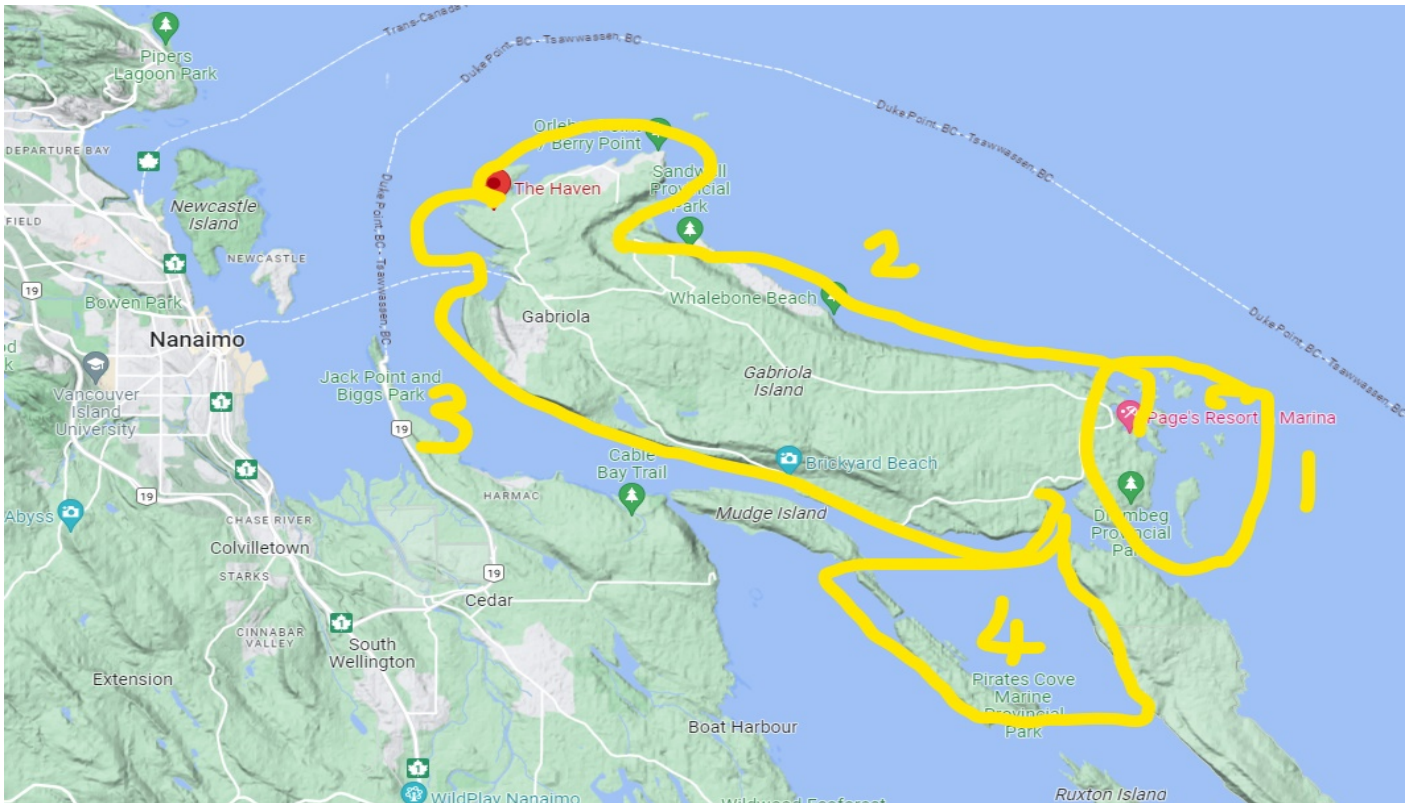


## Gabriola Island Trip.

Version 4 July 2023

On Monday 19 June, nine kayakers drove to Gabriola Island and most stayed six nights in The Haven resort while others camped, stayed in their RVs or with friends. Over four days we kayaked the entire area. Our first paddle was around the Flattop Islands in Silva Bay – 7 nm. The second was along the north coast from Silva Bay to Taylor Bay – 10 nm. Then we took a day off to explore the Island's galleries, farms, cafés and petroglyphs. On the third paddle we went from Taylor Bay to Degnen Bay, transiting False Narrows (between Mudge and Gabriola) at the last of the ebb – 11 nm. And our fourth paddle was to admire the stunning tafoni rock formations on the west sides of Link, de Courcy and Valdez – 11 nm.



Paddle #1: Flattop Islands in Silva Bay. Paddle #2: North coast of Gabriola Isl From Silva Bay to The Haven resort in Taylor Bay. Paddle #3: West & South coast of Gabriola Isl from Taylor bay to Degnen Bay. Paddle #4: From Degnen Bay to west coasts of Link & de Courcy and across to the west of Valdez, and back to Degnen Bay.

**Trip Planning:** The trip was organized to coincide with a morning ebb leading to slack to Dodd Narrows around 1400 on the day we transited False Narrows (current timings are the same as Dodd, but current is half). Fortunately, winds and waves were favourable for us on all our paddles. The excellent 24 page Gabriola Visitor Guide was very helpful in planning our shore side activities.

**The Haven Resort:** The Haven is a 7 acre waterfront, three star resort on Taylor Bay with accommodations for up to around 100 people in diverse suites, cabins, cottages and dormitories. It caters mainly to large groups on wellness and meditation retreats. It also has a hot tub and pool. We made our bookings almost 10 months ahead so were able to secure preferred accommodation. Each person made their own booking and meal arrangements. [www.haven.ca](http://www.haven.ca)





### The Haven Resort

**Monday 19 June:** We drove from Victoria to Gabriola Island and checked into The Haven resort in Taylor Bay. The Gabriola Ferry leaves from downtown Nanaimo about every 35 minutes, except during lunch period. It cannot be reserved. We met at the resort at 5PM to plan out the next day's paddle.

**Tuesday 20 June:** We all drove to Pages Marina and paddled around the Flat Top Islands near Silva Bay. We enjoyed the abundant tafoni rock formations there. We left our kayaks (the marina manager was not happy) and returned to The Haven.



Left to Right: Vic, Julie, Allison, Barbara, Debbie, Dorothea, Susan & Jim. Photo by Norm



**Wednesday 21 June:** Using just a few cars we drove to Silva Bay, and paddled the north shore of Gabriola Island to Taylor Bay and stayed again at the Haven Resort. The first few miles we passed high cliffs with scattered tafoni, birds and sea life. Then nice sandy beaches appeared for snack stops and lunch. It was calm all day, other than being lumpy rounding Orlebar Pt near Entrance Island. We found decent places to land in the flat rocks at our Haven resort so could leave our kayaks on the property. We then retrieved the cars left at Silva Bay.



**Thursday 22 June:** We took a day off kayaking to relax, visit Malaspina Galleries, and explore the island's art outlets, shops, cafes and pubs. A must-see were the faded petroglyphs not far from Degnen Bay. Late in the day we moved two vehicles from The Haven to Degnen Bay.



Malaspina Galleries



Petroglyphs

**Friday 23 June:** We paddled along west and south shore of Gabriola Isl to Degnen Bay. We had a mild ebb going through False Narrows (between Mudge and Gabriola). We left our kayaks in Degnen Bay on private property (with permission) near the Gray Road boat ramp and, using our prepositioned cars, returned to The Haven.



Tafoni in cliff face



Valdez Island Cliffs

**Saturday 24 June:** We drove all our cars to Degnen Bay and paddled along the west sides of Link and De Courcy Islands, lunched in a protected beach near Pirates Cove Park, and then crossed over north of Ruxton Island to the stunning cliffs at Valdez Island. It took over an hour to noodle along this amazing cliff face. We eventually got back to Degnen Bay, loaded our kayaks and returned to The Haven Resort for our last supper.

**Sunday 25 June:** After a leisurely breakfast, we all departed and headed for home. A great trip!