

The quick flowing waters within the Skookumchuck oxygenates all life. All shellfish, all fish ... everything is enlarged. Candace Campo, shishálh Nation guide

A NATURAL BEAUTY



A view from the air of the Skookumchuck Rapids that oxygenate the water for a variety of sea life such as shellfish and ling cod. PHOTOS: GLEN PETRIE

The Sunshine Coast is awe-inspiring with locations that leave you breathless

GLEN PETRIE

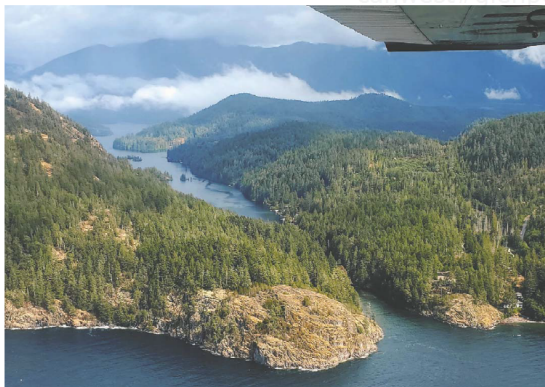
We were over the rainbow. The Sunshine Coast had set aside its blue-sky branding and thrown all types of weather at us: buffeting winds, strafing rain, low ceilings, sun and now below us a rainbow arced above a rocky peninsula.

A flightseeing tour from Sechelt was a splurge on our three-day escape from the city, but a thrilling and worthwhile overview of this 180-kilometre stretch of wilderness. Just a 40-minute ferry ride from West Vancouver's Horseshoe Bay, the Sunshine Coast packs in: mountains, inlets, marine life, surging rapids, and old-growth rainforest with rare birds. And yet you can choose not to rough it with fine dining, luxe spas and stunningly beautiful accommodations.

"As we fly up the coastline I would like to point out to you some of the significant sites, ecologically, culturally and spiritually," said our guide Candace Campo, from the local shishálh Nation.

The Sunshine Coast Air seaplane soared over narrow inlets and fjords to rival Norway's. We spied the white dots of mountain goats on vertical mountain walls reaching to 1,200 metres. The wool of these revered creatures, explained Campo, was used by the shishálh Nation to create elaborate ceremonial regalia.

Off the left wing we passed mountainous Spiiyus Provincial Park with its 800-year-old cedars.



A tour with Sunshine Coast Air reveals the landscape of the rugged and beautiful shoreline.

We flew over the dual cascades of Freil Falls. At 440 metres in height, they're nearly eight times as high as Niagara Falls and empty into the sea near the tiny, uninhabited Harmony Islands. The islets are home to ancient burial grounds of the shishálh Nation.

The pilot banked and circled over one of the showstopper sights of the Sunshine Coast, the Sechelt Rapids at Skookumchuck Narrows, where whirlpools

churned the water's surface and tumultuous rapids sluiced between rocky isles.

"The quick flowing waters within the Skookumchuck oxygenates all life," said Campo. "All shellfish, all fish ... everything is enlarged." Her Elders, she said, used to catch ling cod here that were two metres long.

From the plane I caught a glimpse of West Coast Wilderness Lodge, our luxury accom-

modation for the next few days. Paul and Patt Hansen started the resort as a wilderness retreat for schoolchildren in 1997 and soon realized they were ideally positioned for the booming interest in ecotourism. Over the years, West Coast Wilderness Lodge has been enlarged and upgraded, placing it among the finest accommodations on the B.C. coast. A series of cedar cottages with balconies compete for

We flew over the dual cascades of Freil Falls. At 440 metres in height, they're nearly eight times as high as Niagara Falls and empty into the sea.

the best views. The ultimate view comes from the on-site Inlets Restaurant with its cathedral windows and large decks.

People fly in by float plane just for the view and to dine here. We gorged on mussels in white wine, yam-crusting ling cod, salmon Wellington and a chocolate volcano dessert. I was tempted to simply hang out there for the entire three days, but adventure called. SEE: SUNSHINE COAST ON D2

WATER WAS LIKE BLUE FIREWORKS



Kayakers from all over the world come to challenge the Skookumchuck Narrows. PHOTOS: GLEN PETRIE



A charcuterie board from Inlets Restaurant.

SUNSHINE COAST FROM **DI**

FIREFLIES OF THE SEA

We launched kayaks into water as black as ink, with Greg and Meriel, owners of Metta Eco Experiences leading the way. Illuminated plankton burst like blue fireworks at each paddle stroke. Glittering trails of blue light trailed behind our boats. Exactly why bioluminescent plankton emit light when disturbed remains a mystery, but the effect is magical. Stars crowded the night sky and reflected in the still bay — stars above and below — and I had the sensation of sliding across the universe.

Fish drew darting paths in bright blue. A seal mom and her cub unseen on a rock slipped into

the water and burst into view as fluorescent blue torpedoes. They swam under our kayaks and circled, cyan sparkles slipping over their smooth bodies and trailing away in shimmering wakes.

We joined Greg and Meriel again the next morning for a forest wellness journey. The goal is noble if ambitious. "To make a change in one's life by using the energy of the natural surroundings," said Greg. We headed into old-growth forest and found a suitable spot to harness that power.

While we stood in bare feet (to absorb ions from the earth), the pair proceeded with a crash course that mixes science, qi gong exercises, cleansing rituals and relaxation techniques. Greg

insists the experience is not forest bathing, the popular Japanese practice known as shinrin-yoku, yet there are similarities. The effects are said to include reduced blood pressure, increased energy, a boosted immune system and an improved ability to focus.

RAPIDS, FIORDS AND FALLS

After lunch at the The Back Eddy Pub we walked an easy four kilometres into Skookumchuck Provincial Park to view the famous rapids.

Two hundred billion gallons of water flow through the narrows with each tidal change at speeds of up to 30 km/h, making the Skookumchuck ("strong water") the fastest saltwater rapids in North America.

OCEANIA CRUISES

Explore the ocean in luxury with Oceania!

FREE Airfare*, FREE Airport Transfers* & book with CruisePlus to receive a minimum \$50 US onboard credit per person! PLUS, OLife Choice, choose one amenity for FREE: Onboard Credit, Beverage Package or Shore Excursions! Ask us about other cabin categories and sailings!

10 Day Vikings, Fjords & Legends
July 1, 2023 | Marina | Oslo to London

- » FREE Roundtrip Vancouver Economy Class Airfare, FREE Airport Transfers & \$75 US pp Onboard Credit
- » **OLife Choice, Choose 1:** FREE \$300 US pp OBC, FREE House Select Beverage Package or 3 FREE Shore Excursions

Extraordinary Savings! Limited time offer! Applies to new bookings only

VERANDA
\$4909
taxes included pp CAD

7 Day West Coast Wonders
September 27, 2023 | Regatta | Roundtrip Los Angeles

- » FREE Roundtrip Vancouver Economy Class Airfare, FREE Airport Transfers & \$50 US pp Onboard Credit
- » **OLife Choice, Choose 1:** FREE \$200 US pp OBC, FREE House Select Beverage Package or 2 FREE Shore Excursions

Extraordinary Savings! Limited time offer! Applies to new bookings only

VERANDA
\$2759
taxes included pp CAD

10 Day Medieval Mediterranean Marvels
October 17, 2023 | Nautica | Rome to Venice

- » FREE Roundtrip Vancouver Economy Class Airfare, FREE Airport Transfers & \$100 US pp Onboard Credit
- » **OLife Choice, Choose 1:** FREE \$300 US pp OBC, FREE House Select Beverage Package or 3 FREE Shore Excursions

Extraordinary Savings! Limited time offer! Applies to new bookings only

VERANDA
\$5449
taxes included pp CAD

CruisePlus Signature Series

16 NIGHT BEST OF KENYA SAFARI

CURATED BY DAVE FRINTON, CRUISEPLUS FOUNDER

3 HOSTED DATES TO CHOOSE FROM:

SEP 20 - OCT 6
2023

JAN 15 - JAN 31
2024

OCT 16 - NOV 1
2024

This deluxe safari includes lodging, most meals, 3 internal flights, park fees, most tips and some special surprises!

\$9850 USD per person
based on 2 sharing

ASK ABOUT EXCELLENT SINGLE SUPPLEMENT OTHER NON-HOSTED DATES AVAILABLE

Dave Frinton
CruisePlus Founder

1-800-854-9664

cruiseplus.ca/vancouver

info@cruiseplus.ca

Sign up to receive our emails at CruisePlus.ca

SCAN ME

New bookings only. Fares are per person in currency noted, based on double occupancy. Both cruise and hotel are capacity controlled, subject to availability at the time of booking. Offer may be withdrawn without notice, and is subject to change. Optional & locally payable supplier charges may apply and are not included. Any amendments are available for the first two in stateroom only & based on double occupancy. Before you book, be aware of Covid-19 restrictions and clearly understand insurance terms and conditions. Future Cruise Credits may not be combinable and cruise line insurance may not be available to purchase on advertised offer. Terms of the travel suppliers apply - see their websites. CruisePlus reserves the right to correct any human or electronic errors. Ship's Registry: Marshall Islands. CruisePlus Travel & Tours Ltd. Consumer Protection BC License # 3325.

1-800-854-9664

cruiseplus.ca/safari

info@cruiseplus.ca

Sign up to receive our emails at CruisePlus.ca

SCAN ME

Hosting Safaris Since 1992

New bookings only. Fares are per person in USD, based on double occupancy. Single fares available. Hosted dates require minimum numbers for the departure to proceed. Visa(s) are required for this itinerary; requirements are subject to change without notice. Before you book, be aware of Covid-19 restrictions and clearly understand insurance terms and conditions. Terms of the travel suppliers apply - see details on our website for full information. CruisePlus reserves the right to correct any human or electronic errors. CruisePlus Travel & Tours Ltd. Consumer Protection BC License # 3325.



The view from one of the decks at the West Coast Wilderness Lodge.

Two overlooks offer views for either incoming or outgoing tides.

We stood on smooth rock while waves taller than a metre danced upward, just beyond reach.

The water level on the upstream side can be almost three metres higher than on the downstream side. We watched daring whitewater kayakers ride the flow.

On our last day we booked a jet-boat tour with Egmont Adventure Centre up the narrow Princess Louisa Inlet.

It's one of the most spectacular fiords in British Columbia. Rock walls soar to heights of 2,100 metres and more than 60 waterfalls cascade from the cliffs, including the James Bruce Falls

which drops 840 metres.

At the head of the fiord we went ashore and walked to the thundering curtain of water; 37-metre-high Chatterbox Falls.

The site was first owned by John MacDonald, who fell in love with the area and obtained title in 1927.

MacDonald, or Mac, as he was known, only ever considered himself a caretaker.

"This beautiful, peaceful haven should never belong to one individual," he said. "I don't ever want it to be commercialized."

Eventually, Mac approved the transfer of the property to the provincial government and it became Princess Louisa Provincial Marine Park, for everyone to enjoy.



Greg Rushton of Metta Eco Experiences talks about the benefits of qi gong during a forest wellness journey.

Alaska, Hawaii Cruise and Stay & Pacific Northwest!

Celebrity **X** Cruises®



15 Night Alaska

May 11, 2023 | Celebrity Millennium
Roundtrip Vancouver

- » 1 night in a 4★ Vancouver hotel (or \$100 US pp OBC)
- » 14 night cruise & taxes
- » **\$125 US** pp onboard credit

CONCIERGE
CLASS
taxes included
pp CAD

\$3999



12 Night Hawaii Cruise & Stay

Sep 22, 2023 | Celebrity Solstice
Vancouver to Honolulu

- » 9 night cruise & taxes
- » 3 nights in a 4★ Honolulu hotel
- » **\$150 US** pp onboard credit
- » **Always Included:** Drinks, Tips & WIFI

PARTIAL VIEW
VERANDA
taxes included
pp CAD

\$3699



8 Nt Pacific Northwest

Sep 23, 2023 | Celebrity Eclipse
Vancouver to Los Angeles

- » 1 night in a 4★ Vancouver hotel (or \$100 US pp OBC)
- » 7 night cruise & taxes
- » **\$50 US** pp onboard credit

CONCIERGE
CLASS
taxes included
pp CAD

\$1599



CruisePlus
TRAVEL & TOURS



1-800-854-9664



cruiseplus.ca/vancouver



info@cruiseplus.ca

Sign up to receive our emails at CruisePlus.ca

New bookings only. Fares are per person in currency noted, based on double occupancy. *both cruise and hotel are capacity controlled, subject to availability at the time of booking, offer may be withdrawn without notice, includes room and federal & provincial government taxes only; Optional & locally payable supplier charges may apply and are not included. Any amenities are available for the first two in stateroom only & based on double occupancy. Before you book, be aware of Covid-19 restrictions and clearly understand insurance terms and conditions. Future Cruise Credits may not be combinable and cruise line insurance may not be available to purchase on advertised offer. Terms of the travel suppliers apply - see their websites. CruisePlus reserves the right to correct any human or electronic errors. Ship's Registry: Malta & Ecuador. CruisePlus Travel & Tours Ltd. Consumer Protection BC License # 3325.