



PASSPORT

A KIWI COLLECTION PUBLICATION

An interactive guide to the best luxury hotels, resorts, spas and destination experiences on this planet

CATEGORIES

- LUXURY HOTEL REVIEWS
- SPECIAL PROMOTIONS
- INSPIRATIONAL PHOTOS
- REFRESHING FRIDAYS
- DESTINATIONS
- TRAVEL GUIDES
- NEWS & EVENTS
- GUEST BLOGGERS
- FASHION, ART, DESIGN
- WINE & DINING
- OUTDOOR ESCAPES

SEARCH PASSPORT

POPULAR ARTICLES

ARCHIVE ARTICLES 2010

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
23	22	19	13
MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG
28	25	23	26
SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
15			



PREVIOUS ARTICLE

SEP 20, 2010 DESTINATIONS, NORTH AMERICA, OUTDOOR ESCAPES, WINE & DINING



Peace, adventure and solitude in Sonora

- Nicole Humphries-Voorhoeve

When you're seven months pregnant and your husband has been away all summer, there's only one thing to do when he returns: head to a remote destination where luxury, wilderness, and romance abound. For us, that meant Sonora Resort, a place where West Coast wilderness and rustic luxury blend seamlessly.

As soon as we stepped onto Sonora's private dock, I knew we were in for a treat. The current was so strong that it felt like we were standing next to a river rather than the ocean, and the scenery around us was stunning. We were ushered into the hotel through a dining room that overlooks the sea before sitting down in the lobby to be served drinks accompanied by delicious cheese plates. The property's General Manager, Sean Ross, answered any questions we had about our stay and offered some great tips and suggestions before giving us a quick tour.



It seemed like the hardest part of our trip would be deciding what to do each day: a helicopter ride to a nearby glacier, ocean fishing for salmon, fly-fishing lessons, grizzly bear tours, eco tours, treatments at the Island Currents Spa, and more were all on the menu. And as we listened to our options, it quickly became evident that we had arrived at the kind of place Kiwi Collection is always looking out for: a hotel that delivers an experience that is anything but ordinary.



After gazing out at the beautiful view from our room in the Gillard Lodge for a few moments, we opted for a warm bath in our big bathroom before heading back to the restaurant for dinner. And what a dinner it was! We went with the tasting

menu, which changes each night, and were treated to six delicious courses. The menu on our first night started off with an awesome amuse bouche, followed by an heirloom tomato salad, a torchon of Quebec foie gras, Nova Scotia lobster, an ivory king salmon dish and a "duo of rabbit." Chocolate covered cherry pit ice cream was for dessert, and it was incredible!

After dinner, we decided to make the most of the private movie theater, which was empty when we poked our heads inside. So one of the bartenders loaded us up with drinks, licorice, and other movie snacks and put on the movie of our choice ("Brotherhood of the Wolf" - if you haven't seen it, by the way, do yourself a favor and rent it one night - so good). I used to work in television, and would often be sent to private screenings of films in theaters just like this one, but to have one just for the two of us was even better! Especially considering the fact that we don't have a TV at home... a decision I highly recommend!



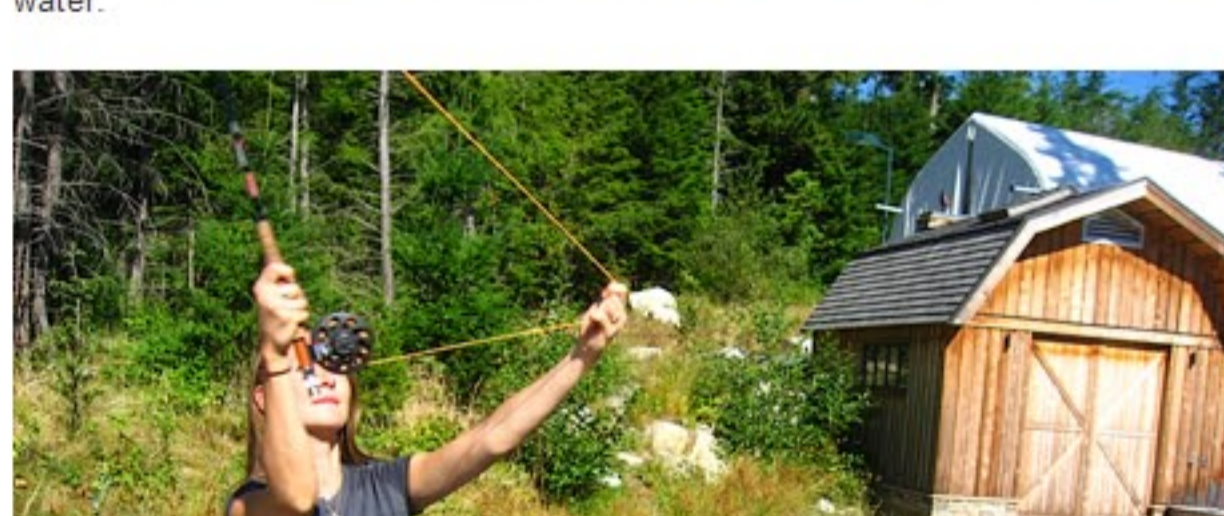
Needless to say, we slept well that night, and after a yummy breakfast the next morning decided to hike to nearby Florence Lake. At least we thought it was nearby... our little venture ended up being close to 10 km long. That said, the stunning sights along the trail and the peaceful setting that awaited us at the lake were well worth the effort. Not to mention the fact that we needed some exercise after the previous night's meal. Of course, we could have read the clearly marked and very informative trail map before setting off!



After our (later than expected) return, we rushed through a great lunch and then headed down to the dock for our afternoon eco tour - an experience not to be missed during a visit to Sonora. Donning survival suits, we climbed onto the resort's 12 seat, 28 foot Eaglemaster Eco Tour boat with two other families (one from London, England, the other from Germany). Aaron was our guide, and his calming voice flowed through personal headphones as he guided us through whirlpools, regaled us with stories about the area's history, and got us "up close and personal" with seals, bald eagles, and white-sided dolphins.

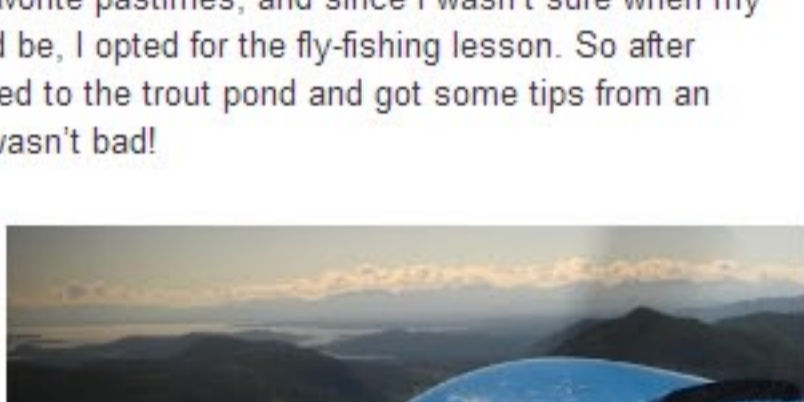


When we returned to the resort, we had time for a quick nap before heading back down to the dining room for another night of gastronomic greatness. Our second night's tasting menu featured another amuse bouche, then chilled coconut corn soup followed by Japanese hon hamachi yellowtail crudo, dungeness crab cannelloni, Queen Charlotte Island sablefish, cardamom honey glazed duck breast, and a refreshing buttermilk sorbet for dessert. Honestly, what more could I ask for? And even though it was late by the time we made it through all of those amazing courses, we couldn't resist heading to the private theater for another movie and a couple of nightcaps - for Paul, that is. I stuck to water.



I had decided that our last day at Sonora Resort would be my spa day, especially after listening to descriptions of the wonderful Island Currents Spa from family friends who adore Sonora Resort. But when I woke up the next morning, I was torn... I had also come to Sonora determined to learn how to fly-fish! It's one of Paul's favorite pastimes, and since I wasn't sure when my next chance to learn would be, I opted for the fly-fishing lesson. So after breakfast, Paul and I headed to the trout pond and got some tips from an expert. And apparently, I wasn't bad!

Our seaplane was picking us up at 1, so we headed back to the restaurant for a quick lunch while our bags were brought to the dock. The short flight over to Campbell River was breathtaking, and the other couple on board (from Switzerland) also clearly enjoyed themselves.



The fact that almost all of the guests we met during our stay were from different parts of the world says a lot about Sonora's international appeal. A lovely family from London who was on our Eco Tour with us had spent an amazing day being taken by helicopter to a nearby lake where parents, daughters, and son snorkeled with wild salmon. The wife told me that if I hadn't been pregnant, she would have insisted that Paul and I try it as well!

Desolation Sound is a place of magic, mystery, and unspoiled beauty, and Sonora Resort has captured it all perfectly. No wonder guests from all over the world marvel at their experiences here. Take it from Paul and I, who spent both our honeymoon and a recent sailing trip in British Columbia: B.C. truly is beautiful, and Sonora Resort reflects the depth and soul of that beauty.



Sonora Resort