

GOLFING AND FISHING ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

Vancouver Island is renowned for its golfing and fishing opportunities. Anglers come from all over the world to fish these salmon-filled waters, and golfers flock to the island for its awe-inspiring courses. Victoria and Campbell River are two hot spots for a golfing and fishing vacation.

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Victoria

The charming city of Victoria is a great hub for a golfing/fishing getaway. There is an excellent collection of courses to choose from, and the salmon and halibut fishing in the surrounding waters – especially in the Strait of Juan de Fuca – is excellent.

Golfing in Victoria

Tee it up at Bear Mountain's two Nicklaus-designed courses. The original Mountain Course is one of the toughest courses in town. After a round, enjoy a savoury steak dinner at Panache, or a spa treatment at the Westin Bear Mountain Golf Resort & Spa.

A scenic drive 30 minutes or so north leads to the Arbutus Ridge Golf Club, rated four stars by Golf Digest. Don't miss some of the wineries directly surrounding the course.

Olympic View Golf Club, where Tiger Woods played as an up-and-coming junior golfer, is a peaceful parkland course that incorporates waterfalls and plenty of elevation changes. The 6,600-yard course ends with a strong par-5 with an interesting rock outcropping in the fairway. Rumour has it Tiger had no problem sailing one over the rock, which sits some 280 yards from the tee.

Fishing in Victoria

The waters off Victoria offer incredible sport fishing opportunities. Board a comfortable chartered vessel in Victoria's Inner Harbour, and in just minutes have a hook in the water. Chinook (king) salmon – the biggest of the salmon species – are the main prize. However, halibut, lingcod and rockfish can also be snagged. Enjoy a full- or half-day fishing charter with one of a number of Victoria charter companies. Try Adam's Fishing Charters, which has logged more than 20,000 hours on the water since 1989.

For something different, try a day of freshwater fly-fishing on the Cowichan River (about an hour north of Victoria). Many consider the Cowichan River to be one of the best trout fishing rivers on Vancouver Island. The Cowichan is home to rainbow, cutthroat and brown trout, along with steelhead and three species of salmon: coho, chinook and chum. Hiring a fishing guide is highly recommended, as much of the river winds through private land.

Campbell River

Some call Campbell River "The Salmon Fishing Capital of the World." The town, which is close to a number of classic freshwater fisheries, also boasts great golf opportunities and is located approximately three hours north of Victoria.

Golfing in Campbell River

Storey Creek Golf Club, which is situated approximately 10km/6mi south of Campbell River, is a gem. The course meanders through a quiet wilderness setting and feels far from civilization. After golf, retire to the classic fisherman's haven of Painter's Lodge, just a 20-minute drive from the course.

Half an hour south of Campbell River is the Crown Isle Resort & Golf Community. It boasts a Graham-Cooke-designed course, luxurious course-side lodging, and an opulent clubhouse complete with a vintage car museum inside! The challenging, well-bunkered course features a nice variety of holes and awesome views. After golf, find a spot on the patio of the Timber Room Pub for a pitcher of beer and a heap of nachos.

Fishing in Campbell River

Salmon fishing in the waters off Campbell River is legendary. The area is known for trophy-sized salmon and natural beauty. Guides out of Painter's Lodge, where salmon fishing culture is centre stage, are area experts. After reeling in the big one, celebrate at the Tyee Pub, which overlooks Discovery Passage at Painter's Lodge.

The Campbell River area also boasts world-class freshwater fishing. Try for steelhead on the Gold River (steelhead trout are regarded as one of the fiercest fighters in Canadian waters), or fly-fish for trout or salmon on the Campbell River. The pristine Campbell River is one of the fastest-flowing fishing rivers on Vancouver Island.

Vancouver Island Transportation

Victoria International Airport is located just 20 minutes from downtown. Car rentals are readily available and the city is easy to navigate. If planning to fish/golf up in Campbell River and the North Island, visitors may prefer to fly into Comox Valley Airport. Flights into Comox are available from Calgary and Edmonton (both approximately 90 minutes). The driving time from Victoria to Campbell River is approximately three hours.