



## TRIP IDEAS

# VANCOUVER ISLAND SPA GETAWAYS

A string of award-winning spas on Vancouver Island link the wilderness with the best of spa pampering. Breathe in the smells of cedar, sea spray and massage oil amidst spa scenery that ranges from beaches and islands to seaside urban landscapes.

Enjoy spa treatments such as traditional sports massages, innovative Hawaiian treatments, or a sea salt body scrub. The products used incorporate natural ingredients drawn from local forests, waters and gardens.

For more great Trip Ideas visit [HelloBC.com](http://HelloBC.com)

### Willow Stream Spa in Victoria

Almost any trip to Vancouver Island starts in the vibrant seaside capital of Victoria. Where to stay? The city is full of stylish digs, but why not try the iconic ivy-covered Fairmont Empress Hotel that has been welcoming royalty and celebrities for a century.

Now it also welcomes spa-goers. The Fairmont Empress' Willow Stream Spa, with its gentle waterfall and Greco-Roman vibe, is one of Victoria's top pampering spots. The spa menu lists experiences, not treatments, like the Island Senses Experience. It's a two-hour immersion in the scents and sensations of Vancouver Island, from the sea salt body scrub to the lavender massage.

Guests are encouraged to linger, so make a day of it. Sit by the fire, relax in the mineral pool, or savour aromatherapy in the steam room. Post-spa, wrap those manicured fingers around some fine bone china and indulge in the ultimate Victorian ritual: afternoon tea at the Empress.

### Poets Cove Resort & Spa on Pender Island

Where do Vancouver Islanders go to get away? They head to the Gulf Islands, a scattering of forested, beach-fringed islets tucked between Vancouver and Victoria.

Poets Cove Resort & Spa on South Pender Island is a yacht-friendly marina and resort overlooking the calm waters of Bedwell Harbour. Rejuvenate at the Susurrus Spa, where a sandstone steam cave lies beneath a waterfall and the spa menu offers a variety of treatments from chocolate fondue body wraps to candle-lit massages for two.

Book into one of the stylish cottages nestled among the trees and take in the views from the hot tub on the deck.

Spend the night catching a spectacular sunset and dining on local organic fare at Aurora Restaurant, or chat with visiting yachtsmen at Syrens Bistro, the resort's casual eatery.

On day two, slip those pedicured toes into some cycling shoes and discover South Pender's winding, virtually traffic-free roads. Bike to woodlands and parklands, including part of the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve, and little, uncrowded white-shell beaches.

### Ancient Cedars Spa in Tofino

Vancouver Island's Pacific Rim, a landscape of open ocean, pounding surf and ancient rainforests, is home to one of Canada's top destination spas, recently voted as one of Canada's top year-round spa resorts by readers of Condé Nast Traveler magazine.

At the Ancient Cedars Spa at the Wickaninnish Inn in Tofino, savour a massage for two in a private cedar hut right next to the ocean's spray, or enjoy an invigorating hydrotherapy treatment in the serene Rainforest Haven.

Fancy something a little different? Try Hawaiian Lomi Lomi or the Aboriginal-inspired Hishuk Ish Tsawalk Awakening Treatment.

After hanging loose, try hanging ten. Surf Sister Surf School can help release anyone's inner surfer on some legendary Tofino surf breaks. For something a little more chilled out, join a yoga class at the spa, stroll the driftwood-strewn beach, explore the trails in nearby Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, or hop on a boat to Hot Springs Cove – a remote natural hot springs on the ocean's edge.

### Getting There

BC Ferries sails frequently from Tsawwassen (just south of Vancouver) to Swartz Bay (near Victoria), while the Victoria Clipper passenger ferry sails daily from Seattle directly to Victoria's Inner Harbour. Get a bird's-eye view of the coastline with Harbour Air, Westcoast Air or Helijet, all of whom fly several times a day from Vancouver to Victoria's Inner Harbour.

For Poets Cove on Pender Island, sail with BC Ferries from Victoria or Vancouver, or fly straight to the resort with Harbour Air, Seair Seaplanes or Salt Spring Air.

Heading to Tofino? Take BC Ferries to Nanaimo, and then drive on scenic Highway 4 across the island to Tofino; Orca Airways and Tofino Air fly direct from Vancouver.



SUPER. NATURAL.  
**BRITISH COLUMBIA**  
CANADA