

Great Explorations



Trip Dates

2012

June 7-13

July 5-11

August 9-15

2013

June 6-12

July 4-10

August 8-14

Self-guided and custom trips also available and can start any day. Call or email for details.

Trip Size

8-16 participants

Total Days:

7 days/ 6 nights

Arrive/Depart:

Salt Spring Island / Saturna Island

Activity Level:

Cycling: 40 km (25 miles) daily average

Walking: 4 to 7 hours
Kayaking: 4 hours

Terrain:

The terrain is hilly and there are moderate and challenging hills every day

Gulf Islands, Multisport Hike, Bike and Sea-kayak

Get away from it all! Journey to a place where lush forests meet the deep blue sea. Sail away to the beauty and tranquility of the Gulf Islands. Explore four unique islands as you hop from one to the other. Follow peaceful trails and old logging roads to unspoiled coves, where seals and Orcas gambol and seabirds wheel overhead. Slow down and relax as you experience the natural wonders that these coastal enclaves have to offer. Your days will be filled with experiences you'll treasure forever. We design and operate our own trips so there are only good surprises.

Itinerary



Getting there :

Salt Spring Island: You can reach Salt Spring Island directly from Vancouver (Tsawwassen ferry terminal) or from Victoria (Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal) on Vancouver Island.

Major Airlines from Vancouver and Seattle to Victoria. For Americans, you may choose to fly into Seattle and take the high speed catamaran from the harbor in downtown Seattle to Victoria harbor. From here a

shuttle can transfer you to Swartz Bay.

DAY 1:

Salt Spring Island - Your tour starts on Salt Spring Island, the largest of the Gulf Islands, and famous for its scenery, sunshine, and warm hospitality. If you arrive early enough take the time for a short hike into the verdant Fern Valley, which feels like a rainforest.

DAY 2:

Salt Spring Island - Today's walk begins with a transfer to Beaver Point Hall, where you will begin your exploration of the southeast corner of Salt Spring Island. You'll follow well-marked trails to Ruckle Provincial Park, named after the family whose homestead this was in the 19th century. Walk along the shore to King's Point, and continue on to Yeo Point, where you'll enjoy views of the Channel Islands, home to seals and cormorants. Follow the water's edge through the Tsawout Band Reserve before returning to your hotel or B&B.

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Cost

Land Cost (current year):

CAD \$2650/ US\$2650
Includes 6B/2L/5D

Single Supplement:

CAD \$445/ US\$445

Bike Rental:

CAD \$140/ US\$140



DAY 3:

Mayne Island - Cycling is on the agenda today. Pedal to Ganges, the island's main town as you explore the southern portion of Salt Spring Island. You won't be able to resist the shops - this could be where you find that perfect souvenir. Every Saturday, there is a splendid Market in Ganges. From Ganges you'll hop on the ferry to Mayne Island, the smallest of the inhabited southern Gulf Islands. Once a stop over for

rowdy miners with Gold Rush fever, the island is now a quiet getaway of farms and orchards, sandy beaches and deep bays. Explore some of the island before arriving at tonight's accommodation, where you settle in for two nights.

DAY 4:

Mayne Island - You have many options today. Explore Miners Bay and learn about the history of the area in the museum, which was once the jail. Bike along meandering roads to tree-lined shores, picnic at Georgina Point Lighthouse, which has overlooked Active Pass since 1885, and watch seals and Orcas gambol in the waves while seabirds glide overhead. Take some time to hike through the forests of Mount Parke Regional Park, the highest point on the island.

DAY 5:

Saturna Island - Enjoy a whole new perspective of the islands as you take to the sea in your kayak. You'll receive everything you need at Blue Vista Resort, including a lesson to get you started and a guide, who'll accompany you today. Paddle to Winter Cover Marine Provincial Park, once a quarry and now meadows and wetlands sheltering migratory waterbirds. Head into Boot Cove below steep hills descending to the water and arrive at Lyall Harbour on Saturna Island, which will be your home for the next two nights.

DAY 6:

Saturna Island - Start with a transfer to the end of Narvaez Road, where today's walk begins. Follow old logging roads and goat trails to the top of Mount Warburton Pike, then descend to the Saturna Winery, in a spectacular setting near the water, and the pebbly beach at Thomson Park. Then it's back to your comfortable hotel or B&B for a relaxing evening.

What's Included in the Cost of Your Trip?

- services of one or more experienced Great Explorations guides and support vehicle
- 6 nights lodging
- all breakfasts, 2 lunches, and all dinners but 1
- entrance fees for selected historical sites and museums
- detailed map and route instructions
- all baggage transportation
- all transportation from initial meeting point to final drop-off including sea-plane flight to Vancouver at end of trip (see arrive/depart cities)

Goods and Services Tax (GST) of 5% must be charged on trips in Canada.

Please note: Final itinerary is subject to revision; any changes made are done so in an attempt to provide the best possible trip given route conditions and available services. Due to the nature of our business and exchange rates, prices are subject to change. All prices quoted are U.S. dollars but we gladly accept payment in Canadian dollars also. Due to cancellations and waiting lists, trip availability fluctuates daily. If you have any questions or would like to confirm space on this trip before making your reservation, please contact us at info@great-explorations.com or by telephone at **604.730.1247**

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Accommodations



The Beach House, Salt Spring Island

Located on the shore of Fulford Harbour in a peaceful, rural setting, the Beach House is a perfect place to relax, unwind and enjoy the sea. Savour delicious breakfasts with home baking, soak in the waterfront hot tub and wander out the private entrance for your room to one of the many garden pathways leading to the beach.



Galiano Inn, Galiano Island

This oceanfront luxurious resort and spa features large guest rooms, each with a breathtaking view, wood burning fireplaces, and a casually elegant décor. The restaurant has been receiving rave reviews for its inspired west coast cuisine. Galiano Inn features intimate luxurious facilities, all thoughtfully designed and furnished to relax, refresh and inspire.



Saturna Lodge, Saturna Island

Overlooking a quiet cove, this elegant yet casual country inn offers guests comfortable and individually themed rooms, extensive wine cellar and fine dining.