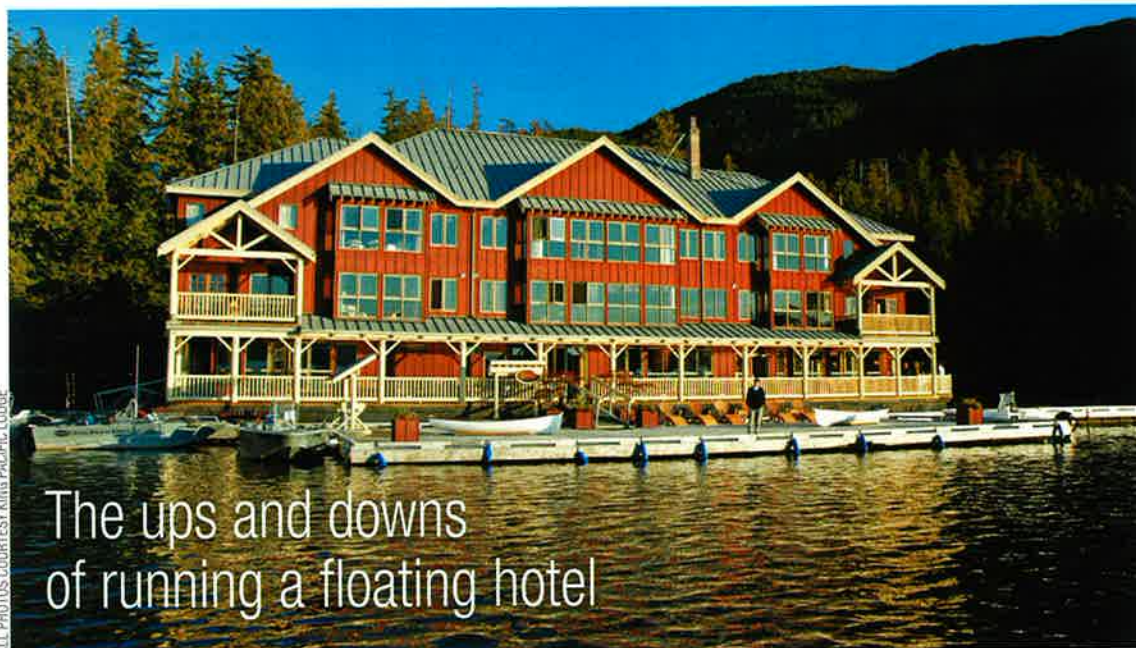


# KING PACIFIC LODGE



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The ups and downs  
of running a floating hotel

By Shannon McMullen  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Guests who visit the King Pacific Lodge have the opportunity to literally dive into their natural surroundings from the property's front porch. That's because the property is a floating luxury wilderness resort, or "eco-adventure travel destination," anchored along the shore of Barnard Harbor, Princess Royal Island, British Columbia, which is about 380 miles north of Vancouver.

Princess Royal Island has no permanent inhabitants or structures and is right in the heart of the Great Bear Rainforest, offering guests experiences hard to come by elsewhere such as heli-hiking, whale-watching, fly-fishing and wildlife viewing.

## MANAGING LOGISTICS

Getting there is the tricky part, but now in its 12th year running, the hotel has the logistics down to a science. The property, which is open from June through September, is towed from its winter home in Prince Rupert to its summer operational location in Barnard Harbor at the end of every May. This journey is handled by a tug boat and takes 24 hours. Guests are flown in by private charter plane from Vancouver to a small nearby island, where a float plane takes them to the lodge.

"Some people might think our job is easy being open a short time. But while we have a four-month season, we work all year round," said Leanne Lalonde, lodge manager. In fact, almost all supplies that are required to run the resort are planned out, purchased and loaded on the premises before the journey to Barnard Harbor,

she said. "In addition to purchasing, we must do hiring, training and maintenance during the off season. It requires a lot of planning."

## EFFICIENT LUXURY

The resort is owned by Joe Hideo Morita, a Japanese businessman whose father founded Sony Corp., and is managed by Rosewood Hotels & Resorts as an all-inclusive.

The challenge lies in creating and maintaining a luxury property—made of native pine, fir, cedar and stone—on a 120-by-60-square-foot barge.

That requires the management to create operational efficiencies that aren't obvious to guests, who are there for the 17 luxuriously appointed guestrooms, amenities and surrounding wilderness.

So while it is in fact lavish, the hotel is anything but wasteful. The King Pacific Lodge operates with a "triple bottom line" philosophy that is built on a deep respect for the land and wildlife. It takes into account the financial, social and environmental factors to ensure that no footprint is left behind at the end of each season.

Making it work is not as hard as it might seem, nor as expensive, according to Lalonde. The hotel runs a water line from the local river into the lodge and through a UV filtration system, which provides plenty of clean water for guests.

There are two diesel generators on board for electricity and heat. Waste is stored on the property and treated until September, when whatever is left is transferred to a waste facility. All recyclable materials are also stored "below deck" where the back-of-house departments are located.

"You can feel the appreciation for [the hotel's] beauty in the air," Lalonde said. "It is as if our guests know that they are in a place that only a handful of other people will ever be able to experience." **HM**

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## → by the numbers

### RECYCLING

#### Triple bottom line philosophy

More than 5,000 cans of soda, 1,000 wine bottles, 7,000 cans of beer and 200 gallons of waste cooking oil are saved and recycled each season.

### TRANSPORT

#### Lodge towed each season

The cost to tow the lodge is \$50,000 each way, with an additional \$20,000 for labor costs and other requirements for loading equipment.

### REMOTENESS

#### 380 miles north of Vancouver

Guests take a minimum of three plane trips before they arrive at the front door of the King Pacific Lodge, including a private charter and float plane.

### CHOICE

#### Small but grand

The luxury, all-inclusive floating property hosts about 600 guests per season on the 120-foot-by-60-foot barge on which the resort is located.