



For Immediate Release

The Inside Passage gets wild: Maple Leaf Adventures' 2012 trips of a lifetime

Dec. 7, 2011, Victoria, BC – Launching their 26th season in 2012, the owners of Maple Leaf Adventures understand that the wild coasts of British Columbia and Alaska, including the magical worlds of Haida Gwaii and the Great Bear Rainforest, are even more mystical when explored aboard a century-old, fully restored and beautifully appointed classic tall ship.

“Our 2012 schedule is not designed for someone seeking your basic inside passage cruise. Our sailing cruises are for travellers who wish to sail deep into fjords for days and encounter wildlife and people on their own turf,” said Kevin Smith, president of Maple Leaf Adventures. “There are trips for natural and cultural history buffs, artists, families and even those with a taste for fine ale.”

Recognized by National Geographic and Frommer's for gently exploring remote coasts while enabling exceptional wildlife viewing, Maple Leaf Adventures carefully designs each trip with the knowledge that marine adventures to far-off and sometimes uncharted destinations are on many people's bucket lists.

Experiences offered include walking grizzly bear trails and viewing rare spirit bears with an expert guide; sailing to and landing at a remote and ancient Haida village in the rainforest; and visiting whale researchers on a small island after viewing different species of cetaceans. Laughter abounds on the trips, whether it is when guests are climbing to the tip of the schooner's bowsprit, steering her under sail or tasting some of the coast's finest craft beer.

The Victoria, BC-based business takes up to eight people at a time aboard a classic 28-metre (92-foot) schooner for its multi-day expeditions. Setting an example for authentic and responsible tourism, Maple Leaf Adventures has pioneered ecotourism on Canada's West Coast and fully committed to social and environmental sustainability.

“Our trips leave no trace on the planet, yet also give back to it through donations and education,” said Smith. “Maple Leaf Adventures has also piloted economic protocol agreements with the coastal First Nations that provide income from our presence, employment for guides and recognition of the traditional territories.”

The team at Maple Leaf Adventures also hosts naturalists and environmental researchers aboard the schooner to teach guests about coastal and ocean ecosystems. Maple Leaf Adventures donates one per cent of all cruise revenues to conservation projects through the organization 1% for the Planet. Last month, the international Virgin Responsible Tourism Awards gave a commendation to Maple Leaf Adventures, which was one of three finalists in the category of tourism in a marine environment at the 2011 awards.

To book a tour or learn more about Maple Leaf Adventures, visit www.MapleLeafAdventures.com, call 1-888-599-5323 or 250-386-7245.

Maple Leaf Adventures' sailing cruise lineup for 2012

- **Great Bear Rainforest Tours by Sail** – Discover British Columbia's Great Bear Rainforest, a pristine land of fjords, mountains, rainforests and great river estuaries and the perfect place to view grizzly bears, the mysterious white Spirit Bear and whales. Maple Leaf Adventures offers spring (Apr. 27 - May 5), summer (Jun. 24 - 29 and Jun. 30 - Jul. 5) and fall (Aug. 29 - Sep. 8, Sep. 10 - 18 and Sep. 20 - 28) cruises. In addition, Maple Leaf Adventures offers

one photography trip in the Great Bear Rainforest, slotted for Sep. 30 - Oct. 5. Price: starts at \$2,860.00 Cdn per passenger (all inclusive except airfare. Keep your wallet packed away – relax and enjoy!).

- **Gulf Islands, BC, Cruise** – Join the team aboard SV *Maple Leaf* for a six-day sailing exploration of the protected islands between Vancouver Island and Vancouver, BC. Guests will visit wildlife colonies, walk through west coast forests and land at remote beaches and islands. In 2012, sail away on Apr. 5 - 10, Apr. 11 - 16 or Oct. 18 - 23. Join a special Tall Sails & Ales beer and culinary-themed tour on Oct. 25 - 30, or a Vancouver Island cruise Apr. 18 - 25. Price: starts at \$2,225.00 Cdn per passenger (all inclusive except airfare. Keep your wallet packed away – relax and enjoy!).
- **Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands Tour** – With rich intertidal life, concentrations of humpback whales, Haida village sites and hot springs, Haida Gwaii is a must-see destination for those who love wildlife, far-flung places and/or northwest coast First Nations culture. On many Canadians' bucket lists, these islands are known as "the Canadian Galapagos." Sailing dates are slotted for May 7 - 15, May 16 - 24, May 25 - Jun. 2, Jun. 4 - 12 and Jun. 13 - 21, 2012. Price: \$4,640.00 Cdn per passenger (all inclusive except airfare. Keep your wallet packed away – relax and enjoy!).
- **Art at Sea on the *Maple Leaf* Among BC's Whales and First Nations Culture** – Combine two loves, painting and the natural world, on this tour. Join Karin Richter, talented artist and teacher, and embark on a voyage aboard the classic schooner *Maple Leaf* for focused lessons in painting nature and coastal scenes. This tour is offered on Aug. 22 - 27, 2012. Price: \$2,825.00 Cdn per passenger (all inclusive except airfare. Keep your wallet packed away – relax and enjoy!).
- **Alaska Adventure by Sail** – Each year, millions of people visit southeast Alaska for its grandeur and frontier history – only a fraction of these people will actually experience Alaska's remote wilderness. On this adventure, get close to wild Alaska's tidewater glaciers, humpback whales and brown bears, and enter the ancient rainforests. Sailing dates include Jul. 7 - 19 and Jul. 19 - 31. Price: \$6,780.00 Cdn per passenger (all inclusive except airfare. Keep your wallet packed away – relax and enjoy!).
- **Whales and Totems of the Great Bear Rainforest** – Northern Vancouver Island and the Broughton Archipelago of British Columbia are known as the "Serengeti of the sea". Experience this diverse marine environment on a five-night, educational whale watching cruise that takes you beyond the spectacle of just seeing whales, and lets you live among their communities, and natural and human history of the entire area they inhabit. Trip dates are scheduled from Aug. 15-20, Aug. 22-27 and Oct. 8 - 13. Price: from \$2,700.00 Cdn per passenger (all inclusive except airfare. Keep your wallet packed away – relax and enjoy!).

About Maple Leaf Adventures

Maple Leaf Adventures has offered natural and cultural history cruises aboard a classic tall ship since 1986. With a reputation as one of Canada's top sustainable tour operators, the multi-day excursions give guests one-of-a-kind experiences in some of the most beautiful places in the world. As a longtime practitioner of ecotourism, Maple Leaf Adventures pioneered travel in BC's Great Bear Rainforest and northwestern Vancouver Island and continues to make significant contributions to coastal conservation efforts. For more information, visit www.MapleLeafAdventures.com.

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