2017 marks the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation and we invite you to celebrate with Parks Canada! Take advantage of free admission to national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas for the entire year. Get curious about Canada’s unique natural treasures, hear stories about Indigenous cultures, learn to camp and paddle and celebrate the 100th anniversary centennial of Canada’s national historic sites with us. Find adventure, fun for the whole family or a short break from the everyday in more than 200 special places across the country.
Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, and Haida Heritage Site is a wild place without roads or stores or cellphone coverage.

Gwaii Haanas is a place where people can explore a way of life in which the land and sea are intertwined with humans and the supernatural. It is a place with over 12,500 years of human history.

The Government of Canada (represented by Parks Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada) and the Council of the Haida Nation manage Gwaii Haanas cooperatively through the Archipelago Management Board (AMB).

Together, the AMB and Gwaii Haanas staff work to ensure Gwaii Haanas remains an awe-inspiring place. We use both traditional knowledge and scientific research to maintain the integrity of the ecosystems and the cultural heritage of the Haida.
The Land

Gwaii Haanas is peppered with islands and islets, bays and inlets, tidal pools and beaches—perfect for relaxing exploration. Pacific temperate rainforest sweeps from sea level up the slopes of the San Christoval Mountains that form the backbone of Gwaii Haanas. At lower elevations, rain and moderate temperatures help to nurture dense, mossy forests of immense western red cedar, western hemlock, and Sitka spruce trees.

The People

Archaeological evidence of human habitation on these islands extends over 12,500 years. Generations have been nourished by the rich abundance of Haida Gwaii. Fish from the ocean, berries from the forest, and birds from the sea and sky were all part of a traditional diet. These readily accessible foods allowed time for the Haida to develop into a complex society with oral histories, legal and social structures, as well as artistic expression. Haida art forms that reflect the intertwining of the people with the land, sea, and spirit world continue to command international recognition.

Haida Gwaii is Unique!

As an archipelago isolated from the mainland, Haida Gwaii has many unique plants and animals. The Haida Gwaii black bear (Ursus americanus carlottae), for example, has thrived on a rich diet of salmon and hard-shelled intertidal creatures for so long it has developed larger jaws and teeth to deal with these crunchy feasts. Some animals that were introduced relatively recently, such as the Sitka black-tailed deer, Norway and black rats have had serious impacts on our native ecosystems. Deer browsing destroys forest understory vegetation and hinders growth and survival of culturally significant plants such as cedar. Rats have decimated entire colonies of seabirds by preying on eggs, chicks, and adult birds. Some species common in north coastal British Columbia, like cougar, wolf, and grizzly bear, are absent from Haida Gwaii.

Gwaii Haanas Resource Conservation programs monitor the impacts of invasive species and in some cases, remove invasive species from selected islands to restore ecosystem health and to protect culturally significant species for Haida traditional use.

The Sea

The sea around Gwaii Haanas teems with life. These waters are home to salmon, herring, halibut, rockfish, crab, seastar, sea urchin, octopus, and numerous other species. Twenty species of whales and dolphins have been recorded in these waters. Grey and humpback whales pass through Haida Gwaii on the way to summer feeding grounds further north. See pods of humpbacks breaching and using bubble nets and flicking their tail flukes to gorge on the bounty of the Gwaii Haanas marine area.

Orcas, minke whales, porpoises, dolphins, harbor seals and Steller sea lions are also seen regularly in Gwaii Haanas. Sei, fin, and other whale species are occasionally sighted.

Haida Gwaii Watchmen

Explore historic Haida village sites with century-old carved poles and longhouse remains. The Haida Gwaii Watchmen welcome visitors and act as guardians from spring until autumn at:

• K’uuna Llnagaay (Skedans)
• T’aanuu Llnagaay (Tanu)
• Hlk’yah GawGa (Windy Bay)
• Gandll K’in Gwaay.yaay (Hotspring Island)
• SGang Gwaay (Ninstints, Anthony Island)

Mortuary poles at SGang Gwaay (also known as Ninstints), a UNESCO World Heritage Site on Anthony Island at the southwest edge of Gwaii Haanas, stretch over 20 feet into the sky. That’s about the same height as a two-story house! Carved with crests—like Eagle, Raven, Bear, Orca, and Thunderbird—the poles are maps of Haida lives and lineages.

Longhouse construction seen at T’aanuu Llnagaay (Tanu), K’uuna Llnagaay (Skedans), Hlk’yah GawGa (Windy Bay), Gandll K’in Gwaay.yaay (Hotspring Island), and SGang Gwaay has been recognized as an architectural design unique to the Haida.
If you are unsure of the area or your kayaks are available for rent locally. Visitors use their own boats, but only a few days. Many independent family and friends, while others spend some visitors spend a few weeks Independent or Guided

Take the time to learn about the changing weather, and strong winds that develop with little or no warning. Take the time to learn about the waters you plan to navigate. (Charts and Tables, pg. 23)

Boat Launch

The closest boat launch to Gwaii Haanas is Moresby Camp in Cumshewa Inlet on Moresby Island. Moresby Camp is a provincial recreational site, accessible by rough logging road. Check with the visitor centres for detailed instructions on times and procedures for travelling on active logging roads. Always drive with your headlights on.

The Route into Gwaii Haanas

Generally, small craft travel the inside waters of Carmichael Passage and Dana Passage from Moresby Camp to Gwaii Haanas; this route avoids the exposed waters between Cumshewa Head and Talunkwon Island. Mariners must time their travel with the tides. Kayakers should plan to go with the tide. Boaters must be aware of their draft, transit at high waters, and follow the markers. There is little room for error. Call on channel 16 and channel 6 before entering Louise Narrows to ensure there is no opposing traffic. If in doubt, avoid Louise Narrows.

Porter Head, on the Tangil Peninsula, is exposed to big seas, wind, and currents – exercise caution. It takes about two days, weather permitting, to travel by kayak from Moresby Camp to the northern border of Gwaii Haanas at the Tangil Peninsula. A popular alternative is transportation by a licensed tour operator.

Camping

Gwaii Haanas has no designated campsites. However, there are many good camping spots for small groups of one to three tents. You will require maps or charts to plan your daily itinerary and overnight stops. Allow enough time to check that each planned campsite is available and suitable for your group and the weather conditions upon arrival.

It is important to note that camping at any one location is limited to a maximum of three nights unless weather prevents safe travel. (Location is defined as an area with a radius of one nautical mile).

The orientation provides detailed information on areas closed to camping or access.

You will need waterproof bags and ropes for hanging food out of bears’ reach. Pack biodegradable soaps and shampoo, and wash dishes or bath at the mouths of creeks rather than upstream where others may collect their drinking water.

Bring a reliable cookstove. Always keep fires on the beach and well below the last high tide mark. Clean your campsite and fire so that no visible trace is left – please help maintain the wilderness experience for others.

Closures

Several highly sensitive areas, including all caves, are closed permanently for ecological or cultural reasons. Other areas, like seabird nesting colonies, may be closed seasonally to avoid disturbing breeding activities.

Temporary closures may be necessary for reasons such as bear activity. Islands in Juan Perez Sound will be closed to all access from March 15th – July 15th, 2017, with the exception of Qendili K’in Gwaii yaay/HotSpring Island, which will be closed from March 15th through May 14th. The mooring buoys off of Murchison Island will remain open from March 15th to July 15th, but the Ramsay Island buoys will be closed to access during this time. Maps and further information will be provided during the orientation. These closures are part of the Llgaay gwii shiihlda or Restoring Balance project. More information on this project can be found on page 11.

To protect inshore rockfish, Fisheries and Oceans Canada has designated two Rockfish Conservation Areas within Gwaii Haanas.

As part of Gwaii Haanas National Marine Conservation Area Reserve (NMCAR), six key marine locations in Gwaii Haanas have been selected for full protection because of their ecological or cultural significance. An interim marine area management and zoning plan is in place while we develop a plan that integrates land and sea management and protection.

A map of closures or areas with restricted access is available at www.pc.gc.ca/gwaiihaanas.

Saltwater Fishing

Fishing is only permitted in tidal waters, and then only outside closed areas.

A license is required for saltwater fishing. These licenses are available online from Fisheries and Oceans Canada (www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

One of the more common injuries that happens in Gwaii Haanas is related to fishing. Puncture wounds from fish or sea urchin spines are easy to come by and can easily become infected. That hazard can be reduced if you do the following:

• deal with them promptly by cleaning well, using antiseptic
• check the wound carefully; if any part of the spine has broken off and is embedded, it needs to be removed at once. Make sure tweezers are part of your emergency kit!
• keep wounds clean, dry and covered
• watch for signs of infection

Drinking water

During the summer, streams may become dry. Always carry a reserve of water between campsites, and bring your own water when visiting Watchmen sites.

For the convenience of larger vessels, water hoses are available at the following locations:

• Buoy on west side of Louscoone Inlet
• Dock west of Shuttle Island

These hoses supply untreated stream water, which should be purified before use.

A Wild Place

Facilities in and around Gwaii Haanas are minimal. Access is limited to boats and seaplanes. There are no roads, stores, or fueling facilities. There are a few mooring buoys, two water hoses, and limited navigational aids.

Make daily travel plans flexible to accommodate weather delays. Bring enough fuel and food to last for a few extra days. Carry clothing and equipment for a variety of weather conditions.

This area has significant tidal variation, strong currents, rapidly changing weather, and strong winds that develop with little or no warning.

Independent or Guided

Some visitors spend a few weeks travelling through Gwaii Haanas with family and friends, while others spend only a few days. Many independent visitors use their own boats, but kayaks are available for rent locally.

If you are unsure of the area or your skill level, try a guided trip. Licensed tour operators offer many types and lengths of organized trips.

Pets

Pets are not allowed at the Haida Gwaii Watchmen village sites. Elsewhere in Gwaii Haanas, pets must be kept on a leash at all times when ashore.

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Before visiting you need to make a reservation and attend an orientation.

Are you travelling independently or on a guided trip?

If you would like to take a guided trip, book your trip directly with your Tour Operator. See page 18 for a list of licensed tour operators.

If you are travelling independently (in your own boat, personal or rented kayak) you will need to make a reservation and attend an orientation.

Independent Visitors

Reserve

Make a reservation by calling Gwaii Haanas toll free at 1-877-559-8818.

Our reservation service is available Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm throughout the year. Be prepared to provide your planned entry and exit dates, the names of everyone in your group, and your vessel registration number, if applicable.

Visitor Numbers Limited

Gwaii Haanas balances recreation with the protection of the natural and cultural features that attract people. With this in mind, the number of visitors entering Gwaii Haanas each day is limited. Available space is distributed between guided and independent travelers.

July to mid-August is our busiest period, so if you plan to visit during this time, verify the availability of your Gwaii Haanas dates before finalizing your travel plans.

Group size is limited to twelve people within sight and sound of each other to preserve your visitor experience and to minimize impacts on the natural and cultural features of Gwaii Haanas.

Attend Orientation

All Gwaii Haanas visitors who are not travelling with a licensed tour operator must attend an orientation.

This 1-1.5 hour session provides an opportunity to connect with Gwaii Haanas staff, ask questions about your upcoming trip and to learn about the amazing Haida culture and incredible wildlife found here. Gwaii Haanas is wild and remote and there is very limited signage in the area. The orientation will go over closures, travel protocols and what to do in case of an emergency. We look forward to meeting you!

Visitors who are concerned about attending an orientation in person should call the Gwaii Haanas office early in the planning process.

Orientation Location

Gwaii Haanas orientations are at the Haida Heritage Centre in Skidegate. Follow the Gwaii Haanas orientation signs from the parking lot to the entrance of the Centre. The Haida Heritage Centre is 6 km from Queen Charlotte Village. If you are coming from the Sandspit or Queen Charlotte harbours and do not have a vehicle, you will need to arrange transportation. Taxi and rental car options are listed on the QC Visitor Information website, www.qcinfo.ca. The Alliford Bay ferry terminal is 10 km from Sandspit. Take this ferry to Skidegate Landing, a 20-minute trip. From there, the Haida Heritage Centre is about 1 km to the right (east).

Trip Permit Tags

Independent visitors will obtain their trip permit tags at the orientation. Display the tag while travelling in Gwaii Haanas or visiting any Haida Gwaii Watchmen site. Trip permits are required throughout the year. If you attend an orientation before finalizing your trip and making your reservation, you will need to request your trip permit tags when you make your reservation.

Orientations in French

Orientations can be delivered in French. Please call 1-877-559-8818 at least 48 hours in advance to arrange a French orientation session.

Private Bookings

For orientations in the shoulder seasons (September – May) call our office 250-559-8818 to book an orientation.

If you would like an orientation outside the scheduled sessions, in other locations, or for large groups, or groups who have special requirements, please contact our office as far in advance as possible. We will do our best to accommodate these requests. Sessions delivered outside normal working hours cost $78.50 and are dependent on staff availability.

Payment is made at time of booking.

Guided Visitors

If you use a licensed operator to drop you and your kayak in Gwaii Haanas, you are considered an independent visitor. You must make a reservation and attend an orientation session prior to beginning your trip. Some transport service providers can deliver orientations to independent visitors they transport; check with Gwaii Haanas for details.

Spring 2017 Orientations in Vancouver and Sidney, BC:

In 2017, Gwaii Haanas will be holding orientation sessions in Vancouver and Sidney to allow boaters planning to enter Gwaii Haanas from the south after they have made their reservations. Below are the dates, times, and locations:

- Friday March 10th, 7pm, Vancouver Public Library, 350 West Georgia Street
- Saturday March 11th, 7pm, Shaw Ocean Discover Centre, Sidney

Cancellations or Refunds

Please call Gwaii Haanas at 1-877-559-8818 to cancel a reservation.

Attention Media:

All media personnel require a media permit. Media are considered journalists, photographers, videographers, and bloggers travelling on assignment or on spec. Please apply early in your project planning.

Our team can help you gather the best possible photos, footage, and information during your Gwaii Haanas story research.

Please contact the Gwaii Haanas office at 250-559-8818 or 1-877-559-8818 and ask to speak to the media permit coordinator for more information.

2017 Orientation Schedule

- June 1– June 30
  - Monday – Friday: 9:00 AM
- July 1 - August 12
  - Monday - Saturday: 9:00 AM
- August 14 - August 31
  - Monday – Friday: 9:00 AM
- September 1, 2017 – May 31, 2018
  - Monday – Friday by appointment (48 hours’ notice)

Orientations are held at the Haida Heritage Centre, in Skidegate.

It is not necessary to reserve space in scheduled orientations. However, large groups (10 people or more) should call 1-877-559-8818 to book a private session.

Thank you for sharing.

It’s wonderful to experience Gwaii Haanas!
Stop at Windy Bay to see the 42-foot monumental cedar Legacy Pole carved by Jaalen Edenshaw. The figures in his design illustrate the connections between land, sea, and people.

The pole was raised in 2013 to honour 20 years of cooperative management between the Government of Canada and the Council of the Haida Nation.

It was the first monumental pole raised in Gwaii Haanas in 130 years!

2017 marks the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation and we invite you to celebrate with Parks Canada! Take advantage of free admission to national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas for the entire year.

What an inspiring place reflecting the work & commitment of so many people!

Thank you for honouring your ancestors & culture in such a beautiful way!
Listen to stories and songs about the Haida’s deep connection to the land and the sea and how these connections continue to thrive in Gwaii Haanas today.

Explore the strange and beautiful animals and plants that live in the world between the tides!

Hike the Spirit Lake Trail to discover how the Haida harvested plants and trees to obtain chewing gum, sun block, baby diapers and more!

Discover the many ways, from basic necessities to monumental masterpieces, that cedar has been generous and essential to the Haida past and present.

Interpretive walks, talks and activities are offered at the Haida Heritage Center in Skidegate during June, July and August.

Our summer program schedule can be found on the Gwaii Haanas webpage and posted in the Haida Heritage Centre.

Private bookings:
Does your group have a tight schedule or a particular interest? Consider booking a private or custom program. Call 1-877-539-8818 for more information.

Ask YOUR questions about whales, seabirds, culture, plants, history and more!

**What our visitors are saying:**

"Knowledgeable and friendly Haida guides. Walk was well paced, I learned a great deal. What a wonderful culture, all of us have lots to learn from the Haida People."

"Fantastic program! The guides were wonderful - very knowledgeable and engaging."

A new pool!

By the spring of 2017, a new pool will be constructed, the bathhouse will be moved closer and we will be ready for bathers!

The hot pools drained in October 2012 after a 7.8 magnitude earthquake shook Haida Gwaii. Hot water has been slowly returning to the area ever since and we look forward to once again offering natural hot water bathing.

It is important to know that Hotspring Island will be closed from March 15 to May 14 2017. This closure is necessary for an important Conservation and Restoration project taking place in the area, called Lligwaay’awii x̱aak ḗ̱ax̱a. Please refer to page 11 to learn more about this ecological restoration project.

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Most wonderful place I have ever been hands down! SPECTACULAR!

A treasure island.

What our visitors are saying:
Haida Gwaii means “Islands of the People” in the Haida language and... - is populated by about 5000 people - contains over 450 islands - is located 120 km west of Prince Rupert (6-8 hr ferry ride) - and 770 km north of Vancouver (2 hr flight)

TRAVELING TO HAIDA GWAI

Visitor Information
Information to help you plan your travel to Haida Gwaii can be found at www.gohaidagwaii.ca. This website has several useful tools to help you build your visit, including the Guide to Haida Gwaii, which is published annually. Community visitor centres are located in Sandspit, Queen Charlotte, Port Clements, and Masset.

White-Nose Syndrome is a serious fungal infection in bats that was recently introduced to North America. It has been spreading westwards in North America since its introduction, and in 2016 was detected for the first time on the Pacific coast in Washington. The mortality rate for infected bat populations is very high, 80-100%. The disease has killed over five million bats in North America so far and has added several bat species to the list of endangered species.

White-Nose syndrome is spread by human transport of fungal spores. The remote location of Haida Gwaii provides a refuge for bat species threatened by the disease. You can play a vital role in ensuring that you do not inadvertently transfer fungal spores to Haida Gwaii. Please thoroughly decontaminate all your gear prior to arrival on Haida Gwaii, especially if you are involved in any caving or mining activities outside of Haida Gwaii. Instructions for decontamination are available at: www.whitenosesyndrome.org/topics/decontamination

For questions or concerns, please call us at 1-877-559-8818 or gwaiihaanas@pc.gc.ca

Please be aware all caves in Gwaii Haanas are closed to public access.

Humpback whales are known for their spectacular acrobatic displays. Breaching, bubble net and flick feeding are just some of their amazing moves you might be lucky to witness in Gwaii Haanas.

After spending the winter in Mexico or Hawaii, humpbacks arrive in Gwaii Haanas beginning in April to feed on the abundant herring and krill found in Gwaii Haanas waters. The peak season for Humpback spotting is April through August.

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Humpbacks can be identified by the markings on their flukes. These markings are like human fingerprints - they are unique to each individual.

You can help researchers monitor these majestic animals. Keep track of the whales you see and report your observations through the B.C. Cetacean Sightings Network (http://wildwhales.org/sightings/ or using WhaleReport App).
LICENSED TOUR OPERATORS

TOUR OPERATORS

Licensed operators offer a variety of expeditions, tours and transportation options. Excursions range from flight seeing and day trips by motor boat to longer sea kayak and sailing expeditions.

Only operators who are licensed by Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, and Haida Heritage Site may operate within Gwaii Haanas.

The following is a list of all tour operators that have an allocation to operate in Gwaii Haanas. These businesses might not be intending to operate in Gwaii Haanas this year. Contact tour operators directly to verify if they will be working in Gwaii Haanas in 2017.

What does licensing mean?

The Gwaii Haanas business licensing process ensures that minimum safety standards are met for all businesses that operate in Gwaii Haanas. Gwaii Haanas does not evaluate guides on the extent of their knowledge of local natural and cultural features, and service standards vary from business to business. You are encouraged to discuss your service expectations with your prospective transportation or tour operator prior to confirming your trip plans.

If you have any questions as to whether a business is authorized to conduct trips in Gwaii Haanas, please contact Visitor Services Team Leader Anna Maria Husband at 250-559-6322 or annamaria.husband@pc.gc.ca

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<th>SERVICES</th>
<th>Air Charters</th>
<th>Kayak Tours</th>
<th>Kayak Rentals</th>
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<td><a href="mailto:hms@haidagwaii.ca">hms@haidagwaii.ca</a></td>
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Self-sufficiency in a Remote Location

Gwaii Haanas is remote. It is critical that visitors who plan to travel on their own in Gwaii Haanas have the skills and are adequately prepared to be self-sufficient in emergency situations, including equipment failure. Emergency responses are weather-dependent. In foul weather it may be many hours before emergency response personnel reach visitors in distress. Below is a list of the main hazards that visitors need to understand and prepare for before coming to Gwaii Haanas.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is the extreme loss of body heat and can result in unconsciousness and death. Hypothermia is caused by cold, but it is aggravated by wet, wind, and exhaustion. Kayakers are particularly susceptible. To prevent hypothermia, wear a warm hat in cool, damp, or windy weather; dress in layers; take frequent rest stops; and eat frequent, nutritional snacks and drinks. Pay attention to your body.

Shellfish Poisoning

Gwaii Haanas is closed to shellfish harvesting because of the risk of shellfish poisoning. Information on the signs and symptoms of Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP) and Amnesiac Shellfish Poisoning (ASP) is located in the Gwaii Haanas Visitor Guide, provided with orientation. For more information contact: Fisheries and Oceans Canada Phone: 250-569-1413 http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gy/contaminationbiotox/index-eng.htm

Allergic Reactions

Any visitors who have known allergies are strongly encouraged to carry the appropriate supplies to help them manage an allergic reaction until they can obtain advanced medical care. It is recommended that all visitors include allergy medications in their first aid kits in case someone has an unexpected allergic reaction, something that can occur when people are travelling in an unfamiliar environment. Insect repellent is also recommended to minimize the discomfort associated with insect bites as well as reduce the risk of allergic reactions for those who are particularly sensitive to insect bites.

Water Contamination

All water in Gwaii Haanas is untreated. Be prepared to adequately treat your drinking water to eliminate potential water-borne illnesses and parasitic infections. Health Canada provides advice on water treatment options: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-sntt/pubs/water-eau/outdoor-plein_air-eng.php

Wildlife Encounters

Black bears are found throughout Gwaii Haanas. They are opportunistic feeders and will take advantage of any food source left accessible to them by visitors. Because of the risks associated with bears that have become habituated to human food, Gwaii Haanas expects that all visitors will store their food (and toiletries, which can be equally attractive to bears) in a way where there is no chance that a bear can gain access. Introduced species, including rats, squirrels, and raccoons, will also take advantage of any available food. Food lockers or hanging devices are not provided in Gwaii Haanas. Visitors must come prepared to store their food using a hanging technique or by using wildlife-proof storage containers. Bear bangers are not permitted in Gwaii Haanas unless a special permit is obtained ahead of time for their use.

Boating Safety

All vessels, including sea kayaks, must meet the minimum safety standards contained in the Canadian Small Vessel Regulations. Current regulations are located in the Safe Boating Guide and the Sea Kayaking Safety Guide available from the Canadian Coast Guard.

Canadian Coast Guard
Phone: 604-666-0145
Search above titles at: www.tc.gc.ca

Kayaking Safety

Check the Gwaii Haanas website for a checklist of recommended and required items for kayaking in Gwaii Haanas.

Medical Insurance

Gwaii Haanas field staff are trained to act as first responders in public safety and first aid emergencies.

Gwaii Haanas may request that British Columbia Ambulance provide patient care and evacuate the person to medical facilities. This protocol is consistent with those of other search and rescue agencies, including the Canadian Coast Guard. If BC Ambulance is asked to respond, they will charge the evacuated visitor directly for services performed. Costs differ for BC residents, non-residents, and for work-related injuries. Visitors should ensure they have medical insurance that includes coverage for air evacuations from remote areas. For more information about BC Ambulance fees: http://www.bacs.ca/EN/main/about/fees.html

Sail Plan

Leave your sail plan with a trusted family member or friend. Close your sail plan by checking in with your family or friend when you return, or you may be held financially responsible for unnecessary search and rescue costs incurred on your behalf.

The Canadian Coast Guard will accept a sail plan, if required. Call 250-627-3081.

Mooring Buoys, Docks, and Anchoring

There are mooring buoys in several locations within the protected area, as well as a dock near Shuttle Island. Visitors are advised to use these facilities at their own risk. Larger vessels should anchor. Docks and buoys at the Operations Stations are limited to staff use except in the case of an emergency.

All vessels are requested to move off a buoy/anchor location after a maximum of three nights in any bay, cove, or inlet, weather permitting.

Emergency Personal Locator Beacons

If you use a PLB device be aware of their limitations. A locator beacon that lets you send a pre-recorded message can be used for daily check-ins with your emergency contact person - but there are some important things to remember:
• be sure to stick to the agreed-upon schedule for sending your message. If you don’t, your contact may initiate an unnecessary and expensive search operation.
• make sure you have enough batteries, or a solar charger, to keep your unit functioning for the duration of your trip.
• once you’ve hit the “send” button, wait until the “sent” message comes up on your screen before you put the unit away.

VHF Radio

All boats travelling in the area should be equipped with a VHF radio. Each kayak group should have at least one VHF radio with two fully-charged batteries.

To operate a VHF radio, you must be certified by Industry Canada with a minimum of the Restricted Operator Certificate (Maritime) – ROC(M). You can take a course or review the Study Guide for the Restricted Radio Operator’s Certificate (RIC-2), then write a test (fee and passport photo required). Contact the Canadian Power and Sail Squadron for a Registered Examiner in your area: www.cps-ecp.ca

Marine Weather

A small craft warning is always in effect for the waters in this area. Boaters and kayakers must listen for cues in the Canadian Coast Guard marine weather forecasts and rely on their observations of local conditions to remain safe.

Weather

The climate of Haida Gwaii is typical of British Columbia’s outer west coast – cool and wet virtually any time of the year. The east side of Haida Gwaii is considerably drier than the west, which receives between 500 and 800 centimeters of rain a year.

Winds in the summer can blow strongly for lengthy periods. These winds funnel over the Islands and down inlets of the east coast creating gusty conditions that can be hazardous, especially for kayaks.

Storms associated with frontal systems occur frequently in winter and are not uncommon in the summer months. Include “weather days” in your travel plans.
Marine Charts

Charts at the largest scale are indispensable in this area. The charts cover the most frequently travelled part of Gwaii Haanas (east coast and south end). For a complete list of charts for Haida Gwaii and the rest of the BC Coast and where to buy them, check the Canadian Hydrographic Services website: www.charts.gc.ca.

Tide Tables

Tide tables are essential for exploring Gwaii Haanas. We have extreme tides here - up to 24 ft tidal variation. The big tides have significant implications for safety and navigation. You’ll find uncharted rocks and reefs in the near shore waters that can be prominent at low tides or hidden under the surface at higher tides. The high tides also pull driftwood off the beaches, presenting more hazards to navigation at this time.

The Hydrographic Service publishes booklets annually that provide daily tides (time and height) for specific locations and instructions on the tide table use.

For Haida Gwaii: Canadian Tide & Current Tables Volume 7 (2017), “Queen Charlotte Sound to Dixon Entrance”.

Find tide tables at the following Haida Gwaii locations: Village of Queen Charlotte: Moeghan’s store Skidegate: Gwaii Co-op store Masset: North Coast Supply Sandspit: Visitor Centre

Check the tides online: www.tides.gc.ca

The crest of the Archipelago Management Board (AMB) is a unique design by local Haida artist, Gitexga. The sea otter and the sea urchin were chosen because of their significance in the ecological and cultural history of Gwaii Haanas.

Kelp forests are among the most productive ecosystems in the waters of Gwaii Haanas. Historically, populations of sea urchins, which fed heavily on kelp, were kept in check by sea otters. This ensured an abundance of kelp and provided habitat for many species, from sea starts to fish and marine mammals. With the extirpation (local extinction) of sea otters during the maritime fur trade era, the natural balance was disrupted. The sea urchin population increased dramatically. Underwater deserts exist where there were once rich forests of kelp. The loss of the sea otter is a powerful reminder of the vulnerability of individual species and entire ecosystems.

Before travelling in Gwaii Haanas, please ensure you understand and have experience in interpreting marine charts and tide tables and using them to identify marine hazards.

Boaters of all kinds should know how to take compass bearings and use triangulation to establish position. Do not rely solely on a Global Positioning System (GPS).

All boaters must follow the collision regulations of the Canada Shipping Act.

For more details on potential marine hazards in Gwaii Haanas go to www.pc.gc.ca/gwaiihaanas.

## CHARTS AND TIDE TABLES

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GO BEYOND

GWAII HAANAS

Like us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/GwaiiHaanas