

2025

Grizzlies of the
Khutzeymateen



The Khutzeymateen Valley

The Khutzeymateen Valley is Canada's only Grizzly Bear Sanctuary. This 39,000-hectare valley lies 40 kilometres (25 miles) northeast of Prince Rupert on the British Columbia coast. It supports a robust ancient trilogy of grizzly bears, spawning salmon, and mammoth Sitka spruce trees. In 1992, after years of effort by several individuals and organizations, such as the Valhalla Society, the Khutzeymateen Valley was declared Canada's first Grizzly Bear Sanctuary by the B.C. government.

This area is home to an estimated 40 - 60 grizzlies who depend on the rich valley for their existence, with its dense rainforest, river mouth estuary, and open fjord. It also attracts wolves, migrating geese, ducks, harbor seals, beaver and otters, as well as orca and humpback whales. The watershed also supports over 100 species of birds including owls, grouse, shore birds, hummingbirds, swifts, woodpeckers, and kingfishers.

Uninhabited by humans, there are no roads, villages or campsites, making this valley pure wilderness and the perfect habitat for the grizzly bear. To explore this magnificent valley, we will use the motor vessel, the *Afterglow I* as our base, and then travel by motorized inflatable to the estuary to safely observe and photograph these mighty animals.

The Grizzly Bear

Grizzly Bears. The name conjures up images of a huge powerful beast, signifying wild lands and freedom. Being highly intelligent and curious mammals, grizzly bears selectively feed on various high protein plants such as green sedge grasses, lupine roots, and the broad leaves of skunk cabbage, all of which the valley has an abundance to offer.

The grizzly bear defines wilderness for us. The bears represent the wild side of our nature and how things used to be. Although the Grizzly can be dangerous and unpredictable, the Khutzeymateen Grizzly is teaching us that they have been misrepresented. They are intelligent and show many human characteristics. This is our 34th year in the Khutzeymateen and our knowledge and understanding continues to grow.

Today the grizzly bears and their habitat – the Khutzeymateen Valley – are protected from dangers caused by increasing numbers of tourists. *Ocean Light Adventures with the Afterglow I* are one of only two outfitters licenced by the BC government to guide trips into the Khutzeymateen sanctuary in May and June. Our expert bear guides are CBVA (Commercial Bear Viewing Association) certified and diligently follow best practices for bear viewing.



2025 Dates & Prices

Dates:

- May 11 - 17*
 - May 17 - 21*
 - May 21 - 24
 - May 24 - 29*
 - May 29 - June 2*
 - June 2 - 6*
 - June 6 - 10*
 - June 10 - 13
 - June 13 - 16*
 - June 16 - 19
- *Privately booked*

Availability: Please email adventure@oceanlight.ca to check availability.

Price: \$3275 CAD per person plus 5% GST from Prince Rupert.
No single supplement for single travellers.

Price includes \$150 Park Fee, \$25 Bear Sustainability Fee for research and conservation, \$25 Bear Viewing License fee, all meals as per the itinerary, and return charter float plane flight between Prince Rupert and the Khutzeymateen Valley.

Number of Participants: Maximum 8

Number of Crew: 2

What's Included?

- The services of a fully qualified skipper/bear guide and cook/crew
- Return air charter from Prince Rupert to the Khutzeymateen Valley
- All meals as listed on the itinerary (B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner)

What's Not?

- Gratuities for crew (optional and/or discretionary, but always appreciated!)
- Transportation between your home and Prince Rupert, BC
- Personal belongings and equipment as per "Clothing & Equipment List"
- Any meals and accommodation in Prince Rupert prior to Day 1
- Excess baggage charges
- Any extra personal expenses incurred because of weather, logistical delays, or delayed departures of chartered or scheduled aircraft.

Logistics & Details

Traveling to/from Prince Rupert

If You're Flying. Air Canada (1-800-247-2262) offers 1 flight daily between Vancouver and Prince Rupert. Please note: The airport in Prince Rupert is situated on an island. To get to the mainland, there is a bus that will board a ferry and take you to the main airport office in downtown Prince Rupert. The same service is available to get to the airport for departure. Check in 2 hours prior to your flight time. The bus/ferry service is complimentary.

If You're Driving. From Vancouver, take Hwy 1 to Cache Creek, turn off to Hwy 9 to Prince George, then Hwy 16 from Prince George to Prince Rupert. The driving time is approximately 20 hours.

If You're Arriving By Ferry. BC Ferries offers service from Port Hardy on Vancouver Island 1-888-223-3779.

Traveling to/from the Afterglow I

You will travel to/from the Afterglow I by charter float plane. Please have the majority of your gear packed in a soft duffel bag for the charter flight. Have a warm jacket and rain gear available. We recommend that you wear your heavy clothing and rubber boots for this leg of your trip.

Charter Flight Meeting Time. Please meet at 7:30 am at the Inland Air Seal Cove float plane dock. Your flight is scheduled to leave at 8:00 am with Inland Air.



Itinerary

Please Note: Due to the early meeting time on the first day, you must arrive in Prince Rupert prior to Day 1 of your expedition.

Day 1 – L/D

The trip begins in the coastal community of Prince Rupert. An early morning float plane flight from the Seal Cove float plane dock takes you to the *Afterglow I* and her crew who await at the head of the Khutzeymateen Inlet. The remainder of the day will be spent pursuing bear-viewing opportunities.

Days 2 and 3 – B/L/D

The itinerary for these days must remain flexible so that we can maximize each day's bear and wildlife viewing opportunities. The daily tide schedule varies and will largely dictate our itinerary. Our time in the inflatable or ashore will find us in some part of the estuary/inlet viewing what could be any number of animals, including black and grizzly bears, seals, river otters, coastal wolves, geese, ducks, and eagles. At dusk, after the evening's activities, you will return to the boat to enjoy a hot drink and dinner while reflecting on the day's events.

Day 4 – B

After breakfast the float plane will arrive for your return trip to Prince Rupert.

Please be advised that there is a slight possibility that the charter flight may be delayed due to adverse weather conditions, and you should therefore make connecting airline reservations that can be changed with little or no penalty.

Baggage Weight Limits & Extra Gear

The maximum weight for personal baggage is 55 lb. per person, including camera gear. Please remember that you will be on the boat for only 3 days and 3 nights – please pack accordingly and bring only what is essential (see page 7 and 8 for a list of recommended clothing and gear).

IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. The personal baggage limit of 55 lb is not arbitrary – it has recently been adjusted due to changing Transport Canada floatplane regulations. It is critical that your baggage conforms to this limit and please bear in mind that your bags will be weighed and the float plane operator may refuse to load baggage exceeding this limit.
2. If you are travelling before or after the trip please arrange to leave extra baggage at your hotel/B&B in Vancouver or Prince Rupert. Alternately, Inland Air will store extra baggage for you while on the trip.