

SOAR

Inflight
Magazine for
Pacific Coastal
Airlines

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BC has thousands of
waterways, making it a
paddler's paradise

Here come the kokanee!

New lakes stocked with
this fisherman's friend

All the glory

Exploring Nemiah
Valley Lodge

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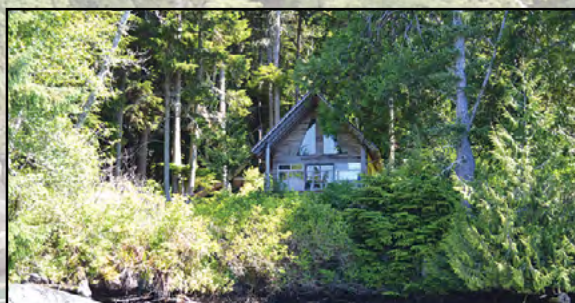
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EXCITING NEWS AND EVENTS!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I want to begin by expressing my appreciation for choosing Pacific Coastal Airlines as part of your summer plans. As we dive into the heart of the summer season, I am thrilled to share some exciting news and events with you.

First, I'm honoured to announce the introduction of two new routes: Nanaimo-Vancouver and Nanaimo-Kelowna. We're proud to be the first airline to offer direct flights for the Nanaimo-Kelowna route that allows passengers to travel between these two remarkable destinations in just over an hour. Moreover, our Nanaimo-Vancouver service will offer customers the convenience and ease of travelling from YVR South Terminal and offering the option to connect to various destinations within our extensive network. These routes will commence operations on September 12, 2023, and customers are welcome to purchase their tickets today.

The month of June held significant meaning as we reflect on and celebrate both Indigenous History Month and Pride Month. At Pacific Coastal Airlines, we are honoured to serve numerous Indigenous communities across BC and Alberta. As we reflect on and celebrate the rich heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of the Indigenous Peoples, we extend our deepest respect and admiration. We also recognize that our responsibility extends far beyond the skies we traverse, and thus we're proud to support Victoria Pride Society in this joyous month of Pride. Diversity is at the heart of our organization and we stand proud in support of every unique individual who makes it so vibrant.

We continue to uphold our commitment to supporting communities when it is most needed. On June 7, the wildfire east of Port Alberni resulted in the closure of Highway #4, causing disruptions and challenges for local residents

and businesses. Pacific Coastal Airlines took swift action by adding additional non-stop flights between YVR South Terminal and Tofino-Long Beach Airport (YAZ) to provide additional seats and cargo capacity needed to the communities of Tofino, Ucluelet and Port Alberni. We continue to offer additional capacity between August 3 and September 8, 2023. For details, please visit our website.

Finally, it is with a full heart that I announce the tremendous success of our 29th Charity Golf Tournament. Together, we raised an impressive \$120,000, surpassing our initial goal of \$100,000. As a result of this incredible feat, we have established multiple aviation scholarships in collaboration with the esteemed British Columbia Aviation Council. Each scholarship, valued at \$10,000, aims to empower Indigenous youth and aspiring Pilot-AME training students. Additionally, we donated \$40,000 to Power To Be, a BC-based charity focusing on creating nature access for people with barriers, and \$40,000 to The Source Club Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing educational, recreational and life-skills programs for persons with mental illness. This remarkable achievement would not have been possible without the overwhelming support of our generous sponsors, donors and dedicated golfers. From the bottom of our hearts, we express our deepest gratitude to each and every one of you.

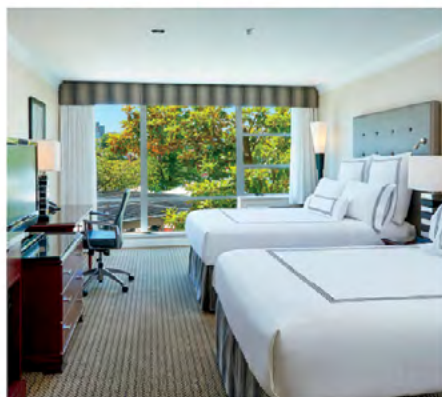
On behalf of the Pacific Coastal Airlines team, thank you for choosing us as your preferred travel option, and we look forward to serving you on your next flight.

Warm regards,

Quentin Smith

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Pacific Coastal Airlines adds Nanaimo to slate of destinations

Routes include direct flights to Kelowna and YVR's South Terminal

Pacific Coastal Airlines (PCA) has announced the introduction of two new routes at the Nanaimo Airport, further enhancing its commitment to connecting communities and providing convenient travel options for passengers.

Starting Tuesday, September 12, 2023, PCA will operate daily non-stop flights between Nanaimo and Vancouver South Terminal and Nanaimo and Kelowna, utilizing the 19-passenger pressurized turboprop Beechcraft 1900 aircraft.

This aircraft offers passengers comfortable seating, a spacious six-foot cabin height, and ample cargo capacity, ensuring a pleasant and convenient travel experience.

"We are thrilled to announce these two new routes and add Nanaimo as a new destination to our route network," said Johnathan Richardson, VP of Customer & Commercial.

"Our unique Nanaimo—Vancouver South Terminal service will provide seamless connections to other destinations in our network and offer customers a new option of travelling with ease from the South Terminal. Our Nanaimo—Kelowna service will provide the only non-stop flight option enabling customers to travel between these communities in just over an hour."

Dave Devana, president and CEO at Nanaimo Airport Commission, said, "We are very pleased to partner with Pacific Coastal to bring direct services to both the South Terminal (YVR) and Kelowna (YLW). This partnership will allow our customers to access all of BC through Pacific Coastal's extensive network of routes within BC. We are very excited to expand the route options for our customers."


Russ Atkinson, director of Air Service Development at Vancouver Airport Authority, expressed enthusiasm about the PCA expansion, saying, "We welcome Pacific Coastal Airlines' new route from YVR's South Terminal to Nanaimo as part of its growing service between Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland. This new service further connects our communities, giving British Columbians and those who travel here another option to visit Nanaimo and other destinations on the Island, while providing important air access for the region to Vancouver and beyond."

"We are so excited to be offering Nanaimo as a new destination and provide expanded regional service for Okanagan residents," says Sam Samaddar, Kelowna Airport director. "Pacific Coastal has been operating out of YLW for 10 years, and we are happy to be able to continue to have it as a valued partner."

Tickets for the new routes are now available for purchase. Passengers can book their flights by visiting pacificcoastal.com, contacting the call centre at 1-800-663-2872, or reaching out to their preferred travel agent.

Visit pacificcoastal.com for more details.

As part of establishing new routes at the Nanaimo Airport, PCA has introduced a new pilot base at the Nanaimo Airport and is currently recruiting pilots to fly the Beechcraft B1900, and who wish to be based on Vancouver Island.

Interested applicants can learn more at: pacificcoastal.com/pilot-careers 

PCA aids wildfire transportation woes


Additional flights prompted by road closures

Pacific Coastal Airlines (PCA) highlighted its commitment to the communities of Tofino, Ucluelet and Port Alberni by adding additional flights when highway-access was shut down due to wildfire.

The airline added several extra non-stop flights between Vancouver South Terminal (YVR) and Tofino-Long Beach Airport (YAZ), providing additional seats and cargo capacity needed due to a massive wildfire east of Port Alberni that caused a three-week shutdown of Highway 4.

"These additional flights underscored our ongoing commitment to support the communities of Tofino, Ucluelet and Port Alberni in a time of need," said Johnathan Richardson, VP of Customer & Commercial. "We wanted to ensure that the residents of these communities continued to have access to seats and cargo options during this challenging time."

The highway was closed June 6 due to the Cameron Bluffs wildfire, burning east of Cathedral Grove Park near Port Alberni. Highway 4 is the only paved route to the 18,000-resident city of Port Alberni—as well as Tofino, Ucluelet and most communities in the Nuuchahnulth Nation.

The closure forced officials to escort convoys of essential supplies over a bumpy logging road detour for several weeks. 

MEET A PACIFIC COASTAL EMPLOYEE: GUSTAVO



Position: Crew Scheduling Supervisor

Location: OCC, YVR South Terminal

Time with PASCO: 20 months

Job description: Maintain an efficient daily flight crew schedule in accordance with Transport Canada regulations and company scheduling rules.

Who is your family?

The "2 Miguels" are part of my family: Dad and my younger brother. Also, a beautiful niece and two nephews.

What path did you take to get to this job?

I finished my bachelor's degree in aviation management at Universidad del Pacífico in Peru. I worked at Airbus Helicopters (Chile) to implement and execute "SMS," and then I went to LATAM Airlines as crew scheduler (five years).

What do you like best about this job?

The people I work with and the work environment vibe at Pacific Coastal Airlines.

What are your hobbies outside of the job?

Tennis, biking and baking pastry.

What is your favourite thing to do in your city?

I believe Vancouver has the best places to go for a hike. 🏔️



Detail from *Ways of Seeing, Ways of Being* by Steve Mennie, as part of the *Semiotically Speaking* art installation at Kelowna International Airport. (118 x 60 acrylic on canvas.)

New art installation at Kelowna airport

KELOWNA: The next time you're travelling through Kelowna International Airport be sure to stop and look up.

Above the airline check-in area, visitors can now see a series of paintings by Salmon Arm-based artist Steve Mennie featured in the 40-foot-long exhibition space organized by the Kelowna Art Gallery.

Titled *Semiotically Speaking*, these works highlight the artist's interest in signs and symbols (semiotics) and take a closer look at how we use them to communicate ideas.

Have you ever stared at something that's very familiar for long enough that it begins to look strange? In a similar way, airport visitors will encounter examples of common road signs that, when taken out of their regular context, may cause viewers to scratch their heads and think, "How'd we ever decide that this is supposed to represent this idea?"

To add to his examination of symbols, Mennie has included his own

playful commentary in the form of text-based painted signage.

Through his stylistic approach rooted in realism and his unique sense of humour, Mennie challenges viewers to interpret the meaning behind the icons, imagery and text present on the everyday signs we encounter.

Semiotically Speaking is presented at the Kelowna International Airport until June of 2024.

Born in Revelstoke, BC, Mennie completed his formal studies at the Ontario College of Art (now OCAD University). Afterwards, he worked for many years as a freelance illustrator and commercial artist in Toronto. Later, Mennie returned to British Columbia, where he began his career painting "en plein air" in a high realist style. He has twice been commissioned by Canada Post to design commemorative postage stamps. Mennie's work is held in both public and private collections across Canada. 🇨🇦



On the BC Tulip Trail in Chilliwack. Photo courtesy Destination BC.

Destination? BC Gardens

BC WIDE: Just in time for garden season, locals and tourists to BC are invited to discover the province's many awe-inspiring gardens via a brand-new, curated online resource.

Gardens BC has launched an all-new online resource, gardensbc.com, offering a comprehensive guide to exploring the diverse and captivating gardens located throughout British Columbia.

This online resource is the best place for people to go to learn about the year-round garden experiences that can be found and booked across BC. From helping visitors identify popular amenities and activities found at each garden—such as gardening education, on-site cafés and gift shops, picnic spots and wheelchair-accessible grounds—the new Gardens BC website is a go-to resource for garden tourism, a family-friendly leisure activity that continues to rise in popularity.

"There's a good reason garden tourism has become so popular in recent years. These magnificent gardens offer locals and tourists alike an opportunity to connect with nature, to learn about plant biodiversity, experience rejuvenation and so much more," explains Geoff Ball, president of Gardens BC.

Exploring BC's beautiful gardens is a must-do for travel enthusiasts and garden lovers. Visit gardensbc.com to discover:

A showcase of the many different garden regions across British Columbia, including two new regions this year in Vancouver's North Shore and Prince George.

A range of experiences from world-famous gardens like The Butchart Gardens in Greater Victoria to hidden gems such as the Park & Tilford garden oasis in North Vancouver.

Curated garden-centric travel itineraries to make planning your next trip through beautiful British Columbia as

easy as possible. This includes photos, amenities found at each garden, and detailed writeups.

A popular blog providing endless inspiration and contributions from notable contributors and garden experts, including Brian Minter and Erin Despard.

A selection of the gardens that are available for private events and weddings across BC—each of which offers a stunning setting to help create lasting memories. 📸

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All the
glory

Staying with the Xeni Gwet'in at Nemiah Valley Lodge

By Suzanne Morphet

The earthy scent of sage fills my nostrils as smoke swirls around me. Closing my eyes, I hear the rhythmic beat of a drum and the guttural voice of the man beating it. I feel heat from the fire and the brush of eagle feathers over my legs and back.

I'm taking part in a smudging ceremony by two cultural ambassadors from the Xeni Gwet'in community near the Pacific Coastal Airlines destination of Williams Lake in BC's Chilcotin region.

Practising this cleansing ritual is one of the ways the Xeni (pronounced like "honey") Gwet'in are reclaiming the parts of their culture lost during colonization. It's primarily for their own benefit, but sharing their traditions with outsiders provides employment opportunities for people who have said "no" to logging, mining and a hydro dam.

With that in mind, the Xeni Gwet'in made their first foray into tourism in 2019 with the purchase of a lodge and seven log cabins in the Nemiah Valley. With a lake at one end and glacier-capped Mt. Ts'il?os (also known as Mt. Tatlow) in the distant other end, the setting is resplendent.

We arrive late one mid-September afternoon when the



Wild horses roam throughout the Nemiah Valley. Photo courtesy Nemiah Valley Lodge

freshly cut hay field in front of the lodge glows in the rays of the setting sun. Originally a horse ranch and fishing lodge, the property maintains its wild west charm with wooden railings that separate the cabins from the former paddock.

The Xení Gwet'in, who belong to the T̓silhqot'in First Nation, spent \$1.5 million fixing it up: replacing roofs, windows, doors; installing a solar field with battery bank that provides 100 per cent renewable energy; and buying all new furniture and linens. The lodge re-opened in spring of 2022 for its first season.

On our way there, we stop at Tl'esqox—another one of six T̓silhqot'in communities—and enjoy a lunch of salmon, moose and bison, before travelling through Farwell Canyon. Wind and rain have carved hoodoos from the sandstone, while the Chilcotin River surges through the sage-covered hills.

Peyal Laceese, a 24-year-old cultural liaison with Tl'esqox, tells us it's been a good year for salmon.

When she spots a group of horses grazing on a hillside, she stops and we admire their strong bodies and healthy coats. They're at home here, just like the Xení Gwet'in. For us, it's been one sweet stay—as sweet as honey, you might just say.

We watch as an Indigenous man swings a long-handled net, scoops up a salmon, then flings it onto the rocks above.

"You have to be quick," explains Peyal, adding that it's a physically tough job.

That evening we enjoy more salmon at dinner with the former chief of the Xení Gwet'in, Roger Williams. Roger is highly regarded for successfully leading

the T̓silhqot'in in their claim for Aboriginal title in a case that went all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada.

"There's still a lot of work ahead of us," he says, smiling, "but it's all exciting, there's so many things to do."

There's lots for us to do too, but it's all play, no work. The next morning a few of us hike up nearby Cardiff Mountain, while others stay back at the lodge and learn the craft of beading by decorating tiny moccasins and making decorative dreamcatchers.

Cardiff Mountain is the remnant of an ancient volcano with striking vertical columns of basalt that have an orange sheen from lichen. We pick our way over leafy kinnikinnick and rosy pussytoes until we come to the edge with a grand view over the whole valley, including Veden Lake, where a sweat house will offer guests another Indigenous experience starting in 2023. When it starts to snow, we're only a little surprised.

The Chilcotin Plateau is more than 1,000 metres above sea level and winter arrives early here.

The T̓silhqot'in traditionally lived in pit houses in winter; these are simple structures dug into the ground and mounded on top with an opening for smoke to escape. Our hiking guide, Bruce Lulua, tells us depressions from hundreds of pit houses have been found from pre-contact times when the T̓silhqot'in numbered about 2,000 people.

"But the smallpox wiped out 60 per cent of our population," he adds.

These are happier days for the T̓silhqot'in. At dinner that night we're joined by chief Jimmy Lulua, who enjoys backcountry skiing in winter and says he wants to build another lodge, this one closer to the Coast Mountains. It would cater to heli-skiers and provide more prosperity for the Xeni Gwet'in.

We head in that direction the next day on our way to Chilko Lake in Tsi'li'os Provincial Park, which the Xeni Gwet'in co-manage with BC Parks. Chilko is the largest natural, high-elevation freshwater lake in Canada. Fed by glaciers, the water looks pure and crystalline. The sky, however, is threatening, so instead of taking a boat ride, we walk along the shoreline, delighting in the contrast of dark clouds, turquoise water and snowy peaks.

Before we leave this enchanted valley there's one more thing I want to see—wild horses. Believed to be descendants of horses brought to North America by the Spanish conquistadors, hundreds of them abound, to the point that the land is being overgrazed.

A couple years ago, horseback riders from the Xeni Gwet'in community rounded up as many wild stallions as they could and castrated them.


"But I've seen some foals, so they must have missed a few," chuckles Bernice Koepke, as we drive along gravel roads back to Williams Lake.

When she spots a group of horses grazing on a hillside, she



A traditional pit house was built by the Xeni Gwet'in for cultural tourism.

stops and we admire their strong bodies and healthy coats. They're at home here, just like the Xeni Gwet'in. For us, it's been one sweet stay—as sweet as honey, you might just say.

Nemiah Valley Lodge is open June 15 to September 27, 2023. Three-night packages start at \$2,175 per person. 



Former chief Roger Williams led efforts to have T̓silhqot'in Aboriginal title recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada. Photo by Suzanne Morphet



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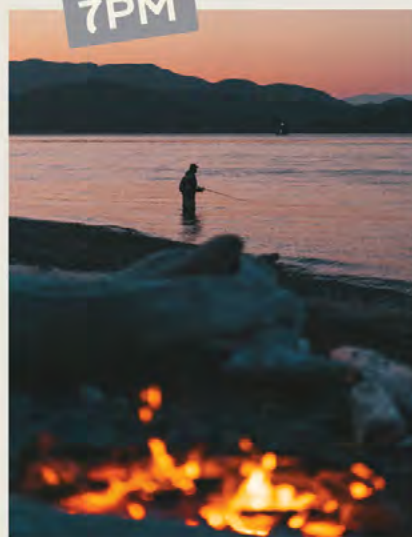
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Here come the kokanee!



Fishing for kokanee on Beavertail Lake, near Campbell River on Vancouver Island.
Photo by Adrian Clarke / Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC

Two Vancouver Island lakes now stocked with an anglers' favourite

By Jennifer Blyth, westcoasttraveller.com

Vancouver Island anglers no longer need to travel to the BC mainland to fish for the celebrated small-lake kokanee.

The Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC and provincial fisheries staff recently announced that after several years of testing, two small lakes on Vancouver Island have now been established as stocked kokanee lake fisheries.

Located in the central island mountains, Shelton Lake is about 25 kilometres west of Pacific Coastal Airlines' newest destination, Nanaimo, and is accessed off Nanaimo Lakes Road via M Branch (one kilometre) and then G Branch (3.5 kilometres to the lake). A cartop-style boat launch is available at the southern end of the lake.

Farther north, Beavertail Lake is located in the wilderness 20 kilometres west of PCA's destination at Campbell River, and is accessed via the well-maintained Elk River Mainline gravel road (7 kilometres) from the Gold River Highway. Recent improvements by Campbell River Fish and Wildlife Association include a fishing dock and day-use facilities.

While some kokanee populations occur naturally in mainland lakes—with connections to migrating sockeye—others, like the two



Kokanee caught at Beavertail Lake, one of two Vancouver Island lakes now stocked with the fish typically only found on the mainland. Photo by Adrian Clarke / Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC

Vancouver Island lakes, have been stocked. The province began stocking non-reproductive kokanee into Shelton and Beavertail lakes in 2020 to see if they'd survive and grow large enough to support a fishery. As non-reproductive fish, they're unable to establish a population in either location.

The Freshwater Fisheries Society notes that the kokanee appear to be doing well in the coastal lakes with some of the fish already reaching sizes up to 30 centimetres—and the potential for three- to five-centimetre growth this summer.

WHAT ARE KOKANEE?

The freshwater form of colourful sockeye salmon, kokanee spend almost their entire lives in a single lake. While smaller than their ocean-venturing cousins, they look very similar, but

“They are delicious table fare, and many anglers prefer the taste of kokanee over trout.”

retain a silvery colour until mature.

They're also fun fish to catch, says Sue Pollard, in her blog for the Freshwater Fisheries Society.

“Depending on the season, these feisty fish can put up a good fight. As an added bonus, they are delicious table fare, and many anglers prefer the taste of kokanee over trout,” Pollard says.

Preferring cooler waters, kokanee are usually found in the middle of the lake for much of the year, heading deeper as the weather warms. But they may move to shallower areas in the spring during insect hatches.

HOW TO CATCH KOKANEE

Kokanee are typically accessible throughout the year, even to the novice angler, but given their preference for cool waters, a boat will generally be needed for success, Pollard says.

“A classic set-up is to troll a kokanee lure with corn-baited hook behind a small dodger or micro flasher off a downrigger, or simply drop a two-ounce weight with a worm on a hook down to where the fish are,” Pollard says.

She recommends two blogs for further reading: Nick Ba-sok's *Guide to Trolling for Kokanee Salmon in Lakes* and Mike Ramsay's *Kokanee Fishing Tips Through the Seasons*. 📖



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Take TIME in Penticton

It's all about the experience at this winery and restaurant

By Darcy Nybo

The TIME Family of Wines at the Pacific Coastal Airlines destination of Penticton, BC is the kind of place where you can pop in for a quick lunch, or you can spend the better half of a day experiencing all it has to offer.

Want to learn how to sabre a wine bottle?

"First we teach our guests the history of sabring and where it came from," explains general manager Christa-Lee McWatters, the daughter of founder

Harry McWatters. "Then we teach you how to do it properly. It takes about 20 minutes for the demonstration. We have the perfect wines to sabre too as my dad was a bubbly enthusiast. We do the sabring in the cellar, and you can book the lesson online or just walk in. There are different prices depending on which sparkling you choose. The price of the product covers the lesson."

Want to experience tasting wine directly from the barrel?

"We do a portfolio tasting first and then do the barrel tasting," says Christa-

Lee. "Some days it could be the Syrah, other days it might be the Cab Franc."

Like music? OROLO Restaurant + Cocktail Bar inside the TIME winery has live music every Thursday night, with the performers ranging from solo artists to full bands.

"We have booked entertainers right through to January," says Christa-Lee. "There's a variety of styles from blues to rock 'n' roll. There's no rap or heavy metal, but pretty much everything else."

Experience is a huge part of the

“More and more people are looking for the experience and the interaction that comes with discovering new wines or new restaurants. We are both.”

culture at TIME, which was transformed from a theatre into an urban winery by the late Harry McWatters. Opening in 2017, it is now run by his daughters Christa-Lee and her sister Darrien McWatters, who works as operations manager. By the spring of this year, all renovations were completed, including the addition of OROLO restaurant and the tasting area.

“More and more people are looking for the experience and the interaction that comes with discovering new wines or new restaurants. We are both,” says Christa-Lee. “The back of the restaurant is where our barrel room is. You can tour the winery, do tastings in the tasting room, and then come to the dining room to eat and listen to music. We have seated wine tastings in a separate room just off the OROLO restaurant. People no longer want to stand shoulder to shoulder in crowded tasting rooms. In our tasting room, there are six plush booths with seating for eight at each booth. It makes it more intimate and more of a day or night out. There’s also a snack menu to order from.”

Chef Kirk is the culinary director of OROLO. He’s a big fan of eating and growing locally produced food.

“We are currently raising our own cows in Summerland,” he says. “It’s all about using fresh local ingredients whenever possible. We change our menu as the seasons change. We have a large garden at the lower bench vineyards, so we always have fresh and local offerings.”

Christa-Lee and Chef Kirk created a dining experience that is educational, fun and delicious.



For example, try a salad created fresh at your table, or on Sundays, select from the mimosa car at lunch-time.


This summer look for some delicious menu items like the Arctic char from Road 17 Char, raised within 100 kilometres of the restaurant. Another summer delight is the new vegetarian tomato tarte tatin and upside-down pie.

“We use heirloom tomatoes with hazelnut and blue cream cheese sauce,” says Chef Kirk. “We work with three vegetable producers in the area. One is just up on the bench. Another is between Summerland and Kelowna. And we work with an orchard for all of our stone fruits. We get all our mushrooms locally, as well, like lion’s mane and oyster. We make a crispy mushroom sandwich with oyster, deep fried and served with an Asian-inspired sauce.”

Asked just how much of what they serve is local, Chef Kirk laughs. “Even our coffee is roasted in Summerland,” he says.

As for types of food, well, this is the kind of restaurant you can bring anyone to, regardless of their food preferences.

“We do regular burgers, plus vegetarian mushroom burgers, as well as a crispy trout sandwich for the pescatarians. There’s crispy cauliflower, tartars and a variety of seafood. We also have items for those who require keto, vegan or gluten-free. For those who like to indulge, we have a jar of cream puffs drizzled with chocolate.”

TIME Family of Wines is currently planning another location on the Lower Bench Road outside of Penticton. You can also experience their wines at the District Wine Village in Oliver. 



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Have paddle, will travel!

By Vince Hempsall / Photos courtesy Paddle BC

**Check out
Paddle BC, a
new online
resource for
unique paddling
experiences**

One of the few places on the planet where helicopters are used to regularly access white-water rafting is right here in British Columbia, specifically at the Kicking Horse River, which flows 80 kilometres from Wapta Lake in Yoho National Park to the Columbia River near the small town of Golden.

It's a unique heli-rafting experience but it's only one of many found solely in British Columbia, which boasts more than 20,000 lakes, 25,000 kilometres of coastline and countless rivers and creeks.

BC is also the only province in Canada where paddling—from kayaking to white-water rafting—can be enjoyed year-round. And thanks to a new resource called Paddle BC, beginner and experienced paddlers of all kinds can easily discover BC's top destinations and waterways for paddleboarding, kayaking, rafting, canoeing, and kayak fishing, across the six diverse regions of the province, all year long.

Here are just some of the best-loved experiences that have put BC on the paddling map.

Canoe the country's best circuits

Bowron Lake Provincial Park is home to one of the most popular paddling circuits in North America. The 116-kilometre loop is accessed via the Pacific Coastal Airlines (PCA) destination of Quesnel and includes four different

lakes that circumnavigate Mt. Faulkner and Kaza Mountain. The portages are well-groomed, leaving visitors more time to take in the views of the surrounding highlands and snow-capped peaks as well as the vast array of local wildlife, from moose and bears to otters and eagles.

Bowron Lake is located at the northern extent of the traditional territory of the Secwépemc (or Shuswap People) and for those interested in learning more about their culture, Moccasin Trails offers guided canoe trips on the South Thompson River. The unique experience includes a local knowledge keeper who shares the history of the area as well as ancestral songs and stories, and describes the importance of the iconic Coyote Rock, a large boulder that sits balancing atop a clay hoodoo.

For those who prefer to stick closer to a large city, however, the PCA destination of Kelowna offers a 27-kilometre-long Paddle Trail on Okanagan Lake. It passes 20 beaches and parks and two bird sanctuaries. It also meanders by the downtown core, so you can jump out and grab a latte anytime.

Paddleboard all year

The year-round mild temperatures on the coast allow paddlers to take to the water in all four seasons, even when there's snow on the ground. You'll find paddleboarders in bikinis in the summer and scarves in the winter, paddling some of the beautiful routes of Howe Sound and Sechelt Inlet on the Sunshine Coast, for example.

Squamish-based company Norm Hann Expeditions operates every month of the year and Norm Hann says, "Some of the most spectacular times I have had paddling on Howe Sound have occurred in the winter



months. Winds will shut off, allowing for beautiful afternoons paddling glassy waters."

Kayak fish in fresh saltwater

BC offers some of the best fishing in the country and the maneuverability of kayaks allows anglers to get into all the places where fish love to hide. Chinook, coho and pink salmon are popular catches in the coastal waters near PCA's newest destination at Nanaimo and around the Southern Gulf Islands, while inland anglers go after trout, steelhead and even white sturgeon on the Fraser River. Given that sturgeon are the largest freshwater species on earth, catching one in a kayak definitely creates an adrenaline rush!

The southern-interior region of the Kootenays is another excellent spot for freshwater kayak fishing, not only because there's plenty to catch but because it is relatively undiscovered. The city of Castlegar (just a 25-minute drive from PCA's destination at Trail) is located at the confluence of the Kootenay and Columbia rivers and offers easy access to world-class fishing for

rainbow trout, bull trout and walleye. It's also located near Lower Arrow Lake where a 12-pound kokanee once was caught—the largest in the world.

Rafting... so much rafting!

British Columbia offers the highest number of rafting experiences in the country. Northern waterways such as the Babine and Skeena are world-renowned, but there are dozens of guided experiences throughout the province that are less renowned but just as fun.

For example, both the Elk and Bull rivers near Fernie offer exciting rapids and stunning scenery; while in Hope, one of the only rafting resorts in the country offers white-water day trips and nightly glamping.

Whether looking for excellent kayak fishing locations, world-class white water, sublime canoe trips, or fun paddleboarding excursions, British Columbia offers some of the best, every month of the year.

For more information, visit: paddlebc.ca 

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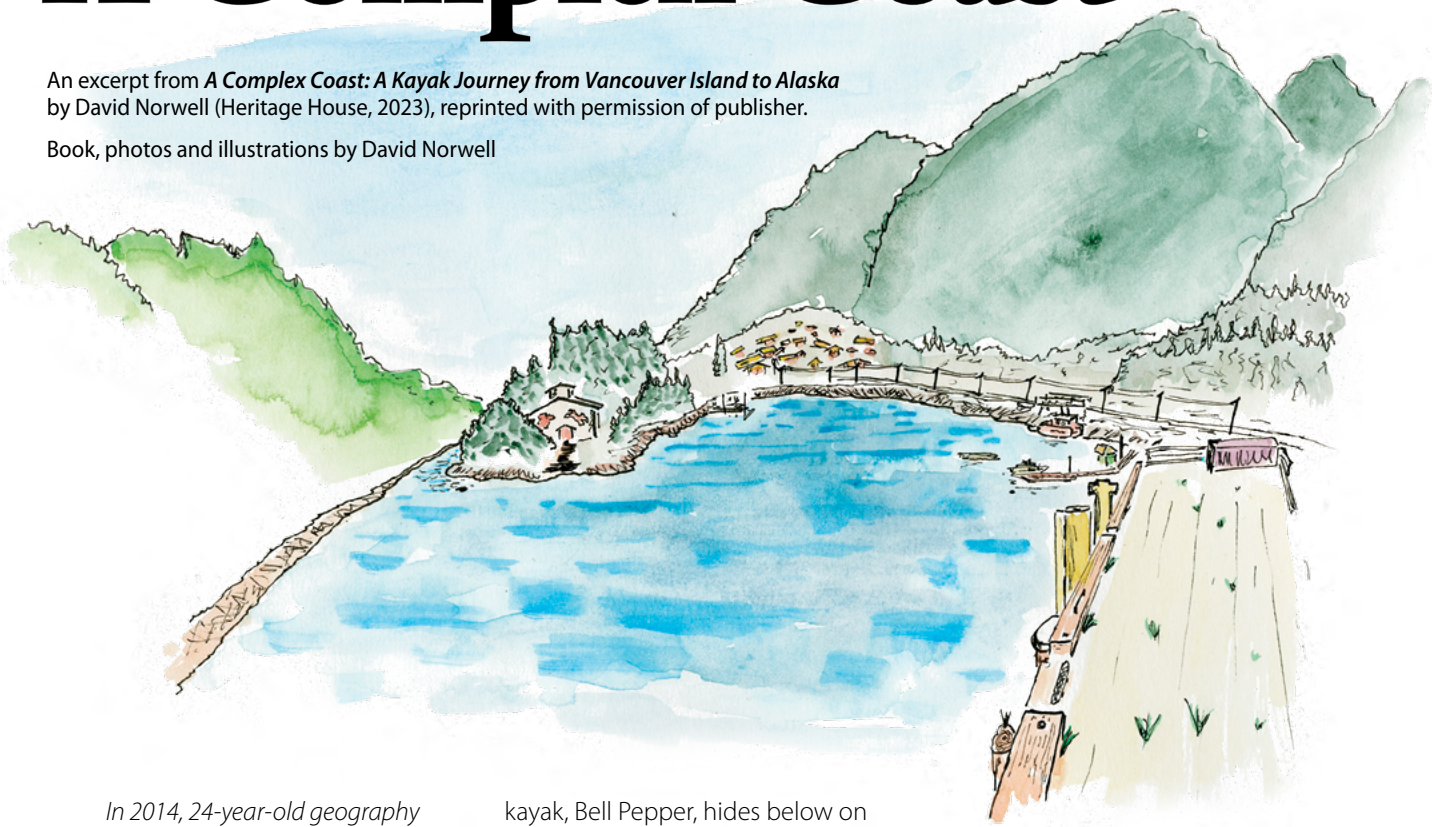
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A Complex Coast

An excerpt from *A Complex Coast: A Kayak Journey from Vancouver Island to Alaska* by David Norwell (Heritage House, 2023), reprinted with permission of publisher.

Book, photos and illustrations by David Norwell



In 2014, 24-year-old geography student David Norwell set off on a daunting three-stage kayak journey in search of purpose in his life. A jigsaw puzzle of jagged mainland and over 50,000 islands—stretching from southern Vancouver Island to Alaska—lay in front of him. As David navigated 1,700 kilometres along coastal BC, he recorded his experiences in a notebook. The result is A Complex Coast, a one-of-a-kind travelogue filled with more than 700 watercolour illustrations about the nature of solitude, the search for meaning and adventure, the wildlife he encountered, the survival skills he acquired and the existence of his own privilege. The following excerpt is from stage two of his journey.

FITZ HUGH CHANNEL:

Two years since my first trip.

Plan: Klemtu to Skagway, Alaska. Distance: 600 nm.

The ferry from Port Hardy streams north—a city-of-lights plowing through the darkness. My

kayak, Bell Pepper, hides below on the car deck, ready to swim again through the complex coast. It's been two years since my first journey kayaking from Victoria to Bella Bella. In that time, I've learned that my heart and mind often don't cooperate.

Kaia was in Japan for the last year, and I don't know where we're at. I want to talk with her about everything but haven't the courage or certainty. I'm hoping this trip will create clarity.

This leg will pick up where I left off, and stitch together north-coast BC with southeast Alaska. My destination is Skagway, 600 nautical mamas [defined as a measurement of distance or time or something along those lines; this is a "Davidism" and included in the "Davidism Dictionary" on page 201 of the book] from Klemtu, the next village north of Bella Bella. My goal for this journal is to delve deeper into the biology of the Pacific Northwest and record my mind as I dive into isolation.

I'm still looking for answers. Let's see what the cedars can teach me this time.

Day 2, June 6: Wind light. Princess Royal Island—21 nm.

My muscles ache. I thought my body could pick up where I left off. Thick fog saturates the morning and sticks to my skin. There is no sun, no sky, no sense of self. Nothing to anchor reality. I navigate by compass. The acoustic landscape is void, but then: PPOOOSSSHHH! Two humpbacks are gasping within metres of me, but visibility is too low to locate them. I love whales. Whales and tide pools. Did you know humpback songs can last hours and are heard 10,000 kilometres (6,200 miles) away? Bonkers.

The haze lifts, exposing the stunted trees and wave-shattered shores of Aristazabal Island. The winters here are ruled by gales. It takes a lot of energy to bend a tree sideways.

I arrive at a cozy tombolo—an island connected to land by a sediment bridge. My evening puzzle is to

figure out where the high tide line is. I'm not sure in the end, and I make up my tent on a sandy pad among the boulders.

My mental alarm clock goes off at two in the morning, an hour before high tide. I need to make sure the ocean is not going to flood me. Scuffling out of the zippers, I find a sky freckled with a million stars, and rising water that will engulf my spot within the hour. Madly, I drag the tent and its contents into the forest. Wide awake, I find no need for sleep. I prop up on a log and contemplate the cosmos while the beach is enveloped by my salty lover.

Tides are teachers.

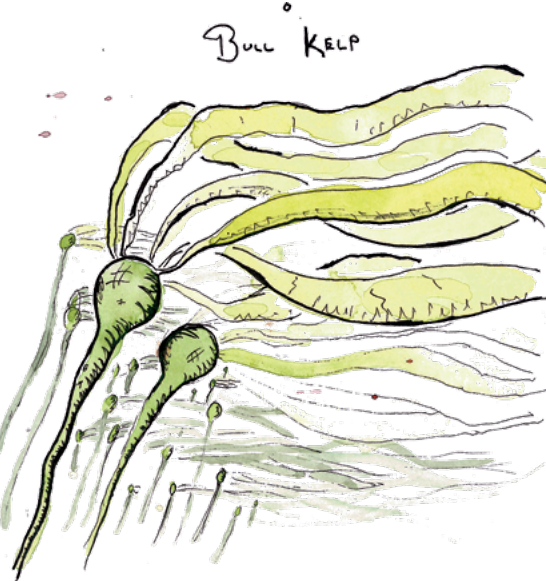
Sea lettuce (*Ulva lactuca*) brought up by the high tide glistens

in the morning sun. A tasty vitamin-C-filled treat, sea lettuce can be dehydrated to last for months. I take a full day off to dry the lettuce on hot rocks. The work results in a ziplock filled with crunchy goodness (vitamins A, C, B1, magnesium and antioxidants).

...

Spring is the best time for collecting seaweed. Large storms and upwellings in the winter stir up nutrients, and the April sun allows for photosynthesis.

(A big thank you to Sara Wickham, who patiently kelp-guided me. For her master's thesis she went to 100 remote islands on the central coast to sample beach wrack and its effects on terrestrial ecosystems. Basically, she did her master's on beachcombing, and her team found three Japanese orbs in the process!)



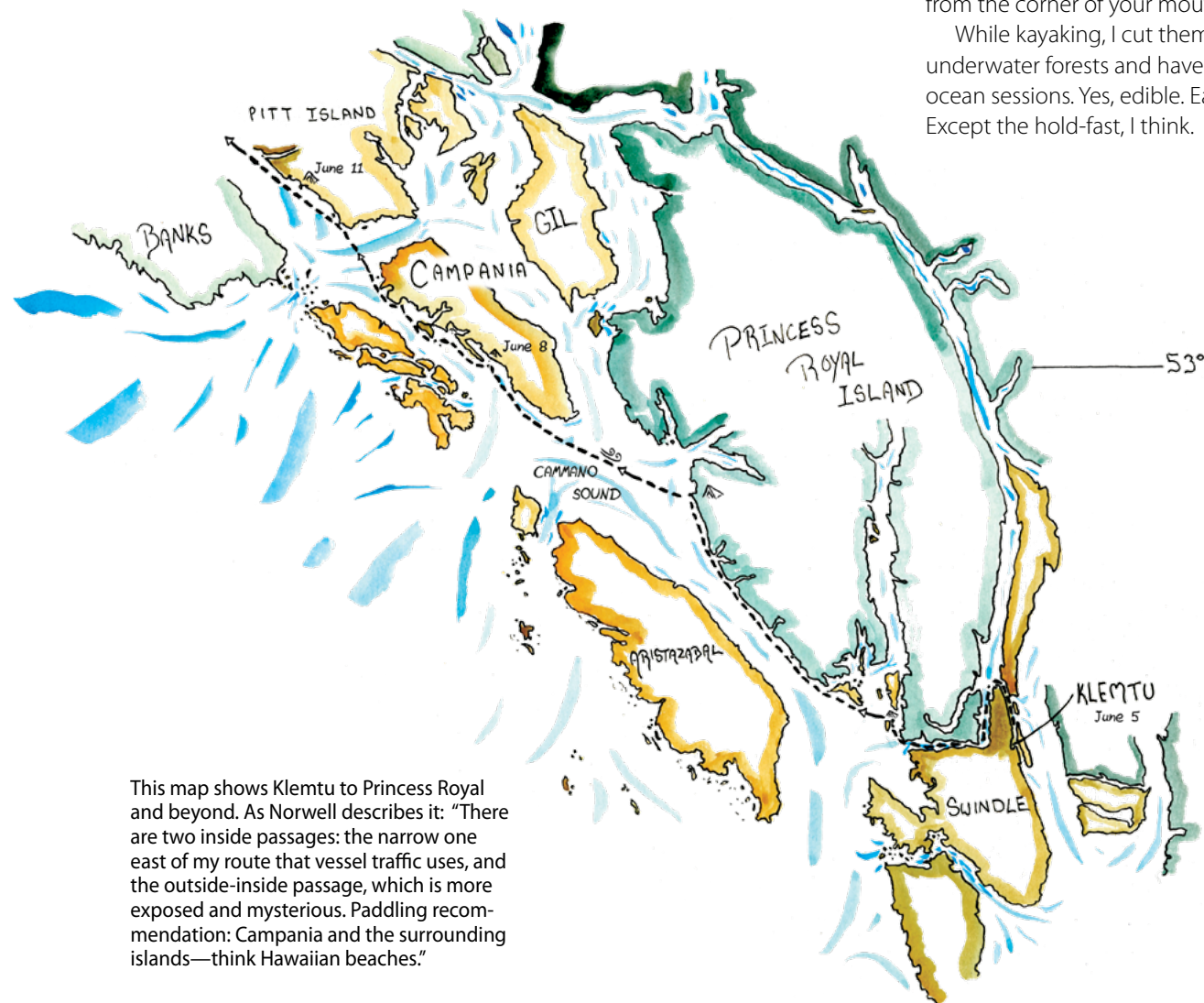
Bull kelp (*Nereocystis luetkeana*)

The hollow stipe of *Nereocystis* can be made into a didgeridoo, which aids me in my habit of making weird noises.

1. Find a recently washed-up specimen and cut one to two metres in length.

2. Purse your lips and blow like a fish from the corner of your mouth.

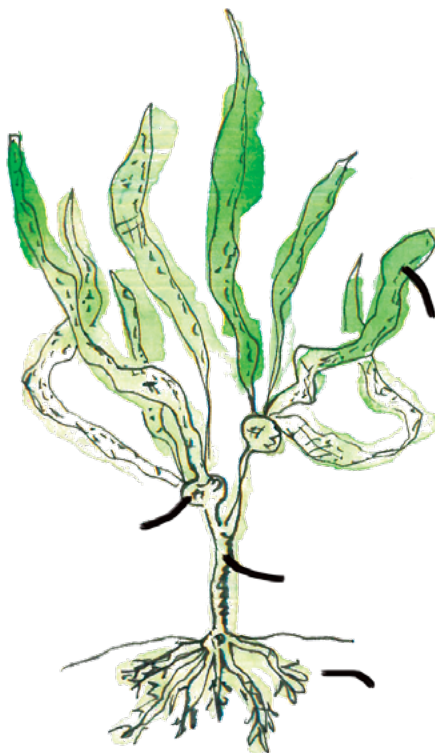
While kayaking, I cut them from underwater forests and have floating ocean sessions. Yes, edible. Eat all parts. Except the hold-fast, I think.



This map shows Klemtu to Princess Royal and beyond. As Norwell describes it: "There are two inside passages: the narrow one east of my route that vessel traffic uses, and the outside-inside passage, which is more exposed and mysterious. Paddling recommendation: Campania and the surrounding islands—think Hawaiian beaches."

Black gold (nori) **(*Pyropia abbotiae*)**

A pillar food for coastal Indigenous Peoples, harvested in May. When I paddled into Bella Bella, the roofs were covered in sun-drying *Pyropia*. A vitamin-booster for all dishes—fish, rice, spaghetti, etc. Sometimes fried into “seaweed chips.”



Giant Kelp **(*Macrocystis pyrifera*)**

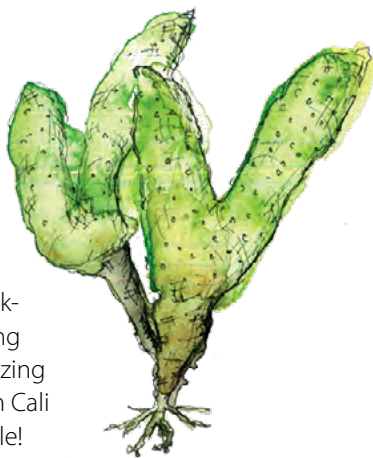
Giant kelp is the marine-macroscopic-algae-boss of the Pacific Northwest. It grows up to 35 centimetres a day in spring and reaches a max of 50 metres. Remember, old-growth Dougies are 85 metres. Giant kelp is the fastest-growing organism on earth.

Can be dried and crushed to powder and added to everything (think kelp smoothie). Also, try using the blades for lasagna kelp-noodles! Famous for inside-out sushi, which is herring roe on kelp. If you’ve tried this delicacy, you are lucky.



Rockweed / Bladderwrack **(*Fucus distichus*)**

A tough intertidal dominator, rockweed has its own camel-back for long hours in the sun. It also survives freezing temperatures, allowing a range from Cali to the Arctic. And of course, it’s edible! Choicey for fermenting due to sugar content (think seaweed-kimchi!)



Turkish towel **(*Chondracanthus exasperatus*)**

People don’t eat this, but you could (no seaweed will kill you, though some are acidic). As the name suggests, this one has a different superpower: it’s a scrubby! Yes, seaweeds do that. I struggle to stay scientific here. It has spiny papillae . . . scrubbers. T-towel has an ingenious marketing strategy, coming in pink, red, yellow, and green. OK, I’ll stop.

Beach wrack (Gardenous delightfuls)

The best way to learn seaweeds is by taking long walks on the beach. And if you have a garden, you can bring it home for compost or mulch.

- For mulching, pile 4–6 inches (it shrinks).
- Reapply as needed.
- If you can, rinse first with fresh water. 🌊



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