Haawa - Thank you for celebrating over two decades of “Once in a Lifetime” moments on Haida Gwaii with us. Your time exploring Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, and Haida Heritage Site is sure to be the highlight to your summer.

My Haida Gwaii Trip Planner is designed to help with your preparation, and the overall expectation of your upcoming vacation with Ocean Sound Kayaking.

Over the past 23 years, our reputation of fun, educational, and safe travel thru Haida Gwaii has provided our guests with a “BUCKET LIST” of memories.

We’re proud of our reviews – but don’t just take our word for it, see what people are saying about us on Trip Advisor. View Reviews
**Haida Gwaii Trip Planner**

It is important that all guests have a clear understanding of the expectations of our tours, and are prepared well.

To help you navigate this document - **Click on any Heading and/or Sub Heading below in the Table of Contents for further information and for future references:**

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**Guests Expectations**

I have introduced many people to Haida Gwaii over the past two decades of leading sea kayak trips in Gwaii Haanas. Before we travel together, I want to ensure that all my guests have a clear understanding of my trips so that your expectations will be met.

**Personal Fitness**
First and foremost, I would like to make it clear that age means nothing to me. I see it as simply a number. The fact that you have connected with me, tells me you are an adventurous soul, and seek intrinsic wilderness experiences, which is what we are after.

We travel in a self-propelled mix fleet of single and double sea kayaks. There is NO support boat on any of my kayak tours.

Kayak experience is not required; however, I do ask that guests feel comfortable around water. More important than one’s paddling skill, is that guests arrive with past camping experiences to draw upon. Past experience’s travelling and camping in the wilderness will assist you greatly ensuring your personal comfort in a remote wilderness setting such as Haida Gwaii.

**Lifting and Carrying Gear**
To make any trip successful all guests must participate in the daily chores, and contribute to the overall team environment such as: food cache, meal prep, meal clean up, setting up camp, collecting fire wood and drinking water, etc.

We can accommodate those that have physical limitations in this department; however, guests are expected to be able to carry up to 20 – 30 pounds, as kayaks must be placed above the high tide line nightly in teams of 6- 8 people.

**Toilets**
There are no outhouse facilities throughout Gwaii Haanas. The use of low impact practices such as the “intertidal flush”, a standard set by Parks Canada for all kayakers in Gwaii Haanas.

Your guide will give you a briefing of this practice and present a private area for the group washroom at each rest stop, and campsite.
Tour Itineraries

**Kayaking Gwaii Haanas – Haida Gwaii** is a true wilderness experience and to travel safely in a self-propelled vessel, with no support, a flexible mindset is needed. The success of the tour will depend on weather, tides, group interests, and the overall ability of the group. No one person (guides included) have any control over such variables.

I believe that the tours are your tours, and OSK will try to facilitate the overall goals of the group, which can deviate from any tour itinerary found on my webpage. Each person arrives to Haida Gwaii with their own personal bucket list and interests that we are trying to fill.

Frequently Asked Questions

- How long can I expect to paddle each day?
- What fitness level is required for such a trip?
- What is the weather on Haida Gwaii at this time of year?
- Can you accommodate my food allergy?
- What is the deference between an Expedition and Basecamp Tour?

These are questions you should be asking yourself. The answer to the above and many other questions can be found here. Please connect with me if you have any questions.

Our Principals

Our goal is to offer a wilderness experience that will remove you from your everyday distractions, replacing cell phones with solitude, and street lights with stars.

Let’s keep the wild, “WILD”. With this in mind, it is our responsibility to travel thru Haida Gwaii with an ethical approach. After all, there are a limited number of places that offer such an authentic wilderness experience like Haida Gwaii.

Your guide will provide you with a trip orientation on day one, a Parks Canada requirement of all Gwaii Haanas guests. The purpose of the trip orientation is to offer insight to: the Haida Culture, the sensitivity of Ecological Reserves, and to deliver awareness as to how our tours will be practicing industry standards regarding low impact camping, and wildlife encounters.

Known as the “Galapagos of the Pacific North West” – Haida Gwaii can offer some incredible wildlife experiences. After all, these encounters are one of the greatest attractions to any kayak trip. Our approach to such species like Humpback Whales, dolphins, porpoises, Orcas, bears, sea birds, seals and sea lions can be reviewed below in our Wildlife Etiquette.
What is Included

- 100% Trip Departure Guaranteed with any OSK booking.
- Owner/Guide - Steve Konik has 23 years of intimate knowledge of the waters surrounding Haida Gwaii to share with you!
- Small group size of 8 Guests.
- Roundtrip transportation between your chosen accommodations in Sandspit, and our remote camp in Gwaii Haanas National Park.
- Two Fully Certified Guides on each tour.
- All Meals while kayaking in Gwaii Haanas National Park.
- The use of a mix fleet of 6 singles, and 2 double fiber glass kayaks.
- Life Jacket and all required kayak rescue gear.
- Tent (individual tents may be provided for those travelling solo).
- Library of books related to Haida Gwaii.
- Satellite Telephone, Satellite Inreach and 2 Marine Radios for emergency use.
- Two Kitchen Tarp s which comfortably houses the entire group in inclement weather.
- A fully stocked camp kitchen.
- Fully stocked First Aid Kit.
- Lastly each individual is guaranteed to have more than a few laughs!

What is NOT included

- Travel to/from Haida Gwaii from your home
- Airport transfers while on Haida Gwaii
- Accommodations before or after your kayak tour
- Personal Travel and/or Evacuation Insurance
- Personal Snacks for paddling or around camp.
- Personal Mug
- Gratuities
- Personal clothing which is outlined in the Gear List
**Travel to Haida Gwaii**

All Haida Gwaii kayaking tours start from the community of Sandspit, BC, Canada and can be accessed by plane, train, or automobile; however, a ferry from Prince Rupert to Haida Gwaii will be required for those not flying directly from Vancouver, BC to Sandspit (YZP).

Our tours will be in a remote coastal environment exposed to a diversity of weather conditions and our water taxi to/from Gwaii Haanas may require last minute adjustments from our transport providers. It is for these reasons that we require all travel arrangements to be made no later than the day before the tour start date, and leave island NO sooner than the day after the tours scheduled last day.

Those guests taking additional time to explore the islands after their tour, I still suggest that you stay in Sandspit on your final evening. Mother Nature may not cooperate, and a later than desired return may occur, which may NOT provide you enough time to catch that limited ferry.

**Planes, Trains, and Automobiles Options**
Here are your travel options to Haida Gwaii, complete with web and toll free #’s.

**Local Haida Gwaii and BC Ferry Schedules**
Here is the local ferry schedule to connect Sandspit (Alliford Bay) to Graham Island

**Baggage Allowance for Flights to Haida Gwaii**
For those flying to Haida Gwaii, there is a baggage restriction. You are allowed 1 checked bag and one carry on. I strongly suggest that guests maximize their carry-on luggage with the essentials: sleeping bag, rain gear, medication you may require, and a change of clothing for the day, just in case your luggage is left behind or lost in transit.

This additional preparation will ensure that you have the bare minimum to start your tour in case your luggage is lost.
**Sandspit Accommodations**

Due to Air Canada and BC Ferry’s limited scheduling, combined with the transport out from Gwaii Haanas, all guests MUST stay in Sandspit their last night of the trip.

If guests chose to leave the islands on the last schedule day of their tour, Ocean Sound Kayaking is not responsible for any additional costs to your travel arrangements such as missed flights, and ferries.

All tours start and finish in Sandspit, BC the location of the island’s main airport. I strongly suggest that all guests stay in Sandspit the night before and after their tour dates. Guests not staying in Sandspit will be required to make their way from the ferry crossing at Skidegate landing (Graham Island) which is 17 km from Sandspit, at your own expense. This ferry has a limited schedule and does not get you to Gwaii Haanas.

Beds are limited in a small town of 250 people, and I strongly suggest once you have confirmed your booking with OSK, that you book your accommodations ASAP.

**Accommodation options for Sandspit, complete with web and toll free #’s**

**Medical, Trip Insurance and Tetanus Shot**

Most people have insurance without knowing it through their credit card(s), health plan, personal insurance, etc. I strongly recommend that all guests have travel insurance to cover any unexpected situations and illnesses that could arise before and especially during your tour in Gwaii Haanas, as any evacuation from this remote location “WILL” be costly.

For Out of Province and Non-Canadian Residents this is a must for you, as medical costs and evacuations can be very expensive. Contact your travel agent or insurance for further information regarding coverage in British Columbia, Canada.

Tour delays can be costly, whether it’s due to bad weather, cancelled or delayed transportation (flights, ferries or zodiac), and illness or like situations that Ocean Sound Kayaking cannot control, are not included in the tour costs.

Is your **Tetanus Shot up to date?** They are free at your local hospital or clinic. We strongly recommend that you update your tetanus shot prior to travelling with us.
**Haida Gwaii Visitor Center**

Many guests often enjoy a few extra days exploring the islands before or after their kayak trip, which I can definitely help with some suggestions for activities and attractions. To get the most current information on car rentals, Graham Island accommodations, hiking trails, etc. one should check out the following webpage:

[Queen Charlotte Visitor Center Link](#)

**Books on Haida Gwaii**

All tours will have a small library for guests to enjoy while kayaking with OSK. These books will cover the Flora and Fauna of the islands, Aquatic ecosystems, and Haida Culture.

Below are some suggestions for those that wish to do some pre-tour reading.

- Haida Monumental Art
- Those Born at Koono
- A Guide to the Queen Charlotte Islands
- To the Charlottes- George Dawson’s 1878 Survey
- Islands at The Edge Islands
- The Golden Spruce: A True Story of Myth, Madness, and Greed

The following books are found in our tour library

- The Golden Spruce: A True Story of Myth, Madness, and Greed
- The Queen Charlotte Islands, -Places and Names Vol. 2
- Ninstants - Haida World Heritage Site
- Ravens Cry
- Chiefs of the Sea and Sky
- Field Guides to Sea Stars, Seashells, and Seaweeds
- Field Guide to Birds of North America
- The Wonders of intertidal
- Field Guide to ecology of Pacific Northwest Forests
OSK GEAR LIST – tried and tested since 1989!

I recommend the following items for our kayaking tours to ensure your comfort. I personally do not believe in expensive name brands but most importantly I do believe in quality and functional gear.

How well you are prepared will reflect on the overall comfort of the group and yourself!

Printable Itemized Check List for your reference:

- Sleeping Bag
- Sleeping pad
- Sleeping Bag Liner (renters)
- Camp Chair
- 1-2 Ikea bag(s)
- Dry Bags 1/20L, 2/10L, 2/5
- Rain Coat & Pant
- Paddle Jacket
- Camp foot wear
- Kayaking Foot wear
- 1-liter wide mouth water bottle
- Mug/Thermos (250 – 500ml)
- Snacks
- 2 pairs of nylon quick drying shorts
- 2 pairs of nylon quick drying pants
- 3-4 pairs of wool socks
- Thermal vest
- 1-2 short sleeve quick dry shirt
- 2 pairs of thermal long under wear and top
- 2 long sleeve quick drying shirts
- 4-7 pairs of underwear
- Insulated Jacket, Synthetic Fill is ideal, as fleece/wool sweater is bulky.
- Bandana, or balaclava
- Toque, winter hat for those south of the boarder
- Brimmed hat of sort
- Lip Balm
- Sunglasses
- Sun Screen
- Headlamp (new batteries)
- Toiletries and personal medication
- Wet wipes – quantify
- Environmental Camp Soap
- Bathing suit or Haida style
- Small quick dry towel
- 2-3 lighters
- 5 large zip lock bags
- 4 large thick garbage bags
- Camera
- Extra Batteries and Storage Insect repellent
- Optional Book – kindle
- Optional Binoculars
- Optional small collapsible umbrella
- Optional Pocket Knife
- Optional Fishing License/Gear
- Optional Wine/Spirits
**Preparing Yourself**

The instructions below are designed to assist you to properly prepare yourself with how the items in the packing list will be used and packed for day one of your kayak trip. Please review the following information in detail as it can save you and the group some unwanted inconveniences.

The best time to kayak in Haida Gwaii is June to September, where the coastal weather ranges from 14 to 22°C, hence why all tours are offered during this time of year.

Please do not let me scare you off with any kind of weather synopsis or items found on the gear list; I wish to prepare my guests with the worse possible scenario, so that way you and the group are properly prepared for any diverse weather we could encounter while on tour. To be honest half the items I do not use, but I sure would want them around if weather requires it.

**Dressing for the Coastal Environment**

Dressing for the diversity of weather conditions of the West Coast, is to simply expect the unexpected. The sport of sea kayaking is an aerobic activity. By dressing in layers allows perspiration to be wicked through synthetic fabrics, in turn keeping you dry and happy.

How you prepare your items, reflects on your comfort and the overall success of group.

**Personal Clothing**

The material that your items are made of contribute greatly to your overall comfort. Here are some thoughts on different materials:

- *Marino Wool* products available which are ideal, as they keep you warm when wet, they do not retain odors (like Polypro), and they are quick drying.
- *Polypro* is a great economical material; however, it often keeps those bodily odors, but it can be washed and dried extremely easily.
- *Cotton* on the other hand is NOT an ideal fabric, as it holds unwanted moisture, creating a cool environment for your body, and is slow drying.
- *Wool* is an acceptable fabric, keeping you warm when wet; however, takes more time to dry in a coastal environment.

It is important that all the items on the gear list arrives on your tour. Remember more does not mean you are better off, it simply means you have more items to manage, and pack into a limited space.
Your local thrift or second-hand store can be a great place to find camp clothing at a reasonable cost.

**Thermal layers**
Such items as long under wear should be considered a winter thermal layer, to ensure your comfort when damp or on a cool evening, preventing heat loss. They can also double as leggings around camp and while kayaking.

**Underwear**
It is human nature to start our day with our trusty whitey tighties (cotton underwear) and never stop to think that this base layer provides you **ABSOLUTELY** no thermal insulation when damp or wet!

Start from your skin out when thinking of the proper materials for your clothing. There is a variety of synthetic under wear on the market that is great for aerobic outings.

Women may want to wear their swimming bottoms, as they are often made of a spandex/synthetic blend.

**Sleeping Bag**
- A three-season synthetic bag, with a temperature rating of +5C is ideal. If you choose to bring a down filled sleeping bag, please note that extra care will be required as they do not keep their warmth or loft when damp/wet. Not that your sleeping bag should ever get wet.
- Renting a synthetic sleep bag is an option thru OSK; however, I have a limited amount and it is first come first serve/ trip. If you rent a sleeping from us, you are to provide a sleeping bag liner. You can ether purchase a liner, or sew one yourself, but its required.

*An example of a reliable synthetic sleeping bag.*

**Therm-a-rest/ Sleeping Pad**
A three season blow up therm-a-rest is ideal for a warm and comfortable sleep. A therm-a-rest/ Sleeping Pad should be no larger the following stuffed dimensions (6 inches in diameter by 12 inches in length).

Renting a therm-a-rest is an option thru OSK; however, we have limited amount and it is first come first serve/ trip

*An example of a reliable therm-a-rest.*
**Additional Information**

**Medication**
Personal prescription drugs should be duplicated, with dosage, and name and one set given to the guide.

Epi Pens, if you have food or environmental allergies an Epi Pen is required. There will be 2 - Epi Pens in my fully stocked first aid kit.

**Cell phones**
There is absolutely NO CELL COVERAGE in Gwaii Haanas, and I embrace it! Besides the use of cell phones as your personal cameras, we ask that you limit its presence while in camp. After all, this is why we are seeking out remote wilderness places.

**Cameras**
Camera, think of how you wish to water proof this item. [Will a zip lock be enough or a larger sturdy pelican case?](#) Also think about extra batteries and digital storage.

**Camera Batteries**
Unfortunately, there are no opportunity to charge batteries while on the tour. There is a number of great storage and battery options for cameras, cell phones, and eBooks on the market for you to choose from.

**Non-Scented and Quantify Items**
Keeping a clean camp starts at home with the items we choose to bring on our tour. To keep the wild, “WILD” we request that all guests bring non-scented items when packing soaps, tooth paste, sunscreen, deodorant, and wet wipes.

- We also ask, that you quantify items appropriately for your kayak tour, as you do not need a liter of sun screen, and bath suds, while your camp towel does not need to be full length.

**Bathing**
Many of our chosen camps have a freshwater source to collect water and to bath in. Your guides will create the boundaries along with a private location for guests.

The kayak tour will have the capability of carrying 110 Liters of water to sites that do not have suitable or reliable water supply.

Non-Scented wet wipes are some handy items around camp, as they are convenient and easy.
Toiletries and Toilets
There are no outhouse facilities at the campsites throughout Gwaii Haanas. Kayakers are to use low impact practices such as the “intertidal flush”, the preferred method of human waste disposal within Gwaii Haanas.

Your guide will present to the group a private area for the group washroom at each rest stop, and campsite. All toilet paper is either burned on site and buried, or stored in a zip-lock bag until one is able to burn their toilet paper.

I do not provide toilet paper on the tours anymore, as it has been missed used on more than one occasion leaving myself and others short of inventory... Each person is responsible for his/her own toilet bag.

Packing the following into a LARGE ZIP LOCK BAG, one roll of TP, accommodated by 2 lighters, a small bottle of air-dry hand sanitizer, and 3-6 small sandwich zip lock bags (Just in case that lighter isn’t working on that rainy day, you can stow and burn your paper in the fire at the nights end). You do not need more than two rolls, unless you have another use for them.

**TIP:** remove the inside tube of your toilet paper roll, this allows you to take the TP from the middle of the roll, which is great when it’s raining because you don’t need to remove it from your dry bag/large zip lock.

Feminine Hygiene Products
We suggest that female guests bring a supply of female hygiene products for the trip, as wilderness travel can often change one’s menstrual cycle. All products are to be zip-locked for disposal.

The “Diva Cup” can be an alternative to traditional products.

Neoprene Farmer John/Jane or Dry Suites
These items are not required for any of my Gwaii Haanas tours. Unless you are a particularly cold person, then this is a personal item of use.

Camp Chair
A chair is a great item to have around camp. I personally use a FLAT CAMP CHAIR, as they are very compact and easy to store in the kayaks, and it does not have legs that will sink into a sandy beach or break. They also do not require being strapped on the outside of the kayak; nor do they rust, and they are very durable.
Gratuities
“Is something given voluntarily or beyond obligation usually for some service.” You without doubt notice the hard work your guide(s) have put into making your Haida Gwaii vacation a memorable experience, it’s often customary to leave 5-10%.

Snacks
Over years I have noticed that everyone’s palette is different when it comes to snacks. We ask guests to bring their own snacks for their personal time in camp and while on the water kayaking to ensure you are getting the specific snack you desire.

Hot Drinks – Mugs and/or Thermos
OSK provides coffee, sugar, powder milk, hot chocolate, and black tea to drink throughout the trip. If you have a personal preference of herbal tea, please feel free to bring it. Guests are also required to bring their own mug/thermos for hot drinks. I have found this to be a personal item that people have hiked, biked, skied... there mug to all corners of the globe.

• A SMALL thermos (350-500ml) is ideal, appose to a mug, as it can hold a hot drink all day.

Groceries
Snacks and groceries can be purchased at the SUPERVALU in Sandspit to keep your luggage weight down if flying with Air Canada.

Supervalu hours can be limited in a small town, plan those last-minute items accordingly.

Alcohol and Cannabis
Alcohol is welcomed on all our trips. Supervalu has a variety of spirits for you to choose from. We simply ask that you pack out all recyclable products.

Cannabis is legal within Canada; however, it is illegal within all National Park’s, and for this reason alone, we ask that you to respect this.
**Foot Wear**

There are two types of foot wear, dry feet, and wet feet.

**Wet Feet**
Your feet will get wet at one point of the trip. There are all kinds of foot wear optiona available, and we all have our own preference. While kayaking you want something that is functional both in the water, along the shoreline, and in the kayak. Some options include strapped sandals, neoprene booties, etc.

A great all-around sandal I use is called Chaco’s. They have a firm sole and offer strapping for solid footing. If your sandals are Velcro make sure the Velcro still works, so those barnacles do not hurt your bare feet when your sandal is floating away.

Keen Sandals are another popular footwear used on the coast. The only issue is that stones and pebbles often get stuck in the shoe.

Guests seem to be using those ever so popular Crocs, they are great but have no rigidity to them, and can be slippery when wet, which can be a challenge when exiting the kayak. I have had to mend a number of feet in camp due to a branch going through the sole, which is worth thinking about.

A rigid bottom neoprene booty can be nice to get in and out of the kayaks. They will keep your feet warm; however, I would not double them as my camp foot wear. They take time to dry and may not provide that ankle support required around camp.

**Dry Feet**
You want something for around camp, this could be old sneakers, rubber boots, or even your paddling sandals if you don’t mind having clammy feet until they dry.

Light weight non-rigid rubber boots are what I wear in the rain forest and around camp, especially if it’s rainy. But you need to keep the water out of them.

Hiking boots I really do not think you will need them. If you are bringing leather hiking boots waterproof them. The salt water will eat them. We don’t do any serious hiking and often they are not used. Instead bring a sturdy sneaker.

Flip Flops are not recommended foot wear for coastal topography. They are sloppy, they break easily, and you are sure to hurt yourself wearing them.
Weather Proof Yourself

Whether it is wind, rain, or cool temperatures, an adequate paddling jacket is a MUST. This is your first line of defense against the weather. There are a number of great manufacturers ranging in prices, but most important make sure all seams are sealed.

Gore Tex is an adequate material; however, it is a breathable fabric and salt water will eventually destroy the membrane over extended use. The use of a product called NiKWiX restores Gore-Tex and gives that old material new life. If you are planning on using that old Gore Tex Jacket, guests should invest on this treatment.

This will be the only time I wish to mention the “r” word, rain. Apart from your paddling jacket, one should think of waterproofing themselves around camp. The only true waterproof material is rubber, and your guides most likely will be wearing Helly Hansen Rain Gear around the camp on those rainy days.

Paddling Jackets

This is one of the most frequent questions I get: “Should I buy a paddling jacket?” I don’t believe people need to go and make a onetime purchase of a paddling jacket just for this trip; however, if this is a pastime you wish to pursue it can be a solid DRY investment.

A paddling jacket should have the following: reinforced seams throughout the jacket, neoprene wrists, and a hood which is nice for wind and rain.

Often guests use their old Gortex winter jacket which is fine. Gore Tex is an adequate material; however, it is a breathable fabric and salt water will eventually destroy the membrane over extended use. The use of a product called NiKWiX restores Gore-Tex and gives that old material new life. If you are planning on using that old Gore Tex Jacket, guests should invest in this treatment before the tour to ensure it will function properly.

MEC makes an economical paddling jacket as well
Level Six is a Canadian Company which I wear while sea kayaking.

There are many other manufactures that will do as well, this should get you started.

- Renting a paddling jacket is available thru OSK, I have limited availability, with first come first serve/ trip.
How to Pack for Day One?

Renting Gear?
I have the ability to outfit 2 guests per trip, so its first come first serve when it comes to rentals.

Here is the rental pricing for the following items:
- 30$/ trip Complete set of Dry Bags (2x5L, 2x10L, 1X20L)
- 30$/ trip Paddling Jacket
- 30$/ trip 3 season Sleeping Bag
- 30$/ trip 3 season Therm-a-rest

Dry Bags will be required to keep all your items dry when on our Haida Gwaii tours. The following dry bags are required by guests.
- These dry bags can also be rented thru OSK; however, there is limited availability to first come first serve/ trip.
- 1 - 20 liter dry bag for sleeping bag
- 2 – 10 liter dry bags for clothing
- 2 – 5 liter dry bag personal toiletries

1 x 20-liter dry bag for your sleeping bag
- Your synthetic sleeping bag along with a synthetic thermal top and bottom so you are ready for a night’s sleep can be packed into a 20 L dry bag. If you choose to bring a down sleeping bag, please use extra care and keep it dry throughout the tour.

2 x 10-liter dry bags for your personal clothing
- Your personal clothing can be divided into the two – 10L bags. One bag can be filled with items you may not wear for that particular day, while the other bag is packed with items you may want accessible behind your kayak seat, or up front of your feet in the cockpit.

2 x 5-liter dry bags for personal items and snacks
- This is an ideal size to pack your toiletries, small items, such as sunscreen, lip balm, books, etc., and they are easy to stow in the cockpit of the kayak with you. This bag should have your toiletries in it as well.
- All personal snacks must go into your second 5L dry bag. Packing snacks allows us to food hang your snacks if required due in particular sites, and the dry bag can also be stored in your kayak while paddling.

Thermarest can be packed into a garbage bag to stay dry, and does not need to go into your dry bags.
The following items do not go into the above dry bags

- Therma rest
- Camp chair
- Rain gear
- Snacks, Wine and Spirits

All this gear can now be packed into your 2 Ikea bags to be transported on day one from your Sandspit accommodations.

**Tents**
- The tents that I provide do not need to go into your dry bags, and will be presented to you at your first remote wilderness camp.

Also leave your sleeping pad and rain gear out of your dry bags as well. If you wish to keep your therm-a-rest (SLEEPING PAD) dry, wrap it in a thick garbage bag, but it usually stays dry in the rear hatch.

**Traveling on the Zodiac**
We recommend you keep a small 5L drybag with you during the Zodiac transportation. You will want access to snacks, sunscreen, sunglasses, water, your camera, and many warm layers for the Zodiac ride.

**Thinking of Fishing on the tour?**

We do not rely on fish for our meals but it sure is great to eat fresh fish with your dinner. There are fishing closures throughout Gwaii Haanas, your guides will be throwing out a line every chance they get outside these closures.

[Click here to review Gwaii Haanas fishing closures.](#)

We do not offer fishing specific tours, nor do we sport fish or recreational fish on any of our tours, we only food fish.

[Fishing Licenses are required, and must be purchased thru this Government link.](#)
**Marine Charts**

Guests are NOT required to bring their own charts for our kayak trips; as your guides will be referring to theirs with the daily objectives of the trip. If you wish to bring your own for reference the following charts will cover our Haida Gwaii kayak trips.

You can purchase charts from [Map Town](#) or from the CHS (Canadian Hydrographic Service). This large-scale chart covers the entire waters of Gwaii Haanas.

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<th>Area</th>
<th>Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3853</td>
<td>Cape St James/Cumshewa/Tasu Sound</td>
<td>1:150,000</td>
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</table>

**Gwaii Haanas Kayak Expedition**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart #</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Scale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3825</td>
<td>Houston Stewart Channel/Cape St James</td>
<td>1:40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3808</td>
<td>Juan Perez Sound</td>
<td>1:37,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3809</td>
<td>Carpenter Bay - Burnaby Island</td>
<td>1:37,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Native Totems of Gwaii Haanas**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3855</td>
<td>Houston Stewart Channel</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Houston Stewart Channel/Cape St James</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fall Bears and Wild BC Salmon, Gwaii Haanas Legacy Traverse, Whales and Birds Migration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart #</th>
<th>Area</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3808</td>
<td>Juan Perez Sound</td>
<td>1:37,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3894</td>
<td>Selwyn Inlet - Lawn Point</td>
<td>1:73,026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3807</td>
<td>Atli Inlet - Selwyn Inlet</td>
<td>1:37,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Emergency Contact Information**

In case of an outside emergency while on your sea kayak tour with Ocean Sound Kayaking, relatives and friends can contact you by following these instructions.

Please this is for emergency purposes only as many people will be going out of their way to relay your friends/family members call out.

Ocean Sound Kayaking Office 1 403 609 5576  info@oceansoundkayaking.com

My wife Lise can be of assistance. If she does not answer the phone, please leave a message, and then continue to proceed to call Moresby Explorers.

Moresby Explorers Office 1 250 637 2215  info@moresbyexplorers.com

This is a company that I work closely with on Haida Gwaii and they have an office person available almost 24/7. They have multiple guides daily in the park and will be able to get the message to me/you at our remote location.

The caller must identify that the message is for a participant of Ocean Sound Kayaking, as they deal with a lot of people and leave contact # with Moresby Explorers for us.

In the field, Ocean Sound Kayaking has 2 marine radio phones, a satellite phone, and an Inreach for emergencies only, so we have the capability to call out to the required personal, anywhere in the world.

**Wildlife Etiquette**

Known as the “Galapagos of the Pacific North West” - Gwaii Haanas can offer some incredible wildlife experiences. After all, these encounters are one of the greatest attractions to any kayak trip. The following are just a few species that could be encountered.

**Humpback Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises**

Twenty-two species of whales, dolphins, and porpoises have been observed in the waters of Gwaii Haanas. Whales belong to two major groups, defined by their diet and feeding habits.

- **Baleen Whales** use plates called baleen to strain plankton and small fish from the water.
- **Toothed whales** eat fish, squid and marine mammals.

It’s our responsibility not to disturb a whale’s natural behavior, while keeping a minimum of 100 meters away from most whales, dolphins, and porpoises, and keeping a minimum of 200 meters if they are in a resting position or with their calf.
Orcas
Transient killer whales often visit the waters of Haida Gwaii. Unfortunately, Haida Gwaii does not have resident killer whales like Johnston Strait. These transient killer whales are carnivores, and prey on salmon, and marine mammals (such as seals and sea lions). They travel in small pods of 3-5. To keep with regulations, we will enjoy their presence with a distance of 200 meters, and will not disturb their natural behavior.

Taan – Black Bears
Taan - is Haida for bear. Haida Gwaii boast the largest black bears in the world; however, they are a subspecies of the North American Black Bear.

I have never had a negative bear encounter, and wish to keep it this way. My opinion is “there are no Bear Problems in Gwaii Haanas, there are Only People Problems”. We will be executing strict practices while on shore, and will be diligent in keeping a clean, scent free camp environment, to ensure no bears become habituated to people.

Guides will be providing more information on how All food must never be unattended, and how food must be properly stored. You can help by choosing non-scent foods and products when packing for your trip. At no time is any food or scented items allowed in your tent.

Bears are omnivorous, and can be viewed foraging in the intertidal zone for crabs, sea-urchins, beach hoppers, clams, mussels and barnacles. In the fall the bears move to the salmon spawning streams. The spawning period lasts around 45 days during which time the bears will accumulate roughly 70 percent of their annual protein intake.

In Haida mythology, the bear is considered family. There is an old Haida Legend called “Bear Mother” or “Taan AwGa”.

One Day a young woman was picking berries but had found that the bears had eaten most of them. She was angry and blamed the bears for her unfortunate luck. The bears had heard her; they became agitate and stole her away. At first the young woman had missed her family and village. She found solace in the bear village, married a bear father and had two bear cubs. Years later, the woman returned to her village to teach the people to respect the bears.

Seals and Sea Lions
Seals and sea lions travel and feed in the sea, but come to shore to rest, mate, give birth, and to molt. Stellar Sea Lions and harbor seals are a common sighting in Gwaii Haanas at “Hall Outs”.

Sea Lions are extremely sensitive to disturbance during the breeding season, which lasts from late May to the middle of July. To protect their pubs from being swept away, they give birth
high on the rocks. In their first month, pubs are vulnerable as they do not swim, and any disturbance to the Hallouts, may lead to accidental trampling from the large bulls.

When viewing seals and sea lions we will pay attention to the natural behavior of the hallouts, the first sign of any unrest regardless of our distance, we will back away. We are required to provide a minimum of 100 meters to any marine mammal.

**Sea Birds**
The isolation, abundance of food, lack of disturbance during nesting periods and the availability to suitable habitat makes Gwaii Haanas an ideal place for sea birds. An estimated 370,000 pairs of seabird’s nests in Gwaii Haanas alone, which represents roughly 15% of all sea birds in BC.

To avoid disturbance to seabirds during the breeding season (April – September) we will take the following steps:
- Do not disturb nests or go ashore sea bird colonies.
- Avoid using flashlights, campfires at night near colonies
- Avoid making loud noises when in proximity of colonies

**Reflection**

As a small business I am always striving to provide quality experiences to my guests. I understand this is your vacation, and I wish to make it a memorable journey.

If I was not your guide on your tour, I will reach out to connect and to reflect with you, regarding your experience with Ocean Sound Kayaking.

Haawa for choosing Ocean Sound Kayaking.

If you have any questions regarding the following information or Haida Gwaii in general, please do not hesitate to contact me.