



**WILD EARTH
ADVENTURES**

WildEarth-Adventures.com

PO Box 2842, Pewsey, Wilts, UK

0871 218 1015

info@wildearth-adventures.com

Canoe Safari 2008



**A unique adventure exploring real frontier wilderness
+ Special Grizzly Bear viewing tour!**

HIGHLIGHTS

- **INCLUDES special grizzly bear viewing tour**
- A journey along the route of the **Gold Rush Heritage Trail**
- **Spectacular** mountain scenery
- Scenic **float plane** ride over coastal mountains and glaciers
- Real wilderness **canoeing** in an alpine setting
- **Hunlen Falls** – the third highest in Canada
- Great **wildlife** viewing opportunities
- A unique **Native Indian** cultural tour to 5000 year old native rock carvings
- A visit to **salmon spawning grounds** with a local biologist

INTRODUCTION

The trip starts at Jericho Beach, Vancouver. This is a fantastic location overlooking downtown Vancouver and the mountain backdrop of the coastal mountains. The group will then be transported north along the Gold Rush Heritage Trail by one of our 15 passenger vans, into central British Columbia and then west over the Chilcotin Plateau. This plateau is a real Wild West frontier, home to sporadic settlements and ranches. Very few of the roads here are paved, restricting access to this isolated region to only the most adventurous.

At Nimpo Lake a boat plane will transport the group to a chain of lakes set high in the Coastal Mountains. The snow-capped, glaciated peaks and granite faces of the Coastal Mountains dominate the Pacific coast of British Columbia, some of the highest and least explored in North America.

This is a unique canoeing adventure providing a rare opportunity to paddle and explore remote alpine wilderness. The chain of lakes takes 3-5 days to paddle. The lakes are linked by short rough trails that will have to be negotiated with canoes and packs to add to the adventure. There are also numerous hiking options including the Ptarmigan Lakes trails. The Sunshine Lake trail at the southern end of the chain can be accessed by canoe for the adventurous. There is also good trout fishing at the outlet!

You will also visit Hunlen Falls, with a single drop of 260 metres it is the third highest in Canada. Continue then along old Native Indian trails to the Atnarko River and the spawning grounds of salmon and steelhead. The old Tote road then leads into the Bella Coola valley and the gateway to the Great Bear Rainforest.

The temperate rainforest covering the lower slopes and valleys is one of the most biologically diverse ecosystems on the planet, rivaling even that of the Amazon rainforest. The area is known as the 'Great Bear Rainforest' due to the high density of both grizzly and black bears. During late summer and autumn the annual salmon spawning migrations occur and bears can be found congregating along the riverbanks to feast. Other mammals that inhabit the area include Wolves, Moose, Deer, Caribou, Bighorn Sheep, Cougar (mountain lion), Lynx, Mountain Goat, Marmots and the mysterious Wolverine.

Once in the Bella Coola valley relax on a river drift down the Bella Coola River through temperate rainforest, as bald eagles circle over head in the shadow of snow-capped peaks. Go snorkeling with salmon, take a cultural tour with local Native Indians and watch Grizzly bears fishing.

WHO IS THIS TRIP FOR?

The trip is for anyone who loves travel and the outdoors. This trip is a chance to develop the adventurous spirit within and explore what is around the corner. Anyone with a desire to venture into unspoilt wilderness will love this journey.

The activity level of the trip is moderate. Participants must be in good health and general physical condition. Age doesn't matter!

TRIP CONDITIONS

The trip departures are scheduled from July - September. This is summer in the alpine and the most consistently dry months for travel. July is early summer, August the hottest and typically driest although September actually offers some of the most consistent weather. The itinerary is moderately challenging and this will vary with the weather! Strong winds can increase the challenge of canoeing a flat water lake! The itinerary will be adjusted as needed. There are portages between the lakes when the water is low. These are short well-maintained trails varying from 200 metres to the longest which is 1000 metres. The guides will carry the canoes but you will need to be prepared to carry your pack adding to the adventure and discovery of this beautiful area! Anyone with a reasonable level of fitness will be fine.

ITINERARY

Please note: This itinerary is flexible and there may be changes before departure or en-route depending on the group's abilities and external factors out of our control, such as weather.

DAY 1 Vancouver

Arrival and welcome in. Groups stay in the Jericho Beach district with fantastic views across to the downtown area and the mountain backdrop of the Coastal Mountain Range.

DAY 2 Gold Rush Heritage Trail

Travel North through the Fraser Canyon and enjoy the spectacular mountain scenery while following the original route of the gold seekers back in the 1800s. There will be a number of stops throughout the journey to enjoy some of the heritage sites and take photos. We will stop overnight at comfortable rustic style cabins.

DAY 3 Fly to Lake Chain

Fly into the lakes over mountains, lakes and glaciers. This is a fantastic opportunity to get a real scale of the wilderness and some great photos! The tour guide will set up camp kitchen, discuss camp safety and environmental practices while cooking, cleaning etc and orientate the group. There will be a short hike to Hunlen Falls, which are the third highest in Canada!

Day 4 – 8 Canoe Adventure

The chain of lakes can be paddled in 3-5 days depending on weather and water levels. The lakes are linked by waterways, some of which can be paddled. By mid-summer these may be too low to negotiate and short portage trails are used to link the lakes. These portage trails are clearly marked and defined and are from 200m to 800m.

By allowing five days to canoe the chain means that the days can be leisurely allowing for plenty of wildlife viewing stops and a chance to explore the remote wilderness surroundings. There are additional hikes and side trails that can be used at the head of the lakes for those with a real adventurous spirit – and extra energy!

Day 9

Hike the trail down to the Atnarko River and Bella Coola Valley. This trail leads you further into a stunning wilderness valley with great wildlife viewing opportunities. The river provides critical spawning ground for salmon and steelhead. By late afternoon you will arrive at the trailhead where we will unpack, repack and load the van before continuing into Bella Coola Valley and to the guesthouse for a hot shower. Once settled the group will head out for dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 10 Salmon Drift and Estuary Tour

In the morning breakfast is provided at the guesthouse. The group will be taken into the settlement of Bella Coola and toured around the estuary and local waterfalls. The group will then be shuttled an hour up the valley to the Atnarko River for a river drift/snorkel with local biologist guides, for an interpretive look at the salmon spawning area where you may see Grizzlies fishing for salmon.

Day 11 Native Indian Rock Carving Tour/Forest Trails

Breakfast is again at the guesthouse. There will be a unique Rock Carvings tour by local native guides to Thorsen Creek. The group will then be shown around the local native art gallery to learn more of the culture and have a chance of buying local carvings. Later in the day will be a tour of some of the forest trails exploring the rich ecosystem of the temperate rainforest.

Day 12 Vancouver

It's time to leave the wilds behind. There are a number of options to return to Vancouver:

- You can ride with us back down to the city, a long drive but scenic nonetheless (10-12 hours)
- Fly out of Bella Coola on a direct flight back to Vancouver (1 hour)
- Take a ferry along the Discovery Coast Passage to Vancouver Island (2 days)

EXPEDITION SUMMARY

Technical Difficulty:	Previous canoeing experience is not necessary. The canoeing will be flat open water although windy conditions can increase the challenge.
Fitness:	Good health and a reasonable level of fitness
Duration:	12 Days from arrival in Vancouver to return to Vancouver
Dates:	22 nd August – 2 nd September 4 th – 15 th September
Group size:	Minimum 4 Maximum 10
Price:	1395 GBP 2790 CAN

Included in the price

- Tour guide services
- Local guide services
- All in-country transport
- Comfortable B+B accommodation
- Camping fees
- Most meals throughout
- Equipment where necessary
- Park fees

Excluded

- International flight
- Personal travel insurance
- Items of a personal nature, souvenirs, drinks etc.....
- Two evening meals
- Personal kit

BOOKING

YOUR PROTECTION: Wild Earth Adventures meets the UK Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992:

“In compliance with the UK Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 an insurance policy has been arranged with Travel & General Insurance Plc to protect the monies paid in respect of the travel arrangements offered in this Brochure/on this website, and to cater, where necessary (and subject to the terms of the insurance policy), for a refund of such monies and/or your repatriation to the UK in the unlikely event of our financial failure”.

Please get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.

INSURANCE

It is a prerequisite of the trip that everyone has adequate insurance. Personal travel insurance must be arranged by each individual. A number of insurance companies can be suggested. Please contact us directly for further information.

AREA INFORMATION

LOCATION

Canada is the world's second largest country after Russia and is divided into ten provinces. British Columbia is the third largest and most westerly province in Canada, it's larger than any of the U.S. states, except Alaska, and is four times larger than Great Britain.

On the west coast of Canada, with the Pacific Ocean on the west and the province of Alberta on the east, British Columbia is bounded by the state of Alaska, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon on the north and the states of Montana, Idaho and Washington on the south.

Population: 3,907,738 (Statistics Canada, 2001 Census)

Capital City: Victoria, Vancouver Island

Government: BC Liberal Party

MAIN INDUSTRY

Forestry, mining, fisheries, agriculture, energy, and transportation

LANGUAGE

Canada is an extremely multi-cultural society and the Inuits of the northern areas converse in their own native tongue. French and English are the official languages of Canada, although the latter is very much the spoken language in this part of the country.

RELIGION

Many religions are practiced in Canada. A large number of the population are Catholics, followed by Protestants and then other Eastern non-Christian religions.

WILDLIFE

British Columbia is famous for its high population of Grizzly and Black bears. There is also the subspecies of the black bear which includes the Kermode or Spirit bear that lives in the coastal temperate rainforest and the glacier bear that's found in the northwest area of the province.

Other mammals that inhabit the area include Wolves, Moose, Deer, Caribou, Bighorn Sheep, Cougar (mountain lion), Lynx, Mountain Goat, Marmots and the mysterious Wolverine.

Sea life is abundant in B.C. coastal waters. Pacific Gray whales migrate along the west coast of Vancouver Island while resident Orca pods (Killer whales) live in the east coast water of Vancouver Island. Minke whales and Humpback whales can also be spotted. Harbour seals are common and there are Stellar and California sea lion colonies.

It's estimated that over one million birds use the Pacific Flyway, including the Rufous hummingbirds and the Snow geese.

Five different species of salmon live in Pacific waters. Lingcod and halibut are also found in waters along the coast. B.C. inland streams and lakes offer cutthroat, rainbow and Dolly Varden trout and Kokanee salmon.

AREA HISTORY

Alexander Mackenzie was the first European to cross the Rocky Mountains and view the western seas from the shores of northwestern North America, preceding the Lewis and Clark expedition by 12 years.

In 1793 Mackenzie and his party left from Lake Athabaska in 1793 in search of a trade route to the Pacific, trekking and canoeing across 1,240 miles (2000km) of unmapped terrain their journey took 72 days, ending in the Bella Coola Valley. They rested at a community that was named "Friendly Village" because of the hospitality of its Nuxalk inhabitants.

These people guided Mackenzie and his men down the river into Dean Channel. A dispute between the Nuxalk and the coastal Heiltsuk people prevented them from reaching the open sea, but Mackenzie was satisfied that his mission was complete.

His journey followed pre-existing trading trails established by Native British Columbians. The trails were used by First Nations primarily for trading eulachon (a small, smelt-like fish) grease, perhaps the most valued commodity in the northwest.

At the westernmost point of his journey, Mackenzie wrote on a rock in reddish paint made of vermilion and bear grease: "*Alex Mackenzie from Canada by land 22nd July 1793*". Now called *Mackenzie's Rock*, the rock near the water's edge still bears his words. It is also the location of a historical fortified First Nations village, and petroglyphs can be found at the cobble beach.

The Bella Coola Valley became a route to the Cariboo gold fields in 1858, the location of a Hudson's Bay Company trading post in 1867. In 1894, a group of Norwegian colonists arrived from Minnesota, and settled in Hagensborg in the Bella Coola Valley, a town that still reflects this Norwegian heritage today. They chose the area because the landscape reminded them of their homeland - fjords just like in Norway!

The Bella Coola Valley is of archaeological and historical significance in that it was a trade corridor between coastal and interior Native Groups. The river had several villages along its length. Furs and leather were exchanged for salmon and eulachon grease, and were transported along what were called the "grease" trails. Remnants of pre-contact Native culture include the site of Friendly Village, visited by Alexander Mackenzie in 1793, pictographs near Big Rock, a burial ground and smokehouse near Stuie, and aboriginal trade trails.

For many years Bella Coola was linked to the world beyond only by horse trail and by sea. The only way to or from Bella Coola was via a steep packhorse trail that led to Anahim Lake, and the start of Highway 26. It wasn't until 1953 that the road to Bella Coola was completed.

LEADERSHIP AND GUIDES

This tour will be accompanied by a professional tour guide. The local guides used throughout the trip are all residents and are selected on the basis of their skills, knowledge and unique characteristics.

Whilst qualifications and experience are essential requirements, it is also the local knowledge of the area which is an important element in leading a tour.

The tour guide holds a current advanced wilderness first aid certificate and has experience of dealing with the symptoms often associated with spending time in the wilderness.

The tour guide will have a comprehensive first aid kit to deal with most eventualities and emergencies. However it is advised that each individual has a basic first aid kit to deal with minor medical issues such as blisters, insect bites and sunburn.

SAFETY AND BACK-UP

During the canoe phase in the central coast, a satellite phone will be carried by the guide as this is the most reliable form of communication. VHF radios are not very reliable due to the signal interference from the mountainous terrain.

Canada operates a volunteer search and rescue service similar to the one in the UK. Kamloops is the control centre for search and rescue on the central coast. In the event of an emergency helicopters and float planes can be used to access remote areas to evacuate a casualty.

In the event of somebody becoming seriously ill or injured, the casualty would be evacuated to the nearest doctor or hospital.

The hospital a casualty is evacuated to will depend on the nature of the medical condition. The most serious would be treated in Vancouver.

It is important to be aware however that external factors such as the weather may determine how long it will take for a rescue to occur.

IMMUNISATION AND HEALTH ISSUES

Canada requires no specific vaccinations.

Water:

Tap water is generally safe to drink, though at campgrounds water is sometimes good for washing only. Backcountry water collected from lakes and streams must always be boiled, treated with iodine or filtered, as giardia can sometimes be present. Symptoms include nausea, bloating, cramps, and diarrhoea. It is easily diagnosed by a stool test and readily treated with antibiotics.

Insects:

Mosquito, Blackfly and Horsefly are quite common, especially near water, so it is advisable to use some form of mosquito repellent. An antihistamine cream is worth taking to relieve any bites that do get through. The best avoidance is to cover up exposed skin at times when they are worse, such as in the evenings.

Lyme disease: a risk in wooded regions, transmitted by deer ticks, which are only 1-2 mm long. Most cases occur in the late spring and summer. Flu-like symptoms are common, including fever, headache, joint pains, body aches, and malaise. When the infection is treated promptly with an appropriate antibiotic, usually doxycycline or amoxicillin, the cure rate is high. Luckily, since the tick must be attached for 36 hours or more to transmit Lyme disease, most cases can be prevented by performing thorough ticks check at the end of each day.

Rabies: a viral infection of the brain and spinal cord that is almost always fatal. The virus is carried in the saliva of infected animals and is typically transmitted through an animal bite, though contamination of any break in the skin with infected saliva may result in rabies. In Canada, most cases of human rabies are related to exposure to bats.

A medical questionnaire must be completed with your confirmation of booking which will be completely confidential. It is important that all participants declare their medical history, any medication and their current medical status prior medical issues are disclosed to prevent any unforeseen problems.

For those participants taking any medication we strongly advise taking 100% reserve stock of medication spread between two bags in case of loss or theft.

ACCOMMODATION

Our aim is to provide quiet, clean and comfortable accommodation. Private double rooms will be allocated. There will be a supplement for those wanting a private single. Breakfast is included with most of the accommodation.

The group will camp during the canoeing phase. The camping sites are marked areas with tent pads, seated toilet, food storage area, fire place, benches and fantastic views!

FOOD

Almost all meals are catered for except for two evening meals and any extras you may desire. We try to make it that there is enough food for you throughout the day that you do not need to purchase any extras.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner will be provided most days. While camping the guide(s) will set up a kitchen area and organize meal times. Food while camping will be of a simple, wholesome and tasty! The menu will be set to meet the requirements of the group. You might find it useful to either buy or take with you

some energy snack bars. A five-minute rest stop with a cereal bar or other quick energy food every hour or so can make a tremendous difference to morale and strength. Glucose energy pills and mineral isotonic drinks are also very useful.

The standard and assortment of dishes in restaurants are on a par with any to be found in the major European cities. Fresh fish is to be recommended and salmon and sea bass feature prominently as do venison and other game meats. Squash and root vegetables are popular legumes and the Asian influence from the Pacific coast appears on many menus.

If you have any particular dietary requirements please let us know.
Of course fast food is readily available.

LOCAL TRANSPORT

Wild Earth Adventures has a 15 passenger van which will be used to transport the group during the trip. This is regularly government inspected to meet Canadian road safety standards. Where an alternative vehicle is used similar road safety checks will be carried out. All vehicles will have sufficient insurance

IN-COUNTRY COSTS

The currency of Canada is the Canadian Dollar.

Visitors can find accommodation, food and entertainment to suit any budget. For most visitors, the largest expense will be accommodation. Food prices are generally much lower than those in Western Europe, but slightly higher than those in the USA. As an indicator of food prices:

Budget meals: C\$7-15

Mid-range meals: C\$15-30

High-end meals: C\$30-40

If you stay in budget accommodation and eat in cafes, expect to spend around US\$45 a day, not including long-distance transport. If you stay in motels and eat at restaurants occasionally, you're looking at around US\$80 a day.

The Canadian government levies a Goods and Service Tax (GST) and a Provincial Sales Tax (PST) which can add up to 15% to the quoted price.

WHAT TO BRING

We will provide all tents and cooking supplies, including mugs/bowls/plates/cutlery. You will need to provide a sleeping bag and mat. We do not supply any personal equipment so you will need to bring appropriate clothing, waterproofs and footwear. A detailed kit list will be sent.

BAGGAGE

A suitcase will not be appropriate. The best pack for this trip is a frameless kit bag sometimes called 'hold-all'. An internal framed modern style backpack would also be okay but these do not pack as easily into the dry bags.

A 60 litre backpack or a kit bag should carry all your main items for traveling. **We will provide you with dry bags to use throughout the paddling. Each person is limited to one dry bag.**

You will need a day pack to carry items of a personal nature. **For the treks you will need a 20-30 litre daypack which will contain all you need for the day.**

ECOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Please be aware of the potential damaging impact tourism can have both on the environment and local communities. We ask for your full consideration and co-operation concerning all ecological matters, particularly with regard the disposal of rubbish.

DISCLAIMER

By its very nature, this trip may be subject to disruptions beyond our control that can force some changes to the itinerary. Environmental factors have the greatest influence on an individual level.

The expedition is taking part in a mountain region. This means that events that might otherwise be none consequential could prove totally disruptive to the expedition. For example: excessive and unseasonable snowfall could make the route of the expedition impassable and the expedition itinerary impractical.

In such circumstances, the expedition leader will make whatever re-arrangements are possible to ensure that the best alternative itinerary is followed, bearing in mind the original aims of the expedition, the resources available and the wishes of all the team members.

Please be prepared to be flexible.

HOW TO BOOK

1. Contact us to check availability.
2. Download the booking form or ask us to send you a copy.
3. Each person travelling must complete a booking form and sign to say they have understood the booking conditions.
4. Decide on preferred method of payment: a bank transfer or cheque*
* Contact us to request bank details for bank transfers. Cheques are payable to Wild Earth Adventures.
5. Ensure each person travelling completes a medical form and signs the waiver *
* The waiver is in compliance with North American requirements. If you have any questions please ask.
6. Send the completed forms to Wild Earth Adventures, PO Box 2842, Pewsey, Wilts, SN9 6WX
7. Confirmation of your booking.

CONTACT US

We are always available to answer and questions or concerns you may have so don't hesitate to pick up the phone or drop us a line...

TELEPHONE: 0871 218 1015

E-MAIL: info@wildearth-adventures.com