



Frequently Asked Questions Whale Watching in Victoria BC

Q: Do you really see whales?

A: Yes! We have a 95% success rate of seeing whales throughout the season.

Q: When is the best time of year for watching whales?

A: Our success rates vary throughout the year. Southern Resident Orcas are sighted consistently April through November. Humpbacks have been sighted consistently for the past five years September through January. Gray whales are occasional visitors throughout the year as they transit seasonally. Transient Orcas are sighted all year but are most obvious during winter season when there is an abundance of seals and sea lions to feed on. Most summer days we also know where to find Minke whales. Between November – May we spend time looking for Transient Killer Whales, seals, sea lions & porpoises. We have a 50-75% success rate of finding whales in the winter months.

Q: How close will we get to the whales?

A: We turn off our engines when we're 100 yards away. However, whales will often swim right up to the boat!

Q: What else do you see on the trip?

A: In addition to Minke, Orcas, Humpack and Gray Whales, you may see Harbour Seals, Elephant Seals, Dall's Porpoise, Harbour Porpoise, California Sea Lions, Stellar Sea Lions, Bald Eagles, Common Murres and Cormorants.

Q: What happens if we don't see whales?

A: Remember, we're working with wild animals and they deserve our utmost respect. The best and worst part of working with these animals is that they're wild and unpredictable! We don't guarantee whales or wildlife; it's part of the adventure!

Q: What happens if it is raining?

A: Trips run rain or shine.

Q: What should we wear?

A: Please dress warmly and if you can, wear flat closed-toed shoes. We will be traveling at more than 30 miles per hour so a windbreaker or jacket will help you enjoy the outdoors. On the zodiac vessel trips we will supply passengers with red cruiser suits, hats, gloves, goggles and rain jackets as required.

Q: Can I bring my camera?

A: Yes! Bring your camera and/or video camera. We also recommend that you bring a plastic bag to keep your camera safe and dry during transit. The boat will come to a complete stop for photo opportunities.

Q: How long are the trips?

A: Most Victoria based trips are 2.5 to 3 hours. The Vancouver to Victoria trips are about 4 hours long on the Ocean Magic.

Q: Do we need a reservation?

A: Reservations are highly recommended so that we can offer you the best departure time that fits your busy schedule.

Q: How early should we check in?

A: 30 minutes prior to your scheduled departure time.

Q: What is the cancellation policy?

A: The trip is non-refundable within 24 hours of the trip unless agreed upon in advance with the office staff. Group bookings of 10 or more are 2 weeks non-refundable.

Q: Are there snacks or beverage on board?

A: The Ocean Magic sells packaged snacks and both hot and cold beverages on the boat. You are welcome to bring your own food on board. The zodiac style boats do not offer snacks or beverages.