

Spirit Bear Lodge: Woven into the Community

Incredibly rare with anywhere between 100 and 500 of its kind in the entire world, the elusive Kermode or Spirit Bear is a powerful draw for tourists to BC—but bear-watching is just one of many ways Spirit Bear Lodge has helped to shape the surrounding community of Klemtu into a globally recognized travel destination.

Situated in the heart of Kitasoo/Xai'xais territory, Spirit Bear Lodge provides a rare and coveted experience: an immersive getaway deep in the mystical Great Bear Rainforest. Visitors are treated to a holistic Indigenous experience, ranging from thoughtful culinary programming starring traditional ingredients like seaweed and sea urchin to engaging cultural excursions by land and sea. Lodge staff—comprising nearly 10 per cent of the Klemtu population—lead guests through ancient territory to old village sites and the auspicious Big House, and past culturally modified trees (CMTs) preserved over centuries.

Opened in 2003, the lodge not only provides much-needed accommodations for visitors to the region, but has also

helped to strengthen the economic and cultural wellbeing of Klemtu. In addition to offering seasonal and year-round employment, the property provides Indigenous youth with the opportunity to

share stories and stage performances showcasing their heritage to visitors. Skippers who have grown up on the region's waterways are hired to lead boat tours, regaling guests with stories of their childhood. Each year, the lodge hosts an excursion for local schoolchildren so they can explore the territory and learn about their heritage.

One of few tourism businesses that is so completely woven into the community, Spirit Bear Lodge is equally distinguished by its coveted location. Situated close to magnificent rivers and estuaries, the property offers complete immersion in the Great Bear Rainforest, inviting visitors to touch, smell, and listen in an environment shared with the mysterious Spirit Bears who also call the rainforest home.

Indeed, part of the reason visitors flock to Spirit Bear Lodge is because of how completely removed it is from everyday life.



The property has 12 rooms, contributing to an intimate and personalized experience that allows staff to connect more deeply with their guests. Currently, three packages are offered, including the summertime Rainforest Recharge. The all-encompassing journey includes a guided hike through lush foliage, lunch on a secluded beach, bear-watching in the estuaries, canoeing or kayaking, and a wealth of additional adventures designed to integrate guests as deeply as possible with their surroundings. In summer 2020, the lodge will host a dedicated family weekend, where parents and their children can learn about local animals while cultivating an appreciation of ancient cultures; and a 'Search, Learn, Discover' week, inviting wildlife experts to the property to share their passions with visitors.

Spirit Bear Lodge is a tourism business just as rare as the animals it is named for: one whose success has also fostered the success of its home; whose goals of education and preservation are just as important as bookings and bottom line; and whose loyalty to its people is a powerful example of why **#BCTourismMatters.**



SPIRIT BEAR LODGE