



THE TICKET TO TRAVEL IN '22 – COME EXPLORE HAIDA GWAI!

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By Don Wells

Even in the most turbulent times, diehard recreational travelers never abandon dreams of exploration and adventure. Especially as we finally look forward to easing out of two years of uneasiness, the urge to bust loose has never been greater.

But what do exploration and adventure look like with the pandemic dust yet settling?

Same as always in many respects, but in the shorter-term things may be a bit different. At least that is a trend among a growing movement of globetrotters who are seeking their thrills a little closer to home and with greater frequency.

Whether we call it “micro-escaping” in the current vernacular, or “bite-sized travel,” let’s not lower our expectations for even a New York minute. We can experience extraordinary things without enduring long exhausting journeys, provided we are willing to rethink not only our destinations, but also our attitudes and agendas.

Now, respectfully, lace up your shoes and consider the following.

## The North America Advantage

It's big – really big. Vast regions are uncrowded, with a population density a fraction of most other regions of the world. It's also geographically and culturally diverse, and it's impossible to explore all of it, even with the help of reincarnation. Its countryside and seashores cover every description, and it is home to many of the world's most famous destination cities. It is also extraordinarily rich in its range of outdoor pursuits. And it requires no transoceanic travel. Chances are there are things you've never seen, but always wanted to, just a short distance from wherever you live.



## The Natural World

You haven't lived until you've really gotten lost. More specifically, it is not until you have drawn breath in an untouched wilderness that you are finally able to realize how important it was that you came. Not to take anything away from the human-made wonders of the world, but when it comes to slack-jawed awesomeness, Mother Nature wins hands-down every time. With just 37 million inhabitants occupying over six per cent of the world's total area, Canada has more choices for soul-searching solitude than anywhere in the world. There is also the added benefit that your phone won't work out there, allowing you a therapeutic opportunity to completely escape and connect directly with those you are with, maybe even yourself.



### Slow Your Roll

Ever come home from a lengthy and memorable bucket list trip only to collapse in utter exhaustion? Usually it's well worth it, but does it always have to be that way? Always, always, always? Or maybe there is equal fulfillment in exploring a much smaller radius of space and time, and in a more restful manner. Europeans, I have noticed, are particularly good at it, moving about less distantly and frantically, lingering longer over meals and celebrating the all-but-lost art of conversation. It's something we all need to do more often. Walk slowly. Gaze longer. Hang around a bit. Chat with new friends. Try to identify that amazing aroma. Have another glass of wine. See? Doesn't that feel good?



### Banish Care

This is the subtle skill of not giving a rip about anything. Its not as tricky as you may think, and it's best achieved by going to a soothing place and allowing skilled people to cater to your comfort in every waking and non-waking moment. There is no harm in a little guilty pleasure. Besides, life in a busy and complex

world takes a toll, often without us even noticing. So just for a while, find a place not far from home that relaxes you, or one that is exhilarating, or serves great food, or is just plain fun. Or all of these things combined. The key is to let somebody else look after the details of daily living. And that To Do list? It can wait.



-Don Wells is a British Columbia based writer and communications consultant.

Ready to explore a bite-sized adventure? [Click here for more ideas.](#)

There are few destinations better suited for a mini escape than a luxury fishing lodge on the mystical Pacific shores of British Columbia's Haida Gwaii. Just a 90 minute jet north of Vancouver, The West Coast Fishing Club operates two lodges that offer the ultimate combination of sophisticated comfort, superb cuisine and restorative adventures amid untouched marine wilderness.

Situated on Langara Island at the northern tip of the archipelago, The Clubhouse welcomes annually returning guests from throughout North America for three and four-night all-inclusive stays where indelible memories are made among business groups, family members and friends. Similar experiences are available nearby at The Outpost, a 14- guest boutique lodge located on a secluded bay on the west shore of Graham Island. Following a scenic 20-minute helicopter ride from the Haida Nation community of Masset, guests arrive wide-eyed and eager for one of the continent's most rare and unique adventure travel experiences.

After lunch and orientation, guests are expertly guided to experience the world's best salmon and halibut fishing, as well as daily sightings of an awe-inspiring range of marine wildlife. And when the fishing day is done, they are whisked back to the extreme comforts of the lodges, where welcoming staff and regionally inspired food and drink await. In late summer, special event trips are on offer, featuring unique culinary themes and live music, while customized packages for private groups are available all season long.

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