

Spring Break 2020 Sailing Adventure Information

Tentative Itinerary

March 23:

Meet at airport (Edmonton or Calgary) at 0500 hours for flight to Victoria.

Board tall ship at 1030 hours. Captain's welcome address is followed by a safety orientation for approximately two hours. Watch Officers are introduced and the group is divided into three 'Watches'. One Watch is on duty at all times with all hands on deck to set sail. Duties rotate through Bow Watch, Stern Watch, Helm, Radio Watch and Night Watch. Ship sets sail around 1230 hours reaching the Gulf Islands by evening. Mug-up each evening often involves games, music, singing, stories and delicious, home-made treats.

March 24:

Lessons taught about launching and rowing the dories are followed by a trip to shore for games and exploring. After returning to the ship, sail training lessons about sailing terminology, knots and theory follow. During the trip, trainees are encouraged to use their time on Watch to practice what they've learned in their sail training lessons. The ship will sail to another anchorage allowing trainees to begin to apply sailing terminology and skills. Anchorages may include De Courcy Island Group, Thetis Island, Montague Bay at Galiano Island or Sidney Spit.

March 25:

Similar to day two with a focus on reinforcing the terminology and activities taught over the past two days. Trainees will often have another opportunity to launch dories, go ashore, weigh anchor, sail the ship and participate in more lessons. All lessons for the Junior Sailing Certificate will be completed by the evening of day three. As well, all trainees will have the opportunity to complete the various oral exams required of sailing certification levels at any time they feel adequately prepared.

When not on Watch, trainees are welcome to put on a safety harness and climb the rigging or out onto the bowsprit to watch for whales and wildlife.

The ship could be anchored in any of the aforementioned anchorages depending on the weather and conditions.

March 26:

After a hearty breakfast and clean-up, written exam materials are reviewed for sailing certificate levels. Written exams are completed and oral exams are wrapped up.

March 27:

On the last day of the trip, games are played as the ship sails off Victoria's waterfront. The ship will arrive in the Inner Harbour in Victoria around 1530 hours allowing time for final photographs and farewells.

Depart ship at 1600 hours and travel to Victoria International Airport for flights home to Edmonton and Calgary.

Possible Activities

This is not a scenic cruise - participants learn every aspect of sailing the ship: raising and lowering sails, navigation and steering, galley work, bosun's chores, marine radio watch, and anchor watch at night. In addition to the ongoing training, five formal sailing lessons are taught (terminology, knots, chartwork, points of sail and rules of the road). Participants can work towards completing six oral exams and achieving at least 80% on a written test to earn their Junior Sail Training Standard. We do as much sailing as possible, and also carry out daily shore excursions to marine parks and other interesting shore locations using the ship's classic wooden dories. These visits may include hiking, swimming, exploring sea caves, viewing marine life, or playing group games or sports on a white sandy beach. Aboard ship, activities may include a rope swing, climbing the rigging or sitting in the rope netting (i.e. whiskers) at the bow of the ship (with climbing harnesses), watching whales or porpoises, and evening mug-up - a time of engaging games, singing, and classic tales of the sea.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is sail training?

Sail training is more than learning how to sail. Sail training is about character development and personal growth in the context of a close-knit community on board the ship. It provides intensive life experiences to stimulate leadership development, team building, a heightened awareness of nature, and an appreciation of historical sailing vessels. Sail training develops confidence, environmental stewardship, courage, strength, and humility. In the process, trainees learn all aspects of sailing the ship, such as navigation, sailing terms, parts of the ship, wheel operation, galley chores, line and sail handling, knots, etc.

What about rough seas and seasickness?

Group trips takes place within the protected waters of the Gulf Islands and on the east side of Vancouver Island. The seas rarely become rough enough to cause discomfort, unless someone is particularly sensitive to motion. If you know that you are prone to seasickness you should check with your physician for medicinal recommendations.

What are the berths like?

Each berth is a single bunk with a mattress. Bunks are in three tiers (levels that do not overlap) on each side of the ship.

How often do we go ashore?

We try to get ashore at least once per day, weather permitting.

Do I need sailing experience?

No, anyone can sail on one of our trips (provided they have normal physical fitness and agility). We do all the training required.

How much do we sail?

We sail as much as the wind and weather will allow.

Can I recharge my camera batteries?

Yes, we do have outlets for battery chargers and these outlets are shared amongst everyone, so it is best to have some backup batteries in case you do not have access exactly when needed. Other appliances (e.g. hair dryers, iPods, computers) should be left at home.