

GALIANO - SPANISH FOR MAGNIFICENT!

Galiano - Spanish for Magnificent!
(Not really, but it should be!)

By Ron Kirstein
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Dionisio Galiano was the commander of the Spanish schooner, 'Sutil's', exploring the Strait of Georgia in 1792. He gave his name to the Island and to the beautiful Park on the North end of the Island. The Coast Salish people know how special Galiano Island is as they have had summer camps on the Island for the past 3000 years or so! I too know how special this beautiful Island is.

When you visit, you will too!



A cyclist passing through the gate of
The Galiano Inn
Photo Courtesy of the Galiano Inn



Entrance to the dining room from the lobby.
Photo by Ron Kirstein



First Nations Artwork at the Inn
Photo Courtesy of the Galiano Inn

Ferry schedules vary from "direct routes from Vancouver and Victoria" to "milk runs" that can take a few hours. My wife Linda and I choose a "milk run". It offers time to relax and enjoy the incredible scenery from Victoria through the Gulf Islands and Active Pass to Galiano. We stop at Long Harbour on Salt Spring Island and at Village Bay on Mayne Island, before landing at Sturdies Bay on Galiano Island. The weather is

superb and the views phenomenal. We are in awe of the beauty of the land we have called home for about 20 years. We feel so lucky to live here.

As soon as we arrive we go directly to our home for the next two days, the Galiano Oceanfront Inn and Spa, a premier resort retreat. Its Madrona del Mar Spa and Wellness Retreat offers a holistic approach to health. The Atrevida Restaurant provides guests with high quality delicious food. The Inn is styled in a Spanish motif with a decidedly west coast influence.



The Lobby at the Galiano Inn
Photo Courtesy of the Galiano Inn

Our hostess, Conny Nordin provides us with a thorough tour of the resort. It has so much to offer guests for a small 10-Room Inn. The owners and staff wanted to create a vision of a Spa Resort, one that extended even to the guest rooms...so they developed a host of special features for guests. Each room has the Inn's own design of a "Madrona" massage table that comes out of the wall at the touch of a button. You can have a massage in your room, fall asleep, and be left to rest. Perfect. I have not seen this feature in some of the world's best accommodations. This massage table unit also has another drop-down table for in-room dining.



Typical Room at the Galiano Inn
Photo Courtesy of the Galiano Inn

All of the electronics in our room are hidden from immediate view, but readily available: everything from a flat screen LCD TV to an Internet connection. We're in the lap of luxury. A silk duvet, a cozy bed, gold-plated taps and faucets, local artwork on display, a wood-burning fireplace, the ocean at our feet, whales passing by, beautiful gardens to relax in...What on earth could be missing? Darned if I know!



Spectacular Mount Baker
Photo Courtesy of Galiano Inn



Dinner at the Atrevida Restaurant
Photo Courtesy of the Galino Inn

Our dinner in the Atrevida Restaurant is delicious. The servers are attentive but do not rush us in any way. Over two hours slip by before we finally finish our three courses. The view from the dining room is spectacular. In the distance we see Mount Baker rising majestically from the Mainland of Washington State. Mt Baker is just south of Vancouver BC and can be seen from all of the Gulf Islands and Vancouver Island. The view of Mt. Baker is visible from our room as well as much of the resort.



Sunrise over Mount Baker from the Inn
Photo Courtesy of the Galiano Inn

That evening at the Spa, I spend a relaxing hour floating in the Mediterranean Sea Flotation Bath ...a sea green room holds a large, slate and marble bath where I float effortlessly, gravity-free...the hour goes by very quickly. The water is warm and I float like a cork. My mood at the end of the hour is mellow and my body feels very relaxed.

Each morning I wake to the Eastern Sun turning the water into shimmering gold and each night the silvery full moon shines across the water from the west. Marine traffic quietly passes through the darkened Active Pass. BC Ferries look like cruise ships as they go by. We leave our balcony window open all night so the gently lapping waves caress us to sleep

Our first morning, we sit down to a truly scrumptious breakfast. We start with fresh croissants and muffins, tea and orange juice. Linda enjoys a frittata and I have the crepes with a light curry sauce. Both are delicious and just the right amount to ready us for an active day.



Evening view from our balcony
Photo by Ron Kirstein



The Inn looks so beautiful at night
Photo by Ron Kirstein

First, we're off to play a round of Golf at the Galiano Golf and Country Club. Our hostess, club manager Halii Raines, cheerfully signs us in and explains the course layout. It is somewhat challenging, but not too tough - just right for my novice partner, Linda. The 9-hole course is 1936 yards long and has modifications if you play 18 holes. The greens are well-manicured and there are unique sandstone tee markers with birds and animals carved in them. The golf course has a relaxed atmosphere, and the staff is very friendly. After golf, we enjoy a delicious lunch in the Club House. They serve gourmet meals on weekends which look spectacular. We'll return someday for one of those.

After lunch, we visit a couple of art galleries of artists participating in a weekend art show. The Galiano Inn has displays in each of the rooms of these local artists.



The Galiano Golf and Country Club
Photo by Ron Kirstein



Linda Putting Out at the Galiano Golf Course
Photo by Ron Kirstein

Then off to meet David Burchall, owner of the Bellhouse Inn and skipper of the Odyssey II. David is taking us for a sail in the waters near Montegue Harbour on the West side of Galiano Island. The weather is perfect, warm, sunny and with just enough winds to bring the Odyssey to maximum "warp" speed. David is an excellent sailor and congenial host. Two American Lawyers from Orange County are also on board. The views from the sail are sensational. Whales are in the area and whale-watching boats from Vancouver zoom by. We see seals, eagles and lots of marine traffic. It's hard not to relax and just soak in the environment when you're on a sailboat. A truly enjoyable trip



Ron and Linda behind the wheel - scary heh!

The next morning we enjoy our Galiano Inn breakfast and talk to Sharon, a nursing professor from Vancouver. She's come over as a Ferry walk-on passenger and tells us all about her hiking and moped experiences on Galiano. The Galiano Inn is so close to the Ferry Terminal that this becomes a very viable alternative to driving. There are many cyclists here as well. There is so much to do here. Next trip we are going to do some sea kayaking.

I return to the Spa for an hour of relaxing massage. Sherri, my spa technician is very good at her trade. She listens to my needs, finds my trouble spots, and achieves her goal. In the end, I am totally relaxed and



The Odessey II - Sailing with David Burchell



Relaxing massage can be done in the spa, the gardens or your room. Oh so, relaxing!
Photo Courtesy of Galiano Inn

my tension is gone. Well done Sherri!

Back in my room, I stand on the balcony overlooking the lush grounds and the sparkling sea. I wonder if it can get any better. This is truly a great place to come and relax. We've thoroughly enjoyed our stay on Galiano Island. It's one of our favourite Gulf Islands. Be sure to include The Galiano Inn on your visit to the Pacific Northwest and to Galiano Island.



View from our balcony of the relaxing grounds
Photo by Ron Kirstein

To learn more about the Galiano Inn, please visit their web site at:

<http://www.galianoinn.com/>

To learn more about the Bellhouse Inn, visit their web site at:

<http://www.bellhouseinn.com/>

Ron Kirstein

SPECIAL DEALS ON GALIANO ISLAND!

More photos below



The dining room at night
Photo Courtesy of the Galiano Inn



The beautiful gardens
Photo Courtesy of the Galiano Inn



The Lobby with Spanish and West Coast decor



The Wine Shop in the lower lobby



The Inn at night



The Yoga Garden at the Inn

SPECIAL DEALS ON GALIANO ISLAND!

P.S.

Here are a few more things you might consider doing when you come to Galiano Island!

Visit Dionisio Park on the North End of the Island

Hike up Mount Galiano

Swim in the Ocean on the Georgia Strait (East Side)- Ellis Road to Morning Beach Access

Golf at the Galiano Golf and Country Club

Kayak at Montegue Harbour

Rent a Boat and do some Exploring

Take a Sail aboard the Odyssey II

Go to Retreat Cove and explore the cave on the beach

Drive or Hike to Bluffs Park and take in the spectacular views

Come and Camp at Montegue Harbour Provincial Marine Park

Do an art tour - visit the many artists and crafters on the Island

Go to Bellhouse Park and pet the Ferries as they pass through Active Pass right under your nose

Hike Bodega Ridge

Explore Pebble Beach

Rent a Bicycle and take a ride

Rent a Moped and explore the Island

Go fishing or take an Eco Tour

Stop by the Woodstone Inn for Bread Pudding (an Island delight)

SPECIAL DEALS ON GALIANO ISLAND!

