

Couple walking along the boardwalk at Telegraph Cove.



Tourism BC / B. Bergman photo

## TRIP IDEAS

# NORTHERN VANCOUVER ISLAND

See a whale breaching off your kayak's bow, hike to a deserted beach, experience a traditional First Nations ceremonial dance or explore a fishing village built on stilts. Northern Vancouver Island may be a little off the beaten path, but it's ground zero for scenery, wildlife and adventure.

For more great Trip Ideas visit [HelloBC.com](http://HelloBC.com)

## Campbell River

Land a prize chinook salmon in Campbell River, dubbed the Salmon Capital of the World thanks to the 13.5-kilo/30-pound salmon frequently pulled from the ocean here.

Back on shore, experience some of Campbell River's seafaring and logging traditions at the Museum at Campbell River, a striking modern building overlooking Discovery Passage. A highlight is the Treasures of the Siwidi exhibit – a tale of a mythical undersea world told with sound, light and masks created by skilled First Nations artists. At the nearby Campbell River Maritime Heritage Centre, meet BCP 45, a historic fishing boat that once appeared on Canada's \$5 bill.

Overnight at the legendary Painter's Lodge, where Bob Hope, Bing Crosby and John Wayne spent their fishing trips, or head across the water for aroma hydrotherapy and oceanfront dining at April Point Resort & Spa on Quadra Island. Also on Quadra Island, Tsa-Kwa-Luten Lodge mixes ocean views and spa treatments with traditional Kwagiulth First Nations art and architecture.

## Telegraph Cove

A century ago, boardwalk villages dotted BC's coastline. Telegraph Cove, built on stilts along the ocean's edge just south of Port McNeill, is one of the last surviving — and best preserved — of these historic towns.

Stroll along the boardwalk to see the brightly painted boathouses and net lofts, and stop in to see the 20-m/66-ft-long fin whale skeleton at the Whale Interpretive Centre. Explore the cove by kayak, join a whale-watching or grizzly-viewing tour and then tuck into a plate of alder smoked salmon at the Killer Whale Cafe. Stay the night in a boardwalk cabin, a suite in the manor house, or even in an extension of the village's old floating hospital.

## Whale Watching

See killer whales hunting and breaching in Johnstone Strait, one of Canada's richest Orca habitats. Every summer, about 250 of these magnificent creatures gather here, off Vancouver Island's northeast coast, to feed on the salmon runs. They also like to rub their bodies on the area's smooth stone beaches.

Whale watching boats and kayak tours leave from Telegraph Cove, Port McNeill and Alert Bay. They keep a respectful distance so as not to disturb the whales or the strait's other wildlife, including minke and humpback whales, porpoises, harbour seals and sea lions.

## The U'mista Cultural Centre

This cultural centre in the tiny village of Alert Bay on Cormorant Island, 45 minutes by ferry from Port McNeill, is home to the world-renowned Potlatch Collection, one of the world's finest.

The collection, taken from the Kwakwaka'wakw people during the 1920s, spent much of the last century in, among other places, the Smithsonian Museum and the British Museum. These treasures and artefacts began to come home in the 1970s and the recovered pieces are now preserved and displayed in a traditional Big House-style building on Alert Bay's waterfront.

Time your visit for a summer weekend and you may be treated to a traditional Kwakwaka'wakw performance by the T'sasala Dance Group.

## Wilderness Cruises on the MV Uchuck III

Sign on for a maritime adventure on the *MV Uchuck III*. The Uchuck, a converted WWII minesweeper, sails from Gold River, at the end of Highway 28, to isolated First Nations communities, settlements and logging camps along Vancouver Island's roadless northwest coast. The 100-passenger ship travels through historic Nootka Sound and Esperanza Inlet, bringing freight and passengers to coastal villages; it also ferries adventurous hikers and kayakers to places way off the beaten path. Kayakers can even arrange for a wet launch straight from the ship.

## The North Coast Trail

Test your mettle on a coastal wilderness trek in Cape Scott Provincial Park, at the extreme northwestern tip of Vancouver Island. The North Coast Trail runs along the coast, past old-growth forest, sea stacks, rocky headlands and miles of spectacular beach. The catch? It's a rugged multi-day hike along a coast known for its pounding rainstorms. For an easier taste of this pristine landscape, try the 45-minute hike to the beautiful sandy beach at San Josef Bay.



SUPER. NATURAL.  
**BRITISH COLUMBIA**  
CANADA