

# DREAMSCAPES

TRAVEL AND LIFESTYLE

Winter/Spring 2022

## Wellness & ISLANDS I S S U E

**Florida Sun**  
RETREATS

*Hit Reset*

**Clayoquot Sound**  
ESCAPE

**Antigua & Barbuda**  
BEACH TIME





ADVENTURE

*Hear the call of the wild?*

# CLAYOQUOT SOUND BECKONS.

*Luxury goes wild in this  
off-grid wilderness enclave*

// BY BIANCA BUJAN // PHOTOS: CLAYOQUOT WILDERNESS LODGE







**M**y heart races as I wade waist-deep through the glacier-fed waters of Bedwell River. I'm waiting for my guide's queue to cross, and when my turn comes, a small leap into the frothy ice-cold chasm has me in a full breast stroke. My helmet-clad head bobs on the surface as I swim my way to the other side of the rocky precipice. I'm thankful for the full-body wet-suit keeping my core warm as I try to keep my cool—my hesitation hidden behind a nervous smile. We swim across the channel single file, and then climb up a jagged rock cliff to a flat clearing. I pull myself up, and squint as a misty waterfall sparkles into view. It feels as though I've climbed my way into a painting. Below me, a school of salmon swims through crystal-clear water.

### ***Paradise is found***

I'm on a canyoning excursion deep in the heart of Clayoquot Sound, which is a name derived from "Tla-o-qui-aht," the largest community of the Nuu-chah-nulth Indigenous peoples living here since time immemorial. Today, it's a UNESCO-designated Biosphere Reserve located on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The untouched temperate coastal rainforest (composed primarily of ancient western hemlock), and the ocean and rocky shores provide home to a significant number of endemic species. This makes Clayoquot Sound a choice spot for wildlife viewing and outdoor adventures—the ideal backdrop for an off-grid luxury escape.







## SOAK AND SPA

The lodge's Healing Grounds Spa allows you to pause and soak it all in, with a curated collection of signature massages and treatments that can be enjoyed seaside. With a focus on environmental sustainability, spa offerings harness the healing powers of the surrounding nature, incorporating local Pacific seaweed and Canadian glacial clay into its unique treatments. Warm up and restore your energy with a languid soak in a large, cedar barrel hot tub while watching the moody fog float away, revealing majestic mountaintops on the horizon.



## Secluded Escape

A stay at Clayoquot Wilderness Lodge—a remote, luxury Baillie Lodges property accessed only by private seaplane or boat—is the only way to access this untouched landscape; and as a guest, canyoning is just one of the nature-immersive experiences included in my stay. The day's four-hour journey involves paddleboarding along a picturesque river channel, then climbing, swimming and leaping our way up the canyons, valleys and waterways that run into Clayoquot Sound. At the top, we snorkel and swim amongst a spectacle of salmon that gather at the base of a waterfall. The trek back down is equally as exhilarating, a must-try cliff jump the highlight of it all.

## Wild Adventures

Like a high-end summer camp for adults, this wilderness escape encourages connection—with others, with nature, and in my case, with myself. Once afraid of horses, I surprisingly feel at ease as I ride horseback confidently through rivers with a group of newfound friends encouraging my every trot. I connect with nature in other ways too. Thanks to tailor-made signature experiences you can take a wildlife-viewing zodiac tour through the Sound; hike the Ursus Valley and trek through old-growth forest and lush fern gardens; even kayak through intertidal waterways at this island playground.

## Sustainable Safari-style Slumber

A meander along a maze of wooden boardwalks takes me to my private guest quarters: a sustainable luxury safari-style tent perched at the river's edge tucked away in the rainforest. Inside, contemporary furnishings commissioned from local designers complement the natural surroundings, and each of the 25 tents at the bespoke rustic lodge is equipped with traditional bentwood boxes created by local Indigenous artists available for purchase should I want to take one home as a special keepsake.

As night falls and the temperatures dip, the tented space is kept warm by a woodstove, and a king-size bed dressed with organic linens and plump pillows promises a good night's sleep after my full day of adventure. An adjoining bathroom offers double sinks and heated floors, and a private, outdoor cedar shower allows me to bare all and bask in the surrounding old-growth forest while soaking my sore muscles in complete serenity.

The call of the wild had beckoned me to this backwoods escape, where I was pushed outside of my comfort zone and challenged mentally and physically. Through it all I discovered a newfound love and appreciation for the wilderness, learning more about nature—and myself. Before, I would have feared the thought of sleeping in a tent in the wilderness, but now, the silent wilderness lulls me to sleep. **DS**



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## TRAVEL PLANNER

The season runs from May 12–September 25, 2022. For reservations and more details, visit [clayoquotwildernesslodge.com](http://clayoquotwildernesslodge.com)