

# Exploring the San Juan Islands

WILD COASTLINES, WHALES, AND PRISTINE WILDERNESS ABOARD THE CATALYST



Wilderness Travel





## TRIP DATES

### 2024

September 12-17, 2024

September 19-24, 2024

September 26-October 1, 2024

### 2025

September 12-17, 2025

September 19-24, 2025

September 26-October 1, 2025

# Exploring the San Juan Islands

The coastlines of Washington and the San Juan Islands are a charming world apart filled with fascinating wildlife. Explore the best of this pristine realm aboard a small "gentleman's yacht" that carries just 8 or 12 passengers. On a six-day cruise, sail from Bellingham, crossing the San Juan channel to explore some of the 130 small islands that dot the area. Kayak alongside rocky cliffs and to small islands, walk along mossy beaches, and hike through old-growth forests to mountain peaks with incredible views of the San Juan archipelago. Traveling by small boat is the perfect way to navigate into hidden bays where large boats can't go, and you'll savor fantastic sea-to-table cuisine from the on-board chef. There is nothing quite like watching for whales, orcas, dolphins, and eagles from the deck of this historic vessel. Join us!



Please Note: These adventures are not exclusive Wilderness Travel departures and it's possible you may be joined by other passengers. However, the small size of the vessel makes for an intimate and convivial journey among like-minded travelers.





# Itinerary

## TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

- Length:** 6 days
- Arrive:** Bellingham, Washington
- Depart:** Bellingham, Washington
- Lodging:** 5 nights aboard a historic 72-foot wooden vessel with six cabins
- Meals:** All meals included (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Activity:** Sea Kayaking, Small Boat and Yacht Cruising, Walking, Wildlife and Natural History
- Trip Level:** ① 2 3 4 5 6  
6-day cruise, wilderness and coastal explorations, easy to moderate sea kayaking and hiking (no previous kayaking experience necessary)

Please note: the captain and naturalist guide may make adjustments to the itinerary, including anchorages and hiking routes, depending on tides, local weather, and trail conditions.

## DAY 1 BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON / CYPRESS ISLAND

Upon arrival in Bellingham, board the ship for a brief orientation and head south to Cypress Island, halfway between the mainland of Washington and the San Juan Islands. From the anchorage at Pelican Beach, stretch your legs on the Eagle Cliff Trail to a viewpoint offering sweeping views of the area. The rock at the top of the Cypress Island reveals scars from the great ice sheets that carved the islands and ocean passages during the Ice Age. After the hike, the ship continues to Eagle Harbor for a delightful dinner highlighting some of the delicious local ingredients and an overnight anchorage...LD

Hiking Details: 2.6 miles, 750 feet ascent/descent

## DAY 2 EAGLE ISLAND / FRIDAY HARBOR / PARKS BAY

Enjoy a morning walk through forests of Douglas fir, seaside juniper, shore pine, Pacific madrone, and Douglas maple. Back on board, watch for wildlife as the ship navigates to Eagle Island, with a possible stop at a brewery or two and a chance explore the Friday Harbor, the small yet bustling port of entry for travelers to San Juan. The anchorage tonight is in Parks Bay, a small cove on the west side of Shaw Island that is perfect for our boat...BLD



# Itinerary (cont'd)

## DAY 3 KAYAKING / WINERY VISITS / CIDER TASTING

The glassy waters of Parks Bay are great for a kayaking expedition this morning. Slip into your kayak and enjoy the serenity of nature. There may even be sightings of whales or dolphins as they glide between islands. The next anchorage finds us in Odlin Park for a visit to the Lopez Island Winery. This family-run organic vineyard is the oldest winery in the county. Schedule permitting, you may visit the Westcott Bay Cidery for a walk in their apple orchards (and a sample of their cider, of course!). Head to Garrison Bay, named after the British military camp that was established here during a border dispute between England and the US. You can walk the camp's pear orchard and ornamental gardens and perhaps make the 3.2-mile roundtrip hike to the top of Young Hill, which offers a panoramic view across Haro Straits to the southern tip of Vancouver Island and on to the Olympic Mountains. Afterwards, you may also be met by one of the local artisans who create wine, cider, or cheese, and have the opportunity to bring some back on board to pair with your gourmet dinner this evening...BLD

## DAY 4 SPEIDEN ISLAND / STUART ISLAND / TURN POINT LIGHTHOUSE

Speiden Island has a large population of three species of unique animals from around the world: mouflon sheep from Corsica, fallow deer from Europe, and sika deer from Asia. How they got here is an interesting story. In the 1960s, the island was renamed "Safari Island" and exotic game animals were imported for hunters who paid to hunt animals from around the world without having to leave their own time zone. However, the island was closed to hunting shortly after San Juan residents protested finding bullet holes in their homes! The animals remained on the island and today, many can be seen grazing on the grassy southwestern slopes. Continue on to Stuart Island, which has its own small flock of wild mouflon sheep, descendants of a few brave sheep who swam from Speiden to the greener shores of Stuart. This is a good place to kayak along the fir- and madrone-covered cliffs that line the harbor. There is an option to hike the 6-mile roundtrip trail out to the Turn Point Lighthouse, the most northwesterly place in the continental US, as well as other hikes accessible





from the state park dock in Reid Harbor. Tonight, savor a wonderful feast and stunning sunset on the bay...BLD

## DAY 5 WHALE WATCHING / SUCIA ISLAND

Sail past the Turn Point Lighthouse overlooking Haro Straits, keeping an eye out for the orcas and whales who frequently hug the southwest shore as they search for shoals of salmon that make their way to their natal creeks, mostly in the tributaries of the mighty Fraser River. Continuing on to Clements Reef, visit sea lions and explore Sucia Island, the gem of northern San Juans. Miles of forested trails meander across the Sucia Island, each leading to another beautiful cove or vista point. The captain has been visiting Sucia for over 40

years and still finds it captivating and intriguing. One could spend months here exploring the trails and hidden corners and still not see it all. This final evening positions you well for a gorgeous sunset and decadent on-board cuisine...BLD

*"We loved the boat, and the food was AMAZING—best food I have ever experienced on any trip. Tracie Triolo is a magician in the small onboard kitchen, and grows small herbs and greens on top. My family ate all kinds of things for the first time and loved every bite!"*

*Beth B., San Diego, CA*

## DAY 6 KAYAKING ECHO BAY / DEPART

This morning, you can enjoy a final kayak excursion on picturesque Echo Bay before the ship heads back to Bellingham. Disembark after breakfast and depart...B



# Trip Details

## DATE AND PRICING INFORMATION

### TRIP COST

Prices are per person, based on double occupancy

DEPARTURES	CABINS 1&6	CABINS 2 & 3	CABIN 4 (SINGLE)	CABIN 5	CHARTER
<b>2024</b>					
Sep 12-17, 2024	\$4,250	\$4,000	\$3,750	\$4,000	\$40,750
Sep 19-24, 2024	\$4,250	\$4,000	\$3,750	\$4,000	\$40,750
Sep 26-Oct 1, 2024	\$4,250	\$4,000	\$3,750	\$4,000	\$40,750
<b>2025</b>					
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\*Cabin 6 is accessible only by climbing ship ladder

\*\*Cabin 4 is a single occupancy cabin, no single supplement

The *Catalyst* has six cabins for guests. Choice of cabins is on a first-come, first-served basis. Most cabins accommodate couples or two companion travelers (see cabin descriptions on page 8).

Note: This is a family-friendly trip but we recommend a minimum age of 13.

### TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of a Trip Naturalist and Captain
- All meals on board and non-alcoholic beverages
- Beer and wine
- Kayaks, paddles, life jackets and boat safety gear
- Use of rubber boots throughout the trip
- Entry fees to national parks/preserves and port charges
- Activities and equipment

### TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

Air travel from your home city/Bellingham, Washington, and Bellingham, Washington/home city; Excess baggage charges; Airport fees and charges; Gratuities; Optional travel insurance; Personal expenses including extra hotels nights pre/post-cruise, Airport transfers, etc.

### PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: 20%

100 days prior to departure: Balance

### CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Minimum fee: 50% of deposit

91-150 days prior to departure: 100% of deposit

90 days or less: 100% of trip cost

\*Please note that this differs from our regular catalog departures.

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details:

[www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance](http://www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance)



# Arrival & Departure

Upon confirming your trip reservation, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a list of documents (passport, visas, etc.) required for your trip. Please feel free to call if you would like this information before making your air arrangements.

If you have booked extra services before or after the trip, an Extra Services Confirmation will be sent with your Final Documents.

## ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Bellingham, Washington

**Suggested Airport:** Bellingham Airport (BLI)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, before 10:00 am

**Meeting Place:** On Day 1, you will make your way from the airport to the Hotel Bellwether Dock and embark the boat at 12:00 pm.

## DEPARTURE

Bellingham, Washington

**Suggested Airport:** Bellingham Airport (BLI)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 6, after 12:00 pm

On Day 6, you will arrive at the Hotel Bellwether Dock around 11:00 am and make your way to the airport.

## ARRANGEMENTS FOR AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Bellingham, Washington.

There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found at [www.exitotravel.com](http://www.exitotravel.com).

Depending on your routing, it is necessary to depart one day prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your government issued ID exactly.

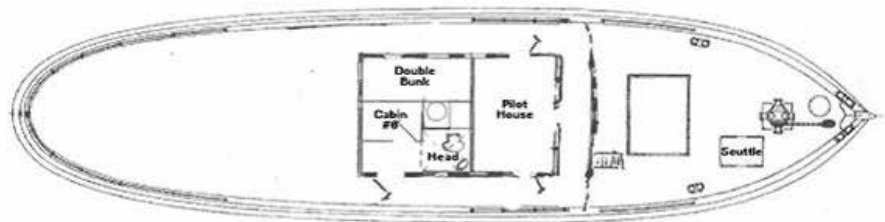
**Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip.** Once tickets are purchased, please forward a copy of your email flight confirmation from the airline. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.



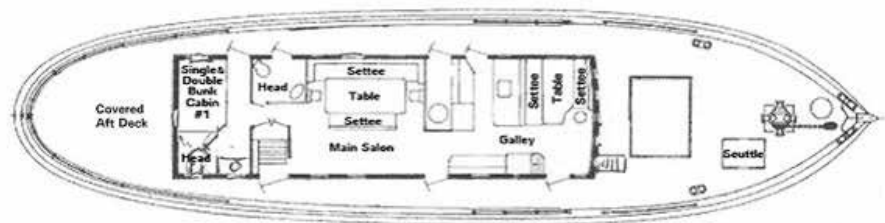
# The Catalyst



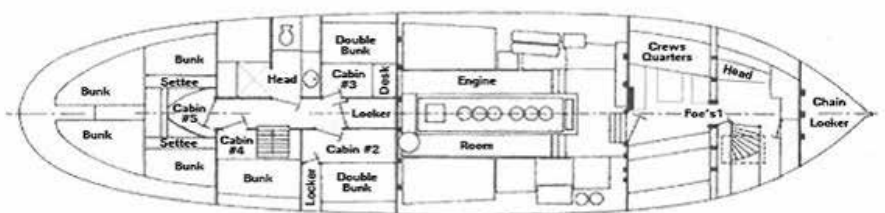
The 75-foot research vessel is a historic wooden boat that accommodates up to 12 guests. Constructed in 1932 as a marine research boat, she can maneuver around icebergs, follow whales, get close to glaciers, and tuck into tiny coves that most passenger vessels wouldn't even dream of approaching. Delicious meals, including freshly-caught seafood, are served by the chef in the warm, wood-paneled salon, and a fleet of kayaks (six doubles and three singles) on board add to the spirit of exploration and discovery.



Upper Deck/Pilot House



Main Deck



Below Deck



### Cabin 1

Upper deck, private bathroom with shower. Double bunk (49" x 80"), single pull-down upper bunk (32" x 74"), with door to the deck, one opening porthole. Sleeps two to three.

### Cabin 2

Lower deck, forward starboard side, private bathroom with shower. 6'10" x 7'0". Double bunk (50" x 78"). Four drawers under bed, hanging closet, storage closet, bookshelf, two non-opening portholes. Sleeps two.

### Cabin 3

Lower deck, forward port side, private bathroom with shower. 6'10" x 6'6". Double bunk (50" x 78"), two drawers, storage locker, two non-opening portholes. Sleeps two.

### Cabin 4

Lower deck, aft starboard side. 6'10 x 7'0", less 4' x 2'6" companionway. Single bunk (43" x 84"). Storage under gear hammock, one non-opening porthole. Sleeps one. Shared bath.

### Cabin 5

Lower deck, aft cabin. 13'0 x 13'0". Two single bunks, one double bunk. Two bench seats with storage underneath, six opening portholes, four non-opening portholes. Sleeps two to four. Good for families. Shared bath.

### Cabin 6

Behind pilot house. Double bunk (50" x 78"). Private entry from outside of pilot house, private head and shower, drawers and storage space, bookshelf, opening porthole and windows. Sleeps two. Accessible only by ship ladder.

Note: \*Note: Cabins 4 and 5 share one washroom with shower. There is a second head on the upper deck next to the main salon. The Crew has their own head and shower deck below.

Departures are available throughout the summer, but we strongly recommend you reserve your trip well in advance in order to get your preferred dates and cabin category. Contact us early to request your dates!

## HISTORY

The ship used for cruising the San Juan Islands was the University of Washington's first oceanographic research vessel. In 1932, Thomas G. Thompson, then Professor of Chemistry, began a personal crusade to establish a school of oceanography at the University. With the help of a \$60,000 grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, he started both the school and the construction of the boat. The vessel was designed by Roland and Strickland, prominent Seattle naval architects. Every aspect of her construction, from the location of the engine to the size of the vessel, was centered around the needs of the laboratory scientists. As a result of her careful design, the ship was the most state-of-the-art research vessel of her time. She took her maiden cruise through Alaska's Inside Passage and across the Gulf of Alaska, then spent the next 11 years collecting data, primarily in Puget Sound. The information collected from her decks in the 1930s forms the foundation for today's understanding of the region's water quality.

The bombs that fell on Pearl Harbor during WWII soon had effect on the ship. In 1942, Dr. Thompson offered her to the Navy to help in the war effort. The Navy conscripted the vessel and mounted a machine gun on top of her pilot house and racks of depth charges on her stern. She spent the war years patrolling the Aleutian Islands for Japanese submarines.

After the war, the Navy sold the ship and she was purchased by an Alaskan mining company and was handsomely refit. The main house was moved forward and the wheelhouse was placed atop it. Hatches, fore and aft, were created to access new holds for carrying tungsten ore. She hauled ore south to Seattle, but also carried supplies and, perhaps more importantly, guests north through the Inside Passage. After all that effort, the company had the boat for only two years, but every owner since has benefitted from the beautiful work they did.

Over the next 40 years, the vessel was owned by a few lucky mariners. The waters of Alaska, the San Juan Islands, Baja California, and Hawaii have all passed beneath her keel. Now she has been restored to her original purpose, learning about the oceanic world. Only this time, it is adventurous travelers, not research scientists, who benefit from her mission.



# What the Trip is Like

## WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is Level 1+, easy to moderate, according to our trip grading system. You'll explore remote coastlines and island by day, then enjoy the comfort of the ship in the evening for good food, fine company, and a comfortable cabin. With just a few hours of cruising each day, there is plenty of time for walking, wildlife watching, or sea kayaking all in the company of an on-board naturalist who shares insights into the local botany, natural history, and native culture.

The three hikes average 3-5 miles each, round trip.

You should be ready for a variety of weather conditions. Layered clothing works best in the changing weather conditions typical of the Pacific Northwest Coast. Layers are easier to pack and more versatile than a single heavy coat. Don't bring down jackets or ski clothes (they don't dry well in the damp climate). Good rain gear is essential; it will enable you to remain comfortable in the wind or rain. Bring your high rubber boots (or use the ones provided on board) for wading and for use in the kayaks and small boats (you will wear these everywhere you go).

No previous kayaking experience is required. Unlike whitewater kayaking, sea kayaking skills can be learned quickly and easily. The waters kayaked in are protected from the open ocean and are generally calm. It is not the intention to kayak on stormy days or when sea conditions are truly "rough" with high winds and waves (such occasions are infrequent in these waters during the summer). Nevertheless, unpredictability is the rule for the weather in this region, and good kayaking weather throughout cannot be guaranteed. And with such a comfortable "mother ship," you can always opt out of any kayaking or hiking to enjoy a cup of hot chocolate and the great views from on board.

Complimentary beer and wine is offered on board. You are welcome to bring any special wines, liquors, and mixers you enjoy. Soft drinks, coffee, and tea are always available.

## WEATHER

Be prepared for temperatures ranging from the 50sF to 70sF. The San Juan Islands have a marine climate, which means rain is to be expected at some point on every trip. The rain itself is often a gentle mist, casting an aura of magic and mystery over the land. We hope for sunshine most of the time, but recommend that you plan for wet, cool weather just in case. You will be comfortable as long as your rain gear is adequate! The boat provides rubber boots for wet landings and weather.

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Cruise Manager or email us at [expeditioncruises@wildernesstravel.com](mailto:expeditioncruises@wildernesstravel.com).

## ABOUT OUR NEW TRIPS

This is a new adventure for 2021 and one that we are particularly excited about offering. However, as with all new departures, flexibility and a spirit of adventure are always appreciated! Activities are described in the itinerary but they can vary, sometimes considerably, depending on weather conditions, the group, and other factors.

## REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

## TOUCAN CLUB

We are very proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business, and have established the Wilderness Travel Toucan Club to reward you for your loyalty. For more information, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at [www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan](http://www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan).

### Average Daily Max/Min °F

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
San Juan Islands	46/36	48/36	53/39	57/41	63/45	67/48	71/51	71/50	66/48	58/44	50/39	46/36

### Rainfall - Inches

San Juan Islands	3.5	2.2	2.1	1.7	1.6	1.3	0.8	1.0	1.2	2.8	4.3	3.7
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# Toucan Club Rewards & Discounts

We are very proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business, and have established the Wilderness Travel Toucan Club to reward you for your loyalty. For more information, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at [www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan](http://www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan).

Here's how it works:

## YOUR FIRST TRIP

As a first-time traveler, you receive a lightweight Wilderness Travel T-shirt and set of durable WT Luggage Tags. On subsequent trips, we're happy to send you a new WT T-shirt and set of Luggage Tags by request.

## YOUR SECOND TRIP

A top quality Wilderness Travel insulated stainless steel water bottle by CamelBak and a cozy Wilderness Travel fleece vest by Patagonia (\$130 value).

## YOUR THIRD TRIP

A versatile Wilderness Travel R-1 pullover by Patagonia (\$140 value).

## YOUR FOURTH TRIP

Discounts on the cost of your trip begin! You receive a 4% discount on the tour cost.

## FIVE AND MORE TRIPS

You receive a 5% discount on the base trip cost. On your sixth trip, you receive a 6% discount, and so on up to your 10th trip. The maximum discount is 10%, with a ceiling of \$500.

*Note: Due to special pricing considerations, Toucan Club discounts do not apply to our Private Journeys or Special Events. However, your participation on these trips does count toward your Toucan discount on future departures of Wilderness Travel's regular adventures.*

## TERMS & CONDITIONS

Toucan Club travel discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount, unless otherwise specified. Discounts are deducted from the base trip cost and shown on the final invoice. The base trip cost is the main land/tier cost and does not include single supplement fees, extensions, internal airfare, or other additional charges. Bonus gifts (T-shirts, luggage tags, vests, water bottles, and pullovers) will be mailed approximately three weeks prior to trip departure. Terms and conditions of Toucan Club bonuses are subject to change or cancellation at the discretion of Wilderness Travel, Inc.



MEN'S T-SHIRT



WOMEN'S T-SHIRT



PATAGONIA SYNCHILLA FLEECE VEST  
PLUS INSULATED CAMELBAK WATER BOTTLE



PATAGONIA R1 PULLOVER





## WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

- World's Best Tour Operators:** *Travel + Leisure*, 2022, 11-time winner
- Best Travel Specialists in the World:** *Conde Nast Traveller*, 2022, 3 years in a row
- Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips:** *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row
- Best Adventure Travel Companies:** *USA Today*
- Trip of the Year:** *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner
- 50 Tours of a Lifetime:** *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row
- Best Adventure Travel Companies:** *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

Revised: February 5, 2024 10:49 AM



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