

GO GARDENING

Tofino's Botanical Gardens are worth a visit. You'll find them on the Pacific Rim Highway just outside town. Ranging over 4.8 hectares, there are manicured gardens, wild forest and sprawling shoreline to explore, all connected by boardwalks and easy-access paths, and enhanced with beautiful art installations. A must-stroll while in town! Visit tbgf.org.

CATCH A WAVE

Tofino is one of the world's most famous cold water surf hotspots, with the breaks at Chesterton, Long Beach, and Cox Bay among the local favourites. For the experienced, you can rent a board in town. If you're keen to learn, book a lesson or two with Surf Sister. Founded in 1999, the school features all women instructors and offers everything from three-hour lessons (with gear included) to five-day intensive camps. Find out more at surfsister.com. Plus, the glassy waters of the Clayoquot Sound offer top conditions for stand-up paddleboarding, with MacKenzie Beach being the ideal spot close to town. Head to Tofino Paddle Surf's website at tofinopaddlesurf.com to hire a SUP from

\$25 or to book a lesson with one of their expert coaches.



COAST WITH THE MOST

HEAD TO TOFINO, CANADA, FOR A BEACH BREAK WITH A WILD TWIST

Perched on the rugged west coast of Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Tofino has a quaint coastal vibe with an adventurous twist thanks to its wilderness backdrop. Here, world-class surf breaks meet lush temperate rainforests that are home to bears, wolves and mountain lions. Plus, it's part of the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, which is famous for its scenic passages and rich wildlife. Here, six ways to enjoy this natural playground.



CRUISE FOR WILDLIFE

Prefer to stay dry? Take a wildlife cruise for a family-friendly adventure. Tofino is famous for its whales, which include humpbacks, orcas and gray whales, and a three-hour cruise with Jamie's Whaling Station will get you into the thick of Clayoquot Sound's action. Along the way you might even encounter sea otters as they float on their backs, holding onto their favourite pebble (adorable!), or

colonies of harbour seals and Steller sea lions. Also, the many islands off Tofino are home to black bears – and a cruise with West Coast Aquatic Safaris is your best bet of seeing them up close. Board their cruiser, *Nanuq* for a 2.5-hour trip through scenic passages and islets, where you can watch black bears search for snacks on the beach. See whalesafaris.com and jamies.com.

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

For waterfront digs that'll house the whole family in style, book a stay at Pacific Sands Beach Resort. The property is surrounded by old-growth forests alongside the Pacific Rim National Park and just metres from the sand at stunning Cox Bay – one of Tofino's most iconic beaches and the site of surf comps throughout the year. The resort has a range of accommodation with epic views, fully equipped kitchens and cosy fireplaces, along with bike rentals and activities for the kids. Find out more at pacificsands.com.



TO GO:

Find out more about Tofino and British Columbia at tourismtofino.com and HelloBC.com.



OUT & ABOUT

With its quaint galleries and artisan stores, Tofino is a browser's happy place. Try: The Eagle Aerie Gallery on Campbell Street. Designed as a traditional Northwest Coast First Nations longhouse, the gallery showcases the work of acclaimed local artist Roy Henry Vickers alongside handcrafted totem poles and stunning native carvings. For more indigenous artwork and local First Nations souvenirs, check out the House of Himwitsa Native Art Gallery's huge collection on Main Street. Visit himwitsa.com and royhenryvickers.com.

TAKE THE PLUNGE

For a memorable day trip out of Tofino, head to Hot Springs Cove with Ocean Outfitters. Nestled in the lush Maquinna Marine Provincial Park, these stunning natural springs are as scenic as they are relaxing, with several geothermal pools, a beautiful waterfall and incredible ocean views to enjoy. And the trip to get to them is an adventure in itself – a 1.5-hour wildlife cruise is followed by a 30-minute stroll along a boardwalk through old growth forest. Tours are available all year round. See oceanoutfitters.bc.ca.