



TRIP IDEAS

VANCOUVER SPAS & WELLNESS

Many places in Vancouver seem made just for relaxing. Spend time in the city's numerous parks, beaches and gardens, or discover unique day spas, yoga classes and healthy restaurants.

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Parks and Beaches

Stanley Park's perimeter seawall can get busy, but the interior forested trails and gardens rarely do. For a long walk on the beach, head west to Spanish Bank; at low tide, the sand seems to go on forever.

Gardens

Take a meditative walk around the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, the first authentic Ming-Dynasty-style garden built outside of China, or stroll among healing herbs and flowers at the Physic Garden at the UBC Botanical Garden. At VanDusen Botanical Garden (just south of downtown), wander through an Elizabethan hedge maze. A few blocks away, soak up the tropical ambience of warm-climate flora and free-flying birds at Bloedel Conservatory in Queen Elizabeth Park.

Serene Architecture

Gregorian chants are sung on Sunday evenings at Christ Church Cathedral; this historic downtown church features stained-glass windows and Douglas fir beams. At the International Buddhist Temple in nearby Richmond, see the classical Asian garden, plus the stunning Seven Buddha Mural – said to be one of the largest Buddhist murals in the world. To rise above the city, take the mile-long Skyride to the top of Grouse Mountain; relax and admire the Vancouver skyline from the peak.

Vancouver Spas

Scrub, steam and soak in a bath of Jerusalem gold marble at the at Miraj Hammam spa, Vancouver's only traditional Middle Eastern spa, or indulge in a treatment at any of dozens of day spas in town. Laze beside a private fireplace at CHI spa in the Shangri-La Hotel Vancouver, radiate in deep warmth in the infrared sauna at Yaletown's Spruce Body Lab, or indulge in ancient Eastern Ayurvedic treatments at Vida Spa.

Absolute Spa, a favourite amongst visiting Hollywood celebs, has 11 locations throughout the Vancouver area. Each spa provides a world-class spa experience, with treatments using local BC products from the Organic Spa Binge Skincare Collection. Chase away jetlag at multiple Absolute Spa locations within the Vancouver International Airport and at the Fairmont Vancouver Airport, or indulge in a luxury wellness experience such as the Absolute Oxygen Facial or Organics Fresh

Rainforest Massage. For the fresh-faced Vancouverite look, visit Skoah, a facials-only spa.

Healthy Restaurants in Vancouver

Café Zen is a Kitsilano breakfast favourite where eggs bennies are a specialty. Gather for little brochettes of charcoal grilled meat at Zakkushi, a cozy Japanese place with three locations around town, or visit Stonegrill Restaurant to choose meat and veggie morsels, then cook them up on a stone slab at the table. For vegetarian food, try the earthy, 24-hour The Naam – it's been dishing out tofu, local brews and live music for decades.

Wellness Shopping

Start at Vancouver's home-grown yoga gear sensation lululemon athletic; the Fourth Avenue flagship store holds yoga classes and lifestyle workshops. Then browse for spiritual and health titles at nearby Banyen Books and Sound, the city's biggest new age book store.

Relaxing Vancouver Hotels

At CHI at Shangri-La, experience a holistic approach to wellness where therapies incorporate the Five Elements Theory to obtain maximum benefits.

The Ayurvedic principles used at Vida Wellness Spa at the Sheraton Wall Centre will leave one feeling pampered and revitalized, while at Century Plaza Hotel & Spa, the Absolute Spa experience offers an array of tempting packages including Organic Body Binge, Escape and Instant Gratification.

Vancouver Transportation

SkyTrain's Canada Line whisks visitors from the Vancouver International Airport to downtown in just 25 minutes. With twice daily arrivals on Amtrak Cascades, zen-seeking visitors from Oregon and Washington State can relax, go green, and take in the ocean view on the way up.

Vancouver's downtown core is compact and most sites are linked by public transport. The SkyTrain, Vancouver's rapid transit system, travels to areas in and around the city, with buses and cabs filling in the gaps. The most fun way to travel is via Aquabus and False Creek Ferries, little foot-passenger boats that criss-cross False Creek between downtown, Granville Island and Kitsilano every few minutes.