



Gulf Islands
National Park Reserve of Canada
parkscanada.gc.ca

Authentic Explorer

With a foot in both worlds, you appreciate the understated beauty of natural and cultural environments. You enjoy using all of your senses when you explore your chosen destination and really get to know the places you visit. You quickly adapt to personal challenges and risks, easily figuring out how to make the most of every situation. You want to be fully immersed in your travel experiences and tend to stay away from group tours and rigid plans.

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Take a deep breath of the fresh salty air, feel the warm west coast sun on your face (or our famous misty west coast rain) and take a moment to feast your eyes on the idyllic Gulf Islands scenery surrounding you. From breathtaking mountaintop views, lush old forests and stunning seascapes to unique historic landmarks— this is the place to embark on your own awe- inspiring west coast experience.

Explore new horizons: climb a mountain, spot a whale, learn to sail, try geocaching, feast on authentic west coast fare, camp in the great outdoors, get your hands dirty on an interpretive program and immerse yourself in the unique flora, fauna and history of the park reserve.

Choose a new gulf island adventure each weekend and experience first-hand the distinctive culture and lifestyle of each place! You will rub shoulders with the locals, take part in a farmers' market and discover the unique flavours of island life.

Speak to our Parks Canada staff to make the most of your visit!
www.canada.travel/eq

For the **Authentic Explorer** we suggest...

Best places to spot wildlife — Pack your camera and a lunch and head to East Point (Saturna Island), Georgina Point (Mayne Island) or Sidney Spit for your best chance to see everything from birds to whales!

Best “nightlife” spots — As the sun sets over the pacific, enjoy the dancing bat show over head. Once the sky is dark, admire all of the bright stars you can see away from the city lights. At the beach, stir the deep dark sea to discover the mysterious sparkle of bioluminescence (living creatures that glow in the dark). (Winter Cove, Roesland, Beaumont or Sidney Spit)

The perfect paddle — Feel the waves and become one with nature in a sea kayak. Discover the islands from a whole new perspective and learn a few tricks of this authentic West Coast sport along the way. Check the website for licensed kayak guide operators.

Go on a treasure hunt — Try one of our geocaching programs and embark on a self-guided adventure **to experience some of the park's most interesting** cultural and natural hotspots. Choose from two routes: a family-friendly treasure hunt or a more strenuous route.

Coast Salish Traditions — Discover first-hand the deep traditional bond between Coast Salish people and the land and sea. Enjoy storytelling, singing and drumming, wool knitting or cedar bark weaving with a First Nations educator and a Parks Canada interpreter.





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Cultural Explorer

You seek constant opportunities to embrace, discover, and immerse yourself in the entire experience of the culture, people and settings of the places you visit. Not content to just visit historic sites and watch from the sidelines, you want to participate in the modern-day culture as well. You often attempt to converse with locals, attend local cultural festivals, or go off the beaten track to discover how people truly live.

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Welcome to the heart of culture on the west coast. Wherever you go in the Gulf Islands you will meet folks with unique traditions and ways of life— whether they be First Nations, hippies, yuppies or everything in between.

Soak up some easy-going island charm and experience first-hand the distinctive culture and lifestyle of each island. Rub shoulders with the locals, check out the bounty at the Saturday farmers' market on Saturna and Pender Islands and browse for treasures handcrafted by island artisans.

See for yourself the deep traditional bond between Coast Salish people and the land and the sea. Join a First Nations' **educator** throughout the park this summer; enjoy storytelling, singing and drumming and try your hand at wool knitting or cedar bark weaving. First Peoples will regale you with stories about the islands and their personal connection to the area.

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For the **Cultural Explorer**
we suggest...

Coast Salish Traditions – Discover first-hand the deep traditional bond between Coast Salish people and the land and sea. Enjoy storytelling, singing and drumming, wool knitting or cedar bark weaving with a First Nations educator and a Parks Canada interpreter.

Get out to sea— How better to experience the Gulf Islands than to relax on a boat captained by a knowledgeable expert? Treat your family to a guided excursion and visit some of the top destinations in the park. You can see eagles, otters, seals and maybe even a whale!

A true Gulf Islands experience – Go to the annual “Saturna Island Lamb BBQ” and celebrate **Canada day with islanders at a country-** fair-style picnic. Play games, enjoy the entertainment and if you are a carnivore try the lamb with mint sauce (harvested and made on the island)! July 1st at Winter Cove on Saturna Island.

Get away from it all – A peaceful forest trail leads you down onto a beautiful rocky point, surrounded by crystal clear turquoise waters and tall echoing cliffs. Take a seat, breathe in the clean forest air and admire your stunning surroundings at Narvaez Bay on Saturna Island.

Natural encounters – Touch a slug, smell a tree, **hear the “poof”** of a whale and get your feet wet while you discover the plants and animals of the park reserve on a free and fun nature program.





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Cultural History Buff

You strive to go beyond your own roots to understand the history and culture of others. When you travel, you are likely pursuing a personal interest or hobby, making the experience more intrinsically rewarding. Travelling alone or in small groups, you seek the freedom to observe, absorb and learn at your own pace, unhurried by others or driven by rigid schedules.

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

From a historic Hawaiian homestead to a fabled fog alarm building, the park offers places to immerse yourself in the lore of eras gone by. Set your own schedule and choose a new gulf island to discover each weekend. Wherever you go in the Gulf Islands you will meet folks with unique traditions and ways of life— whether they be First Nations, hippies, yuppies or everything in between.

Book a kayak guide or water taxi and head to Russell Island— a place that time has forgotten. Nestled into a lush and mossy forest, a gnarled apple orchard and an old white house set the scene. Here, on summer afternoons and early evenings, descendants of **the island's** original Hawaiian pioneer will regale you with stories of their **ancestors' lives on the island.**

If you want to dig a little deeper before or after your visit, read one of the many fascinating books about the people of the area, such as ***Saltwater People (as told by Dave Elliot Sr.*** by Janet Poth) or ***Maria Mahoi of the Islands*** (by Jean Barman).

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For the **Cultural History Buff** we suggest...

If these walls could talk... — Step back in time at Roesland (North Pender Island) where you can see the original log cabins that were once part of a popular vacation destination and take a walk through the Pender Island Museum. Or, visit the recently renovated Fog Alarm Building at East Point on Saturna Island, chat with a local volunteer and hear tale tales of the islands.

History comes alive — Book a kayak guide or water taxi and head to Russell Island, where a forested trail leads you to a historic Hawaiian homestead. On summer afternoons, descendants of the original settler will **regale you with stories of their ancestors' lives on the islands.**

History on the move — As you explore Sidney Island, discover the remnants of various settlements and industries such as an abandoned brick factory. Check out the interpretive signs found along the way to uncover clues from the past such as historical tidbits, maps and archival photos.

Coast Salish Traditions — Discover first-hand the deep traditional bond between Coast Salish people and the land and sea. Enjoy storytelling, singing and drumming, wool knitting or cedar bark weaving with a First Nations educator and a Parks Canada interpreter.

Go on a treasure hunt — Try one of our geocaching programs and embark on a self-guided adventure **to experience some of the park's most interesting** cultural and natural hotspots. Choose from two routes: a family-friendly treasure hunt or a more strenuous route.





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Free Spirit

Something of a thrill-seeking hedonist, travel satisfies your insatiable need for the exciting and the exotic. You like the best of everything and want to be surrounded by others who feel the same way. You have a lot of energy and want to see and do everything. It all adds to the fun! Young, or young-at-heart, you travel for the thrill and emotional charge of doing things. You can't stay at home. Why would you?

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Uncover a rare corner of the world where rugged wilderness adventure and unsurpassed scenery are just a step away from all the luxuries in charming Victoria or cosmopolitan Vancouver.

Shake things up and do something out of the ordinary. Climb a mountain, spot a whale, learn to sail, take a dip in the pacific and stir the deep dark sea to discover the mysterious sparkle of bioluminescence (living creatures that glow in the dark).

Step up to one of the latest outdoor trends: geocaching, a treasure hunt for all ages. Challenge yourself to find the 'Top Ten Best Places in Gulf Islands National Park Reserve' on a rigorous series of hikes. This self propelled adventure will lead you to all of the must-see destinations of the park reserve.

Spoil yourself with a weekend of extravagance at a local gulf island resort or Bed and Breakfast. Stay in a cozy oceanfront cottage, pamper yourself at a nearby spa, indulge in local fare at a west coast restaurant and **get a "natural" work-out** on a hike through the park reserve.

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For the **Free Spirit** we suggest...

Sweaty reward – Step up to a challenging hike at Portland Island (three-hour loop) or Mount Norman on South Pender Island (one-hour loop) where you will get some exercise and be rewarded by beautiful panoramic views of the park.

One-Day Wonders – Pack the picnic basket for a new family adventure each weekend: Sidney Spit – make sandcastles; Mt. Warburton Pike – bring a blanket and spot a goat; East Point – hear sea lions; Winter Cove– watch the water do tricks; Roesland– take a family photo on the point at Roe Islet.

Carbon credit biking adventure – Help save the planet and leave your car at home today. Instead hop on your bicycle and zip along the Lochside trail from Victoria to the end of Beacon Avenue in the town of Sidney (about one-hour). Lock your bike at the Sidney ferry dock and hop on the passenger ferry to Sidney Spit.

A true Gulf Islands experience – Go to the annual "Saturna Island Lamb BBQ" and celebrate Canada day with islanders at a country- fair-style picnic. Play games, enjoy the entertainment and if you are a carnivore try the lamb with mint sauce (harvested and made on the island)! July 1st at Winter Cove on Saturna Island.

The perfect paddle – Feel the waves and become one with nature in a sea kayak. Discover the islands from a whole new perspective and learn a few tricks of this authentic West Coast sport along the way.





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Gentle Explorer

You like returning to past destinations and enjoy the security of familiar surroundings. You seek the most comfortable places when you get away and avoid the unknown. Well-organized travel packages and guided tours that take care of all the details appeal to you - travel should be fun, not extra work! And if it's fun, chances are you'll be back.

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Enjoy a place where serenity and idyllic scenery are a step away from the finest amenities!

Spoil yourself with a weekend of extravagance at a local gulf island resort or Bed and Breakfast. Stay in a cozy oceanfront cottage, pamper yourself at a local spa, indulge in local fare at a west coast restaurant and enjoy the peace and quiet of the surrounding park reserve.

Look no further than Sidney Spit for a relaxing get away that is close to home. Lie back and unwind on your beach blanket and be transported to the tropics by the warm sandy beaches and inviting blue waters. From building sandcastles to bird watching, there is a pleasant diversion for everyone in your clan. So pack a picnic and your favourite book and idle away an afternoon.

What better way to enjoy your Gulf Islands retreat than to sit back and relax on a boat captained by a knowledgeable expert? Treat yourself and your nearest and dearest to a guided excursion and visit some of the **park's tried and true** top destinations.

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For the **Gentle Explorer** we suggest...

Soothing Strolls – Stroll along the warm sandy beaches of Sidney Spit, admire the picturesque view of the lagoon and dip your toes in the Pacific Ocean. Or, slip away from the afternoon sun on Saturna Island to ramble along the shoreline of Winter Cove to a breathtaking view of Boat Pass and the Strait of Georgia. Sit back, relax and be mesmerized by the tides.

Sniff, sip and savour – Cap off an afternoon stroll through the park with a leisurely lunch, followed by a wine tour and tasting at a local winery.

Scenic road trip – Drive to the top of Mt. Warburton Pike on Saturna Island and enjoy the **breathtaking bird's eye view**. Or, **cruise along the** stunning ocean-side road to East Point on Saturna Island where you will find an unparalleled view of the Strait of Georgia (and your best chance to spot a whale from land).

Under the sea – The Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre is a Parks Canada partner that offers you the opportunity to touch local marine creatures and see the ocean environment normally hidden under the waves in the park reserve.

Sidney stroll with a view – Admire stunning views of the park while strolling the waterfront boardwalk in Sidney. Stop in at the nearby shops for coffee or ice-cream, or take some time to browse the second hand bookshops. On Thursday evenings in the summer, drop by the famous outdoor market.





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No-Hassle Traveler

As a bit of an escapist, you search for relaxation and simplicity when you get away. You prefer worry-free travel and spending time travelling with family and friends. Short breaks and getaways are preferred to long-distance travel. After planning the basics of the trip (accommodations, transportation), you like to fill in the details as you go. Along the way, you hope to see and expose your family or travel companions to the beauty of natural scenery and different cultures.

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Get off the beaten track and bring the whole brood for a “not-to-be missed” Gulf Islands experience— the Saturday market on Pender and Saturna Islands (just a short BC ferry “cruise” away from Sidney or Vancouver). Soak up the easy-going island charm while sampling local comfort food and browsing for treasures handcrafted by island artisans.

If you have only an afternoon to spare – take off with your nearest and dearest to the gorgeous beaches of Sidney Spit. Pack a picnic, build a sandcastle and catch up on your favorite book. Unwind on your beach blanket and be transported to the tropics by the warm sandy beaches and inviting blue waters.

Need a mini-getaway? Go on a weekend camping trip just a 25 minute drive from Victoria at McDonald Campground. Kick back and relax. You'll find tranquil scenery just a few steps from all of the conveniences of the city. Breathe in the clean air, admire the beautiful forest setting and roast marshmallows over a crackling campfire with your family.

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For the **No-Hassle Traveller** we suggest...

Under the sea – The Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre is a Parks Canada partner that offers you the opportunity to touch local marine creatures and see the ocean environment normally hidden under the waves in the park reserve.

Sidney Stroll with a view – Admire stunning views of the park while strolling the waterfront boardwalk in Sidney. Stop in at the nearby shops for coffee or ice-cream, or take some time to browse the second hand bookshops. On Thursday evenings in the summer, drop by the famous outdoor market.

Scenic road trip – Drive to the top of Mt. Warburton Pike on Saturna Island and enjoy the breathtaking bird's eye view. Or, cruise along the stunning ocean-side road to East Point on Saturna Island where you will find an unparalleled view of the Strait of Georgia (and your best chance to spot a whale from land).

Natural encounters – Touch a slug, smell a tree, hear the “poof” of a whale and get your feet wet while you discover the plants and animals of the park reserve on a free and fun nature program. Check the website or an information kiosk (at locations throughout the park) for a list of program locations and times.

Coast Salish Traditions– Discover first-hand the deep traditional bond between Coast Salish people and the land and sea. Enjoy storytelling, singing and drumming, wool knitting or cedar bark weaving with a First Nations educator and a Parks Canada interpreter.





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Personal History Explorer

You travel to gain a deeper understanding of your ancestry and heritage. Your travel tends to be a shared experience, both during and after the trip. You feel safer when you stay at branded hotels and prefer to travel in style, comfort and security. You like to visit all of the important landmarks, so a carefully planned schedule, often as a part of group tours, ensures experiences of a lifetime.

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Enjoy the serenity of the Gulf Islands and bond with your family on a boat captained by a knowledgeable expert. Treat yourself and your nearest and dearest to a guided excursion and visit **some of the park's** tried and true destinations. From a historic Hawaiian homestead to a fabled fog alarm building, the park offers many places to immerse yourself in the lore of eras gone by

Take sanctuary on a weekend at a local resort. Stay in a cozy oceanfront cottage, pamper yourself at a local spa, dine on local fare at a west coast restaurant and enjoy the peace and quiet of the surrounding park reserve.

Check out the viewpoints and interpretive signs found throughout the park reserve. In this storied area, you can uncover clues from the past such as historical tidbits, maps and archival photos.

If you want to dig a little deeper before or after your visit, read one of the many historical or cultural books on the area such as ***Saltwater People (as told by Dave Elliot Sr.*** by Janet Poth) or ***Maria Mahoi of the Islands*** (by Jean Barman).

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For the **Personal History Explorer** we suggest...

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Sidney Stroll with a view – Admire stunning views of the park while strolling the waterfront boardwalk in Sidney. Stop in at the nearby shops for coffee or ice-cream, or take some time to browse the second hand bookshops. On Thursday evenings in the summer, drop by the famous outdoor market.

Scenic road trip – Drive to the top of Mt. Warburton Pike on Saturna Island and enjoy the **breathtaking bird's eye view**. Or, **cruise along the** stunning ocean-side road to East Point on Saturna Island where you will find an unparalleled view of the Strait of Georgia (and your best chance to spot a whale from land).

Sniff, sip and savour – Cap off an afternoon stroll through the park with a leisurely lunch, followed by a wine tour and tasting at a local winery.

Get out to sea – How better to experience the Gulf Islands than to relax on a boat captained by a knowledgeable expert? Treat your family to a guided excursion and visit some of the top destinations in the park. You can see eagles, otters, seals and maybe even a whale!





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Rejuvenator

For you, travel is a chance to totally disconnect and just “get away from it all.” All you want to do is rest, recharge and renew. You usually take short vacations to familiar destinations, often for family visits and celebrations. While you might seek out destinations with a few interesting things to see and do, you don’t want overly-hectic schedules of events. After all, travel is meant to be relaxing, not extra work!

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Enjoy a place where tranquility and magnificent scenery are just a step away from all the amenities of modern life. Spoil yourself and your nearest and dearest on a weekend of extravagance at a local resort. Stay in a cozy oceanfront cottage, pamper yourself at a nearby spa, dine on local fare at a west coast restaurant and enjoy the peace and quiet of a stroll through the surrounding park.

Disconnect from daily life and get a real breath of fresh air on Saturna Island, just a short BC ferry “cruise” away from Sidney or Vancouver. Head to East Point where a short ramble down the beautiful grassy headland takes you to an unparalleled view of the Strait of Georgia. You may spot a whale or even a whale pod. Cap off your afternoon with a leisurely lunch, followed by a wine tour and tasting at a local winery.

Don’t miss the Gulf Islands answer to a tropical paradise— Sidney Spit. Lie back on your beach blanket and be transported to the tropics by the warm sandy beaches and inviting blue waters. Pick up a gourmet picnic from a local bistro and catch up on your favourite book.

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For the Rejuvenator we suggest...

Get out to sea – How better to experience the Gulf Islands than to relax on a boat captained by a knowledgeable expert? Treat your family to a guided excursion and visit some of the top destinations in the park. You can see eagles, otters, seals and maybe even a whale!

Sidney Stroll with a view – Admire stunning views of the park while strolling the waterfront boardwalk in Sidney. Stop in at the nearby shops for coffee or ice-cream, or take some time to browse the second hand bookshops. On Thursday evenings in the summer, drop by the famous outdoor market.

Cosy campfire sing-a-long – Gather the gang around a crackling campfire at McDonald campground, a lush forest setting only minutes away from Sidney and Victoria. Roast some marshmallows, tell your scariest ghost stories and sing your favourite campfire songs.

Get away from it all – A peaceful forest trail leads you down onto a beautiful rocky point, surrounded by crystal clear turquoise waters and tall echoing cliffs. Take a seat, breathe in the clean forest air and admire your stunning surroundings at Narvaez Bay on Saturna Island.

One-day wonders – Pack the picnic basket for a new family adventure each weekend: Sidney Spit – make sandcastles; Mt. Warburton Pike – bring a blanket and spot a goat; East Point – hear sea lions; Winter Cove– watch the water do tricks; Roesland– take a family photo on the point at Roe Islet.





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Virtual Traveler

Tending not to travel very often, you prefer the comforts of home to the uncertainties of new places or cultures. Often very active locally, you usually find enough to satisfy your sense of exploration within your community. Rather than being restricted to the confines of pre-packaged tours, you prefer the flexibility of being able to decide what you want or don't want to do on your own. Your trips tend to be shorter, close to home and centered on family events.

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Admire stunning views of the park while strolling the waterfront boardwalk in Sidney. Stop in at the nearby shops for coffee or ice-cream or take your time browsing the second hand bookstores. On Thursday evenings in summer, the famous outdoor market is worth a visit.

Need a mini-getaway? Enjoy a relaxing afternoon with your nearest and dearest on the famous beaches of Sidney Spit. Pack a picnic, build a sandcastle and catch up on your favorite book. Unwind on your beach blanket and be transported to the tropics by the warm sandy beaches and inviting blue waters. Get away from it all without going far from home.

Come to a place where tranquil scenery is only a few minutes away from all the **amenities of modern life**. Enjoy a leisurely weekend “**in your own backyard**” while camping at McDonald Campground (a 25-minute drive from Victoria). Breathe in the clean air, admire the beautiful forest setting and roast marshmallows over a crackling campfire with your family.

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For the **Virtual Traveller** we suggest...

Float your boat – Cruise to Cabbage Island and enjoy the peace and quiet or circumnavigate Princess Margaret (Portland Island) for 360 degrees of stunning views. If you **don't have your own boat**, hire a **kayak guide** for the day or treat yourself to a guided eco-tour.

Under the sea – The Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre is a Parks Canada partner that offers you the opportunity to touch local marine creatures and see the ocean environment normally hidden under the waves in the park reserve.

Scenic road trip – Drive to the top of Mt. Warburton Pike on Saturna Island and enjoy the **breathtaking bird's eye view**. Or, **cruise along the** stunning ocean-side road to East Point on Saturna Island where you will find an unparalleled view of the Strait of Georgia (and your best chance to spot a whale from land).

Mediterranean on a shoestring – With its warm sandy beaches and inviting blue waters, Sidney Spit is the closest thing to the tropics on the west coast. Lie back on your beach blanket and be transported to paradise!

Soothing Strolls – Stroll along the warm sandy beaches of Sidney Spit, admire the picturesque view of the lagoon and dip your toes in the Pacific Ocean. Or, slip away from the afternoon sun on Saturna Island to ramble along the shoreline of Winter Cove to a breathtaking view of Boat Pass and the Strait of Georgia. Sit back, relax and be mesmerized by the tides.

