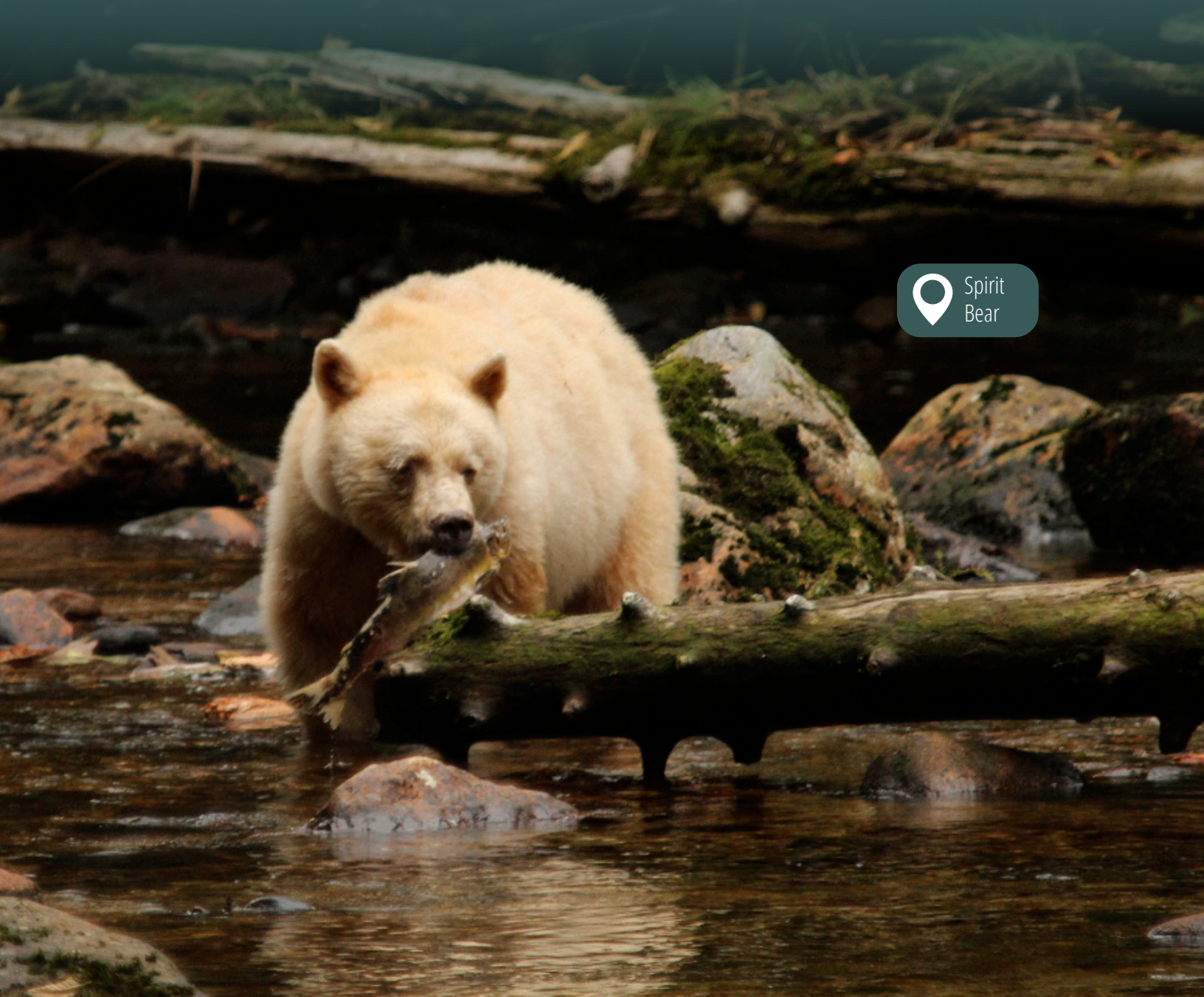




Great Bear Rainforest

IN SEARCH OF SPIRIT BEARS

SEPTEMBER 20 – 27, 2025 | 8 DAYS





Deep in the green, primeval forests of the British Columbia Central Coast, elusive large white animals roam. They are called “Spirit Bears” or Kermode Bears and result from a recessive gene among the local Black Bears. Only 10% of Black Bears in the area are Kermode, so though we expect to see Black Bears, it will require good luck and perseverance to spot a Spirit Bear.



When you sail the Great Bear Rainforest, you see islands and intricate waterways beneath towering mountains; lush, coastal temperate forests; wilderness alive with eagles, ravens, salmon, bears, and wolves; 10,000-year-old Indigenous cultures; and now the opportunity to adventure along these waterways inside the forest, search for wildlife, meet local guides, and learn why the Great Bear Rainforest is one of the last gems on the Pacific Coast.

We travel a long, convoluted maze of narrow waterways and fjords. Emerald forests of Western Hemlock and Western Red-cedar cloak lush river valleys and broad estuaries. Biologically abundant and diverse, this area is also ecologically fragile. Along our route, we are ever on the lookout for magnificent Grizzly Bears, animals that require large areas of habitat undisturbed by human activity. The rainforest is home to a significant population of Gray Wolves and a rich and varied bird population, including Bald Eagles and colourful seabirds such as Pigeon Guillemots and Rhinoceros Auklets. During our voyage, there are excellent chances of seeing Humpback Whales, Gray Whales, and Orcas. We travel in this area with permission from the local Gitga’at, Kitasoo, and Xais Xais people (members of the Tsimshian Nation). We plan to spend a day with local Gitga’at guides, sharing in their culture and history and visiting their favourite bear-viewing sites. We also intend to visit ancient villages where old building remains lie, see petroglyphs, and visit the newly built longhouses in Klemtu or Hartley Bay. There is something almost ethereal in these waters and along these shores. Join us to venture into a world apart on this chartered expedition cruise.



Tour Leader

Catherine Jardine is an avid naturalist and traveller who follows her considerable interests in wildlife and landscapes worldwide. A superlative communicator of the natural world, Catherine works as a staff ornithologist with Birds Canada based at their National Data Centre in Delta, British Columbia. Catherine has a particular expertise in seabird ecology and her field work has taken her to many a remote place. She has led previous Quest tours to Honduras and Antarctica and a number of expeditions to the Great Bear Rainforest.



 Humpback Whales

Signature Moments

- 🌀 Watching Grizzly Bears foraging for salmon
- 🌀 Seeing Humpback Whales feeding cooperatively using the 'bubble-net' technique
- 🌀 Beachcombing along misty shorelines
- 🌀 Tracking Spirit Bears with the local First Nations residents
- 🌀 Kayaking in the calm morning hours with fantastic backdrops

Our Route



Detailed Itinerary

Saturday, September 20: Embark your vessel at Terrace

Meet your fellow group members at a designated location in Terrace for a shuttle ride to the MK Bay Marina in Kitimat where we meet the vessel and her crew.

After a brief introduction, safety orientation, and cabin assignment, we set sail for the Great Bear Rainforest. During our daily shore excursions, our onboard naturalist is there to identify different coastal plants, animals, birds, and marine life forms, while elucidating on their natural history. Interested participants can help keep a species list for the trip. There is time to explore the protected waters using our stable sea-kayaks whenever we are at anchor. Each night, we anchor in a different, secluded anchorage.

Overnight: Island Odyssey

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Sunday, September 21 – Friday, September 26: Great Bear Rainforest

During these six full days of the voyage, we plan to stop at some of the most stirring natural and cultural sites along this verdant stretch of coastal temperate rainforest. Here is a sampling of the sites we intend to visit. The chronology may change depending on weather and local conditions.

Milbanke Sound: Keep an eye out for Sea Otters in these waters. Amid the nuclear testing at Amchitka Island in Alaska between 1968 and 1972, 89 Sea Otters were transplanted to Vancouver Island. Some found their way to the central coast, and you can occasionally spot them in the kelp beds wrapped in the leaves of kelp to anchor themselves against the currents.

Douglas Channel: This is an area of spectacular rock faces and impressive waterfalls. We get to travel along the shore of Gitga'at (Princess Royal Island) Conservancy — the best-known area for seeing the rare Spirit or Kermode Bears.

These bears are Black Bears expressing a genetic variation that results in about ten percent of the population here being all white. As we wind our way through the remote corners of this area, watch for bears and an array of coastal birds attracted to the spawning salmon. We are fortunate to spend a day with local Tsimshian First Nation guides who take us to their favourite wildlife-viewing areas where we get some of our best chances to spot Spirit Bears. We also have the privilege of visiting the ceremonial Big Houses at the two First Nations villages in this area: Klemtu and Hartley Bay.

Farther up Douglas Channel, we cruise past Hawkesbury Island. It is along these mainland shores that we might observe Grizzly Bears. We plan to explore an estuary for foraging bears, Bald Eagles, Common Ravens, and other animals feeding on the spawning salmon.

Whale Channel: Here, we have a great chance of seeing Humpback Whales, magnificent and playful creatures that can grow to be up to 15 metres in length. Individuals from this North Pacific population migrate each winter to their breeding waters around the Hawaiian Islands. In near-shore waters, watch for Steller Sea Lions, the largest eared seals in the world!

In open Principe Channel, we hope for a good wind so that we can set the sails and ride the air currents.

Overnight: Island Odyssey

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Saturday, September 27: Disembark at Terrace

By mid-morning, we arrive at Kitimat, where the local shuttle bus transports us and our luggage to the Terrace airport. The travel time to the airport is approximately one hour.

Meals: Breakfast

Note: The voyage itinerary listed is an example only. Due to the nature of this cruise, weather or other conditions there may need to be changes to the itinerary and/or cancellation of certain shore excursions.



Steller's Jay



Humpback Whale



Grizzly Bear



This tour is eligible
for the WEC 5% credit.
Read all about the
Worldwide Explorer's
Club [here](#).
Every booking earns
WEC status!



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Steller Sea Lions

Tour Details

Tour Cost (per person): C\$8545 + 5% GST

Group Size:

Up to 12 travellers.

Single Supplement

The number of cabins is limited, and we cannot guarantee single accommodations, though it's possible that a very limited number of cabins *may be available* for guaranteed single accommodations. If you wish guaranteed single accommodation, the single supplement for this trip is the tour cost plus an additional 100%. This will be collected at 90 days prior to departure.

Included Features:

- Accommodation in double occupancy aboard the *Island Odyssey*
- \$100 Sustainability Fee in support of conservation and research
- Ground transfer from Terrace accommodations to embarkation point at Kitimat on Day 1
- Ground transfer from disembarkation point in Kitimat to the Terrace airport on Day 8
- All meals, as listed in the itinerary
- All activities while on board the ship and ashore
- Park entrance fees
- First Nations protocol fees
- Services of crew and local naturalist
- Full use of all facilities aboard the *Island Odyssey*

Not Included:

- Pre-trip hotel night in Terrace
- Transportation to/from Terrace
- Roundtrip flights
- Gratuities to ship crew and staff
- 5% GST
- Provision of a bath towel
- Airport and departure taxes
- Meals not listed in the itinerary
- Items of a personal nature: laundry, drinks, phone calls, etc.
- Excess baggage charges
- Fuel surcharges, if applicable
- Travel insurance (This coverage is strongly recommended and can be purchased through Worldwide Quest.)
- Additional arrangements required due to any emergency or other situation

Payment Details

A non-refundable deposit of C\$1500 per person is required to reserve your space on this tour. A payment of C\$2000 is due six months prior to departure. The balance is due 90 days prior to departure.

What to Expect



Joining Instructions

Arrival: Saturday, September 20, 2025

The tour begins with an included shuttle transfer from your accommodations in Terrace to the embarkation point in Kitimat. Pick-up time will be included in your final trip documents.

Departure: Saturday, September 27, 2025

The tour concludes with an included shuttle transfer from the disembarkation point in Kitimat to the Terrace airport. Please contact us to verify timing of this transfer prior to making any flight arrangements.

Flights

Flights are not included in the cost of your tour and must be arranged separately. Pacific Coastal Airlines provided daily service between Terrace and Vancouver International South Terminal. You should plan to arrive in your starting location the day before the boat departs. If you are making your own flight arrangements, please reconfirm with our office that the trip is confirmed as operating and reconfirm that your air schedule matches the planned itinerary.



Level of Activity: Easy to Moderate

While this is not a particularly strenuous trip and none of our hikes are particularly long or fast, you should bear in mind that walking on rough paths or pebbly beaches is sometimes more difficult than on hard ground or pavement. Good firm walking shoes and perhaps a trekking pole for extra balance should maximize your enjoyment of this trip. It is a good idea to have a change of shoes for on board.

There are no specific physical fitness requirements for this tour; however, we should all be able to climb in and out of small boats, with assistance from the crew, and walk moderate distances through wilderness that has no prepared trails. There are no docks and all shore trips involve beach landings. You should also take in to account that we will be travelling in an isolated area, with limited access to assistance in case of a medical emergency.

Prior to going ashore, our local onboard naturalist will explain the level of difficulty and physical fitness required for the scheduled shore activities. If any of us feels that, for one reason or another, we would rather not participate in the scheduled activity, we are welcome to remain on board the vessel or explore the immediate shore and beach area.



Travel Documents

Nationalities other than Canadian, will require a passport for this trip. Please ensure it is valid for at least 6 months beyond your scheduled return home. Before booking, please refer to the Canadian government website to obtain travel advice for the destination(s) you are visiting: www.travel.gc.ca



Accommodation

As noted above, pre-expedition accommodations in Terrace are not included, but there are several comfortable hotels from which to choose.



#SafeTravels

Worldwide Quest has been awarded the World Travel and Tourism Council's #SafeTravels Stamp for adopting health and hygiene global standardized protocols. [Learn more.](#)



Weather

We expect conditions typical of a temperature rainforest: cloudy skies mixed with bouts of sun, and some rain showers. Out on more open stretches of water, it can be quite windy. Daytime highs at this time of year average around 15 °C, with morning lows sitting around 8 °C. The ever-changing weather is a big part of what makes this region so unique.



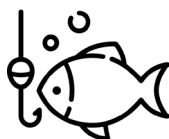
Kayaking

There are kayaks on board for use in sight of the boat when at anchor. The kayaks are very stable double kayaks (two people in each) and smaller singles. The crew of the boat would be happy to give you instruction and get you started.



Transportation

We use comfortable shuttle buses for the ground transfer between Terrace and Kitimat on Days 1 and 8.



Fishing

If you intend to fish, you will require a “Tidal Water Sport Fishing License.” For further information, please refer to the Fisheries and Oceans Canada website (Pacific region).



Water

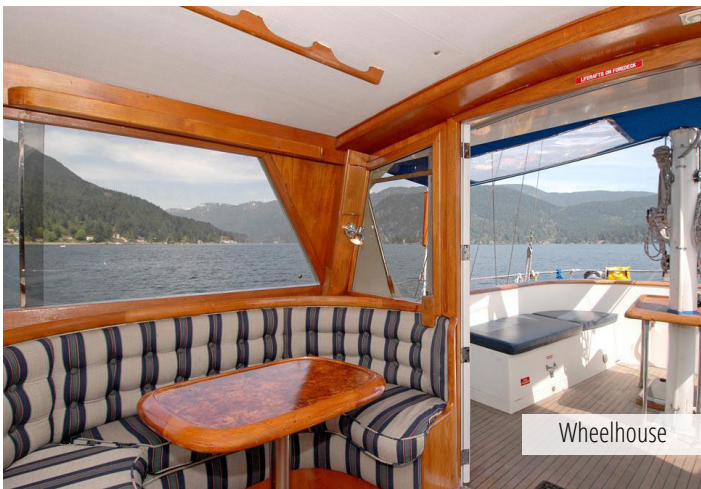
This vessel carries a good supply of water, but it is important to remember that a boat is totally self-contained and in wilderness areas not always near a water supply. Travellers are asked to use water conservatively.



Packing Suggestion

Please note that these vessels are lovely, but they are not the QE II. The space aboard is ample for comfortable living, but not excessive. Soft luggage, such as a duffle bag, is most easily stowed as it is compressible.

Our Exclusively Chartered Vessel



We charter the *S/V Island Odyssey* exclusively for our Quest group.

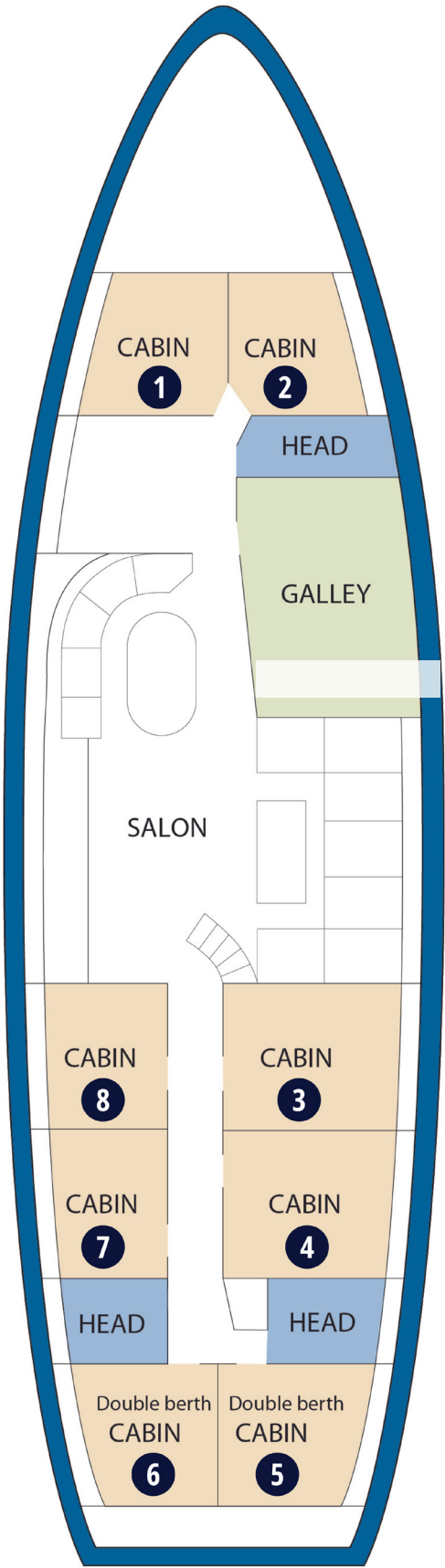
A 68-foot ketch, The Island Odyssey was built as a luxurious private yacht in 1984. It completed a major renovation in 2003 to update the cabins and all safety systems. It features 8 private double-occupancy cabins, 3 shared bathrooms with hot showers and a comfortable salon with a natural history library. On deck, the large deckhouse provides a comfortable spot to watch for wildlife.

Cabins are of irregular sizes. Each has accommodation for two people — some cabins with one double bed, most with two single bunks, often an upper and lower style.

Cabins:

- Cabin 3: two single bunks in an L formation
- Cabin 4: two single bunks in an L formation
- Cabin 5: one double bed (rear cabin)
- Cabin 6: one double bed (rear cabin)
- Cabin 7: two single bunks in an L formation
- Cabin 8: two single bunks in an L formation

Deck Plan



Additional Info

Terms and Conditions

For additional information about our terms and conditions, please refer to your booking form, the current brochure, or our website. All participants booking with Worldwide Quest are covered by the terms of the Ontario Travel Industry Act (Worldwide Quest International, Ontario – License # 2667946). See full details [here](#).

Cancellation Policy

All payments are non-refundable; however, you may transfer your initial deposit for any land tour to another tour 90 days or more prior to your scheduled departure date. Initial deposits for cruises are non-refundable and non-transferable. Your second payment and your final payment are non-refundable and non-transferable. If you cancel within 90 days prior to trip departure, all associated trip costs are non-refundable. In the event of a cancellation, you must notify Worldwide Quest immediately and in writing. See full details [here](#).

Travel Insurance

We urge you to ensure that you have adequate cancellation and medical insurance in place, should an unexpected event cause you to cancel or interrupt your trip or should the tour not be operable as per our terms and conditions. We will offer you Manulife insurance coverage. Medical insurance, including emergency medical evacuation coverage, is mandatory on all our tours.



Worldwide Explorers Club

Travel twice with us and you become a member of the Worldwide Explorers Club. Earn 5% off all your subsequent eligible group tours. Look for the WEC icon to find your next tour. The bonus is non-transferable and cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount or credit. Note that some exceptions may apply. Members also get access to special offers and exploratory tours.



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How to Book

Please contact the Worldwide Quest office for more information and to secure your booking.

1-800-387-1483 | 416-633-5666
travel@worldwidequest.com