

# **TRAILBLAZERS**

A 13 part Adventure Series  
by Omni Film Productions

---

It's a legacy that dates back to the days of the early explorers -- men and women whose courage, instincts and strength of character set them apart from the pack. They are the leaders, the guides, the risk takers. They are the **Trailblazers**.

The *Trailblazer's* job:  
to explore new territory and confront personal limits.

This series takes a long hard look at the men and women who lead so that others can follow. On each of our expeditions we are watching closely to see if individual team members can rise to the occasion and become *Trailblazers* in their own right.

Each episode features an awesome wilderness setting and a unique group of individuals who have answered the call to adventure. They have accepted a challenge that will push them beyond their comfort zone. We're along for the thrills and spills, the victories and bitter-sweet failures. We are constantly reminded that these are tests of character as much as coordination and strength. And if we come away with a valuable life lesson, then there's no such thing as defeat.

The audience lives through the eyes of our host -- a *try anything* kind of guy who treats the camera as a close friend. Never mind he's not a pumped-up adrenaline junkie, he's quick to learn. How far out of his comfort zone will he find himself next? Viewers will be tuning into next week's show to find out.

## **Trailblazers - Thirteen Episodes**

***Hiking the West Coast Trail***  
***Rafting the Tatshenshini***  
***Pole to Pole 2000***  
***The Nahanni Experience***  
***Machu Picchu***  
***Elite Search and Rescue***  
***Mystery Mountain Odyssey***

***Costa Rica Coast to Coast***  
***Caving in Northern Thailand***  
***Sea Kayaking the Canadian Galapagos***  
***Diving the Wrecks***  
***Sailing on the Sea of Cortez***  
***Molokia'i Mountain Biking Paradise***

## **Trailblazers - Thirteen Episodes**

### ***Hiking the West Coast Trail***

Five days along a merciless stretch of coastline that mariners call  
*The Graveyard of the Pacific.*

### ***Rafting the Tatshenshini***

From glacial source to the Pacific Ocean on our *last truly wild river.*

### ***Pole to Pole 2011***

Everything you wanted to know about selecting a team for the “geodyssey” of a lifetime.

### ***The Nahanni Experience***

Through the Headless Valley by canoe -- if the river doesn't finish you, the folk lore will.

### ***Diving the Wrecks***

Out of sight is out of mind until archaeologists show us scenes we'll never forget.  
(In B.C.'s Queen Charlotte Strait)

### ***Machu Picchu***

Through the timeless Amazon, then up to Peru's ancient City in the Sky.

### ***Elite Search and Rescue***

Sar-Tech experts wear their orange suits with pride. At boot camp we find out why.

### ***Mystery Mountain Odyssey***

From sea to sky and back again as we launch an assault on B.C.'s highest peak,  
Mount Waddington.

### ***Costa Rica Coast to Coast***

From the Pacific waterworld to the cloudforest canopy to the crater of an active volcano.  
Five international trekkers take five days to explore five worlds in one.

### ***Caving in Northern Thailand***

Stalagmites, stalactites, cave snakes and tropical lagoon -- all in the heart of  
darkness.

### ***Sea Kayaking the Canadian Galapagos***

Kayaking guides face the ultimate test on the moody open ocean off Haida Gwaii.

### ***Sailing on the Sea of Cortez***

The adventure school where amateurs become professionals or bust.

### ***Molokia'i Mountain Biking Paradise***

Mountain biking's best kept secret exposed at the First Annual UCI Tour of Champions.

## **Extra shows**

### ***The Maple Leaf Takes Alaska***

Explore a wilderness of fjords, islands and tidewater glaciers aboard a 92-foot, two-masted schooner.

### ***Mountain Biking "The Reaper"***

Join the sub-culture and gear up for the ultimate ride down *The Reaper*.  
(Vancouver, B.C.)

## **POLE TO POLE 2000**

*Trailblazer* MARTYN WILLIAMS has made a career out of exploring the farthest reaches of the earth. In the year 1999 he'll lead a group of twelve exceptional young people on an expedition from the North Pole to the South Pole, arriving on the eve of the new millennium. But first, Williams has to select his "recruits".

At Keremeos, B.C., thirty candidates will be put through a four-day crash course to test their mettle. They'll climb and slog long distances up and over and through mountains, rivers and forests day and night. They'll battle obstacle courses, climb ropes and jump from cliffs. *A good thrashing!*, as Williams puts it.

But what good's the body without a mind? These young men and women will be assessed for skills in speaking, listening, intuition and compassion -- all necessary aspects of an effective and proactive team player. We'll get to know a few of them and discover that these are disciplined kids who have already spent their youth facing challenge after challenge in the great outdoors. These kids from right across Canada who are already winners in their own right.

Not just a visit to the world's most sincere boot camp, this episode checks out footage of Williams' previous treks across the both polar ice caps and through the Himalayas to Everest. Expectations for 1999 will run high as the worthy twelve are finally chosen. By then we'll be eager for next year's sequel:

*Pole to Pole 2000: Let The Grind Begin.*

## **COSTA RICA COAST TO COAST**

It's said of Costa Rica that it has no temples, no ruins, no history. But the Nature! A third of the country is a biological reserve. And that's why we're here -- a *Lonely Planet* escapade across Costa Rica with an international group of eco-adventurers.

This journey is one of discovery, of mingling with eclectic inhabitants and of encountering an awesome range of botanical and geophysical features as we cover five eco-systems in five days, from the Pacific coast to the Caribbean.

Starting at Montezuma in the West, we head for the port city of Puntarenas, stopping en route to dive the Gulf of Nicoya to swim with the Pacific ridley seaturtle. Then, north to the Monteverde Cloud Forest for a uniquely thrilling adventure harnessed to tree top trams high in the rain forest canopy. The jungle is alive with toucans, tapirs, margays, peccaries and jaguarundi. Don't worry if you don't know them, you soon will.

At 9,000 feet we find one of the few accessible active volcanoes in North America. Farther west, the eco-centre at Selveverde, then a jaunt south for world-class wind surfing on Lake Arenal. We saddle up for a ride through the Cordillera Central where dramatic waterfalls hide amongst a topography as spiky as cats' teeth and river rafting lends us a new respect for the disinterested powers of nature.

Five days of non-stop thrills seems like an eternity yet ends all too quickly at Limon on the Caribbean coast. Columbus landed here in 1502 and called it the "Rich Coast".

Costa Rica. Terra Rica.

Air Force para-rescue specialists wear their distinctive orange flight suits with pride. And why not? They save the lives of hundreds of Canadians every year. As SAR Techs, they've also made it through one of the most grueling tests of physical and psychological integrity. Bar none.

Each year a hundred applicants are screened and processed. Twelve will make the grade. Who are these twelve? What combination of grit, wit and intelligence does it take to become one of these extreme angels? In this hour we'll find out.

Chief Warrant Officer FRED RITCHIE leads his troops through a 7-9 month course that's designed to turn out an even dozen. There's no life like it as long as the alchemical ovens of character building don't burn you to a crisp. You try -- vicariously -- as we track the troops through a regime of rappelling from helicopters, scuba and sky diving; of paramedics and trauma relief in frigid waters and colder mountain tops.

Question: How far can CWO Ritchie challenge them? Answer: As far as it takes to prepare a person to stare death in the face.

Course starts in April. See you there.

## **MYSTERY MOUNTAIN ODYSSEY**

At 13,177 feet, Mt. Waddington is B.C.'s highest peak. The feature film, *K2*, was shot here. Never mind it's one of the most spectacular mountains in the world, few people recognize it because it's in remote country north of Garibaldi. But that's not all that discourages your average tourist from attempting her peak. Its Himalayan proportions include granite pinnacles that jut out of glaciers like thousand metre fingers pointing towards the sky. But these days, the eco-tourist is increasingly hot on the scent of the rare and exotic challenge.

*"Build its rep and they will come."*

Outfitter, TOM BENSON, knows well Mt. Waddington's reputation yet it hasn't stopped him from guiding wannabee *Trailblazers* to its near vertical slopes. But not before they're prepared. Benson sees to that at rigorous training sessions that begin months before the expedition. Those who survive his tests will be well versed in advanced rope techniques, crevasse rescue, reading avalanches and bivouacking at 20 below.

Flying from Squamish, the expedition will put down on a glacier and hike to base camp on Waddington's flank. Weather permitting, Benson will then lead an attempt on the North West peak. He has prepared his team for disappointment, however, for this is a world-class mountain that rarely surrenders its peak. *Que sera, sera.*

Reaching the peak is the archetype of all climaxes. And to ski down Waddington's Angel Glacier is the ultimate denouement. But our story isn't over until the expedition has descended the 30 km Franklin Glacier all the way to the sea. There, moored in an inlet, a yacht, friends and champagne await them.