



## NEWS RELEASE

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### Victoria Harbour Ferry Expands Zero-Emission Fleet

VICTORIA (July 29, 2016) – You could call it the quiet revolution. After the successful launch last year of its first electric passenger vessel, Victoria Harbour Ferry is adding two more of the silent, zero-emission vessels to its fleet on July 30.

The three all-electric passenger ferries will serve the company's popular Gorge Cruise, making the scenic 60-minute tour of Victoria's historic Gorge waterway 100 per cent zero-emission.

"We've been experiencing growing demand across our operations and decided to expand our fleet of electric vessels rather than bring more diesel boats into service," said Nick Samsom, President of Victoria Harbour Ferry. "The move to electric boats makes economic sense for our company and it aligns with our commitment to keep the waterway clean and pristine."

Samsom noted that the company has been an integral part of the Gorge waterway revitalization since day one, assisting in the clean-up by transporting volunteers and helping to remove debris.

"If we had continued with three new diesel vessels, as opposed to the three new all-electric vessels, we would have consumed approximately 8,000 liters of fuel during each season," he added.

The zero-emission vessels usher in a new era of sustainability and passenger comfort. The vessels are propelled by a 3.5 horsepower electric engine that is powered by a bank of 16 batteries. They can travel at a speed of 5 nautical miles per hour and operate for up to 160 kilometres on a single charge – that's enough to complete a full day's operations on the water with power to spare. The vessels were purpose built for Victoria Harbour Ferry by Duffy Boats of California.

"Feedback from our customers has been fantastic. It's the same fun ride in a sleek modern design. People love the fact that they are out enjoying nature without leaving a carbon footprint," said Barry Hobbis, Vice President of Operations, noting that the electric vessels are the perfect viewing platform to observe the wildlife and take in the sights and sounds of Victoria's bustling Gorge waterway.

The layout offers 360-degree panoramic viewing for 10 passengers, with full sun and wind protection. The ultra-quiet electric engine allows passengers to more clearly hear the strident rattle call of the Belted Kingfisher and approach a Blue Heron undisturbed.

Hobbis said the new vessels will be named *Rose*, to honour his late mother, and *Wendy*, named after the wife of one of the company's owners. The first e-vessel was christened *Tina*, after the wife of another Harbour Ferry owner.

The fleet of loveable Pickle Boats that have defined Victoria Harbour Ferry for more than 25 years will continue to service the 14 hop-on hop-off H<sub>2</sub>O Taxi stops throughout the harbour, as well as handle the Harbour Tour and the world's only Pickle Pub Crawl and Water Ballet.

Whether introducing people to the region's fascinating maritime history or shuttling commuters between work, shopping and entertainment, Hobbis said it is the knowledge and personal stories from the ferry Captains that sets the company apart.

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“It’s all about our people. Among our crew we have people who grew up on the Gorge and around the harbour, former mayors, retired naval officers, a tugboat skipper, jet pilots and folks from all walks of life – every one of them has great stories to share with our passengers,” he said.

Victoria Harbour Ferry offers the Gorge Cruise from March to October, with 15 departures daily between 10 a.m. and 9 p.m. during July and August. Advance reservations available. Tour departs approximately every 30 minutes.

### **FAST FACTS - Victoria Harbour Ferry**

**Fleet:** 18 vessels, including three all-electric, zero-emission vessels.

**Routes:** 14 ferry stops around the Inner harbour and Gorge waterway – from West Bay to Fisherman’s Wharf to the Selkirk Trestle and points in between.

**Cost:** H<sub>2</sub>O Taxi hops start at \$6. Gorge and Harbour cruises cost \$26 for adults, \$14 for children. Pickle Pub Crawls start at \$20 per person. Annual Passes are available for \$200.

**Crew:** Victoria Harbour Ferry employs as many as 70 staff, with 45 to 50 captains in peak season.

**Water Ballet:** The world’s first and only. FREE performances every Sunday from May-Sept., plus every Saturday in July-Aug., beginning at 10:45 a.m.

**Season:** March-October.

### **About Victoria Harbour Ferry Company Ltd.**

For more than 25 years, Victoria Harbour Ferry has been zipping happy people around the city’s Inner Harbour and neighbouring waterways. Founded in 1990 with just two ferryboats, today the company carries more than 350,000 people annually linking tourists and residents with local neighbourhoods, restaurants and attractions. The company operates a fleet of 18 small passenger ferries, including three all-electric, zero-emission vessels. The company also brings the world’s only Pickle Pub Crawl and Water Ballet to the city’s harbour. Victoria Harbour Ferry is consistently rated as one of Victoria’s top tourism attractions. For more information, visit [www.victoriaharbourferry.com](http://www.victoriaharbourferry.com).

### **Media Contact:**

Barry Hobbis, Vice President of Operations

Victoria Harbour Ferry Co. Ltd.

250-708-0201

[bhobbis@victoriaharbourferry.com](mailto:bhobbis@victoriaharbourferry.com)