



## Gwaii Haanas

'Laanaay 'waadluxan Tilga Kaaganda,  
Tang.ewan 'Laanaay 'waadluxan  
Kaaganda, ad Xaaydas Giinaa.ah 'Laana

## Gwaii Haanas

National Park Reserve, National  
Marine Conservation Area Reserve,  
and Haida Heritage Site

Réserve de parc national, réserve  
d'aire marine nationale de conservation,  
et site du patrimoine haïda

## Gwaii Haanas

# Gwaii Haanas Trip Planner





# THE ISLANDS

**This trip planner provides a glimpse of what it's like to travel in Gwaii Haanas. We hope you leave with this place in your heart, as so many visitors have before you.**

## What is Gwaii Haanas?

**Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, and Haida Heritage Site is a Haida homeland.**

Gwaii Haanas is one of the only areas in the world protected and managed from sea floor to mountain top. It is also unique because it is a true and equal partnership between the Government of Canada and the Council of the Haida Nation managed through the Gwaii Haanas Archipelago Management Board.

Visitors come from all over to explore this jewel at the edge of the world, experiencing its sheltered sandy bays, turquoise inlets, Haida villages, and old growth forests. Gwaii Haanas' unique combination of coastal temperate ecosystems and thriving Haida culture make this a place like no other on earth.

Archaeological evidence of human habitation on these islands goes back at least 14,000 years. Throughout millennia, Haida have developed a complex society and culture. Art, ceremony, and medicine continue to create connection to the land and sea. Haida art forms reflect the intertwining of the people with the land, sea, and spirit world.

# WELCOME TO OF BEAUTY

## 1985

Haida took a stand against unsustainable logging practices as part of the Athlii Gwaay protest on Tllga Kun Gwaay.yaay *Lyell Island*.

The Haida Nation designated the southern 15 percent of Haida Gwaii as a Haida Heritage Site.

## 1993

The Gwaii Haanas Agreement was signed and National Park Reserve designation was added to the Gwaii Haanas Haida Heritage Site designation.

## 2010

Gwaii Haanas became the first National Marine Conservation Area Reserve and aligned Canada's marine protection with the Haida Heritage Site designation.

## 2013

Celebrating 20 successful years of cooperation, Gwaii Haanas raised the Gwaii Haanas Legacy Pole in Hlk'yah *Gawga Windy Bay*.

## 2018

The Gwaii Haanas Gina 'Waadluxan Kilguhlg'a Land-Sea-People Management Plan was signed. This plan provides a blueprint for responsible and respectful stewardship that will ensure the continuity of Haida culture and protect the natural heritage of Gwaii Haanas for future generations.



*Urchin barrens compared with healthy kelp forest.*

## THE SEA OTTER CREST

### A SYMBOL OF BALANCE

The crest of the Archipelago Management Board is a unique design by local Haida artist, Giitsxaa. 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 world. Historically in Gwaii Haanas, populations of sea urchins, which feed heavily on kelp, were kept in check by sea otters. This ensured an abundance of kelp and provided habitat for many species. Haida and sea otters coexisted on Haida Gwaii for millennia and the two have a deep traditional relationship.

With the extirpation of sea otters during the maritime fur trade era, the natural balance was disrupted. The sea urchin population increased dramatically. Underwater barrens replaced rich kelp forests. The historic loss of the sea otter is a powerful reminder of the vulnerability of individual species and entire ecosystems.

Sea otters have now naturally returned to Haida Gwaii. Their return will bring ecological and cultural changes in the coming decades. Their return offers us a chance to reflect on our past with sea otters and consider a new relationship based on historic connections and today's values.



## YOUR VISIT

### Plan

Advance planning is key to a successful trip! You can explore Gwaii Haanas as part of a guided trip, travelling with a licensed tour operator, or on a self-guided adventure. Use the flow chart on pages 6-7 to determine what type of adventure is most suited for you.

If you would like to take a guided trip, book directly with a tour operator. (See pages 16-17).

If you are planning a self-guided trip, you must make a reservation, pay a visitor use fee and attend an orientation.

Gwaii Haanas balances recreation with protection of the natural and cultural environment. With this in mind, the number of visitors entering Gwaii Haanas each day is limited. Available space is distributed between guided and self-guided travellers.

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



## Reserve

### Are you travelling with a tour operator?

If you are travelling with a licensed tour operator, you will make your reservation, pay your fee and receive your orientation directly through your operator (see pages 16-17).

### Are you travelling independently?

If you are travelling to Gwaii Haanas on a self-guided trip, visit [parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-plan](https://parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-plan) for more information about reservations, fees, and the mandatory orientation.

When making your reservation be prepared with your planned arrival and departure dates, the names and age categories of everyone in your group, an emergency contact for the group, and if applicable, your boat name, vessel registration number, and country of registration.

We understand that for independent boaters trip plans will be weather-dependent. However, reservations are still required. Reserve your anticipated entry and exit dates. If weather or mechanical issues result in changes to your entry date, please contact our office as soon as possible to make alternate plans.

## Kayak Shuttle Service

If you use a licensed operator to drop you and your kayak in Gwaii Haanas, you are still considered an independent visitor. You must make a reservation and attend an orientation prior to your trip.

## Gwaii Haanas fees

Visit [parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-fees](https://parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-fees) for a list of current fees.

## Orientation

If you are visiting Gwaii Haanas on your own boat or kayak, you must attend a Gwaii Haanas orientation. This session includes information on closures, traveller protocols, and what to do in case of an emergency. It is also an opportunity for you to connect with a Gwaii Haanas staff and ask questions about your upcoming trip.

We offer in-person orientations in the Haida Heritage Centre in HlGaagilda *Skidegate* during June, July, August. Visit [parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-fees](https://parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-fees) for a detailed orientation schedule. Please allow at least one hour for this session.

We are happy to provide an orientation in French. Please contact our office as early as possible in your planning process to request this.

Once you have made your reservation and attended an orientation you will receive a visitor guide and permit.



## Cancellations

Please contact the Gwaii Haanas office (1-877-559-8818) to cancel a reservation. See back cover for full contact details.

## Media Permits

All media require a media permit when travelling in Gwaii Haanas. Media include journalists, photographers, videographers, influencers and bloggers travelling on assignment or spec. It is important to contact us early to request a permit as well as for project and trip advice. We work closely with the Haida Nation communications department to review all media permit applications.

We offer complimentary fact checking, photo and video gathering services to media before or after their travels in Gwaii Haanas.

Please contact the Gwaii Haanas office and ask for assistance from a media permit coordinator.

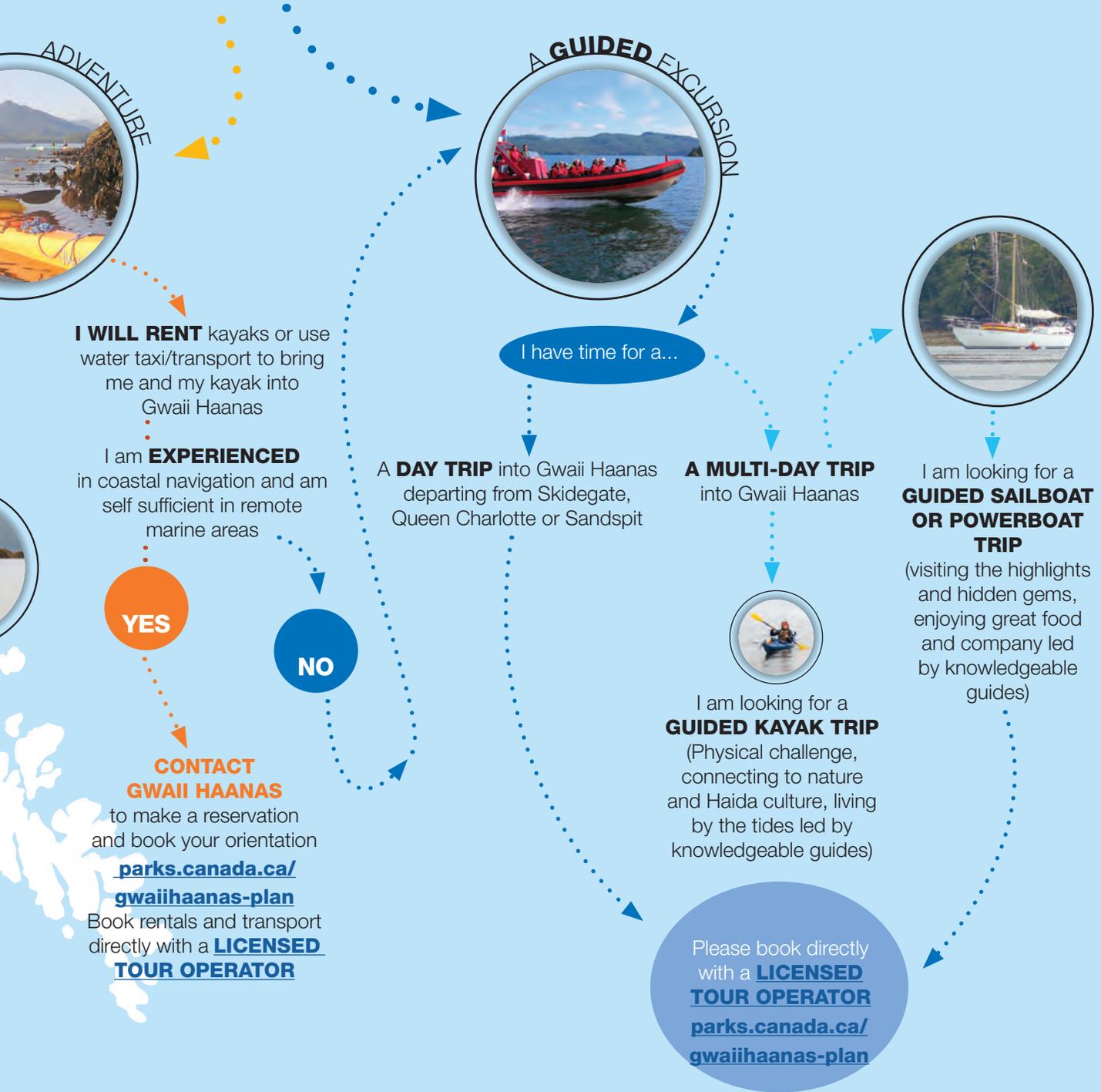


**DOWNLOAD**

- Gwaii Haanas Trip Planner
- Before You Go Guide
- Visitor Guide

[parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-plan](https://parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-plan)

# I'M LOOKING FOR...





## INDEPENDENT TRAVEL TO GWAI HAANAS

### Remote

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

Take the time to learn about the waters you plan to navigate.

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

Be sure to review the **Before You Go Guide**, available at [parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-plan](https://parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-plan). Use the **self-guided checklist** on page 3 of the **Before You Go Guide** to see if a self-guided trip is right for you. Complete the **Before You Go Checklist** on page 20 before you begin your trip.

### Boat Launch

The closest boat launch to Gwaii Haanas is Gawu Kuns Llnagaay Moresby Camp in Cumshewa Inlet, over 20 nautical miles from the Gwaii Haanas boundary.

Gawu Kuns Llnagaay Moresby Camp is a provincial recreational site, accessible by a rough logging road. Check at the local visitor centres for detailed instructions on times and procedures for travelling on active logging roads.

### Boating to Gwaii Haanas

Generally, small craft travel the inside waters of Carmichael Passage and Dana Passage from Gawu Kuns Llnagaay Moresby Camp to Gwaii Haanas. This route avoids the exposed waters between Cumshewa Head and Talunkwan Island.

Louise Narrows has strong currents and shallow waters. Time your travel according to the tide. Be aware of your draft; there is little room for error. 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 Gawu Kuns Llnagaay Moresby Camp to the northern boundary of Gwaii Haanas at the Tangil Peninsula, a distance of nearly 25 nautical miles. A popular alternative is using a licensed tour operator to transport you and your kayak to Gwaii Haanas.



## Drinking Water

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

For the convenience of larger vessels, a water hose is currently available at the dock west of Shuttle Island.

This hose supplies untreated stream water which should be purified before use.

## Camping

Gwaii Haanas has no designated campsites. However, there are many good camping spots for small groups of up 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 current weather conditions.

Camping at any one location is limited to a maximum of three nights unless weather prevents safe travel. Location is defined as an area within a radius of one nautical mile. Ensure that there are no more than 12 people ashore at a time or within site or sound of other groups.

You will need waterproof bags and ropes for hanging food out of bears' reach, or use bear-proof canisters. Do not store food in kayaks.

## Hiking

Gwaii Haanas does not maintain hiking trails and the terrain is very rugged. Advanced backcountry and navigation skills are required to hike anywhere in Gwaii Haanas.

## Closures

Several highly sensitive areas, including caves, are closed permanently for ecological or cultural reasons.

Temporary closures may be necessary for reasons such as bear activity or to accommodate conservation and restoration projects.

Maps, and further information about areas closed to camping or access, are provided during the visitor orientation and at [parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-plan](https://parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-plan).

Seaplanes require a landing permit to land in Gwaii Haanas.

The use of drones is prohibited in Gwaii Haanas.

Zoning and closures in Gwaii Haanas do not infringe on inherent Haida rights.

## Fishing

In the marine area of Gwaii Haanas, sustainable recreational and commercial fishing continues in designated areas. To meet key ecological and cultural goals, areas of sustainable fishing are interspersed with zones of full protection, where fishing is not permitted. Detailed maps and descriptions are provided at the mandatory visitor orientation and at [parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-plan](https://parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas-plan).

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

Freshwater fishing is not permitted within Gwaii Haanas.



## HAIDA GWAII WATCHMEN



Historically, Haida Watchmen were posted at strategic positions around a village to raise the alarm in advance of an approaching enemy. The current Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program began in the 1980s as a volunteer initiative to protect Haida villages and other important cultural sites in Gwaii Haanas. Today, Watchmen welcome visitors and are guardians protecting the villages and artifacts from spring until autumn.

### Sites where Watchmen live and work

*K'uuna Llnagaay Skedans*

*T'aanuu Llnagaay Tanu*

*Hlk'yah GawGa Windy Bay*

*Gandll K'in Gwaay.yaay Hotspring Island*

*SGang Gwaay Anthony Island*

Haida poles at SGang Gwaay, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and K'uuna Llnagaay Skedans stretch into the sky. Poles are maps of Haida lives and lineages and a connection with the supernatural, displaying crests associated with certain families and people.

With amazingly large posts and beams defining enormous tiered house pits dug into the earth, longhouses offer a window into traditional Haida life. Haida longhouse construction has been recognized as an architectural design unique to the Haida.



## INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

Our detailed summer program schedule can be found on the Gwaii Haanas website, posted in the Haida Heritage Center and at visitor information centres in Daajing Giids, K'il Kun *Sandspit* and Masset.

### Guided Walks

#### LOW TIDE BEACH WALK

Haida Gwaii's huge tides provide great opportunities to explore the beach. As the tide falls, join a Gwaii Haanas Interpreter and meet some of the strange and beautiful animals that live along our shores.

Location: Beach in front of the Haida Heritage Centre, Hl̨gaagilda *Skidegate*.

#### SPIRIT LAKE HIKE

Come and explore the sights, sounds, and smells of a coastal temperate rainforest with a Gwaii Haanas Interpreter. Meander along a small stream to tranquil Spirit Lake, a place of story and enchantment.

Location: Spirit Lake Trailhead across Highway 16 from George Brown Recreation Centre in Hl̨gaagilda *Skidegate*.

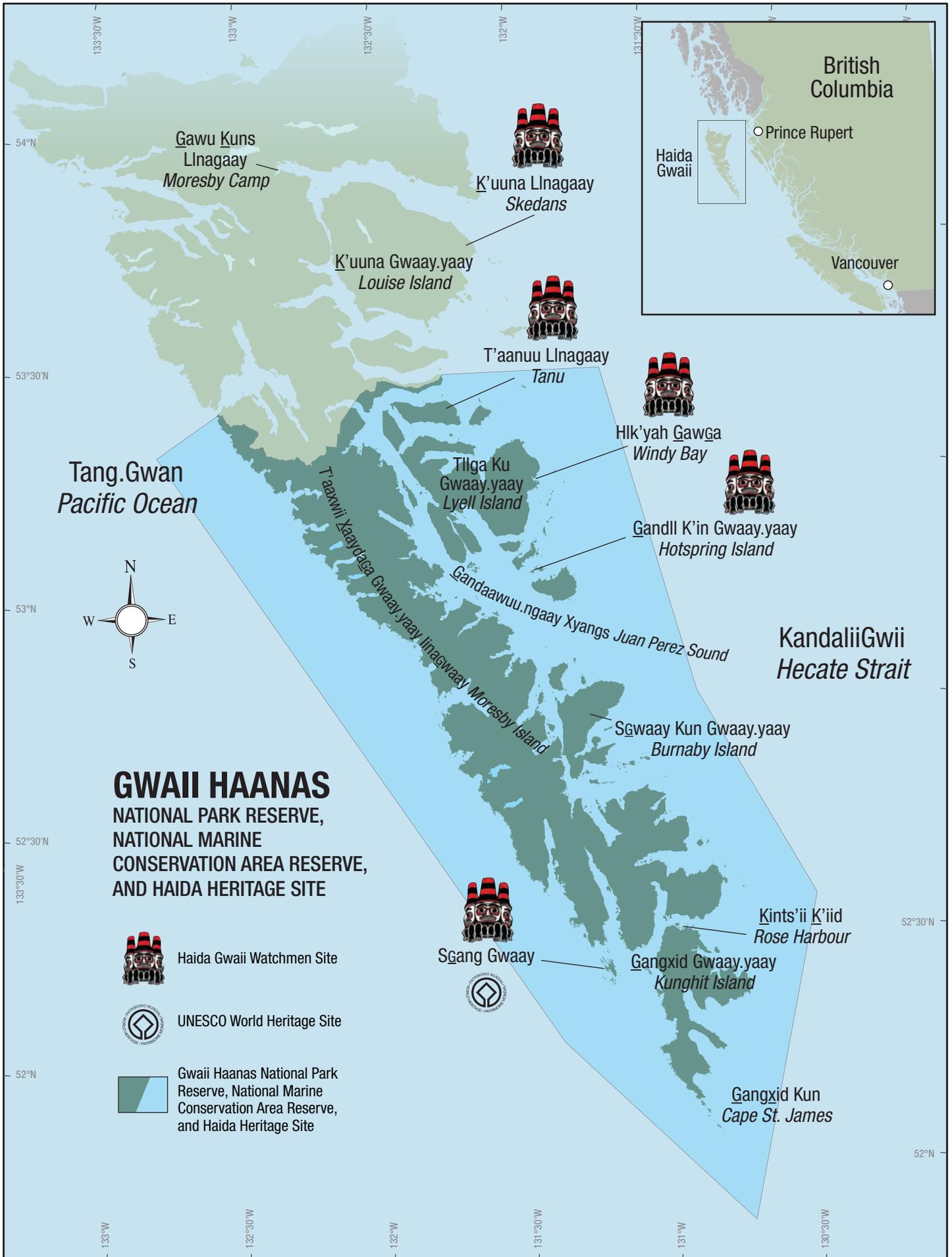
### Talks and Activities

During June, July and August join us at the Haida Heritage Centre in Hl̨gaagilda *Skidegate* and learn about the history, stories, and science behind Gwaii Haanas. From short, interactive talks to hands-on activities we are happy to share our knowledge with you, and to answer any questions you may have!

### Private Bookings

Do you have a large group or a tight schedule? Consider booking a private program. Contact us for more information.





Gawu Kuns  
Lnagaay  
Moresby Camp



K'uuna Lnagaay  
Skedans

K'uuna Gwaay.yaay  
Louise Island



T'aanuu Lnagaay  
Tanu



Hik'yah Gawga  
Windy Bay



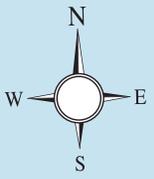
Gandll K'in Gwaay.yaay  
Hot Spring Island

Tang.Gwan  
Pacific Ocean

Tilga Ku  
Gwaay.yaay  
Lyell Island

Gandaawuu.ngaay Xyangs Juan Perez Sound

KandaliiGwii  
Hecate Strait



**GWAI HAANAS**  
NATIONAL PARK RESERVE,  
NATIONAL MARINE  
CONSERVATION AREA RESERVE,  
AND HAIDA HERITAGE SITE



Haida Gwaii Watchmen Site



UNESCO World Heritage Site



Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, and Haida Heritage Site



Sgang Gwaay



Gangxid Gwaay.yaay  
Kunghit Island

Kints'ii K'iid  
Rose Harbour

Gangxid Kun  
Cape St. James



## TRAVELING TO HAIDA GWAI

### BC Ferries

There are sailings two to five times a week, depending on the season, between Prince Rupert and Skidegate Landing. Day crossings are 6 hours and night crossings are 8 hours. A second route, referred to as the Inside Passage, sails between Port Hardy on Vancouver Island and Prince Rupert. Reservations are required for both these routes.

1-888-BCFERRY (1-888-223-3779)  
[bcferries.com](http://bcferries.com)

### Air Canada

In summer there are daily flights between K'il Kun *Sandspit* (YZP) and Vancouver International (YVR) airports.

1-888-247-2262  
[aircanada.com](http://aircanada.com)

### Pacific Coastal Airways

There are regular flights between Masset (ZMT) and Vancouver International Airport's South Terminal (YVR).

1-800-663-2872  
[reserve@pacificcoastal.com](mailto:reserve@pacificcoastal.com)  
[pacificcoastal.com](http://pacificcoastal.com)

### Inland Air Charters Ltd.

Chartered floatplane flights between Prince Rupert and Masset harbours.

1-888-624-2577  
[info@inlandair.bc.ca](mailto:info@inlandair.bc.ca)  
[InlandAirCharters.ca](http://InlandAirCharters.ca)

### Small Craft Harbours

Facilities for recreational and commercial vessels are available in K'il Kun *Sandspit*, Daajing Giids and Masset. Facilities vary.

### Getting Around Haida Gwai

The communities of Gaw Tlagée *Old Massett*, *Masset*, Taaw Tldáaw *Tow Hill*, Gamadiis Llnagaay *Port Clements*, Tll.aal *Tlell*, HlGaagilda *Skidegate*, and Daajing Giids are located on XaaydaGa Gwaay.yaay IinaGwaay *Graham Island*. K'il Kun *Sandspit*, Gaats'iigundaay *Alliford Bay*, and Gawu Kuns Llnagaay *Moresby Camp* are located on the northern part of T'aaxwii XaaydaGa Gwaay.yaay IinaGwaay *Moresby Island*. A 20-minute ferry ride connects Moresby and Graham Islands. Gwaii Taxi and Tours runs a daily shuttle service between the K'il Kun *Sandspit* airport and HlGaagilda *Skidegate* and Daajing Giids. Reservations are required.

(250) 637-1162  
[gwaitaxiandtours.ca](http://gwaitaxiandtours.ca)

Car rentals are available in HlGaagilda *Skidegate*, K'il Kun *Sandspit*, Daajing Giids, and Masset. Book in advance.

### Visitor Information

Trip planning help, including This is Haida Gwaii Kaats'ii Hla trip planner, is available from [gohaidagwaii.ca](http://gohaidagwaii.ca).

Community visitor centres are located in:

K'il Kun *Sandspit* (250-637-5362)

Daajing Giids (250-559-8316)

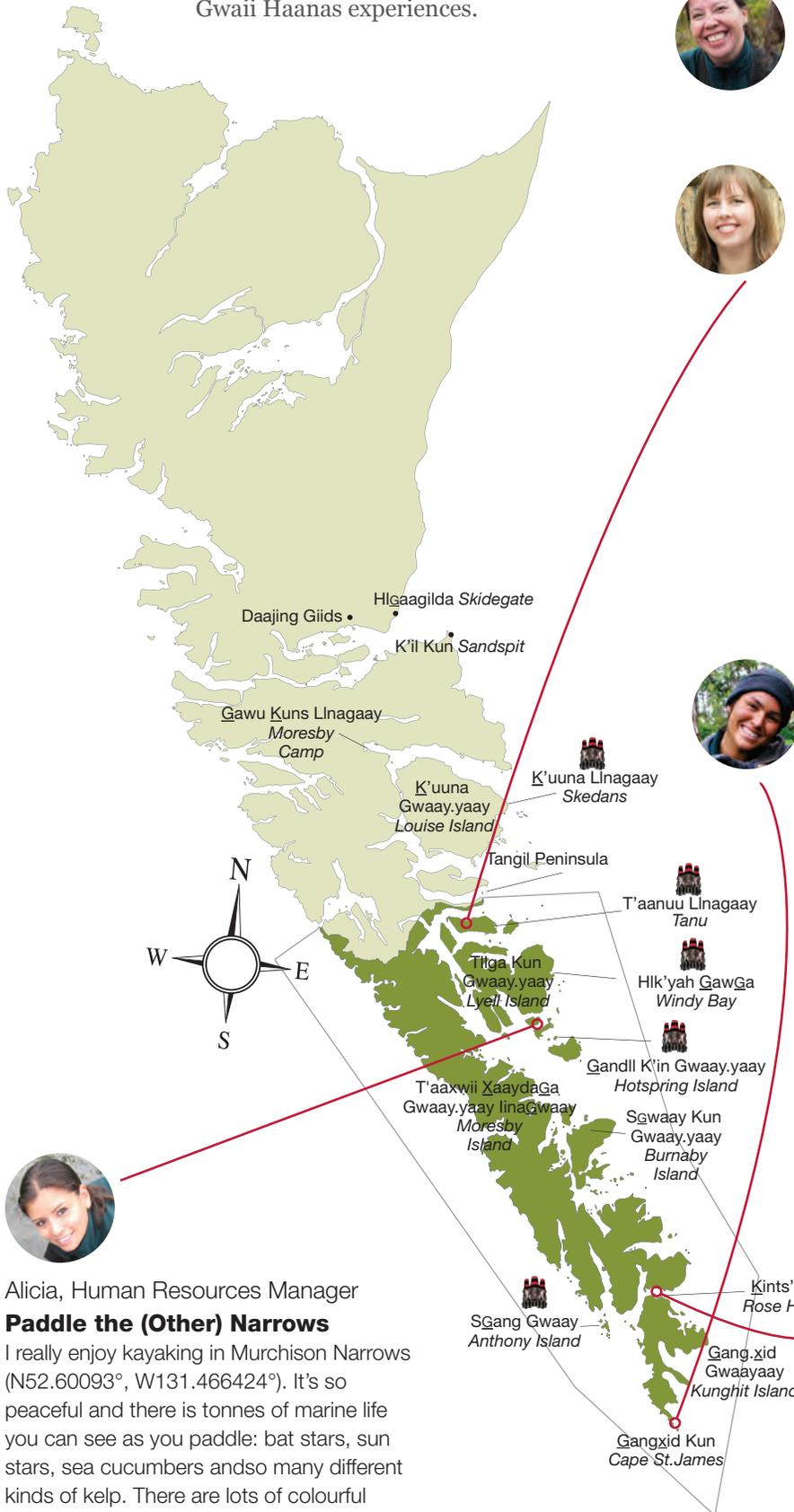
Gamadiis Llnagaay *Port Clements* (250-557-4576)

Masset (250-626-3982)

# ISLANDS OF BEAUTY

## Our Favourite Places

Here are some of our team's favourite Gwaii Haanas experiences.



Christine, Outreach and Education Officer

### Visit The Haida Gwaii Watchmen

One of my favourite things to do in Gwaii Haanas is learn about the history of the different sites where Haida Gwaii Watchmen work. I love having a good catch-up with the Haida Gwaii Watchmen and Watchwomen over a cup of tea or coffee at one of the Haida Gwaii Watchmen cabins. It doesn't happen often, but when it does I feel like I've just visited with old friends.



Miranda, Public Relations and Communications Officer

**Imagine a Forest** If you're near T'aanuu Lnagaay, the native plant enclosures across the way on 'KangGuu Gwaay.yaay *Kunga Island* (N52.752817° W-131.582883°) are great places to go for a forest walk. When you're on the beach, look for the marked trail starting on the forest edge and hike in about 100 metres to see a big fenced-in area. The second enclosure is 200 m to the NW along a marked trail. The enclosures were built in 1998 and rebuilt in 2023 to demonstrate what would grow back if deer couldn't graze vegetation down. Imagine what it would be like if there were no Sitka Black-tailed deer to munch down the vibrant vegetation.



Mary, Cultural Resource Management Officer

### View Find in the South

Taking in the views in the southern-most part of Gwaii Haanas makes me feel like I'm in a far off place or on the edge of the continent. *Gangxid Kun Cape St. James* (N51.908632°, W131.015852°) offers stunning views. Visiting *Gangxid Kun Cape St. James* is not an everyday trip. It's a challenge to get there so when you do make it, thanks to the right combination of weather and tides, it's a real treat. At the weather station, there are old shelters that are marked with signatures from visitors from the last 50 years or so. Sometimes you can even see steller sea lions or mola mola (sunfish) swimming below your boat.



Sandra, Finance and Administration Officer

### Explore the Beach

I love *Kints'uwid K'idsii GawGa Sgad.dal Raspberry Cove* (N52.167159°, W131.081859°) in *Kints'uwid K'idsii Houston Stewart Channel*. The beach is really nice and a bit rocky. When I visited a few years back, it was very serene. While we were there, I saw an octopus in the intertidal zone. At first I didn't notice but then I saw his eye. It was thrilling and creepy all at once.



Alicia, Human Resources Manager

### Paddle the (Other) Narrows

I really enjoy kayaking in Murchison Narrows (N52.60093°, W131.466424°). It's so peaceful and there is tonnes of marine life you can see as you paddle: bat stars, sun stars, sea cucumbers and so many different kinds of kelp. There are lots of colourful creatures just below the ocean's surface.



## LICENSED 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 licensed by the Archipelago Management Board (AMB) may operate within Gwaii Haanas.

On the next page is a list of all tour operators who have a license to operate in Gwaii Haanas. Contact tour operators directly with questions or to book a tour.

### **What does licensing mean?**

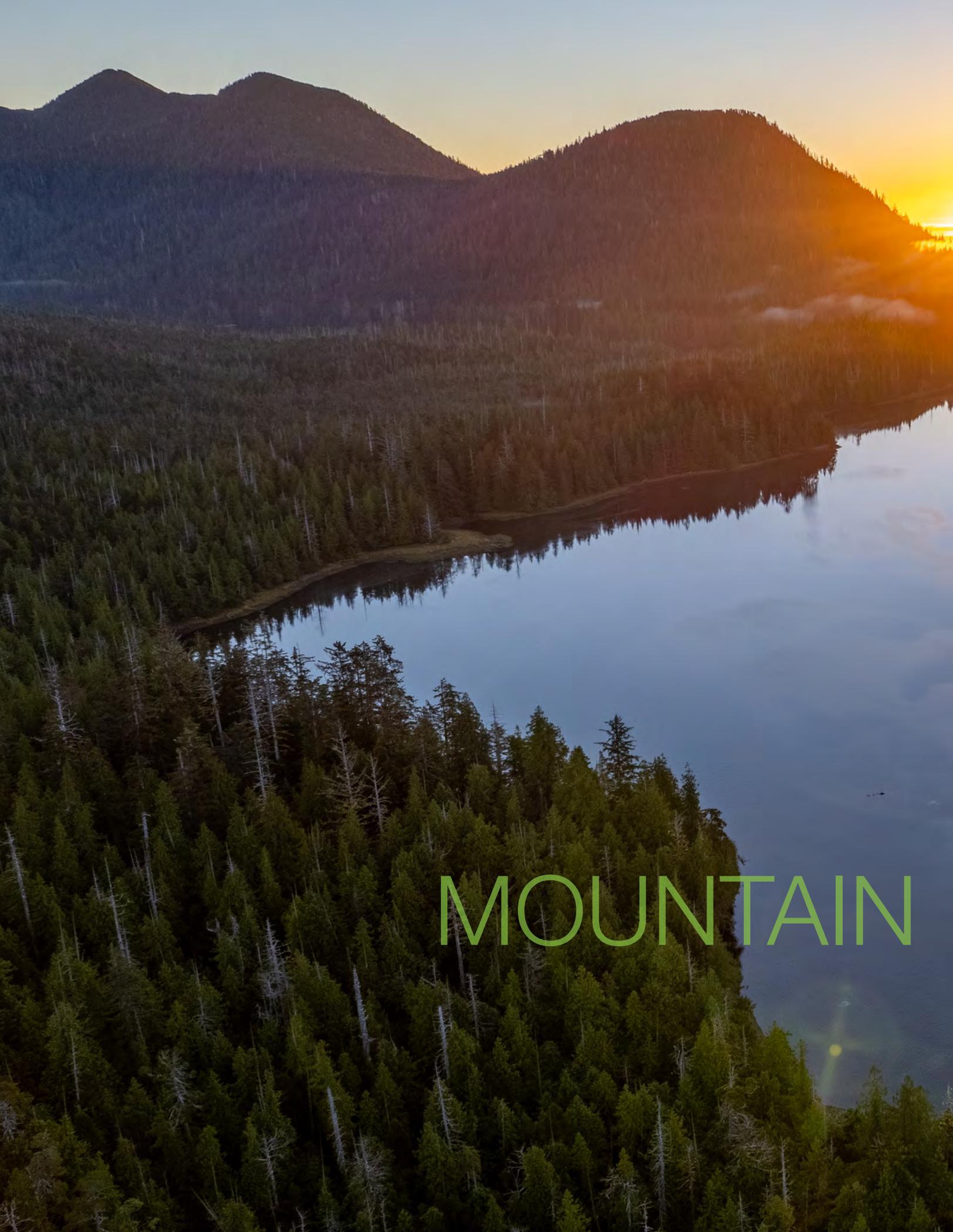
The AMB business licensing process ensures that minimum safety standards are met for all businesses that operate in Gwaii Haanas. Gwaii Haanas does not evaluate guides on the extent of their knowledge of local natural and cultural features, and service standards vary from business to business. You are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

If you have questions about authorized tour operators, please contact the Gwaii Haanas office:  
*[gwaiihaanas@pc.gc.ca](mailto:gwaiihaanas@pc.gc.ca)*

TYPE OF EXPERIENCE

Gwaii Haanas Licensed Tour Operator	Contact Information	Website	TYPE OF EXPERIENCE					
			Kayak Tours	Kayak Mothership*	Kayak Rentals	Transportation Services	Power Boat Tours	Sailboat Tours
Archipelago Ventures Ltd.	info@TourHaidaGwaii.com 250-652-4913	tourhaidagwaii.com		●		●	●	
Atlas Ocean Tours	info@atlasoceanatours.com 250-577-8514	atlasoceanatours.com		●			●	
Bluewater Adventures	explore@bluewateradventures.ca 1-888-877-1770	bluewateradventures.ca		●				●
Butterfly Tours	info@atthewatersedge.ca 250-230-4399	islandsofbeauty.com	●					
Gnoses Sailing Adventures	svgnoses@gmail.com	gnoses.com		●		●		●
Green Coast Kayaking Ltd.	info@gckayaking.com 250-637-1093	gckayaking.com	●					
Haida Style Expeditions	info@haidastyle.com 250-637-1151	haidastyle.com				●	●	
Highlander Marine Services Ltd.	hms@haidagwaii.ca 250-637-1111	highlandermarine.ca				●		
Kingfisher Wilderness Adventures	info@kingfisher.ca 1-866-546-4347	kingfisher.ca	●					
Lindblad Expeditions	explore@expeditions.com 1-800-397-3348	expeditions.com					●	
Maple Leaf Adventures	info@mapleleafadventures.com 250-386-7245	mapleleafadventures.com		●			●	●
Moresby Explorers	info@moresbyexplorers.com 1-800-806-7633	moresbyexplorers.com	●		●	●	●	
Ocean Adventures Charter Co. Ltd.	info@oceanadventures.bc.ca 604-812-9453	oceanadventures.bc.ca		●			●	
Ocean Light Adventures	adventure@oceanlight.ca 604-328-5339	oceanlight.ca		●			●	
Ocean Sound Kayaking Company	info@oceansoundkayaking.com 403-609-5576	oceansoundkayaking.com	●					
Outer Shores Expeditions	info@outershores.ca 1-855-714-7233	outershores.ca		●				●
Tofino Expeditions Ltd.	info@tofino.com 1-800-677-0877	tofino.com	●					

\*Kayak mothership services listed here include either guided or unguided kayaking. Contact tour operators for more information.



MOUNTAIN



PROTECTED FROM  
TOP TO SEA FLOOR



**Contact Gwaii Haanas**

Phone: 1-877-559-8818 or 250-559-8818

Email: [gwaiihaanas@pc.gc.ca](mailto:gwaiihaanas@pc.gc.ca)

[parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas](https://parks.canada.ca/gwaiihaanas)

[facebook.com/gwaiihaanas](https://facebook.com/gwaiihaanas)