

Kate & Jim's Travels with Charles

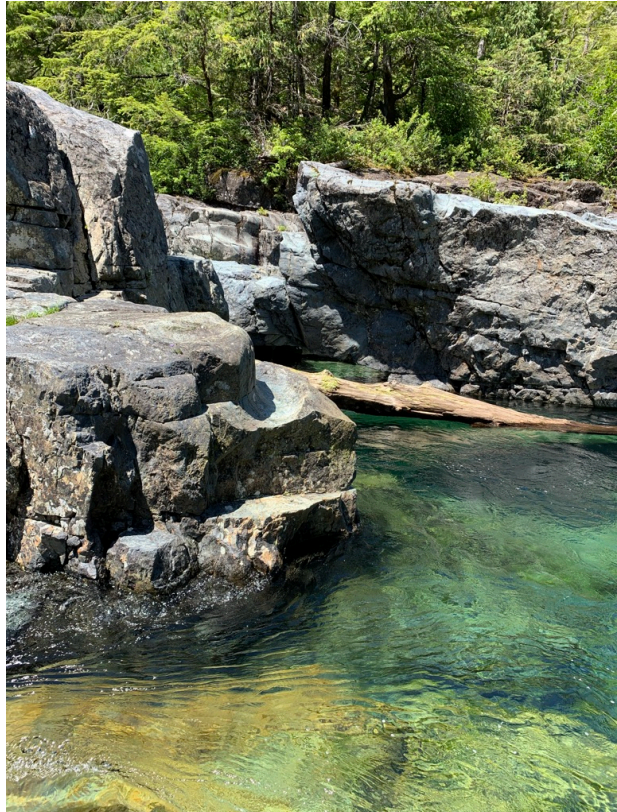
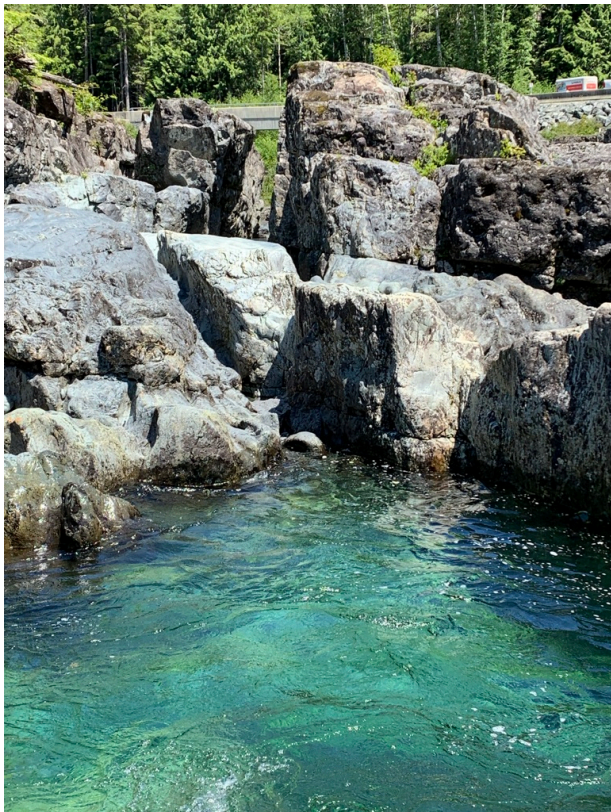
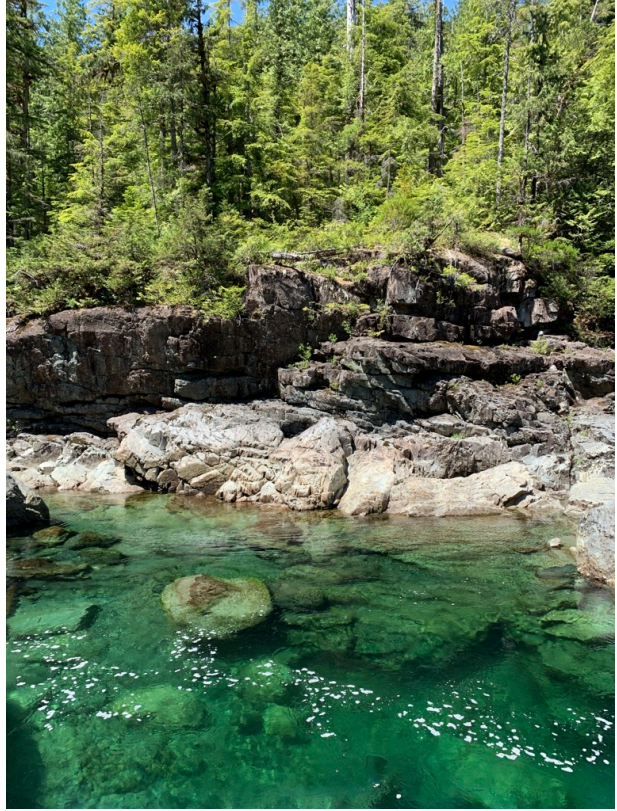
Episode #3: To Ucluelet and Back

From Chemainus, we set out for Ucluelet on the west side of Vancouver Island, which Siri on our GPS couldn't understand because "she" pronounced it as though it rhymed with "succulent".

It's not a long drive, but we knew there would be stops along the way – some of our own choosing and some not.

Two years ago, when we did this drive, we passed a spot that had no signs indicating there was anything interesting to see, but we couldn't believe how amazing it was. The sign nearby calls it Wally's Creek, but it's part of the Kennedy River system, and it's one of the most spectacular spots we've visited. Of course, we had to stop again. Here's why:





Definitely one of our happy places, so we had to stop again. We still don't understand why it isn't on any maps or guide books. I mean, honestly, wouldn't you stop here?





During our last trip, we also discovered that there was a huge construction project on the road through the mountains, called the Kennedy Hill Upgrade. So we knew we would have to stop for an unpredictable amount of time.



On the way out, it was about 20 minutes, on the way back it was nearly an hour. But when you see how massive the job is, you understand the long wait. Clearly everyone else knew too, and everyone was quite patient.

And through it all, our intrepid driver kept a firm hand on the wheel.



We had never been to Ucluelet before, and we found a nice campsite in town, right by the harbour which worked quite well for us. There were a number of interesting shops and restaurants, and we did our part to support the local economy.





And when we found a sign that epitomized our attitude toward life, of course we had to have it.



One of the reasons to be in Ucluelet was that it's close to Long Beach, one of Jim's favourite spots. It was wild and windy, but beautiful as ever.





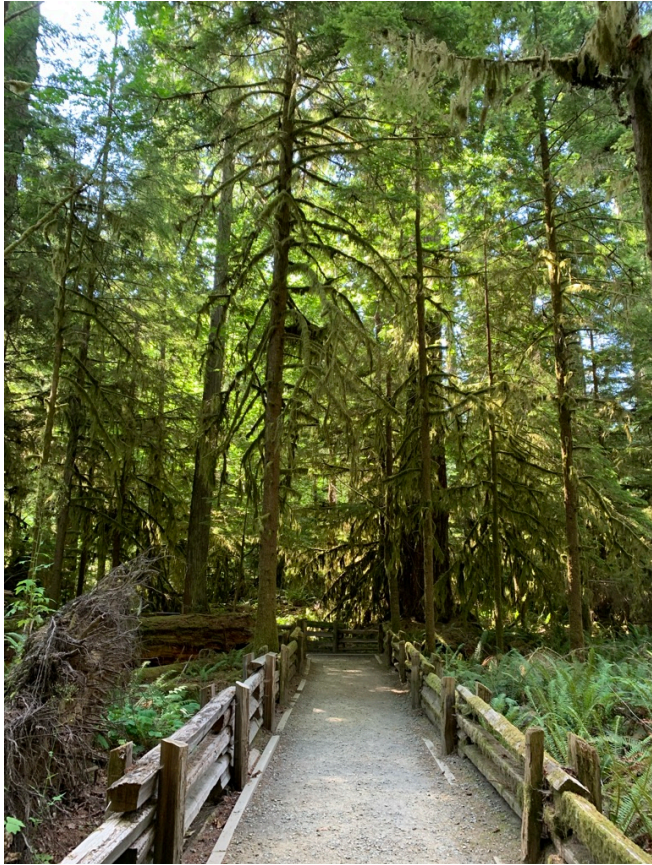


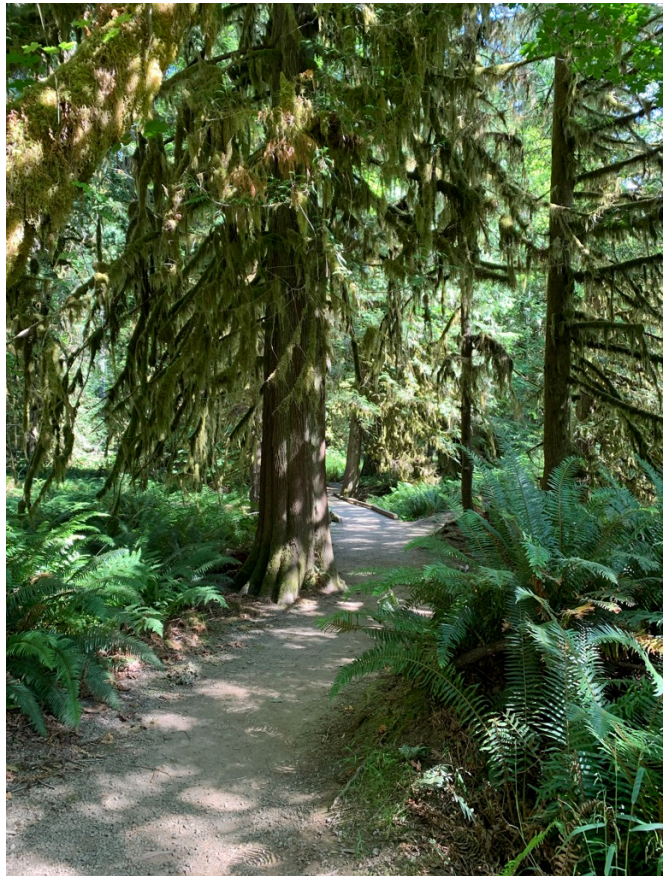
Another spectacular stop on that route is Cathedral Grove, an old growth forest, with trees between 300 and 800 years old.

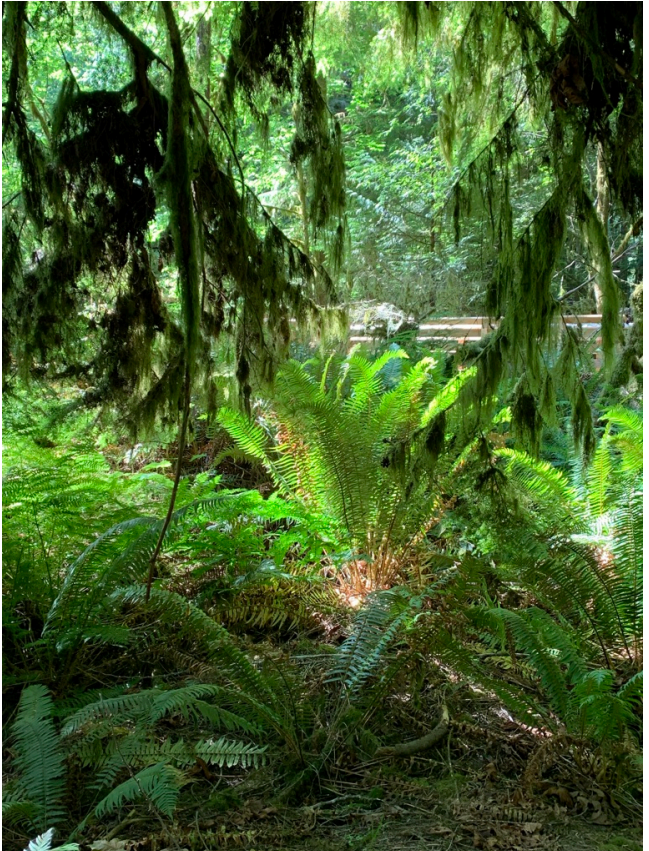
Walking through there is kind of like going to church. It's breathtaking and awe inspiring and majestic and so peaceful you can feel your heart rate relaxing with each step.

Pardon me for being incapable of editing these photos. They're all too beautiful.









During the years Jim and I have been together, we've gone on numerous driving trips and have always talked about what it would be like to have our own RV so we could stop anywhere we wanted. If we saw a beautiful spot by a river or near the ocean, we'd just park there and, write or just enjoy the beauty of the place, and if we were allowed to, we'd stay overnight. Using our handy dandy iOverlander app, we found an incredible free camping spot near Cathedral Grove, right beside the river. It was exactly what we'd dreamed of. And it was idyllic.



Talk about living the dream...



