is the tipping policy aboard the ship?**

Gratuities are not compulsory on your trip; however, if you feel that the crew have made your trip special and wish to show your appreciation, a tip is very much appreciated. The amount given is entirely up to the guest; however, a guideline of about \$50 - \$80 CAD per day of your trip is a good reference, which is then split evenly among the crew.

## Wildlife and Photography

**What wildlife will I see?**

We expect to see a variety of wildlife on all our trips, but please note, wildlife have their own agenda. It is only luck that determines how close wildlife comes to us or how spectacular their behaviour. Our crew are very good at spotting animals and along with enthusiastic guests spend a great deal of time looking. Bring your binoculars. We take a cautious approach when observing wildlife. We do not want to apply any pressure to animals that could result in a change in their behaviour.

### **What kind of equipment is good for photographing wildlife?**

If you are intent on getting good wildlife pictures, you should contemplate bringing a long lens. A lens of 300mm seems ideal, while lenses with lengths of 180-300mm generally give good results. Consider bringing fairly fast film to capture whale breaches and other action photos, and to allow photography in the low light of morning or evening.

### **Will I be able to fish?**

Our trips focus mainly on wildlife. Usually only a small number of our guests are interested in fishing with the hope of providing dinner. We have fishing gear on board. If you wish to try fishing, you will need to purchase a fishing license before you join the trip. We no longer fish on our San Juan and Gulf Islands trips to protect depleted fish stocks in this area.

## **Recommendations for Extending your Trip in Haida Gwaii**

### **If I want to extend my trip, where can I stay?**

We highly recommend extending your trip to explore Haida Gwaii on your own. Adding a day or two either before or after your voyage with Adventure Canada would allow you to explore Graham Island and visit Masset. Thus, we have added other local accommodation and travel information below.

Haida Gwaii has a range of accommodation to serve the needs of visitors. Hotels, Motels, and Bed & Breakfast (B&B) establishments are found in Sandspit and Daajing Giids. The following selected accommodation contacts may be useful in helping to plan your trip around your Adventure Canada adventure!

#### **SANDSPIT**

<b>Northern Shores Lodging and Catering</b>	250-637-2233	<a href="mailto:northernshoreslodge1@gmail.com">northernshoreslodge1@gmail.com</a>
<b>Seaport B&amp;B</b>	250-637-2215	<a href="http://www.seaportbb.com">www.seaportbb.com</a>
<b>Bayview Garden</b>	250-637-5749	<a href="http://www.bayviewgarden.ca">www.bayviewgarden.ca</a>

#### **DAAJING GIIDS**

<b>Sea Raven Motel</b>	250-559-2333	<a href="http://www.searaven.com/main">www.searaven.com/main</a>
<b>Premier Creek Lodge</b>	250-559-8415	<a href="http://www.haidagwaii.net/premier">www.haidagwaii.net/premier</a>

<b>Spruce Point Lodge</b>	250-559-8234	<a href="http://www.sprucepointlodge.com">www.sprucepointlodge.com</a>
<b>Echo Bay Lodge</b>	250-559-4595	<a href="http://www.echobaylodge.com">www.echobaylodge.com</a>

#### MASSET

<b>Copper Beech House</b>	250-626-5441	<a href="http://www.copperbeechhouse.com">www.copperbeechhouse.com</a>
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#### TLELL

<b>Haida House</b>	250-557-4600 1-888-602-0989	<a href="http://www.haidatourism.ca/haida-house">www.haidatourism.ca/haida-house</a>
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## What is the best way to get around?

Public transit service is not available on Haida Gwaii. There are a few local operators that can help you get from point A to B.

<b>Gwaii Taxi and Tours</b> Sandspit – Daajing Giids - Skidegate	Taxi: 250-637-1162	<a href="http://www.gwaiitaxiandtours.ca">www.gwaiitaxiandtours.ca</a>
<b>Mile Zero Taxi</b> Greater Masset	250-626-8999	<a href="http://daddycools.ca/mile-zero-taxi">daddycools.ca/mile-zero-taxi</a>

#### Rental Vehicles

Vehicle rentals are available in Haida Gwaii with airport pickup and drop off. Cars are limited and must be reserved in advance. For information and reservations call:

<b>Gwaii Taxi and Tours</b> Sandspit - Daajing Giids - Skidegate	Tours/Rentals: 250-559-2380	<a href="http://www.gwaiitaxiandtours.ca">www.gwaiitaxiandtours.ca</a>
<b>Budget-Rent-A-Car</b> Sandspit Airport	250-637-5688	
<b>Budget-Rent-A-Car</b> Daajing Giids (Charlotte Island Tire)	250-559-4641	

#### For more information about things to do and see:

For information on what to do in Haida Gwaii, visit [www.gohaidagwaii.ca](http://www.gohaidagwaii.ca). For further activity suggestions you can also visit [www.lovehaidagwaii.com](http://www.lovehaidagwaii.com)



<b>Sandspit Visitor Centre</b>	250-637-5362
<b>Daa'ing Giids Visitor Centre</b>	250-559-8316

For general information on British Columbia's attractions, travel, restaurants, shopping, transportation and accommodation visit Destination BC or the Tourism BC website at [www.hellobc.com](http://www.hellobc.com).

## Emergency Contact Information

Please note that the *Gwaii Haanas* archipelago is a remote wilderness area. Radio and satellite telephone communications is not always dependable, and it can take considerable time to make contact with the outside world. You will not be able to make telephone calls from the vessel during the trip. If someone back home needs to get in touch with you for an important message, instruct them to call the Bluewater Adventures office **(604) 980-3800 / Toll Free: 1-888-877-1770**. Office hours are Monday to Friday (8:30 am to 5:00 pm PST). If they are unable to speak with our office staff, they should leave a detailed message which will be relayed at the first opportunity.

In the event of an emergency, they should first call the Bluewater Adventures office and speak with our staff or call the emergency telephone number provided through the recorded message. The urgent message will be passed along to the passenger via the Bluewater Captain on board. However, it still may take some time to establish contact.

The Adventure Canada office can be reached from Monday to Thursday, 9:00AM to 5:00PM EST at **+1-800-363-7566**.