

Kate & Jim's Travels with Charles

Episode #7: Earl's Cove, Princess Louisa Inlet, Chatterbox Falls and Joni Mitchell's Fave Hangout

We asked our new friends in Powell River, Roy & Shelly, what sights we should check out on our way down the Sunshine Coast. They gave us two suggestions. One was Skookumchuck Rapids, which we had also heard about from our friends on Salt Spring Island. It sounded great and we really wanted to go. We were totally prepared to do the one-hour hike to get there and the one-hour hike to get back ... until the morning when we were supposed to do it. And then, it just didn't happen. Ah well, maybe next time.

But the other recommendation Rob and Shelly had was to take the boat tour to Princess Louisa Inlet and Chatterbox Falls. They said they'd heard it was great and had always wanted to try it. We felt an obligation to check it out for them and let them know if they should make the trip themselves. We felt compelled to do the research.

After saying goodbye to Powell River, we headed south on the Sunshine Coast. You can't drive very far before you have to take a ferry. So we got in line at Saltery Bay and enjoyed the 50-minute ferry ride to Earl's Cove.



We had booked two nights in the Timberline RV Park, which was quite pleasant, with a very congenial and helpful host, Richard Quilty. He not only helped us out with levelling our van but also offered up some helpful suggestions about the area.



A walk on the grounds proved quite interesting as well.



The next day, we drove to Back Eddy Marina and met our skipper Bryce, who took a group of us for the 5-hour tour of Princess Louisa Inlet. The day started off cloudy, but the views were still spectacular.



Bryce took us in close to get a look at the terrain and he told us about the kind of animal and plant life it supported.



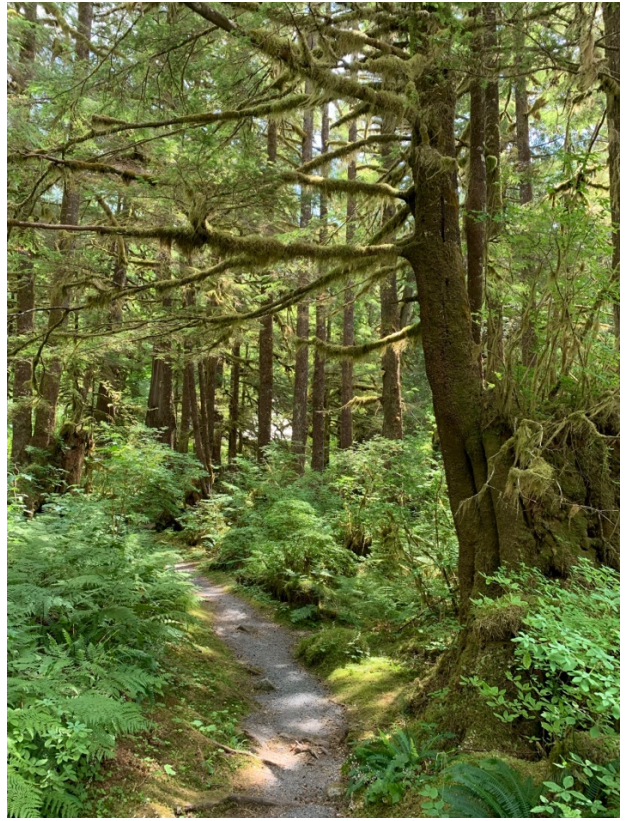
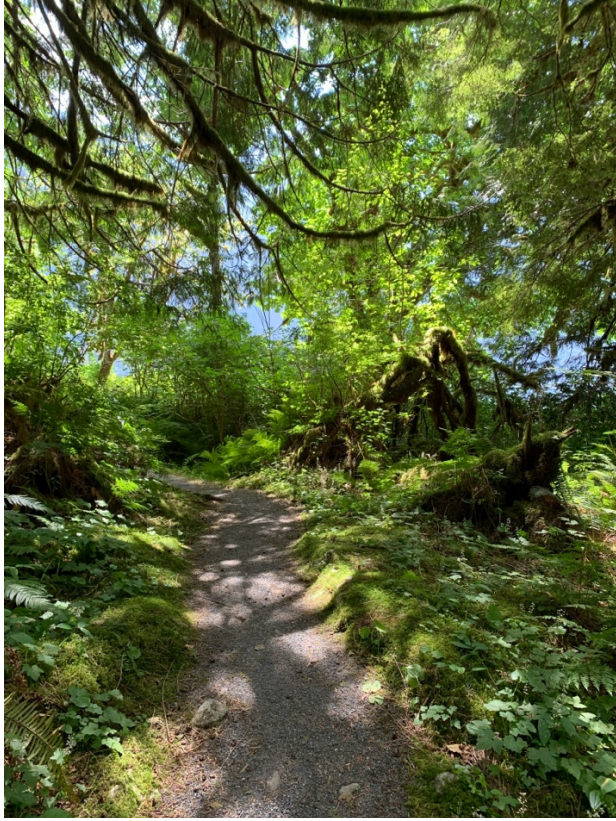
He also passed along a lot of information about the history, lifestyle and traditions of the Sechelt people. If you look closely in the upper right portion of this photo, you can make out a reddish pictograph which purportedly represents a salmon chasing a whale. There are several of these pictographs along the way, and nobody knows how old they are.

It was an informative and beautiful trip. Eventually, the clouds lifted, and the views got even better.



The highlight of the tour was Chatterbox Falls, at the end of the inlet. After viewing it from a distance on our boat, we docked and had an hour or so to explore the falls up close. We also had time to eat our lunch, which we brought along with us.





The walk up to the falls was beautiful and lush. And videographer Jim had some opportunities to get more footage for his next water & music video.



Though certainly not the highest waterfall, Chatterbox Falls was exhilarating and gorgeous. You may notice that some of the photos appear a little fuzzy. That's not because they're out of focus – it's because of the mist from the falls. When you were close, it felt almost like getting a facial.







Although the ride back was exactly the same route, it was no less exciting. The views were different because the light was different. And because we'd already heard the stories and seen the highlights, Bryce gunned it. There was a long stretch of narrows where the water was very rough. As we bounced over the choppy waves, I kept an eye on the step counter on my phone, and it recorded us doing about 8,000 steps while we were sitting on the boat! Bonus!



So, Roy and Shelly, in Powell River, if you're reading this, thanks for the recommendation. And yes, based on our research, you should definitely try it!

That evening, we followed up on another recommendation to eat at the Ruby Lake Resort. It's a beautiful spot and is purportedly Joni Mitchell's favourite dining destination (she apparently has a place in the area). She didn't show up, but we had a fine time in the beautiful setting anyway.





Across from the restaurant, on the way to our campsite, we caught this breathtaking scene. The perfect end to a fantastic day.

