

Story Ideas by Topic – Maple Leaf Adventures



By Destination – Off the Beaten Track

Canada's Great Bear Rainforest – An emerging destination for wildlife viewing and ecotourism. Dozens of fjords cut this rugged coastline on Canada's west coast. There are no roads here. Explore the bears, wolves, whales, rainforest, culture and natural history of one of Earth's last great wild places.

Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands) – aka the Canadian Galapagos. One of Canada's best kept secrets. And most Canadians also don't know how to really experience the sublime distillation of nature and culture here: by planning a multi-day exploration of remote Gwaii Haanas.

Broughton Archipelago – 200+ islands just a 45-minute plane ride from the metropolis of Vancouver, this is a world where time is set by tides and moons. It's site of some of the greatest whale viewing in the world – as families of orcas and the spectacularly returning humpback whales feast here.

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve – One of Canada's newest national parks. 200+ islands of temperate Mediterranean climate. With Maple Leaf, get beyond the bed and breakfast stereotype of these islands, and sail to the remote wildlife colonies, old homestead sites, and quintessential peaceful beaches. Far from the tourist crowds.

Alaska's Stunning Southeast – Alaska without the cruise ship crowds. Each year, millions of people cruise Alaska's wilderness of fjords and islands ...usually in the company of thousands of others. But southeast Alaska's wild grandeur is best experienced on a small boat, off the beaten track. Here, you'll travel with just nine other guests. Your ship will be an 88-foot converted tug. Your "shows" will be humpback whales next to you or brown bears chasing salmon, as you view them with a naturalist. You'll walk into the silence of the rainforest, and pull chunks of calved glacier ice out of the sea with your fingers. All while being hosted by coastal residents passionate about the natural and cultural history of their home.

By Type / Style

Wildlife

- Bears - Grizzly bears, spirit bears, black bears with some of BC's most experienced and knowledgeable bear guides, who also work hard for their protection.
- Whales – Orcas, humpback whales, fin whales, dolphins, porpoises
- Seabirds – Puffins and other alcids, loons and cormorants, ducks, shore birds, ravens, eagles and forest birds.

- Mystery – Sasquatch, Steller’s sea monkey

Culinary

- Craft beer tasting cruise – foodie cruise in British Columbia. Tasting 50+ top craft beers from BC, cooking with beer, food-beer pairings, exclusive dinners with brewmasters, and the culture and social history of beer in Canada’s west with a top brewing historian (who is also hilarious).
- Wild foraging on your cruise

Ecotourism

- How a conservation economy is envisioned for Canada’s Great Bear Rainforest (with one of the negotiators who helped with the land use planning)
- Explore the Great Bear Rainforest with one of the people working to protect it, Capt. Kevin Smith.
- Bear viewing – done right, it’s heaven for visitors and protects the rainforest, too. Find out why.
- Bear viewing – see for yourself why the animal that Hollywood loves to make us terrified of really doesn’t want to growl at you. An experienced bear guide will help you understand the daily life of a bear, its behaviour and needs. Plus you’ll walk in a bear’s footprints (literally) and see some of the tools bears use to communicate with other bears in their world.

Cultural History

- UNESCO World Heritage Site SGang Gwaay and the Haida culture
- First Nations history of the Gulf Islands with Florence James
- The salmon culture of the BC coast

Boating

Boutique expedition cruises – we show you our home; a human-scale trip in an epic-scale landscape.

The Inside Passage Gets Wild – explore the fjords, islands and wildlife without the typically cruise ship crowds, noise and silly distractions. Guided by local naturalists on a small classic, wooden ship.

Classic wooden ships – Feel adventure the second you step aboard a piece of coastal history. Maple Leaf’s well-known, heritage vessels (1904, 1912) have long pedigrees on the coast.

Tall Ship – sail the wild coast by 92-foot schooner

News, Science and Issues

(Note that outside travel support from traditional sources may not be available for stories about issues. Third-party travel support is for stories about travel.)

- The return of the whales – Baleen whales are returning to the BC coast in a stunning manner. Twenty years ago there were almost none. Now, there are channels filled with whale blows, groups of coordinated bubble-net feeding humpbacks, large groups of fin whales, and male humpbacks practicing their

songs. Scientists learn more each year. Join Maple Leaf Adventures to explore this on our new trip that celebrates the return of the whales.

- Oil tankers in wild heaven - The Great Bear Rainforest's fjords, islands and reefs are threatened by a proposed oil supertanker route. But the oil company and project proponents seriously underestimated the BC residents' love for the coast – and their determination to protect it. This is a showdown of our times: the race for fossil fuel profits against the people who live where they'll be obtained or transported. This battle of values simmers against a backdrop of granite fjords, white spirit bears that swipe salmon from clear rivers, whales that sing and feed in the fjords' depths, and seas that rage over submerged reefs.
- The ascendancy of bear viewing over sport killing – Bear viewing, as an emerging form of tourism, long ago eclipsed the idea of killing bears for sport in BC in every meaningful way: public support (90%/10%), revenues (viewing + 1200%), employment and government fees. But despite incredible acts of innovation and effort, the trophy hunt continues. View the wild grizzly bears, black bears and wolves – who rear their cubs in front of us – and see for yourself a story that surely will reach its conclusion within the next five years.