

For Immediate Release
17-099

December 11, 2017

BC FERRIES ADDS EXTRA SAILINGS FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON

VICTORIA – From December 21 through January 2, BC Ferries is adding over 175 extra sailings on two routes between Metro Vancouver and Vancouver Island to ensure smooth sailing for travellers over the busy holiday season. On the Tsawwassen – Swartz Bay route, which is the busiest of the 25 routes BC Ferries operates, BC Ferries is adding 130 sailings, while 46 additional sailings are scheduled between Horseshoe Bay and Departure Bay. Eight additional sailings are also scheduled between Horseshoe Bay and Langdale.

December 23 is expected to be the most popular pre-Christmas travel day. December 26 – 28 are expected to have the highest traffic volume post-Christmas, with December 27 expected to be the most popular travel day of the holiday season. On December 23, 26 and 27, 6 a.m. sailings have been added in both directions between Tsawwassen and Swartz Bay to start moving traffic early. To assist customers with their holiday travel plans, BC Ferries has posted a calendar of what are forecasted to be the most popular sailings for travel between Metro Vancouver and Vancouver Island on bcferries.com. This is a great tool to consult when making holiday travel plans.

“We’ve added these sailings to help travellers connect with family and friends over the holiday season, and ensure our commercial customers can travel as well,” said Janet Carson, BC Ferries’ Vice President of Marketing and Customer Experience. “We lowered the cost of reservations earlier this year to \$10 if booked seven days or more in advance and given the volume of traffic during the busy holiday season, we strongly recommend customers make a reservation to guarantee that they can travel at the time of their choice.”

Starting December 21, the schedules on two of the three routes using the Horseshoe Bay terminal (Horseshoe Bay – Departure Bay and Horseshoe Bay – Bowen Island) will be expanded to allow more in-dock time during this busy period. With more traffic expected, it generally takes longer to load the vessels, and this additional time helps BC Ferries stay on schedule. The Horseshoe Bay – Langdale route is already operating on an expanded schedule. All three routes will be on new schedules starting January 2, which were developed following a public participation process with the Sunshine Coast and Bowen Island to improve service to those communities.

Early morning and late evening savings will be back for the holiday season. From December 21 to January 3, customers can save significantly on more than 260 select sailings on routes between Metro Vancouver – Vancouver Island and Metro Vancouver – Sunshine Coast. Full sailing schedule and promotional details can be viewed at bcferries.com. Customers who plan to travel on discounted sailings are also advised to reserve in advance to avoid disappointment.

For any customers looking for gift ideas, we recommend the gift of travel on BC Ferries. BC Ferries' gift certificates make great stocking stuffers and are available online. For reservations, schedule information, BC Ferries Vacation packages and gift certificates, visit bcferries.com.

BC Ferries reminds customers of the Transport Canada regulations that restrict passengers from remaining in their vehicles on closed car decks. For customers needing to remain in their vehicles, BC Ferries recommends arriving early at the terminal and identifying themselves at the ticket booth, so staff can make every effort to accommodate their request. BC Ferries kindly thanks all customers for complying with this new requirement.

– 30 –

Media Contact:
BC Ferries, Communications
Victoria: (250) 978-1267

Customer Contact:
Victoria: (250) 386-3431
Toll-free: 1-888-BCFERRY (1-888-223-3779)