

# IFR

IN•FLIGHT REVIEW

*Helijet*

# 6 Classic Boat Tours

**ESCAPE,  
RELAX AND  
CONNECT TO  
B.C.'S WILD  
SIDE** | PAGE 12

**ONWARDS & UPWARDS**  
Charting a new course at  
Helijet | PAGE 04

**SUMMER CONCERTS  
SCENE** | PAGE 08

**THE SCOOP ON  
SCOOPS** | PAGE 14



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SUMMER 2022

**IFR**  
IN-FLIGHT REVIEW

**Helijet**

## In-Flight Review Magazine

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### Published by

Archipelago Media  
1248 Woodway Road  
Victoria BC V9A 6Y6  
Tel 250.380.3961  
[archipelagomedia.com](http://archipelagomedia.com)

Complimentary Copy

ISSN 1916-5080

In-Flight Review

SUMMER 2022 Vol. 15 No. 2

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### COVER PHOTO

The Maple Leaf, a 92-foot schooner, tours B.C.'s coastline. Photo: Maple Leaf Adventures, Greg Shea

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## EDITORIAL



**Melissa Tomkiel**  
President,  
Blade Urban Air  
Mobility Inc.

# Onwards & Upwards

ON DECEMBER 2, 2021, Richmond-based Helijet International ("Helijet") and Blade Urban Air Mobility ("Blade") of New York entered into an agreement for the sale of exclusive rights for the booking of flights on Helijet's scheduled service routes. In doing so, both organizations charted a new course together — one that will alter the nature of air travel in the Pacific Northwest.

Blade is a technology-powered, global urban air mobility platform committed to reducing travel friction by enabling cost-effective air transportation





Photo credit: Blade Urban Air Mobility, LLC.

alternatives to some of the most congested ground routes in North America and abroad. No company flies more people in and out of city centers than Blade.

Naturally, we saw a perfect fit in partnering with Helijet, North America's largest scheduled commuter helicopter service. Over 35 years Helijet has built a reputation for safe and reliable service, flying up to 100,000 passengers each year. They are second to none in the industry in terms of aircraft maintenance reliability, pilot training standards and customer service. We can build on that by overlaying Blade's brand and technologies.

So, how will this affect Helijet and its passenger clientele?

Blade's first priority is to work with Helijet to fully recover from the disruption caused by COVID since March 2020. We want to do that as quickly as we can so we can embark on expansion plans, which includes the introduction of new aircraft into scheduled and charter operations, as well as new routes in the Pacific Northwest's Cascadia Corridor. Specifically, we're looking at launching scheduled helicopter service between Vancouver and Seattle in the near future.

Moreover, we intend to enhance Helijet's customer

*A Midsummer Night's Dream*  
 Sarah Roa (Puck)  
 Photo: Emily Cooper

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# There's No Place Like Home



**CHERYL FRASER**

| Helijet Admin

TODAY'S TIGHT labour market is remarkable to anyone over the age of 35. Good paying jobs abound, while the concept of minimum wage seems rather quaint.

Cheryl Fraser had a different experience when she entered the workforce in the early '80s, working part-time while going to high school. After graduation she worked at several low-paying jobs before settling on a full-time position as a receptionist with Helijet in 1993.

"Not much has changed, except we don't use typewriters anymore!" Cheryl says with a laugh. "That seems so dinosaur now."

Helijet was a small company at the time, requiring employees like Cheryl to wear several hats. When she wasn't working reception she was busy in Accounts Payables or HR. In recent years she has also lent her administrative talent to the Stores Department, which is responsible for procuring all the parts necessary to keep Helijet's aircraft fleet operating.

In August 2010 Cheryl briefly left Helijet to tend to a family matter. The job market at the time was bleak, so she was relieved to get a call a few months later from Danny Sitnam, Helijet's President & CEO, asking her to return.

"It was a scary time," she recalls. "The economy was shaky and jobs were scarce. My length of service with Helijet is what allowed me to step back into a job where I felt comfortable, surrounded by supportive people." She adds, "So many times my 'work family' has stepped up to help me when I needed it most."

When asked what advice she would give herself 30 years ago, Cheryl doesn't hesitate: "Get an education; don't marry young; and make a career with a company that looks out for its people." 📌



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# Summer Concert Scene

**Live music events abound this summer with concert dates for every musical taste.**

Rogers Arena will rock all summer long with some of the world's biggest headliners. Fresh from playing Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, **Rod Stewart** will head to Vancouver with special guest **Cheap Trick** on June 10. Canadian singer-songwriter **Shawn Mendes** will take the stage July 2, followed by **The Lumineers** on July 17, and **John Fogerty** on July 24. August kicks off with **Maroon 5** playing on the first of the month and ends with **Alicia Keys** playing August 29. **The Backstreet Boys** will make their Vancouver tour stop on August 24. (rogersarena.com)



The **Weeknd's** After Hours til Dawn stadium tour with **Doja Cat** is coming to BC Place on August 23 followed by **Def Leppard** and **Mötley Crüe** with **Poison** and **Joan Jett & the Blackhearts** on September 2. (bcplace.com)

It's a double-header at UBC's Doug Mitchell Thunderbird Sports Centre with **HAIM** playing June 10 followed the next night by **5 Seconds of Summer** on June 11. (thunderbirdarena.ubc.ca)

Port Theatre in Nanaimo will host three beloved Canadian performers: **54-40** will celebrate 40 years of recording on June 6, **Jann Arden** will take the stage June 21 and classic rock band **Chilliwack** will delight fans on June 29. (porttheatre.com)



Kids and kids at heart won't want to miss **Fred Penner** as he performs at the McPherson Playhouse in Victoria on June 18 and Grammy Award-winning singer/songwriter **Jason Mraz** will appear on the Royal Theatre stage July 13. (rmts.bc.ca)



Photo credit: Jay Minter

Join Helijet's LGBTQ2S+ Ambassador, Mina Mercury, at Vancouver and Victoria Pride events this summer.

## PRIDE

**JUNE 23 – JULY 2: VICTORIA**

**JULY 31: VANCOUVER**

More colourful and vibrant than ever, Pride events in both Victoria and Vancouver promise a 2022 celebration like no other. Bring your costumed canine to Victoria's Big Gay Dog Walk on June 24, watch (or play in!) the Memorial Drag Ball Game on July 1 or let your rainbow flag fly at the Pride parades taking place June 26 in Victoria and July 31 in Vancouver.

[victoriapridesociety.org](http://victoriapridesociety.org) / [vancouverpride.ca](http://vancouverpride.ca)

## KINKY BOOTS

**JUNE 9 – JULY 31: VANCOUVER**

Presented this summer on the Stanley Industrial Stage, this joyous Tony Award-winning show features music and lyrics by pop icon Cyndi Lauper. Based on a true story, *Kinky Boots* tells the tale of Charlie Price, an aspiring young businessman struggling to save his late father's bankrupt shoe factory. As luck would have it, an unexpected encounter with drag queen Lola inspires a new kind of business model: creating "women's boots for women who are men." It's an unlikely partnership and a heart-warming tale. [artsculb.com](http://artsculb.com)

## RUSSELL PETERS: ACT YOUR AGE WORLD TOUR

**JUNE 22: VICTORIA & JUNE 23: VANCOUVER**

After four years away, Toronto-born stand-up comedian Russell Peters is returning to his native land with his latest world tour. See the Netflix star live and in person at Save-On-Foods Memorial Centre in Victoria or at Rogers Arena in Vancouver.

[russellpeters.com](http://russellpeters.com)



## CIRQUE DU SOLEIL'S OVO

JUNE 16-19: VICTORIA

The high-flying acrobatics of Cirque du Soleil buzz into Victoria's Save-On-Foods Memorial Centre this summer for *OVO*, a colourful insect-themed production teeming with amazing ants, flexible dragonflies, silky spiders and crazy crickets.

[cirquedusoleil.com](http://cirquedusoleil.com)

## CLASSIC COUNTRY ROADS

JUNE 17 - AUGUST 21: CHEMAINUS

This old-timey, comedic revue pays tribute to country music's greatest hits and classic icons, from bluegrass innovators to Rockabilly legends to all-stars of the Grand Ole Opry. [chemainustheatrefestival.ca](http://chemainustheatrefestival.ca)



Photo & Image Design: Emily Cooper

## BARD ON THE BEACH

JUNE 8 - SEPTEMBER 24: VANCOUVER

Is there any other way to watch Shakespeare than at Vancouver's iconic Bard on the Beach? We don't think so. This summer, Bard presents both Shakespeare's comic masterpiece *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and tragic tale *Romeo and Juliet*. Also on stage, the Governor General Award-winning drama *Harlem Duet* with characters inspired by Shakespeare's *Othello*. [bardonthebeach.org](http://bardonthebeach.org)

## RIFFLANDIA FESTIVAL

SEPTEMBER 15-18: VICTORIA

Mark your calendars: Rifflandia Festival returns to the Capital City this September with an impressive line-up of top-notch acts. Lorde, Charli XCX, Cypress Hill, Black Pumas, Lauv, Ben Harper, DJ Diesel (a.k.a. Shaquille O'Neal) and many more will perform alongside exciting new and emerging artists during this three-day festival. [rifflandia.com](http://rifflandia.com)

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STORY BY TRACY SMITH

## ESCAPE, RELAX AND CONNECT TO B.C.'S WILD SIDE

*Restored ocean vessels steeped in history paired with expert guides make these summer boat tours the ideal way to explore the pristine wilderness of B.C.'s wild west coast. Your trip aboard these legendary classic vessels begins where the road ends, venturing to magical regions of stunning beauty and immense biodiversity.*

1

### Outer Shores Expeditions & Outer Shores Lodge

INTIMATE EXPEDITIONS FOCUSED ON  
EDUCATION, CONSERVATION &  
SUSTAINABILITY

**The Vessel:** Step aboard *Passing Cloud*, a 21-metre classic wooden schooner designed by William James Roué, architect of the legendary *Bluenose*. “You can feel her incredible history, authenticity and calm confidence,” says Russell Markel, founder of Outer Shores Expeditions. “She’s an ideal expedition sailing vessel.”

**The Experience:** Markel, a marine ecologist, conservationist and educator, has a passion for B.C.'s wildlife and ecosystems. His colleagues at UBC join him as expert guides, sharing knowledge of the biology, ecology and conservation of the bears and wolves of the Great Bear Rainforest.

Exceptional wildlife viewings also abound for whales, porpoises, otters, seals, sea lions, seabirds

6

## Classic Boat Tours



Once a U.S. military vessel, the *Pacific Yellowfin* is now an exclusive private charter yacht. Bottom right: The *Passing Cloud* is known for her elegant design.

and the rare white Spirit Bear found nowhere else. Glacier-scoured fiords, spectacular estuaries, ancient forests, outer coast beaches and temperate rainforests offer once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

“It’s incredibly rewarding to get people out and experiencing these wonders of the world rather than just reading about them,” explains Markel. “The excursions change how people see the world. Many reassess their lives and how they spend money. They tell us that they didn’t know places like this existed. It gives people a sense of hope.”

Outer Shores Expeditions purchases one hundred percent of its carbon credits from the landmark Great Bear Forest Carbon Project to offset its carbon emissions. “We’ve been carbon neutral since 2013 and have ten years of data to help us improve operations,” Markel notes. “Working in tandem with our new Outer Shores Lodge, which opened April 2022, we’re planning shorter excursions that don’t depend on diesel and using *Passing Cloud*’s gorgeous sails, decreasing up to 30 per cent in carbon emissions. Wind turbines and solar panels are future projects.”





PHOTO: James Thompson Photography



PHOTO: Maple Leaf Adventures

## Maple Leaf Adventures

CELEBRATE THE NATURAL WORLD  
ABOARD A CLASSIC SAILBOAT OR  
TUGBOAT

**The Vessels:** The Maple Leaf sailboat has been everything from a cutting-edge racing yacht to a halibut fishing boat. Built of coastal Douglas fir, cedar and mahogany, the 92-foot schooner accommodates up to eight guests in four semi-private sleeping areas and a crew of five. Swell, best known for its appearance on *The Beachcombers* television series, is a classic tugboat with \$4 million in refits. It accommodates 12 guests in six private cabins with showers and a crew of five. Both vessels were built in Vancouver and have spent their entire careers on the B.C. coast.

**The Experience:** Tours aboard both vessels offer a 360-degree experience of B.C.'s coast and cultural history, with travel that delights the mind and senses. With an expert naturalist on board and access permits to protected areas, passengers enter worlds most people never see. Hear stellar sea lions barking, witness whales spouting, visit UNESCO World Heritage Sites, forage for food that on-board chefs transform into culinary delights and kayak to remote beaches.

"B.C. can be a leader in regenerative travel. It's not about the destination to us. It's our home and we all passionately love, protect and celebrate our natural world with our guests," says Maureen Gordon, co-owner of Maple Leaf Adventures.





PHOTO: Jeremy Koreski for Pacific Yellowfin Experiences

## Pacific Yellow Fin

LISTEN TO STORIED TALES ABOARD  
THIS 1943 YACHT

**The Vessel:** The Pacific Yellowfin is a 34.7 metre, World War II ammunition carrier yacht, refitted meticulously with modern amenities without sacrificing its classic nautical style. Incredibly stable and typically cruising at 12 knots per hour, the noiseless steam engine is such a rare sight the crew give mini tours of the engine workings. Gleaming woodwork, luxurious cabins and gourmet coast-to-table dining experiences have many clients returning to Pacific Yellowfin annually.

**The Experience:** “Adventures unscripted is the best way to describe our tours,” says Captain Colin Griffison. “We’ve been in these waters for 15 years and it’s still a unique experience every time. We’re seeing killer whales that have never been catalogued and contacting research teams to check them out. Each day is surprising.”

An abundance of toys is at guests’ disposal on this private expedition: inflatable trampolines and a 40-foot slide, kayaks and paddleboards, a paddle ship (accommodating up to seven people), water-skis, wakeboards, snorkeling gear, mountain bikes, motor bikes and more.

Griffison says the high ratio of five crew to six passengers ensures exceptional service. Abundant wildlife sightings, rainforest excursions, bird watching, Spirit Bear outings to the Great Bear Rainforest and more make this an ideal excursion for multi-generational families.

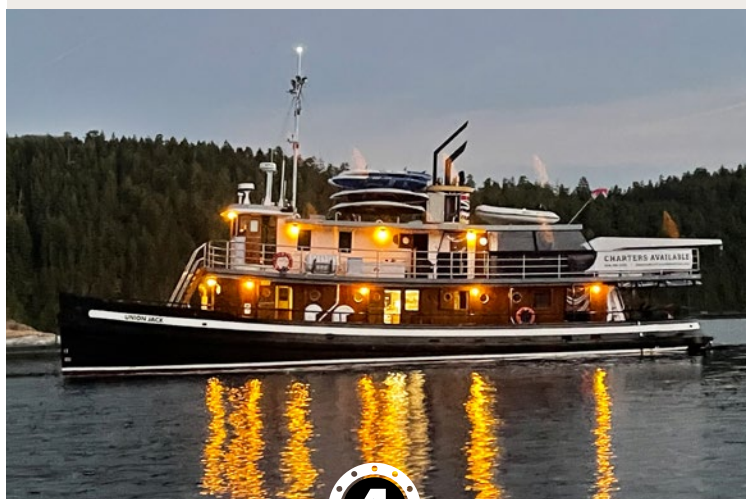


PHOTO: Remote West Coast Adventures

## Remote West Coast Adventures

MELT THE STRESS AWAY TO THE  
PEACEFUL HEARTBEAT OF A  
RESTORED 1941 TUG

**The Vessel:** “The heartbeat of the Union Jack is its original 40,000-pound diesel engine that creates the most magical experience,” says Remote West Coast Adventures co-founder Mark McColman. “Traveling at around 16 kilometres per hour, the stress just melts away.”

The Union Jack is one of the only heritage tugs left in the world and was hand built in Deep Cove from old-growth timber for Canada’s Navy during World War II. She was later owned by Straits Towing & Salvage Co. Ltd. and in the 1980’s pulled barges up and down the Fraser River. McColman and business partner Neil Wurst had the Union Jack completely restored over eight years, creating premium coastal-inspired suites with modern amenities.

**The Experience:** Book a private charter where the crew offers personalized service and a customized itinerary based on your interests. “Many of our return clients are multigenerational families who want to share fantastic outdoor adventures together and experience the most beautiful coastlines on the planet,” says McColman.

Explore the unique landscapes of the South Gulf Islands as you hike, bike, kayak or paddleboard secluded areas. Discover quaint coves and inlets, sandy beaches and parks, and panoramic viewpoints. Whales, seals, sea lions and marine birds frolic along the bays of the pristine islands. Other summer destinations include Desolation Sound.





PHOTO: Mill Bay Marine Group Adventure

5

## Mill Bay Marine Group Adventure Co.

LEARN TO PADDLEBOARD AND SAIL A TALL SHIP ON THIS THREE-DAY ADVENTURE OUT OF PORT SIDNEY MARINA

**The Vessel:** Mill Bay Marine Group Adventure Co. has teamed up with Blue Dog Kayaking for a paddle board/sailing adventure aboard the tall ship Providence, the oldest working vessel in B.C. waters.

Built in Denmark in 1903, the 24.4 metre ship was sold to Peter-Thor Watson in Victoria in 1978. She worked as a cargo, commercial fishing and charter vessel until 2018, when Simon Fawkes and Danny Robertson purchased and completely refitted her over eight months. In 2019, Providence 1903 Charters Ltd. was launched.

**The Experience:** “The SUP Sailing Tour is a new authentic adventure combining unparalleled access to the Gulf Islands along with learning to paddle board and sail a historic tall ship,” explains Marlese Plater, Marketing and Events Coordinator at Mill Bay Marine Group. “The three-day, two-night itinerary easily fits into your summer plans. We take you to remote paddleboard locations not accessible by shore so you can immerse yourself in the beauty of the islands.”

Sail and paddle the waters of the Salish Sea, soaking in the remote tranquility of the Southern Gulf Islands, under the guidance of Blue Dog Kayaking’s certified Paddle Canada SUP instructors. Novice and experienced paddle boarders alike will enjoy the tour. Three meals a day, bunk style accommodations below deck on Providence, paddle boards, dry bags, wet suits, sailing instruction and education about the local area are all part of the package.



PHOTO: Mothership Adventures


6

## Mothership Adventures

KAYAK ADVENTURES BY DAY, RELAX IN LUXURY BY NIGHT ABOARD B.C.’S ORIGINAL SEA KAYAKING MOTHERSHIP

**The Vessel:** The Columbia III “mothership” is a wooden motor yacht imbued with significance. The third in a succession of hospital ships built for B.C.’s Anglican Diocese, Columbia III was commissioned in 1955 to provide medical and social services to remote logging camps and coastal communities. She was retired from service in 1968, but in 1990 Columbia III was restored by Bill McKechnie of Victoria and sold to a U.S. buyer. She returned home in 2003 and Ross Campbell and his family purchased her in 2005 to operate live-aboard kayak tours.

**The Experience:** Kayak the Broughton Archipelago between the northern reaches of Vancouver Island and the remote mainland coast of B.C. Explore the U’Mista Cultural Society Museum in Alert Bay, home to Kwakwaka’wakw cultural artifacts, and visit an abandoned village with remains of a longhouse and totems. Uninhabited islets, secluded channels and chance encounters with orcas, humpback whales and Pacific white-sided dolphins make this tour remarkable.

The Great Bear Rainforest tour offers some of the most spectacular sea kayaking in the world and Columbia III’s crane system and water platform make launching kayaks a breeze. “The Columbia III is a little jewellery box on the coast, a museum piece of B.C.,” says Ross Campbell, owner of Columbia III and Mothership Adventures. “Our tours are small and family run. We share our experiences of living in the south Great Bear Rainforest for over 42 years.” 

**CHECK OUT THESE LOCAL ICE CREAM SHOPS THAT TAKE THE CLASSIC SUMMER DESSERT TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL.**

# THE SCOOP ON SCOOPS

## MISTER ARTISAN ICE CREAM

With two locations in Yaletown and Kitsilano, Mister Artisan Ice Cream is as much of an experience as it is an ice cream shop. Every cup is made to order using an ultra-cold liquid nitrogen process that rapidly freezes the product resulting in smaller crystals and a richer, denser ice cream. The staff at Mister aren't scared to break out the blow torch either, using it to create scrummy delights such as Crème Brûlée Ice Cream Sammies and Cream Smore's Bars.

**The inside scoop:** Planning an event? Mister offers custom catering, bringing their equipment and full range of ice cream flavours onsite, treating your guests a genuine Mister experience.

## RAIN OR SHINE

What started with a home ice-cream machine back in 2011 is now a mini chain of three beloved shops located in Cambie Village, UBC and Kits. Inventive "seasonal fling" flavours are ever-changing, but the custom ice cream formula at Rain or Shine remains the same: pure, whole ingredients sourced as locally as possible. Choose flavours like Blueberry Balsamic or Honey Lavender from their regular menu or create your own sundae sensation with limited-time seasonal flavours such as Lemon Square or Hojicha Mango Milk Tea.

**The inside scoop:** Be sure to visit Rain or Shine for their Taco Tuesday special served in a homemade waffle-cone taco.

## EARNEST ICE CREAM

The folks at this small Vancouver-based chain are just as serious about sustainability as they are about making seriously great ice cream. You won't find anything that isn't edible, reusable or compostable here, so you can feel good about indulging in that Vegan Peanut Butter Chocolate Pretzel cup or Sour Cherry Goat Cheese cone.

**The inside scoop:** Pints of Earnest Ice Cream come in re-usable glass jars. Bring your jar back to the shop to have it re-filled with yet another fabulous flavour.

## CHOCOLATS FAVORIS

The first Chocolats Favoris artisanal chocolate shop opened in Quebec City in 1979. Since then, locations have multiplied throughout Quebec and Ontario, but its lone post in the West can be found on Government Street in Victoria. This shop exudes Willy Wonka vibes, and the star of the show is a fun selection of 12 decadent chocolate concoctions used to make their dipped soft-serve cones. Surprise flavours like Key Lime Pie and Maple Pancake make limited appearances, or choose one of their regular features such as Salted Caramel with a hint of *fleur de sel*, or Cotton Candy with tufts of the pink stuff.

**The inside scoop:** Bring the fun home with a tin of Chocolat Favoris fondue. Simply heat the can in hot water, prep your favorite dippers and start the party.

## COLD COMFORT

From their small Can Canteen take-out window in Victoria's Fernwood neighbourhood, the folks at Cold Comfort have created more than 400 ice cream flavours since their start in 2010. From Apple Pie and Aged White Cheddar to White Tiger with anise, fennel and orange zest, there's always an exciting new flavour creation on the menu board.

**The inside scoop:** Have a hankering for a small-sized sweet treat? Try a Cold Comfort Mini, a delightfully petite ice cream sandwich made with vanilla macrons.





# En Route with Helijet

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