

Flying higher

Dave Norona

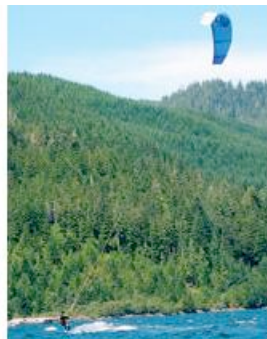
Special To North Shore News

Sunday, August 12, 2007

The grin on my face gets bigger as my board slaps along the water at what seems like Mach 1.

I dive my kite, edge my board and feel the 30 knots of wind trying to blow me off the water. The sun sits high in the sky and lights up the lush green mountainside as I careen across Nitinaht Lake.

Nitinaht Lake sits on the outer coast of Vancouver Island, just 50 kilometres past Lake Cowichan. This little gem, in the middle of nowhere, offers windsurfers and kite surfers a true paradise as the wind howls every sunny day. The water is clean, the camping is nestled amongst giant trees, and the people are awesome!



CREDIT: photo submitted
 Kim gives kite surfing a try at Nitinaht Lake.

We were a little worried at the beginning of the year when the area was hit with epic winter storms that brought down half of the area's trees. However, thanks to Nitinaht caretakers Judy and Dale, who organized an amazing clean up, the area opened up for business as usual.

This was Kim and I's first trip to Nitinaht, due to the weather, and we wasted no time picking out a wicked little campsite that would become our home for the next week. As the wind blew in, the giant trees began to sway and our heart rates began to quicken. Unpacking the car would have to wait and we ran down with our kite gear to set up.

Although the wind blows most days, each day is slightly different due to changing weather patterns. Today, you could feel the wind's intense power so we set up our seven-metre kite. Kim launched me perfectly and I was off across the lake. There are few words to describe what it feels like to harness the power of the wind in a kite that sits far up in the sky and pulls you like a ski boat. There were only a few people out and I wasted no time in making my way upwind to enjoy the serenity of the lake with no one around.

After a couple of hours I surfed downwind to hand the kite off to Kim. She was super stoked about my success and I returned the favor of a nice launch and she was off. Kim is much more aggressive than me and I love watching her crank upwind with a big rooster tail of water coming off her board.

By 5 p.m. our minds wanted to keep going but our bodies cried for mercy. We picked up some giant dungeness crab from the local fisherman and went back to our campsite to gorge. There's nothing better than sitting back in your chair with a giant piece of crab in one hand and a beer in the other after an epic day.

Later that evening we hooked up with our new friends Andrew and Karen, Tom and Louise, and Stan around a massive fire trading stories from the day. Tom brought out his guitar and played some amazing tunes while the heat from the fire warmed our souls and a billion stars lit up the night. Day one down with many more great ones to follow. . . .

Adventure Dave Norona can't wait to get back to Nitinaht Lake and get in some more kite time. His kiting addiction is supported by Advil, Bionicon Bikes, and North Shore Ski and Board.

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