



Gulf Islands, B.C.

A Frommer's "Trip of a Lifetime"



Some people who visit the Gulf Islands think they've stumbled into Paradise.

This group of hundreds of semi-mediterranean islands in a protected sea has drawn people for millenia, with its green and gold slopes, blue ocean and ring of snow-capped peaks.



Islands in the Salish Sea

Step aboard the schooner Maple Leaf and enter a world where the most important decision is which place to explore next.

With 200+ islands and islets, some with "dry rain-forests", some with white shell beaches, some with colonies of animals, the options are many.

Maple Leaf's crew knows the area well and while you'll visit some of the larger, well-known islands, you'll also be guided to little-known havens to which most people will never have access. (Ever heard of Cabbage Island? How about Mandarte, Prevost and Wallace?)

The Gulf Islands offer a combination of unique wilderness and eclectic communities. On land, Garry oaks and Douglas fir forests, wildflower meadows and Arbutus (madrone) trees flourish. You'll explore rocky beaches, quiet lagoons and spectacular passages. The islands lie in a rain shadow, so some even support small cacti. Our onboard naturalist unlocks the wonder of even the smallest shells you may find.

Sea Life & Sailing

Fresh spring and fall breezes make for great sailing, and we often get generous portions of sunshine. A stunning variety of sea life is found here - brightly-coloured sea stars, crabs, clams and seaweeds. Seals, otters, dolphins and whales swim the waters between islands.

These trips are a great opportunity to experience the relaxing pace of life aboard Maple Leaf. In the quiet beauty of these islands, you will feel as if you are thousands of miles from anywhere.

Coast Salish First Nations Culture

The Coast Salish culture has flourished for thousands of years here, and it's easy to see why. Living is easy, the climate is mild, the land is gentle, and natural beauty abounds. In the past, Salish people traveled to specific islands to cultivate meadows of naturally-occurring blue camas lilies.

Explorers and Eclectic Villages

The islands are as diverse as they are beautiful. Most reflect the history of maritime exploration on the Pacific Coast and many, such as Galiano and Valdez, still bear the names of the earliest European explorers.

The natural meadows lured European and Hawaiian settlers to farm here, and later, American draft dodgers and hippies of all kinds came to the islands to escape urban life. Crafts and arts thrive, and the Gulf Islands are now one of the most desirable places to live in Canada. Sit back on deck and explore these idyllic islands. You'll see why they are known as one of the world's best cruising destinations.





"Thank you for the privilege of being aboard this beautiful ship, experiencing the magical beauty of the islands."

*- Elspeth McVeigh,
Vancouver, B.C. & United Kingdom*

2010

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

"Spring Fling"

Mar. 30 - Apr. 4, Apr. 6 - 11, Apr. 13-18*

*(combined Art at Sea/Nature adventure)

5 nights, 6 days C \$2150

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

"Autumn Adventure"

Oct. 18 - 23 5 nights, 6 days

C \$2150

Tall Sails & Ales, Gulf Islands

Oct. 25-30 5 nights, 6 days

C \$2350 *Inquire for more info*

2011

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

"Spring Fling"

Mar. 29 - Apr. 3, Apr. 4 - 9, Apr. 11-16

5 nights, 6 days C \$2180

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

"Autumn Adventure"

Oct. 19 - 24 5 nights, 6 days

C \$2180

Tall Sails & Ales, Gulf Islands

Oct. 26-31 5 nights, 6 days

C \$2390 *Inquire for more info*

Depart & Return, all trips: Sidney, B.C.

Maple Leaf Adventures

PO Box 8845, Stn. Central,
Victoria, B.C., V8W 3Z1 Canada

toll free 1-888-599-5323

local 1-250-386-7245



Spring Fling in the Gulf Islands

There is no better way to celebrate the return of spring than sailing among these eclectic islands in south-western British Columbia.

While the rest of the North is still clothed in a blanket of winter, the Gulf Islands burst with life - from the green flames of new growth to meadows of bright flowers and the exuberant, noisy clamour of seals, whales and birds flocking around millions of spawning herring.

Meadows are carpeted with wild flowers...white Easter lilies, pink sea blush, purple camas, Blue-eyed Mary. All shine against an early spring-green palette.

Autumn in the Gulf Islands

Autumn, a time of feasting, comes slowly to the Gulf Islands. But as we drift past the shores, leaves on oaks, dogwood and broadleaf maples will be starting to turn to fall colours. The arbutus splash the coastal woodlands with bunches of ripe, red berries.

Migrating birds stop on the beaches on their journey south along the Pacific Flyway. Spawning salmon congregate among the islands before running up the mighty Fraser River, and sea mammals including seals, sea lions and orcas feast on the fish.



Sample Itinerary -

Spring/Autumn in the Gulf Islands

Note that, as with all expedition cruises, itineraries vary depending on the interests of the guests, and the actions of weather and wildlife. This sample itinerary is meant to give you an idea of the typical trip.

- Day 1 Orientation, cruising. Seabird island visit, wildlife watching, porpioses. Anchorage Saturna Island
- Day 2 Morning hike on Saturna Island, forest ecology learning. Cruising, beachcombing a remote island, sea lion haul out.
- Day 3 Village visit, sailing in Georgia Strait or one of many channels in the area, walk to visit Canada's largest arbutus and Garry Oak meadow.
- Day 4 Intertidal life, First Nations shell middens, wildflower meadows, remote island anchorage. Optional kayak.
- Day 5 Sailing, island anchorage, evening kayaking
- Day 6 Cruising to Sidney.



General and Booking Information



Family & Friends Trips

Planning a family reunion? Thinking of spending some special time with friends?

Over the years, a number of extended families or groups of friends have booked a whole charter. They say it provides them quality time in an unhurried, magical atmosphere, allowing them to connect on a deeper level than in our normal “hurly-burly” world. Not to mention that the crew, chef and naturalist take care of the logistics!

If you think this is something you’d like to do, call us to discuss. Advance notice to book an entire trip is required, so let us know as soon as possible so that we can accommodate your plans.



About our company:

Maple Leaf Adventures has been operating trips focused on the natural history of B.C.’s northwest coast and Alaska, and the culture of the First Nations peoples of the areas, since 1986. We have a reputation for quality, professionalism and sensitivity to both the natural and cultural landscapes.

Our institutional clients have included the Royal BC Museum, The Canadian Museum of Civilization and the John G Shedd Aquarium. Our company has been recognized by the Canadian government as a leader in eco-tourism and our trips have been featured internationally in such travel guides as *Frommer’s* and on the Oprah Winfrey television show.

About Our Trips and the Ship

Our trips take place in the best areas and at peak times for natural phenomena; therefore they originate from different places on the coast. Our guests fly, drive, or take a ferry to meet us at trips’ point of origin, which maximizes the amount of time we are able to spend exploring our chosen areas.

A small group of **8 guests** allows us the flexibility to respond to special natural events, weather, and the interests of our group.

Our pace is unhurried, giving us time to linger with whales, paint or sketch in a Haida village, beach comb, or walk ancient forests. We experience the entire environment, not just the view from on board. We go ashore often to experience the magic

of various habitats and the special life that inhabits each area.

Expert naturalists with a variety of backgrounds accompany us on every voyage. Veterans of field research projects in the areas we visit, they share their expertise and abundant knowledge on a very understandable and enjoyable level. They have guided us to some of nature’s most impressive events.

Maple Leaf is a beautiful 92-foot schooner. She and her crew are Coast Guard approved. She has a long and enviable reputation on the coast. Her accommodations are very comfortable. The spacious main cabin is airy and divided by curtains and walls into four “cabins,” providing sleeping accommodations for eight guests. Mahogany and fir line the galley and dining salon and wheelhouse. She has an extensive library.



Contact Us

To book a trip or for help with any questions you may have, we welcome your call or email.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Is this trip suitable for me?

A. Anyone is eligible so long as they are enthusiastic about participating, amenable to the vagaries of weather, agile enough to clamber in and out of shore vessels in an area where there are no docks, and friendly enough to get along in the relatively close quarters of a sailing yacht. We have had people on board as much as 80 years of age. However, our trips are not suitable for people of failing health or physical disabilities.

Q. What is included in the price?

A. Our price includes all meals, activities and guides throughout your voyage in the region you are visiting. Specifically included:

- All meals, snacks and beverages prepared from the freshest ingredients by our superb chef.
- Fine wines featured with the evening meal, and a limited amount of beer included and available throughout the trip. (Liquor is not a large part of our trips, so plan on light consumption).
- The services of our naturalist and professional crew.
- Shore excursions (there are several each day).

- Use of all gear available on board, including raingear, sea boots, kayaks and fishing gear.

Not included in our price:

- Transportation to the trip's point of origin.
- Goods and Service Tax (Canadian trips only)
- Crew gratuities
- Sustainability Fee. As a professional ecotourism company, it is at the core of our operating principles to work with local communities, respecting regulations and contributing to local opportunities. Responsible operations cost a little more. We extract from the fare a percentage of the increased costs that go towards sustainable communities add it to the list price as a 'sustainability fee' of \$100 per trip. Through it we hope our guests share in the pride that a trip with Maple Leaf is a contribution to the sustainability of the whole coast – as well as being the experience of a lifetime!

Q. Can you accommodate my special diet?

A. Yes. If you advise us in the pre-trip questionnaire we can accommodate most special dietary requirements.

Q. Will I be seasick?

A. Sea sickness is rarely a problem as Maple Leaf is a sturdy and sea-kindly ship. We travel short distances in protected waters and go ashore often.

Q. Can I be involved in sailing the ship and performing other duties?

A. Absolutely yes. We encourage our guests to participate in any aspect of the trip that interests them and to whatever level they are comfortable with. We are patient instructors (no yelling) and delight in helping people learn. On the other hand, you are not required to sail or perform duties while on your vacation. The choice is yours.

Q: What makes you an eco-tourism company?

- A:
- Our trips have low impact (virtually no impact) on the planet and on the places we visit.
 - We partner with local people. We have protocol agreements either signed or in process with First Nations in territories we visit.
 - Our naturalists – experts in their fields – and other knowledgeable crew members provide a wealth of knowledge on the areas we visit, as do our First Nations guides.
 - We work within the regulations of parks and conservation areas, pay the applicable fees and obtain permits for all limited-use areas we visit.
 - We dedicate time and resources to preserving the wilderness we travel in.



Wild BC and Alaska Tours by Sail



"Thanks for the best vacation ever."

– Carrie Novick, Oregon.

Contact Us

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Booking and Cancellation Policy

To avoid disappointment, your reservation should be made early. The number of participants in each program is limited, and the demand is high. Our trips sell out early.

North America Trips

Deposit: A deposit of one third of the price of the trip will reserve your space for any trip.

Balance: The balance is due 120 days prior to departure.

Cancellations: If you are unable to participate and cancellation occurs at least 120 days prior to the departure date of your trip, the full amount of your deposit is refundable, minus a \$200 admin fee. If cancellation occurs less than 120 days prior to the departure date of your trip, we will do our best to try to fill your space on the trip, however no money will be refunded unless all the spaces on your trip are filled.

Galapagos Islands Trips

Deposit: A nonrefundable deposit of US \$1000 reserves a place on the trip. On payment of the deposit you will receive: receipt/invoice, medical information form, agreement and release from liability form, itinerary and additional information covering packing lists, visa requirements, health issues, etc.

Balance: The balance is due 3 months prior to departure date. On payment of the balance you will receive: receipt, final trip bulletin including participant list and rendezvous instructions.

Single Supplement: Accommodations are based on double occupancy. If you are traveling alone and wish to share accommodation, we will try to assign you a roommate. If there

is no one with whom you can share, or if you prefer single accommodation, you will be requested to pay a Single Supplement, as listed for each trip.

Cancellation Policy: At the time we receive written notice of your wish to cancel your trip, the following fees will apply: * 90 days+ from departure date: 100% of deposit; * 89 to 60 days from departure date: 50% of Land Cost; * 59 days or less from departure date: 100% of Land Cost

Group Bookings

For large group bookings, such as a family charter of the entire ship, the booking and cancellation policy may be different - please do contact us for information.

Cancellation Insurance

We highly recommend cancellation insurance, which protects you if you have to make a late cancellation in certain cases (such as a medical emergency). Travel insurance can be purchased through your travel agency or through our travel agent (contact us for info). This must be done at the time your booking is confirmed.

Pre-Trip Information Package

A comprehensive pre-trip information package will welcome you "aboard" at the time of booking. It includes information on clothing and other items to bring, how to get to your trip, insurance, visa requirements, etc.

Getting to & from the Ship

Our office staff can help you with these questions and arrangements - call or email any time.

Design: www.LotusDesign.ca