

# The one that got away

It's almost impossible not to catch a fish off the Charlottes but . . .

It is fair to say that B.C.'s wild-salmon stock is completely safe from us.

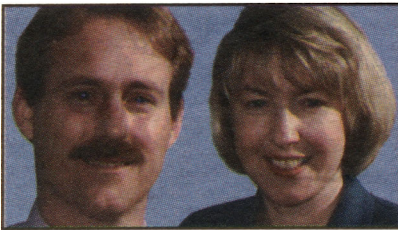
We've just spent a few days at the remote yet luxurious West Coast Fishing Club (1-888-432-6666 or [www.westcoastfishingclub.com](http://www.westcoastfishingclub.com)) on Langara Island in the very north of the Queen Charlottes.

It's in an absolutely beautiful setting and for almost everyone else, the fishing was terrific.

Fishers at this resort don't have to do anything except concentrate on the fish. Snacks and coffee or other libations are packed and ready to go every morning and afternoon and a boat even goes out to check that you have everything you need twice a day, kind of a travelling grocery store.

It was our intention to catch and release but we never got the chance. We won't go so far as to say they were popping up out of the water to mock the two of us but we were right on the salmon runs and they indeed ran right by us.

While Rick wasn't even close to catching anything, Barbara tells the story that she was practising long-line release with an orca of some size (i.e. she lost the rock fish several metres



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Travel Talk

from the boat).

In spite of Jarod's (our terrific guide) best efforts at showing us the ropes — er, lines — we seemed to be the only two at the resort who didn't seize a fish. Though to be truthful, we were also not out there at 5 a.m. with the rest of them.

We had good reasons. Why go to a place with an astounding cliff-top view of the northern Queen Charlottes and not linger over breakfast? Why not enjoy the hot tub or even indulge in a shiatsu massage while the others are waddling around in survival suits?

Sitting on the deck of the quiet lodge and armed with a good book, a camera, binoculars and a cup of coffee seemed to us to beat wrangling salmon and halibut. With eight or 10 eagles as company hovering in the air currents of the cliff just above the all-glass dining room, we felt little need

to go fishing.

Suggest sightseeing, though, and we were there. We loved bounding over the waves to circle the island, checking out the northern-most lighthouse at Langara Point, intriguing rock formations, overfed eagles and whales as we went.

A short trip over to Kuista, a Haida village on Graham Island, was fascinating. We walked a jungle of springy moss to explore old sites of long-houses and to run our fingers over the worn but still discernable carvings on the mortuary pole.

Seeing them in their natural setting is a powerful moment.

A helicopter ride tempted us to set down on a deserted sandy beach in search of glass globes from Japan. The only prints were those of bears and deer. Were they closer to a town, those beaches would be littered with people. Well, if the water was warmer, too.

The West Coast Fishing Club has an excellent resident chef who serves up a constant stream of edible delights. Periodically a celebrity chef from other fine restaurants is invited to cook up a storm. The weekend we were there, David Hawksworth of Vancouver's award-winning West Restaurant ([www.westrestaurant.com](http://www.westrestaurant.com)), created a scrumptious five-course dinner. David was one of the keeners up and out at 5 a.m. He also caught the largest fish of the trip.