



## Ecotours - BC

### *“Grizzly Bears, Wildlife and Nature”*

BC's Premier Outdoor Adventure Specialists!



*“The Bear Whisperer”- Grizzlies and salmon - “The Cycle of Life”*

## *Walk With The Grizzlies*

### *High Adventure For Grizzly Bear Thrill Seekers!*

*WALK with the Bear Whisperer* up a remote salmon spawning river where the bears retreat to solitude and enjoy their salmon fishing and feasting at leisure in the heart of the Cariboo Mountains. Find out what's around that bend in the river! Photograph mountain grizzlies on salmon rivers that have run through the ancient forests since the last ice age. This thrilling adventure has you walking among the bears in the boreal forest and on the river banks of the salmon infested waters. With the sounds of salmon splashing and eagles crying overhead you will watch the grizzlies in the heart of nature's buffet. Its high adventure where only a few people have had this rare opportunity to walk among the bears. Its thrilling and not for the faint of heart. It can be extremely dangerous as you come in close proximity of the grizzlies – the kings of the mountains – but also an exhilarating adrenalin rush.

This adventure is limited to 2 people per group and is available for only a few weeks per year in September.

Requirements: Guests must be physically fit. Minimum age is 19 years. You will be in full wading gear – chest waders and wading boots as we will be wading in the salmon river and crossing the river. Your package includes waders and boots for your use on the tour. Clients will be required to sign an absolute waiver of liability.

Itinerary:

Day 1 – Arrival at lodge – check in 3 p.m. – Orientation and dinner starting at 5 p.m. Orientation will include bear awareness, gear, expectations and Q&A.

Day 2 – Early breakfast in lodge (5 a.m.) – Depart for bear viewing river. Choice of river(s) for the day will be determined by the guide and will depend on the river showing the most bear activity. We have 4 major spawning rivers in the area. One is accessed by 4 wheel drive vehicle and hiking and the others are accessed by small jetboat. Spend the day on the river watching and photographing bears. Lunch with the bears – packed lunch. Return to the lodge around 5 p.m. - Dinner at 6 p.m.

Day 3 – Same as day 2. We may switch rivers on this day or return to the river we visited on Day 1.

Day 4 – Breakfast in lodge. Prepare to depart. Check out time is 10 a.m.

## **About Ecotours-BC and The Cariboo Mountains Adventure**

Deep in the heart of British Columbia in the Cariboo Mountains surrounding the deepest fjord lake on earth is the rare temperate rainforest found nowhere else on earth. In the Quesnel Lake watershed, which drains some 12,000 square kilometers of land, water is the essence of the sustainability of the vibrant and abundant life forms found within it. Through spring and summer the high alpine explodes in a kaleidoscope of color as the wild flowers burst into full bloom – asters, glacier lilies, solomon's seal, monkey flower, Indian paint brush and a myriad of others. The lush valley bottom ecosystems provide food and shelter for countless species, including Grizzly Bears and black bears, water fowl, furbearers ungulates, butterflies, and a whole other plant world. In the rivers of these valley bottoms the bull trout and rainbow trout share their habitat with the salmon – sockeye, coho and Chinook. This natural place – remote, wild and endlessly green – refreshes your soul and cleanses your inner spirit.

Ecotours – BC is a grass roots outdoor adventure guide service offering extraordinary wilderness experiences. Our specialty is grizzly bear watching and wildlife viewing. Situated in the heart of one of the most unique and diverse areas on earth, the Quesnel Lake watershed has it's own unique micro-climatic zone on the western slopes of the Cariboo Mountains. Experience it first hand with

experienced knowledgeable guides including local experts, people recognized nationally in their fields of expertise whether it be entomology, botany, biology, bryology and ornithology. Whether you come for the sheer pleasure of observing nature and life in this unique ecosystem, or whether you are a novice or amateur naturalist or a research expert, you will find much to challenge your interests when you join us on an ecotour in the Cariboo Mountains.

The Cariboo Mountains watershed area includes a unique cross section of biogeoclimatic zones, which make it a rare and interesting nature study. The region runs the gamut from Old Growth interior cedar – hemlock to Engelmann spruce – subalpine forests, and including northern spruce, willow and birch of the subalpine zones and alpine tundra of the high mountains. This results in

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a very mixed climate ranging from cool, wet winters, and summers which are generally warm and dry, to long, cold winters and short, cool, growing seasons in portions of the area. Consequently this cross section also creates an unusually productive area for plant and animal life. It makes the wetlands a particularly rich staging area and home habitat for a varied and numerous bird population. This area also is rich in history. It is the heart of the 1860's Cariboo Gold Rush and there are many authentic and interesting historical sites remaining from the gold rush days.

## **Meet the Cariboo Mountains "Bear Whisperer"!**

Gary Zorn has a passion for the big bears – the grizzlies. With Gary you will meet the Cariboo Mountains grizzly bears in their wild natural habitat. Gary has devoted his life studying the social hierarchy, habits, habitat and body language of these creatures while communing with them on their turf. Grizzlies, one of the largest predatory and most solitary species with their razor sharp claws, big demeanor, tell-tale hump over the shoulder and dished nose are unmistakable - the undisputed signature species of the Canadian wilderness. From the wetlands to the alpine travel the trails of these great animals with Gary. He knows the bears here intimately from their unique habits, temperaments, family units and colorings. While amongst the grizzlies, Gary thinks like a bear. As he communicates with the bears he speaks in a soft monotone, and filled with his special brand of humour, he conveys calmness but can also convey a stern command – “Hey, bear, how’s the fishin’?”. “Enough bear, back off now”. These bears are wild, free and unhabituated. With over 30 years experience Gary maintains a constant and vigilant respect for the bears. His most often repeated advice in bear viewing – “Grizzly Bears are wild animals. Remain calm. Never run from a bear.” High safety standards ensure guests enjoy this unique experience and see some of Canada’s premier wildlife in close proximity, ideal for photography and just experiencing nature in the raw. Whether you are viewing the bears on the rivers by jetboat going about their daily business and enjoying a salmon feast or feeding on Solomon seals (*Polygonatum multiflorum*) and grasses in the high mountain valleys, it is an experience you will remember and treasure forever.

Observe the “cycle of life” as the clear glacial waters of the Mitchell River run red with the returning sockeye salmon. One of the life’s blood rivers of the Quesnel Lake watershed and one of the major salmon producing rivers in the province, the habitat it provides is shared by the resident trout and the salmon. The salmon return from the Pacific Ocean through the Fraser River system and the Quesnel River into the watershed. They make their way to the Mitchell River where they spawn and complete their life cycle. As the salmon return the Grizzly bears also return to the river. This adventure provides exceptional grizzly bear watching and photography opportunities as the bears feast on salmon and ready themselves for their winter hibernation. Along with the grizzlies the river is lined with eagles, bald and golden, also feasting on the salmon carcasses. This exquisite river ecosystem provides a unique study opportunity for naturalists and photographers.

The Cariboo River originates among the mountain peaks and glaciers in Cariboo Mountains Park. The glacial waters follow a rugged path of waterfalls and rapids through steep boulder strewn canyons, Cariboo River Park, and Cariboo Lake to its confluence with Quesnel River. The Cariboo River is spectacularly beautiful from its amazing crystal blue-green churning waters through the wild wilderness to where it meets the Quesnel River at the historic gold rush ghost town of Quesnel Forks. This river hosts the largest bodied Chinook (King) Salmon run in the interior of British Columbia making it a “grizzly bear buffet”. It is an amazing sight to see these big King Salmon, that often exceed 60 pounds, attempting to jump the waterfalls to return to their spawning grounds. The Cariboo’s long runs and deep pools are ideal habitat for it’s big bull trout and rainbows. It also provides critical habitat for wildlife, especially moose, grizzly bears and waterfowl.

As you watch the cycle of the salmon and the antics of the native wildlife you are likely to see many species of birds including ducks, geese, blue herons, trumpeter swans, dippers (water ouesels), whiskey jacks (gray jays), sapsuckers, woodpeckers, grouse, swifts and many more. Native wildlife in the area includes the mountain grizzlies, mountain goats, mountain caribou, mule deer, moose, black bears, and a host of smaller furbearers such as otters, beavers, pine martens, chipmunks, squirrels and more. Don’t miss this natural history adventure. This is one of the few places on earth where this cycle of life remains in tact in the wild – untamed and undisturbed.

All the seasons in the Cariboo Mountains are spectacular in their mountain beauty. The splendor of autumn is particularly magical and enchanting as the withdrawal of summer heralds the coming of autumn with its crisp cool mornings, warm sunlit days and spectacular fall colors. Picture yourself on the shore of Quesnel Lake, the deepest fjord lake on earth, with the sun rising over the snowcapped mountain peaks to illuminate the brilliantly colored yellows, oranges and reds mixed in with the shades of green of the surrounding forests. The crisp, lightly frosted morning comes alive with the sounds of nature and woodland life surrounded by magnificent snowcapped mountains, old growth forests with trees over 1000 years old, wildlife, birds, unique eco-systems, and outstanding beauty. Ecotours-BC has many unforgettable scenes like this.

Come and join Gary and Ecotours – BC for this unique experience. Hear his engaging and often humorous bear stories and learn about these magnificent animals from his knowledge and experience in the world of the great bears. A truly Canadian wilderness adventure this is not just a grizzly bear viewing trip. It’s a pure intimate experience with nature – one that has the power to enlighten and redefine one’s inner self.

### **Why Ecotours-BC?**

We are often asked what is unique about our tours. The pure intrinsic value of tours with Ecotours-BC lies in your total immersion and connection with nature. A tour with Ecotours-BC connects you with wild creatures in their natural habitat in ways you have never known. We put you on the inside of the forest - seeing with the eyes of the forest – and

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you become one with nature and the wild creatures. It is a pure natural nature connection. It's pure joy. And when you look back at the pictures you have taken its not just a picture of a bear or a moose or a bird or a mountain peak, its an experience that brings back the complete lifetime memory of the adventure and maybe even a life changing moment.

**Note:** Our lodge offers a comfortable retreat for your wilderness bear/wildlife viewing excursion. We recommend you allow a minimum of at least 2 days (3 or more is better) so that you have the best opportunities to view the bears and wildlife and immerse yourself in the natural environment. We request that you arrive at the lodge the evening before your tour begins for an orientation session and also because of our early morning starts. Guests also need to ensure they are prepared for all types of weather with warm clothing, full rain gear – pants and jacket - and waterproof footwear. Please let us know of any special dietary requirements, physical impediments or medical conditions we should be aware of at time of booking.

**Packages Include:** Accommodations, meals, guides, necessary motorized equipment (boats, motors, vehicles), orientation and interpretive information, house wine or beer with dinner. Depending on the trip chosen guests need to bring camera (preferably with a telephoto lens), memory cards/film, a good pair of binoculars, proper footwear, backpack, day pack sack, hat, rain gear, gloves, clothing that can be layered – fleece is best, personal toiletries.

**Not Included:** International airfares, staff appreciation gratuities, liquor, applicable Canadian taxes, Wilderness Stewardship Levy, ground transport from/to Williams Lake airport is available. Single supplement is 30%. (Recommended gratuities for staff – 10% of package cost.)

**Payment & Cancellation Policy:** Bookings are confirmed with a 50% deposit with the balance due 60 days prior to arrival. In the event of cancellation 60 days prior to your scheduled arrival, and we can rebook your reserved space, the deposit can be applied for an alternative date. All payments are final and nonrefundable. Payments may be made by bank transfer or personal cheque. Prices are subject to change without notice. Bookings confirmed with a deposit are guaranteed.

**Notes:** Ecotours – BC reserves the right to cancel or modify services as weather and local conditions warrant without notification in the interest of safety of all concerned. We view wild animals in their natural habitat. The animals are totally wild and unhabituated. This is natural wildlife viewing of animals in their natural habitat. There are no viewing platforms, we do not bait, and the animals are not enclosed in any wildlife preserve. With natural wildlife viewing there are a number of variables that are out of our control including weather conditions, natural instincts and movements of the wildlife, and human capabilities. We do not guarantee wildlife sightings, but do our best to take guests to the optimal locations giving them the best opportunities for viewing wildlife. Guests are required to sign a waiver of liability prior to participation in activities.

**Important Trip Planning Notes** – Being prepared is an important part of maximizing your wilderness adventure experience and making it an unforgettable experience. At the time of booking we provide you with a recommended equipment list to assist you with packing for your tour with us. Please note we do not accept liability for any circumstances which may result in the failure/cancellation of your holiday arrangements which may be due to unusual or unforeseeable circumstances or events beyond our control or that we, our agents, suppliers and associates could have anticipated or avoided. We do not carry health, life, or personal property insurance for guest benefit. As of March 2016 international travelers to Canada require an **Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA)**. Please visit the Government Of Canada Immigration Website for more information - <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp> .

**Insurance:** You will need to purchase trip cancellation insurance as well as extended medical insurance to cover life and health care risks while in Canada, emergency evacuation insurance (please ensure it includes wilderness activities), and personal property insurance to insure your personal belongings against loss/damage. Proof of insurance is required prior to trip commencement.

*Custom packages of longer or shorter duration can be formatted to suit you or your group's itinerary. Please inquire for family/group rates and availability. References available on request.*

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