

# TRAVEL

Adventures  
in Ucluelet

## Cozy up for fog, storms

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What makes a community livable? Retaining its sense of self in changing times? The citizens of Ucluelet seem to know, and have been recognized internationally for their achievements and success in planning Ucluelet's future. They have built a path for future growth while maintaining the natural beauty and small town atmosphere of their village. And while Ucluelet's amenities grow, it retains its vital individual character. No matter what the season, or the reason, on a visit to the western edge of Vancouver Island, Ucluelet is poised to charm.

### Mother Nature

Rolling fog, tempest-tossed seas and giant migrating sea creatures are just a few of the treats she brings out between October and April on the Wild West Coast of Vancouver Island.

The Pineapple Express (tropical gales from Hawaii pushed along the jet stream) regularly hits Vancouver Island's exposed coast in the form of 120 km (75 mile) winds and 12 m (36 feet) waves. Add in the rain of the rainforest and you have a first-class storm-watching location.

Few communities are so well poised to comfortably view and experience some of the wildest storms in Mother Nature's arsenal

than Ucluelet. The village of 1,800 is surrounded by verdant forest, islands and vast stretches of pebbly shore. And there are plenty of cozy places where you can snuggle up, drink a cup of tea (or a glass of wine) in front of a roaring fire, and watch the winter waves pound the surf and the rain lash the windows.

### Cozy cabins

Ucluelet is gaining the reputation of being the cottage country of the west. The town also offers everything from great B&Bs and luxury resorts to intimate motels. Dining facilities range from coffee shops to restaurants with gourmet menus. More hotels, lodges and eateries are currently under construction, with even more planned including a Jack Nicklaus-designed golf resort.

### Fog-horns

Each season brings its own delights. Come in autumn and Ucluelet and its environs become a mystical place. You feel a different type of energy in the fresh salt air. Rocky outcroppings and millennium old cedars shrouded in fog give an ancient ambiance to the area. The low bleats of fog-horns will accompany you on your walks around town or along Ucluelet's Wild Pacific Trail.

The Wild Pacific Trail is

the town's pride and joy. It hugs the rugged shoreline around Ucluelet and offers incredible views of the Barclay Sound, the Broken Group Islands and the open Pacific Ocean. The first four phases have been completed and include 8.5 km of paths which wind past Amphitrite Point Lighthouse, He-Tin-Kis Park, and end at Big Beach Park.

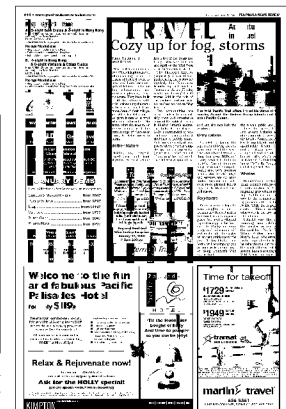
### Whales

By mid-March, the storms abate in time for the procession of an estimated 19,000 migrating gray whales from Baja California on their way to the summer feeding grounds of the northern Pacific. While the migration starts in March, resident whales are in the area until late in the fall.

Ucluelet and the surrounding area celebrate the whales' return with the week-long Pacific Rim Whale Festival, also in March. Local whale-watching tour operators in Ucluelet take visitors out to see the whales throughout the season. But a hike along the Wild Pacific Trail may also bring sightings.



*Sharon Tiffin photo*  
The Wild Pacific Trail offers incredible views of the Barclay Sound, the Broken Group Islands and the open Pacific Ocean.



TRAVEL  
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