

Great Bear Rainforest Explorer



2016 Edition



Ocean Light II Adventures

The Ethereal Great Bear Rainforest



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The Great Bear Rainforest

The Mid Coast of British Columbia from Rivers Inlet to the Skeena River is also known as the Great Bear Rainforest. This area is true wilderness and sees very few human visitors, making it an exciting adventure destination. Within the Great Bear Rainforest lie some of the world's last pristine coastal rainforest: Old-growth hemlock and cedar forests; tidewater estuaries rich with grasses, roots and berries; cascading waterfalls and sparkling streams of spawning salmon. In the fall bears, wolves, and birds come to the streams and rivers to feed on the salmon.

What's Involved?

This trip aboard the *Ocean Light II* takes you to one of the world's most spectacular coastlines. We will explore the inlets, bays and old-growth forest of the spectacular mid-coast of British Columbia, including to the region that is the ancestral home of the rare white Spirit Bear. The surrounding mountains and rainforest offer spectacular scenery and diverse and abundant wildlife. We'll cruise the inlets, walk the trails, and explore the creeks while searching for – and hopefully photographing – Spirit Bears, black bears,

grizzly bears, American martens, river otters, eagles, coastal wolves, humpback whales, harbor seals and more!

The Spirit Bear is a rare, elusive colour variant of the North American black bear. The Tsimshian-speaking people of the north coast of British Columbia have shared its territory for thousands of years. Due to a double recessive gene, a small percentage of black bears in the area are all white. Because these bears



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mostly live on isolated islands, the gene continues to be replicated. A Tshimshian myth says that “Raven made one in every 10 black bears, white to remind the people of the time when glaciers covered this land”.

The Spirit Bears of the Great Bear Rainforest have had very little exposure to humans. As it can be difficult to locate these bears, we have undertaken numerous trips over the past two decades to get a better idea of their behaviour and distribution. Today, working in close conjunction with local First Nations, conservation groups and bear biologists, we take small groups of people into the area to search for, watch and hopefully photograph these exquisite yet elusive animals. To maximize our chances of seeing a Spirit Bear we will utilize viewing platforms in certain situations set up by the local First Nations. We will also explore estuaries and bays and watch the remarkable feat of spawning salmon.

The Great Bear Rainforest is also home to the magnificent Grizzly Bear. River estuaries that support spawning salmon are particularly good habitat for the grizzly bear. In the fall, the grizzlies congregate on the rivers and tidal estuaries to feast on the 4 species of pacific salmon that are returning to their natal streams. We will look for grizzlies and in doing so will see some of the most stunning scenery that the area has to offer.

Typically at this time of year, humpback whales frequent the inlets and bays: we will watch and photograph these massive and amazing mammals when the opportunity presents itself. In the past 5 years the numbers of whales in the area has increased dramatically. We often get the chance to see whales up close, bubble-net feeding, lunge feeding and breaching.

This is a multi-faceted trip, focusing not just on the bears but also on the entire ecosystem in which they thrive. We will use the *Ocean Light II* as a base, and a motorized inflatable to transfer people between the boat and the shore. Four kayaks are on the *Ocean Light II* for those wishing to enjoy the tranquility of paddling as we explore one of the last unlogged temperate rainforests in the world.

The photographic opportunities are amazing. This trip will give you access to some of the best bear viewing locations in the world! Participants should arrive in good physical and mental shape prepared for a flexible itinerary that may require strenuous physical activity, including hiking on uneven, wet and rugged terrain. Weather conditions may be variable and participants must be prepared for adverse weather including torrential rain and cold temperatures. Although conditions may be difficult at times, the rewards are great, as you become part of a small percentage of people who have explored the wonders of the Great Bear Rainforest.

2016 Dates & Prices

- Dates:**
- Sept 2-9
 - Sept 9-16
 - Sept 16-23
 - Sept 23-30
 - Sept 30 - Oct 7
 - Oct 7-14

Availability: Please email us (adventure@oceanlight2.bc.ca) to check availability on any of the trips above.

Price: \$4449.00 CAD per person plus 5% GST from Terrace, BC.

Number of Participants: Maximum of 9

Number of Crew: 2

What's Included?

- The services of a fully qualified skipper/bear guide and crew/cook
- Use of all gear available on board
- All meals from Lunch Day 1 to Breakfast Day 8 (B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner)
- Van transport from your hotel in Terrace to the *Ocean Light II* in Kitimat and back to Terrace airport



What's Not?

- Gratuities for crew (optional and/or discretionary, but always appreciated!)
- Transportation between your home and trip start and end point (Terrace, B.C)
- Personal belongings and equipment
- Accommodation in Terrace on night prior to trip
- Excess baggage charges
- Any extra personal expenses incurred because of weather, logistical delays, missed flights or delayed departures of scheduled aircraft.

Itinerary

You must arrive in Terrace prior to Day 1 to prepare for an early morning departure. This itinerary is a sample only – the exact itinerary of your trip will be dictated by factors such as weather, tides, and group interest, with the crew working within the parameters of safety, time, and the highlights of the area.

Day 1 – L/D

Early morning you will be picked up at the Best Western Hotel in Terrace by van and driven to the marina in Kitimat (approximately 45 minutes).

We will head out right away to start exploring some of the best wildlife viewing areas.

Days 2 to 7 – B/L/D

These days are spent exploring the Great Bear Rainforest and enjoying the splendor of the surrounding area. Opportunities for wildlife viewing and photography will occur on each day; however, please be aware that the weather conditions and the location of wildlife will dictate the frequency of such activities. We will utilize viewing platforms as well as explore salmon creeks and rivers to try and see the Spirit Bear and the Coastal Grizzly Bear. The fall is a time of plenty and marine mammals such as the humpback whale are a common sight. The *Ocean Light II* will be utilized as a base for sleeping and eating.

Day 8 – B

After breakfast you will be picked up by the van and driven back to Terrace airport. Please do not book a flight out prior to 11 AM.

More About the Trip

The Boat. The *Ocean Light II* is an Ocean 71' ketch and is thought by many to be the perfect B.C. Coast charter yacht. With fourteen Atlantic crossings, the *Ocean Light II* has the pedigree and comfort to make any sailing experience with her one to remember. It has a spacious, well maintained interior of mahogany, authentic Douglas Fir and white enamel.

The layout offers 5 separate guest cabins that are closed off from the rest of the yacht. A berth will be assigned to each person upon arrival. There are two heads, a shower and the interior is all newly remodeled. The main salon located below deck is a spacious 14' x 17', which seats twelve comfortably while still leaving space to move



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about freely. There is ample deck space and she is very comfortable under sail. *Ocean Light II* features all of the extras expected: 19' hard bottom inflatable, four kayaks as well as an extensive library for your enjoyment.

The Crew. Chris Tulloch, Tom Ellison or Tom McPherson will be your skipper/guide. They all have years of coastal experience and all are CBVA (Commercial Bear Viewers Association) certified. They have introduced the coast of B.C. to hundreds of people, young and old. Jenn Broom provides invaluable assistance as crew, guide and cook – she has over a quarter century of coastal experience and she'll make you feel at home aboard the *Ocean Light II*. Alternately Luise Frommer will be the cook/guide on your trip. *Ocean Light II Adventures* and her crew continually contribute a tremendous amount to the conservation of our endangered wilderness areas.

For more information about our boat – including images of the interior – just visit this page on our website:

<http://www.oceanlight2.bc.ca/html/about/boat.html>

Meals. We take special care in preparing nutritious and delicious meals. All meals will be prepared aboard the sailboat and will include fresh seafood, homemade soups, breads and salads. Wine is served with dinner,

and you may bring your own drinks to be consumed in moderation and only when the anchor is down for the night. We will not tolerate excessive drinking on our vessel. Clients have the option to assist in food gathering and meal preparation. If you have particular dietary restrictions, please let us know well in advance.

What About the Weather? Weather along the coast in the fall can be variable. One should expect the variety of weather that creates the many moods for which this area is noted. Past experience tells us that September can be a very wet month. Be prepared for rain and overcast skies and for cooler temperatures. Later in the month we start to see the first frosts. This said, the sun does shine in the fall and classic Indian summers are not rare.

For more information about this once-in-a-lifetime adventure, please contact us at:

Email: adventure@oceanlight2.bc.ca

Phone: 604-328-5339