

Introduction to an initial Nature Trek Canada route proposal.

No cost, no obligations.

The accompanying first route proposal was put together in November 2018 for **Patrick** and **Nicola Johanssen** from Norway. It consisted of 16 pages in total. The route proposal below **only** shows some of the essential components of Nature Trek Canada's first response to their request. It should give you an idea about our local expertise, our commitment to your travel preferences and our way of guiding you through your travel options.

Route proposals are furthermore accompanied by the following (pdf) files:

1) Detailed travel budget

Every adjusted route plan is accompanied by an updated travel budget. We accept € (Euro), \$Can and \$US currencies. Travel budgets are prepared in either one of those currencies with the total trip price per person also shown in any currency of your choice.

2) Background information of the various regions you may travel through

A short description in chronological order of the regions you will travel through. Image links included. Below an example

	<p>Whistler and the Coastal Mountains</p> <p>The Rockies get all the 'fame' and glory but the Coastal Mountains, stretching from Oregon to Anchorage, are on average 200 meters higher and contain more ice fields and glaciers. In only 5 places is it possible to traverse this mountain range to the coast. Fortunately, there are places like Whistler and Pemberton where the splendor of the Coastal Mountains comes fully into its own. A mixture of modern and rustic settlements and a variety of attractions and activities. Hiking, or by cable car to the alpine heights, biking, rafting or (until May) skiing is possible here. A wonderful immersion in lush west coast nature.</p> <p>Photos http://www.whistler.com/photos/</p>
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2) Wildlife excursions and Guided components

Many guided components can be included in your itinerary 'on the spot' by you. More exclusive opportunities will have to be reserved in advance. We strive to match you with experienced local operators most of whom we know personally. Below one example:

Sea kayaking in Canada's Gulf Islands

Sea kayaking is the ultimate way to experience the temperate rainforest and the Pacific Ocean - an active and comfortable way of exploring enjoyed by novice paddlers and more experienced kayakers alike. After a thorough introduction we use our stable 2-person Seward kayaks to explore a landscape of rocky islands



and bays, pearly-white beaches, tidal zones and the temperate rainforest. You and your partner, group of friends or family will be traveling with your 'own' Nature Trek Canada guide. This enables us to cater to your interests and capabilities which makes your trip more flexible and personal. Your guide lives and works in this area and knows it like no other. In addition, each guide not only has the necessary certification but extensive guiding experience as well and is equally at home with adults as with young children. Nature Trek Canada has been guiding sea kayak trips in the Gulf Islands since 1992 and is a recognized operator in Gulf Islands National Park Reserve. Along the way there is plenty to see - eagles, seals, deer, raccoons, otters and even hummingbirds and the odd cactus (did we tell you this area is called Canada's Mediterranean?). We assume participants have no previous sea kayaking experience but that you have chosen to explore the west coast in a way that is fun, educational and safe. We never paddle more than about 45 minutes before we go for a little hike or find something interesting to look at, or have a little nibble, etc. Your kayak provides a great way of getting around and will take you to really special places. For longer trips we camp on islands.

Departure April to September from Salt Spring Island from \$Can 185 pp all in (depending on your group size).

Climate and region: temperatures between 15-25 Celsius. Ocean and temperate rainforest.

Activities: kayaking, hiking, wildlife observation and photography.

Remarks: your party is not part of a group but will be privately guided. Certified local guides. A very diverse area. Excellent menus and equipment.

Difficulty: we expect no previous experience and none is required. We design each trip around your personal interests and capabilities. Great for families with (young) children.

Program focused on educational nature interpretation and wildlife observation/photography in a relaxed and fun manner.

Guides: Certified and experienced local guides. Business licence approved by Parks Canada.

Transport, accommodation and meals: all in from Salt Spring Island.

Equipment: No special equipment needed, everything will be supplied.

Included in price: all equipment, meals, guidance and taxes.

See <http://www.naturetrek.ca/sea-kayak-trips/> for more information.



3) Route maps (optional)

These route maps are Google generated and correspond to the itineraries included.

4) Motorhome options

A comprehensive overview of suitable RV solutions for your itinerary.
Detailed cost overview and motorhome information.

RV Pick up date	Vancouver Sep 10 2019
RV drop off date	Calgary Sep 28 2019
Number of passengers	2 adults (none > 185 cm)
Chauffeurs	2
Assessed trip mileage	2750 km
Inclusive of	Insurance (see below*), all taxes, preparation costs, inventory and personal kits, kilometers, one-way fee, transfers.
Exclusive of	No Risk insurance (which lowers the residual risk to \$Can 0, see below *). Early pick up (0900 instead of 1300) late drop off (1500 instead of 1100).

* Camper is insured against damage, theft etc. Residual risk for Fraserway campers is \$Can 750 per occurrence. You can add an extra insurance called the CRD Plus for € 9 per day which brings residual risk to \$Can 0.

40 rental options, First 10 included below. Ranked from lowest priced to highest priced

Rank	Rental company	RV type	Quality/Score (out of 10)	Totaal €	Total \$Can
1	Canadream	Run of Fleet 4	Good/8.5	3081 EUR	
2	Canadream	MH-B	Good/8.5	3182 EUR	
3	Canadream	Run of Fleet 2	Good/8.5	3182 EUR	
4	Cruise Canada	C25	Basic/6.5	3182 EUR	
5	Cruise Canada	C30	Basic/6.5	3277 EUR	
6	Fraserway	MH19	Premium/9.0	3279 EUR	
7	Canadream	TC-A	Good/8.5	3283 EUR	
8	Canadream	MH-B	Good/8.5	3283 EUR	
9	Cruise Canada	C19	Basic/6.5	3300 EUR	
10	Traveland	Era Van	Premium	4051 EUR	

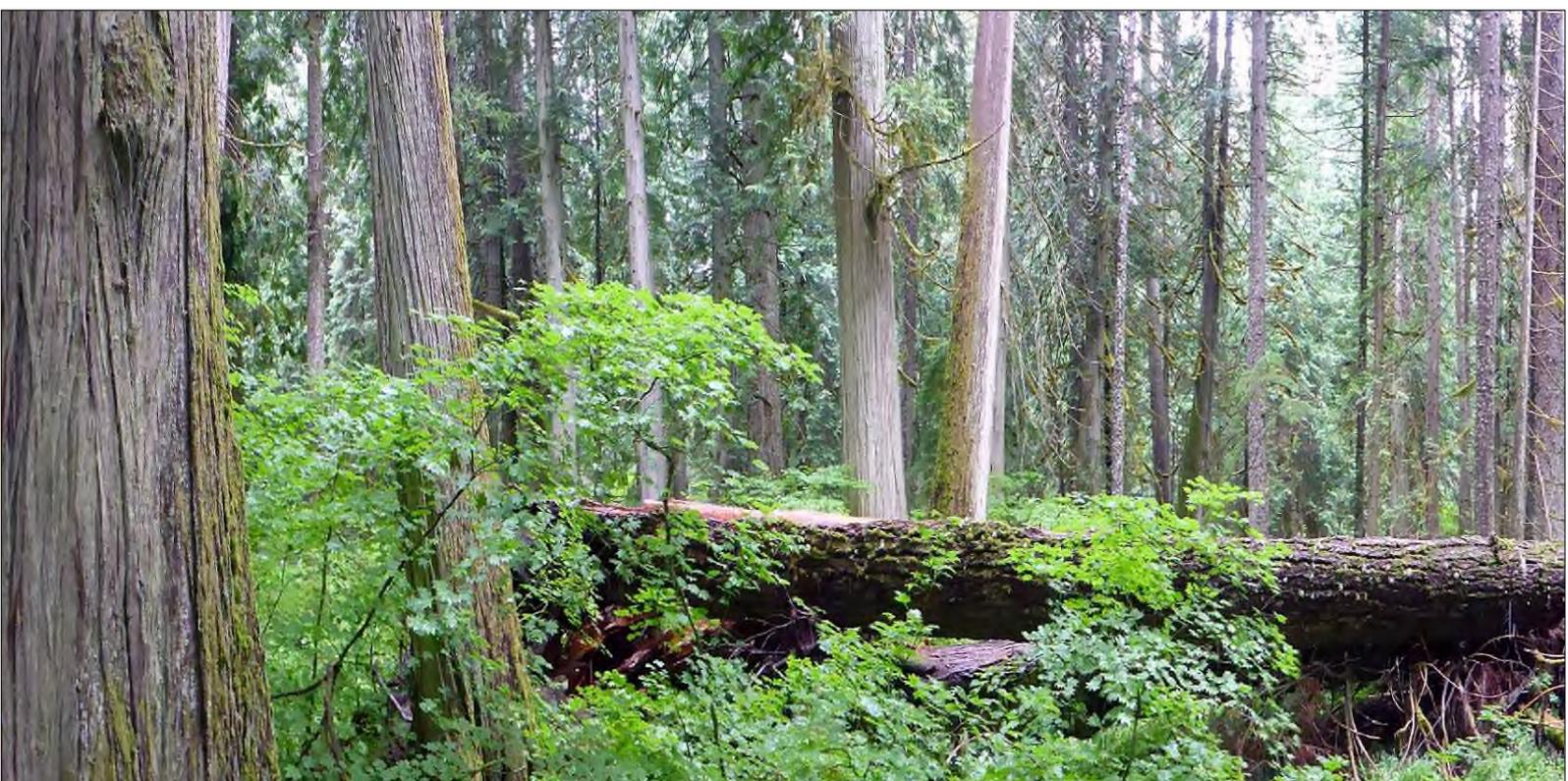


**Salt Spring Island
British Columbia, Canada
November 2018**

Hello Patrick and Nicola,

Great that Canada is on your vacation radar for this year! Thanks for letting us 'think along' with you at this stage of your travel preparations. After offering guided trips since 1992 (yes, that is 25 years.....), we soon realized that we could also share our experience on a 'one-on-one' basis with you to design your own vacation in Canada! Working with a local expert gets you advice, creativity and advocacy – those things are hard to come by online..... Particularly when your most valuable asset is your leisure time, and once it is lost, there's no making it back! So we take our advisory role quite serious when putting together a first route proposal for your trip. Hence a bit more information than you might have anticipated. We feel it is important to find the right balance between your travel budget and route and 'content' (programming) as both are the main ingredients for a wonderful Canada trip. So what we did first is make an abbreviated list of your travel wishes and parameters after which we dive right into routes and programming.

A brief introduction about the way we work is in order (more details on our [website](#)). Nature Trek Canada does not offer 'standard' travel packages from which to choose. Each and every trip we put together for (and with) you is a customized vacation based on your travel preferences. The trip's budget is determined by adding up all the trip components (flights, local transportation, accommodation, meals, excursions, ferries, fuel etc.). Some of the budget's components we can reserve/book for you like flights, local transport, etc. and some you will have to pay for while 'en route' (meals, fuel etc.). The trip budget is an accurate indication of your vacation costs but it is not the amount you pay us. **You are always free to reserve and book your own travel components.** If you feel we're on the right track with this first complementary trip design, we can further develop a custom Travel Plan with you (€ 250\$Can 350). You pay for our time, expertise and local connections and that is invaluable. In many cases we save you money or provide you with greater quality. Nature Trek Canada is a registered Canadian company founded in 1993 by Lo Camps and Annemarie Linders. In 2017 we celebrated our 25th year as expedition leaders and trip organizers. Over the years Nature Trek Canada Ltd has assisted over a 1100 travelers like yourselves with designing their own customized vacations and have also organized and guided more than 255 of our own 3-week wilderness expeditions throughout all of Canada.



Let's review your travel preferences (the 'condensed' version):

Travel party: 2 adults
Travel period: September 8th 2018 onward
Duration: up to 3 weeks
Region of choice: British Columbia and Alberta
Local transportation: car or camper
Accommodation: Camping and/or budget accommodation

Additional remarks

- *We are interested in Hikes, wildlife, nature.*
- *The less crowds the better. Crowds are a no go*
- *Preferably campervan or mixture camping/lodges.*
- *We are Norwegian, so we have plenty of mountains and would like to experience something different and the great wide open.*
- *My husband gets seasick easily, so we can skip cruises.*
- *Guides are fine for some days, but we also like to go on our own.*
- *we prefer basic over posh, love to hike and prefer not to drive long distances every day.*
- *My plan is to present him with a convincing special trip that he can't say no to ;-). What I want to show him is something like I had the privilege to experience (backroads, camping in the woods with no one around, except for the odd bear or moose ;-), being out in the fresh air with the sounds of nature, physical activity ...).*

First order of business - question and answers

My reasons for choosing sept/oct was a) avoiding crowds, so arriving after the long weekend in Sept. b) lower cost due to off season, c) less mosquitos ?, c) potential fall foliage. However we are fairly flexible. A) and b) were really the main reasons.

Yes, September will avoid crowds and will definitely give you cheaper RV rental (see below). There will be NO mosquitoes but also NO (or very little) Fall Foliage. For that you are too late (Yukon and Alaska is last week of August) OR in the wrong area as Fall colours is pre dominantly a 'central' Canada thing. From Toronto East and it starts there around the last week of September (see photo below). I guide a 3-week trip there every year and make sure I am in the right location on September 26. Now with THAT kind of fall foliage come the crowds too. So it is a mixed blessing that the west coast does not support what is (wrongly) termed an Indian Summer.

Healthy organic fresh meals are important to us (we eat no meat and hardly any dairy) and I assume that's not so easy to get outside the cities.

You will be surprised. Particularly on Vancouver Island. Organic food is becoming mainstream in Western Canada. It is not so much of there is organic food available outside big cities as 'will there be any food at all'. Some locations have no facilities at all and you will have to stock up prior to getting there. It is up to us of course to advise you of that.

So I still favor a camper van. Shower and toilet not mandatory, kitchen equipment would be ideal, so would be standing height and direct access from the driver cabin

All RV's have toilet and shower. Attached possibilities fitting the route plan discussed below.

First priority is nature (we love forests, but the fjords and islands on your west coast would definitely be a highlight), active, hiking. I can also imagine a few days of trekking if it's not too technical (I am a bit afraid of heights, my husband is pretty fearless if you leave out small boats; - This mixed with some cultural experiences would be awesome.

Okay. Our fjords and islands are indeed spectacular but also covered in the temperate rainforest. The westcoast has no 'wide open' spaces like the prairies. However..... we will be able to 'link' the fjords and islands with wide open spaces, no crowds and (possibly, if you are game for that) an extension into the 'badlands' east of Calgary which you must remember from your biking trip.

Let's have a look at possible modes of transportation while you are traveling – using a motorhome (RV or camper) or a rental car.

You intend to use an RV as mode of transport and accommodation.. A good choice as it gives you the opportunity to experience your surroundings better and, especially during the fall season, it is often cheaper and certainly more intimate than staying in hotels, etc. Here are a few "pros" and "cons" of the various options. Not to persuade you to change plans but to give you a more complete overview of the possibilities.

Motorhomes give you the opportunity to stay pretty much anywhere in relatively luxurious circumstances (often however this means that you stay at a campsite in either a park or commercial setting). There are advantages and disadvantages to using a motorhome. Advantage is that you always have your 'home' with you. And that includes your kitchen, toilet and even a shower. Disadvantages are the inherent 'unwieldiness' of a motorhome. They are easy to operate but it is more a certain lack of flexibility - once you have 'installed' your RV you feel less inclined to drive to that nice viewpoint to watch the sun go down (knowing that you must re-connect all cables and hoses in the dark. Large motorhomes cannot always be accommodated on ferries without reservations. Your RV has to be 'hooked up' regularly to replenish power, water and sewage discharge. With a rental car and tent you always have a place, but with a motorhome you have some places really advance reservations. Thus you lose some of your flexibility. Tenting is potentially more quiet as you can choose 'wilder' spots *en route* and many park campgrounds also cater specifically to tent camping, away from larger RV sites. If you're traveling by (rental) car and are intend on spending nights in roofed accommodation (hotels etc.) then renting a camper can be significantly cheaper, especially if you party consists of more than 2 adults. Moreover, you will often need to book hotel accommodation in advance whereas campsite reservations can be limited to busier locations (like national parks) in the high season. If you're traveling by car and alternate (tent) camp with the occasional hotel or cabin then that option is by far the cheapest. In addition, there is the undeniable advantage of camping (car or camper) as in all national (and most provincial) parks in Canada, roofed accommodation is not permitted.



Algonquin Fall Colours
Photo Tjeerd vd Wal

You can find hotels etc. in villages outside the park (such as Jasper and Banff for example), but not in the park itself. Campers (or tenting) allow you to be in closer proximity to nature, hiking and the wilderness around you. Cars (as opposed to campers) are faster, somewhat easier to drive, cheaper on ferries and in have better gas mileage. With a car you are more inclined to explore (later into the day) as uprooting your camper from all its connections is a less desirable option.

Summarizing,

- If you travel by car and are (tent) camping than that is by far the cheapest as you save on accommodation and meals, fuel and ferry costs.
- If you travel by car and combine (tent) camping with hotels/motels etc. you will (most likely) still save on your budget compared to renting a camper.
- If you travel by car and only stay in hotels/motels then renting a camper is often cheaper (depending on dates and number of people). Renting a camper also gives you more flexibility and independence.
- If a luxurious mode of accommodation is more your style then car rental and accommodation would be a better choice.
- Usually it is impossible (or expensive) to pick up or drop off campers on Sundays.

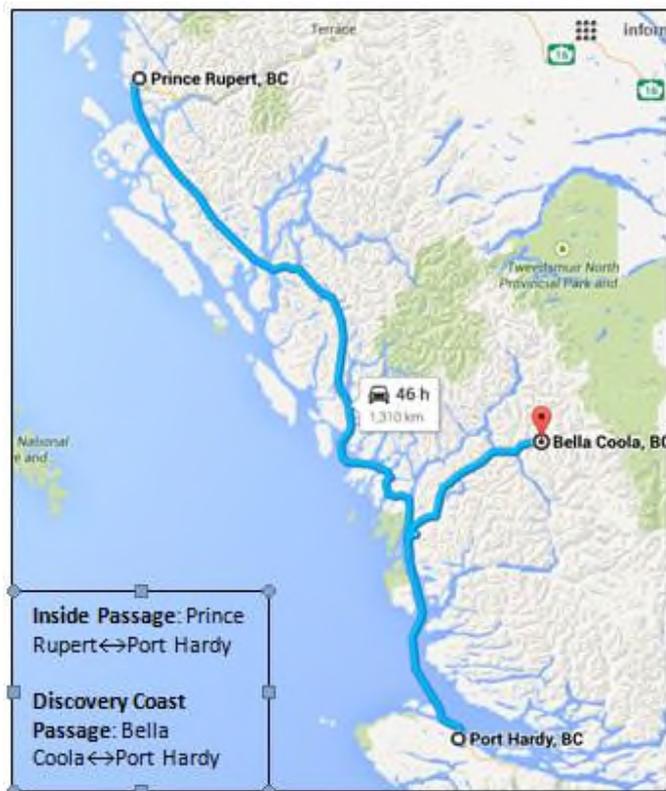
A quick comparison

Pricing in euros. Inconvenient but the <i>comparison</i> is valid in any currency.	Camper (Fraserway MH19) and: camping		Auto (Midsize SUV) and: Hotels/BB/Lodges		Auto (Midsize SUV) and: Camping (tent) combined with hotels/BB/Lodges	
Rental fee	3279	19 nights	1179	21 days	1179	21 days
Accommodation hotels	110	1 night	2198	20 nights	1099	10 nights
Accommodation camping	336	19 nights	0	0 nights	142	10 nights
Meals self-prepared	425	15x	340	12 x	425	15 x
Meals in restaurants	248	5x	511	8x	248	5x
Fuel	511	2750 km	230	2750 km	230	2750 km
Ferry costs	225	RV incl.	225	Car incl.	225	Car incl.
Totals	5134		4683		3548	

Tent camping combined with accommodation is by far the cheapest option. As you indicated it would not be a real choice I am not using that category in the travel budget. Renting a camper is the least affordable option, but it does provide you with the vacation you want for € 451 more. Driving less will make the camper option cheaper too.

Camper price is all in (all km, prep cost, inventory, taxes, drop off, insurance (\$Can 750 residual risk per accident). If a camper will be your mode of transportation I will present you with a ranked overview. For this table I choose the cheapest possibility out of 39 campers. Adding a week would drop the price by € 350.

For more information about this camper <http://www.fraserway.com/rentals/vehicles/c-small-motorhome>



Let's move on to the various route and program options

Let's start with evaluating the 'season' in which you will travel. From early September onward is past 'peak' season and that'll determine an overall layout of the trip. It is our experience that Vancouver Island will be experienced as quite the highlight in any west coast journey. **Etc. 1½ pages.**

Routing and programming.

In short there are **four main routes** departing Vancouver (Island) to Calgary (or vice versa of course):

- Two routes will carry you further north via BC Ferry connections (1) **Inside Passage** route or (2) **Discovery Coast Passage**. Both sailings last about 14-16 hours to complete.
- Two routes 'circle' more to the south, foregoing long ferry routes through (1) the **Coastal Mountains** (Whistler) or (2) the **Okanagan** (Kamloops and Kelowna).

Etc. 1 ½ pages

In putting together a first trip itinerary we let the following be our guidelines:

- The best possible diversity in natural landscapes.
- Not having to move every day to another location. Let's not introduce the 'see all of Canada-in-10-days' syndrome into the package.....
- Guided components **can** be a part of your program if they add significantly to your vacation experience.
- Active exploration (hiking) fitting your individual levels of experience and fitness
- A high wilderness component
- Somewhat primitive - Back to Basics

Etc. 2 pages followed by

1) Flight options

We work with travel consolidators in Europe to provide you with competitive pricing while adhering to consumer protection regulations common in most countries. Note – you are encouraged to compare our pricing with your own research. Booking tickets etc. is only **one** aspect of an Individual arrangement. Important? Yes. Very. But so are your travel preferences. Every travel agent can arrange bookings for you, only a few can provide you with in depth information ~ you see more when you know the right people!

2) Overview

3) Questions

Patrick and Nicola Johanssen

Canada Adventure 2019 ~ Start Vancouver and finish Calgary

Totale travel distance about 2750 km (2300 km point-to-point)

Date	Day	Day	Programme	Km
Sep 8	SUN	1	Arrival Vancouver. Pick up car. Depending on arrival time cross over to Vancouver Island (1 ferry, close to airport)	50
9 *	MON	2	Hike day 1 Juan de Fuca coastline. Magnificent hiking, wild coastal scenery. Camping near the coast (this could be day 1 of a guided mini trek)	70
10	TUE	3	Juan de Fuca day hike (2). Rocky coastline and rainforest.	0
11	WED	4	Via Port Renfrew to Parksville. Great back country route. Good chance of wildlife (elk/black bear if you start early enough). Short stops, hikes along the way (Cathedral grove).	225
12	THU	5	Via Cathedral Grove and Strathcona's forbidden plateau to Campbell River.	120
13	FRI	6	On to Cormorant Island. Short ferry ride across. Great camping. Authentic native atmosphere. Great hikes too. Friendly, off the beaten track. Quiet.	200
14	SAT	7	Cormorant Island – whale tour (4 hours). Visit Cultural centre. Coastal and rainforest hikes.	5
15	SUN	8	Knight Inlet grizzly bear excursion (full day).	5
16	MON	9	Then to Port Hardy, possible stop Telegraph Cove. Great (and little known) coastal hike east of Port Hardy. Ferry departs 1800.	60
17 **	TUE	10	Arrive Bella Bella 0100. Leave Bella Bella 0245. Arrive Bella Coola 1200. Drive to Tweedsmuir Provincial Park. Stop at bearviewing site.	70
18	WED	11	Tweedsmuir Hike. Very wild, very beautiful, very nobody....	5
19	THU	12	Via Nimpo Lake (possibility for a floatplane tour over the Monarch Icefields) towards the Chilcotin Plateau. Camping en route. Open spaces. Plateau	300
20	FRI	13	Great day hike Sheep Junction Provincial Park. Immense vistas. And very, very few people (if any). Camp Riske Creek	60
21	SAT	14	Chilcotin day off.....	50
22 ***	SUN	15	Via Williams Lake to Clearwater and Wells Gray provincial Park. A lesser known provincial park of great beauty.	275
23	MON	16	Well Gray alpine hike.	10
24 ****	TUE	17	Drive to Jasper – long but worth it! Changing scenery along the route. Mount Robson and serious mountains.	350
25	WED	18	Jasper day hike. Many options which we will of course discuss with you in detail	20
26	THU	19	Jasper Daghike.	20
27	FRI	20	Icefield Parkway. Arrive Banff National Park	275
28	SAT	21	to Calgary and departure	130
29	SUN	22	Arrival Norway	2300

Blue –can be replaced by Pacific Rim National Park (see region information).

Brown – can be replaced by the Inside Passage route

* this can be replaced by a Nootka wilderness trip. Private guide. See attached information
** from here you can take a floatplane into the alpine and hike back out in 2-3 days (or spend days on the alpine plateau and hike down 600 meters where the floatplane can pick you up again.

*** This is the ‘day’ where you could turn west again and end in Vancouver. I would choose the Okanagan as a return region then. Much quieter in september but still very reasonable weather. Semi-desser, open landscape with huge lakes.

**** you CAN bypass the Rocky mountains here and drive through the Badlands to Calgary instead.

Additional itineraries included in this proposal were

- (1) a **Coastal mountain** route and
- (2) a route via the **Discovery Coast** and
- (3) a route including the **Okanagan**.



Tidal Pools
Photo Mike Roelofs