THE NOOTKA TRAIL ITINERARY

The Nootka trail goes through challenging terrain and unpredictable weather at times. Because of that this itinerary is subject to change. The exact schedule including daily distances hiked will be dictated by factors such as weather and safety, as well as group strength and preferences.

Day 1: *Nanaimo - Gold River - Nootka Island - Third Beach (Drive, float plane and short hike)*

We will pickup guests between 9:00 - 9:30am at your choice of 3 different locations in Nanaimo: **Best Western Dorchester Hotel - Nanaimo (70 Church St. - 9:00am), The Buccaneer Inn (1577 Stewart Ave - 9:15am) or Departure Bay Ferry Terminal (689 Trans Canada Hwy - 9:30am)**

The drive up to Gold River is about 4 hrs. from Nanaimo. Once arriving in Gold River we will divide out all the camp food among our packs, give out any rented gear and then load on to our private chartered float plane. Our plane will depart Gold River at approx. 3:00pm so we should aim at arriving in Gold River by 2:00pm at the latest so we have time to go over food, gear and load up. We will have to make sure we have full water bottles before loading on to the plane, and that our hiking boots are packed in our bags in preparation for unloading from the plane on Nootka Island in knee deep water. The float plane ride should be approx. half hour. After unloading we will start our short hike to camp today at Third Beach. The hike should take approx. 1 hour and after arriving in camp we will start our regular evening routine of setting up tents and tarps, getting a fire started, hanging/caching our extra food away, making some tea and/or hot chocolate and then starting to prepare dinner. After that the rest of the evening is yours to enjoy; read a book, write a journal, take some picture, relax by the fire or go to sleep in the tent early and listen to the sound of the ocean just a few feet away from your tent front doors.

Day 2: *Third Beach - Calvin Falls (12 kms hiked)*

Today we will, set our regular morning routine for the next few morning. Generally we will be up and moving at approx. 7:00am. After having a hot coffee or tea/hot chocolate and a warm breakfast we will start packing up our gear and cleaning the campsite to get ready for our hike for the day. We should have our backpacks on our backs by 9:00am. If the tides are low enough we may be able to do a lot of beach hiking today, if not then we will spend most of our day in the forest. Our destination today is Calvin Falls, which some consider to be the most scenic campsite on the whole trip. The hike today should take approx. 5-6 hours with a stop for lunch and lots of chances for photos. Once arriving in camp, weather permitting, we should have time to jump in and have a little swim at Calvin Falls before getting into our regular evening camp routine.

Day 3: *Calvin Falls - Beano Creek (11 kms hiked)*

Today we will keep the same morning routine as the morning before. The start of todays hike will be quite easy, but as we move on through the day we will encounter much more difficult terrain including some forest, logs, sea stacks, boulders and rocks and pea gravel (harder terrain than it sounds). We will also pass by a culturally important First Nations site (used to be the site of a Mowachaht village, now currently an Indian Reserve called Aass). The hike today should not take too long time wise but will be a bit of a challenge terrain wise. Before reaching camp we will most likely have to make a water crossing to get across to where we are going to camp at the Beano Creek Campsite. After arriving there should be time to rest the feet, potentially go for a swim and get into our regular evening routine.

Day 4: *Beano Creek - Yuquot Beach (12 kms hiked)*

Today will be our longest and most difficult day. After waking up and going through our regular morning routines we will start our long hike through mostly forest scattered with some small pocket beaches. We will have to keep our eyes on the tides and our tide table throughout the day to make it work as there is a spot near the end which is impassable if we arrive at the wrong timing. There will be lots of up and down, with some sections where we will have to use some fixed rope assistance. All in all it will be a longer but still fantastic day however we will have to be a little more conscious of our pace. Tonight we will feast as it is our last night out on Nootka Island so we will make sure we finish off any leftover snacks and meals we have in our bags!

Day 5: *Yuqout Beach - Friendly Cove - Nanaimo (Short drive - boat - drive)*

Today is up and at it early like all mornings. Although we only have about a 1 hr. walk (or less) to Friendly Cove there is a lot of sights to see and history to take in before we load up onto our boat and head back to Gold River. There is a church-museum and the picturesque Nootka Lighthouse to have a look at, as well as some informative First Nation historical plaques to read with interesting information about the area and its history. We will load on to the boat early afternoon where we will be taken right back to where our van will be parked in Gold River. Once arriving back in Gold River we will change into clean clothes, drop our bags in the van and go for a celebration burger and beer/pop to finish off the trip before driving back to Nanaimo. We can expect to arrive back in Nanaimo sometime between 6:00-9:00pm and we can drop you off at the hotel of your choice or at either of the 2 ferry terminals in Nanaimo (if preferred we can take you to Victoria instead of Nanaimo for an extra fee).

Trip includes: transportation, float plane, water taxi, First Nation fees, food on the trail, ACMG certified guide, tents, water purification and a celebration meal in Gold River at the end.

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