

GREAT BEAR RAINFOREST TRIP

30 JULY - 6 AUGUST, 2026

There were eight participants on our trip, our excursion to the GBR being arranged through At Waters Edge Tours of Haida Gwaii. We arrived in Bella Bella on 29 July and had the opportunity to tour the Big House that the Heiltsuk Nation constructed in Bella Bella, an impressive and beautiful building that was awe-inspiring. One of our group wanted to get hold of some bear spray, so we went to the local grocery store where she was directed to a specific aisle; but all she could find on the shelf was toiletry products. She returned to the customer service, only to find that the agent had thought she was asking for hair spray, causing great amusement to all the staff.

Our trip started in earnest the next day, meeting with our wonderful Guides, Rob and Zoë, and being kitted out with our kayaks, six single kayaks and one double, as well as other sundry items. A water taxi ride took us along Seaforth Channel, past Cape Swaine to a sheltered bay in Dyer Cove where we were dropped off. It was here that the rains started, and continued for the next couple of days. We camped on the south end of Cape Mark for two nights, taking the opportunity the next day to explore the west side of Wurtele Island and the long inlet in the St Johns Harbour area. The experience of eating a superb luncheon, under the shelter of a tarp, in torrential rain was one not to be missed.

Our next day started off in the rain as we explored the West side of Princess Alice Island. We paddled to the Houghton islands where we stopped for lunch, again in torrential rain; but then the sun came out, clearing the clouds away and treating us to three days of glorious weather, along with minimal swell and wind. Our trip to the campsite that evening took us over to Fingal's Island and then on to the McMullin Group where we camped for a couple of days on a beautiful sandy beach. It was an opportune time to dry off all our gear before taking a trip out to Goose Island the next day.

Packing up camp the next morning, we set out on our longest paddle (about 17nm), traveling through the Tribal Group, along Iroquois Island, through the McNaughton Group to Cultus Lagoon on Hunter Island where we camped for the

night. Rob demonstrated his excellent back country skills that evening by starting a fire with wood that was absolutely sodden. I am in awe!

The following day saw us traveling around Superstition Point, down the Hunter Island and Spitfire Island coastlines, then this time camping for the next two days on another paradisiacal beach in the Serpent group. It was here that one member of our clan was bathing buck naked in the cove when a cruiser came into the cove with the intention of mooring there. When our doughty clan member stood up, water level to mid thigh, the cruiser immediately stopped, turned around and rapidly left. The area will, in our minds, forever be named the Great Bare Rainforest.

I cannot overstate the quality of the guiding provided to us by Rob and Zoë who were expert kayakers, knowledgeable about the area and fabulous cooks. They used their talents on more than one occasion to cook our freshly caught fish, as well as serving up baked brie with garlic, gnocchi and many other toothsome treats. Their expertise and personalities made them great fun to be around. Thanks also to Mark who acted as the group's point man, no mean task when it came to sorting out who was going to paddle which kayak on which particular day.

Below is a link to a video of our trip that Konrad very kindly produced:



Submitted by Paul Flynnne