

GO GREEN! Rather than printing these notes, we suggest saving this PDF file on your smartphone. Not only is it more environmentally friendly, but it also means these notes are always at hand!

Cougar Accommodated

6 days/5 nights

Escape to the rugged west coast of British Columbia on this 6 day tour to Vancouver Island and Whistler. Experience soaring mountains, old-growth forests, raging waterfalls, and picturesque lake and ocean views. Enjoy free time in the quaint fishing village of Tofino, Victoria (the provincial capital), and Whistler, one of the 2010 Olympic host resorts. With an included Indigenous cultural tour, adventure activities like whale watching, surfing, and ziplining on offer, and beaches, shops, and sites to explore, you'll have plenty to do!



Note: The Cougar is a combination of our Island Explorer and Sea to Sky tours. Some of your fellow travellers will be continuing on to the Rocky Mountains after you finish.

Highlights

- Take a scenic ferry journey across the Salish Sea
- Enjoy picture-perfect views around the quaint fishing village of Tofino
- Watch the sunset over the Pacific from a beach near Tofino
- Dive into the scene at Victoria's Inner Harbour
- Walk through a rainforest to the base of Shannon Falls
- Discover Indigenous cultures at the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre

What's Included

- 5 nights mixed gender, hostel dormitory style accommodation
- Moose Bus transportation
- 2 scenic ferry rides to and from Vancouver Island
- Services of a professional & fun tour guide/driver
- Guided tour of Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre
- Walking tour of Victoria
- 2 dinners
- National Park fees

Itinerary

Day 1: Vancouver to Tofino

Get your binoculars at the ready! We'll begin our adventure with a little marine life spotting as we take a scenic ferry ride from Horseshoe Bay to Nanaimo on Vancouver Island. From there we will explore the lush rainforests, cascading waterfalls, and giant trees of Vancouver Island. Then we're off to Sproat Lake to observe one of the finest panels of prehistoric Indigenous petroglyphs. Our day ends by settling into the quaint little fishing village of Tofino, and feasting on fish & chips (don't worry, they have non-seafood options too!)

Meal Inclusions: Dinner

Moose Accommodation: HI Tofino - Whalers on the Point

Day 2: Tofino Free Day

Today is yours to do as you please! Cruise through the Pacific Ocean and go whale watching, soak in one of Tofino's hot springs, or jump right into kayaking or surfing. Explore on foot, by bike, or go hiking – Tofino has lots on offer for your free day! As the evening draws in and the stars start to appear, we'll be setting up a beach campfire (weather permitting) where we'll toast some marshmallows and share each other's stories of the day.

Moose Accommodation: HI Tofino - Whalers on the Point

Day 3: Tofino to Victoria

We'll start our day at Wickanninish Beach in Pacific Rim National Park, which was named after Chief Wickanninish who ruled Clayoquot Sound in the 1700s! Then we'll be heading to the village of Coombs for a chance to spot the famous goats on the roof of the Old Country Market. Then, it's the East Coast for us as we head down to Chemainus with its 39 giant outdoor murals for a little AI Fresco art appreciation. You'll also get a chance to snap the world's largest (ice) hockey stick! (only in Canada, eh?) This evening we'll be staying in the BC provincial capital, Victoria, where you can enjoy the buzzing Inner Harbour night scene.

Moose Accommodation: Ocean Island Inn or HI Victoria

Day 4: Victoria to Vancouver

Today's a day for history! We will begin our day with a walking tour starting in Victoria's Chinatown, then make our way along the Inner Harbour to see the Empress Hotel, Parliament Buildings and learn about the Black Pioneers that arrived from San Francisco in 1858. Then we'll head to Beacon Hill Park – known as the crowning jewel in Victoria's park system, to gaze at the Terry Fox Memorial, and the world's tallest free-standing totem pole. After that, the day is yours to explore Victoria as you wish, although we highly recommend checking out the vibrant Fisherman's Wharf. We'll then congregate to take another scenic ferry through the Gulf Islands, across the Salish Sea and back to Vancouver.

Moose Accommodation: HI Vancouver - Jericho Beach

Day 5: Vancouver to Whistler

Have your camera ready for an amazing journey today! We'll travel the breath-taking Sea to Sky Highway, past mountain peaks, glaciers, and stunning lakes, stopping off at two

waterfalls, Shannon Falls and Brandywine Falls. Upon our arrival in Whistler, we'll take a guided tour of the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre including a forest walk with a Cultural Ambassador, to learn about the Indigenous cultures of the Whistler Valley. We bet you'll be hungry after this jam-packed day, so we'll be dining together this evening. After that, check out Whistler's nightlife scene or give axe throwing a go! (And yes, Canada hosts a World Axe Throwing League.)

Activity Inclusions: Guided tour of Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre

Meal Inclusions: Dinner

Moose Accommodation: HI Whistler

Day 6: Whistler to Vancouver

Ziplining, bungee jumping, mountain biking and hiking; these are just some of the things you could be doing today! We don't leave until the afternoon, giving you plenty of time to explore Whistler village or the mountains. Alternatively, find a quiet spot in one of the beautiful parks and take in some raw unadulterated nature, before we head back to Vancouver, stopping en route for another photo opportunity!

Moose Accommodation: There is no accommodation included tonight. You will need to make your own arrangements.

Joining Your Trip

Vancouver

We pick up from the following hostel locations in Vancouver on Day 1 of this tour. Please be ready and waiting in the hostel lobby 15 minutes prior to your scheduled pick up time.

Hostel Name	Pick Up Time	Hostel Address
HI Vancouver - Jericho Beach	07:30	1515 Discovery St, Vancouver
HI Vancouver - Downtown	07:50	1114 Burnaby St, Vancouver
Cambie Hostel on Seymour	08:00	515 Seymour St, Vancouver
Samesun Vancouver	08:10	1018 Granville St, Vancouver

NOTE: if you are staying anywhere else in Vancouver, you will need to make your own way to one of these locations. We recommend joining the tour at the Samesun where the Moose office is located.

Finishing Your Trip

Vancouver

On the final day of the tour, we drop off at all of the hostel locations in Vancouver listed in the Pick Up section above. If you are staying elsewhere, you will need to make your own way

there from one of the above locations. Under normal circumstances, expect to be dropped off in Vancouver around 8pm.

NOTE: we strongly recommend that you DO NOT book onward travel on the final day of the tour, since traffic or other unexpected circumstances may cause delays.

Accommodation

We know that a good night's sleep is important, especially after a busy day of travelling with lots of fun activities. We choose hostels and backpacker properties that offer budget value, as well as great facilities, and a welcoming atmosphere.

On an accommodated tour all your accommodation is included for the standard nights of the trip, at a Moose discounted rate. You'll be staying in mixed gender hostel dorm rooms. By staying in shared rooms you get a chance to meet more people, hang out with other Moose travellers, and have paid less than you would booking a private room or hotel.

NOTE: if you wish to stay in gender-specific dorm rooms, you can request this at the time of booking. Our hostel partners will try to accommodate your request, but we cannot guarantee it will be possible.

Accommodation Locations

Day & Location	Hostel Name	Address	Phone Number
Days 1 & 2: Tofino	HI Tofino - Whalers on the Point	81 West St, Tofino	+1 250 725 3443
Day 3: Victoria	Ocean Island ¹	516 Yates St, Victoria	+1 250 385 1789
	HI Victoria ²	791 Pandora Ave, Victoria	+1 250 385 4511
Day 4: Vancouver	HI Vancouver - Jericho	1515 Discovery Street, Vancouver	+1 604 224 3208
Day 5: Whistler	HI Whistler	1035 Legacy Way, Whistler	+1 604 962 0025
Day 6: Vancouver	none ³		

Notes:

1. On Thursdays in Victoria, we reserve beds at Ocean Island Backpackers.
2. On Sundays in Victoria, we reserve beds at HI Victoria.
3. You will need to make your own reservation for the final night of the tour.

Do I Ever Need To Book My Own Accommodation?

You ONLY need to make your own reservation for your pre & post tour nights in Vancouver.

Daily Departure Times

We depart from the included accommodation at the following times on each day of the tour:

Day & Location	Hostel Name	Departure Time
Day 1: Vancouver	See Joining Your Trip section above	
Day 2: Tofino	N/A - Free Day	
Day 3: Tofino	HI Tofino - Whalers on the Point	08:30
Day 4: Victoria	HI Victoria	15:00
	Ocean Island	15:15
Day 5: Vancouver	HI Vancouver - Jericho	07:45
Day 6: Whistler	HI Whistler	16:00

Meals

Your included meals are listed in the **What's Included** section above. Included meals do not include beverages, except for free tap water, and as such, you will need to purchase your own drinks.

Speaking of tap water, it's clean and safe to drink almost everywhere in Canada, unless specifically noted at the water facility. We strongly encourage you to bring a reusable water bottle that you can refill from a tap, rather than purchasing disposable plastic water bottles that contribute to pollution. A reusable coffee or tea mug is also a great idea!

To help you save money, we make grocery stops almost every day so you can self-cater, and all of the hostels we stay at have kitchens that are available for Moose use (that rhymes!) As such, you can prepare your own breakfast or dinner at the hostel if it's not already included. On occasion, your Moose guide may organize an optional group dinner, where you can choose to pitch in a few dollars, and then help with cooking or clean up. It's fun and inexpensive! Or they may suggest an optional group dinner at a good value local restaurant. On travel days, lunch will typically occur en route. Your Moose guide will either stop in a town where you'll have several options for lunch, or you will stop in the morning to pick up lunch supplies for a picnic in the wilderness later in the day. Remember, don't feed the wildlife!

We recommend budgeting approximately CAD\$20 to \$40 per day for non-included meals. Restaurants will be more expensive, and remember to account for Canadian tax (5%) and tip (15-20%). Note that alcohol in the Province of BC is also subject to an additional 10% tax.

Transportation

Our buses are safe and comfortable mini-coaches, seating anywhere from 11 to 24 people. They have extra large windows for catching all the great views, air-conditioning and heating to keep cool or warm, and a sound system to keep the tunes rolling!

We also include two scenic ferry rides across the Strait of Georgia with BC Ferries. Keep your eyes peeled for whales, dolphins, and other wildlife!

Optional Activities

Why not enhance your trip by participating in one of the below adventure activities during your tour? No need to book ahead. Your Moose guide will give you more information during the tour. But please budget for them if you are interested!

The optional activities listed below are not operated by Moose, except for the free hiking, swimming and wildlife spotting activities. Moose arranges the activity as an agent of the local supplier. If you choose to participate in an optional activity, your contract will be with the activity provider and their conditions will apply. Some activities are seasonal, weather dependent, or require minimum numbers to participate.

NOTE: the prices and activities listed below are approximate and subject to change.

ACTIVITY	APPROX. COST (CAD)	LOCATION
Hiking, swimming, wildlife spotting	Free	Various locations
Whale watching tour (2.5 - 3 hrs)	\$103	Tofino
Coastal bear watching tour (2 - 2.5 hrs)	\$103	Tofino
Sea kayaking tour (from 2.5 - 4 hrs)	from \$65	Tofino
Natural hot springs & whale watching tour (6.5 hrs)	\$139	Tofino
Surfing (lessons & rental included, 3 hrs)	\$68	Tofino
Sea to Sky sightseeing flight (15 min flight)	\$50	Squamish (en route to Whistler)
Bungee jumping	\$115	Whistler
Ziplining	from \$116	Whistler
Axe throwing	\$40	Whistler
TreeTrek canopy walk	\$53	Whistler
Mountain Bike Intro to Park (lesson, rental & lift pass, 3 hrs)	\$185	Whistler
Peak 2 Peak gondola ticket	\$64	Whistler