



Tourism BC/Donna Hogg Photo

TRIP IDEAS

VANCOUVER CULINARY ADVENTURES

Wondering where to start in the Vancouver food scene? Try a culinary adventure to combine the best of dining and outdoor activities. Try tours led by a chef or a gourmet kayak tour in Vancouver, or head just an hour or two from downtown to combine rafting and floatplanes with tasty meals. Here are some ideas for chefs-in-the-making and foodies looking to sample new experiences.

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Chef-Led Tours

Join Edible Canada's chef-led tours to sip and snack around Vancouver's most intriguing culinary neighbourhoods in the company of a local food pro. Sample barbecue pork buns and jasmine tea, followed by a dim sum lunch, in the markets and eateries of Canada's biggest Chinatown. Or meet vendors at Granville Island Public Market, where dozens of stalls sell everything from artisanal cheese to chocolate, bagels to blintzes (the Russian take on crepes).

After the tour, stop by Barbara-Jo's Books to Cooks to browse through thousands of popular and rare cookbooks, or take a cooking class in the in-store kitchen and create a tasting menu based out of select cookbooks.

Gourmet Kayak Tours

Start a gourmet kayak tour by ensuring a soft bed post-paddle. One idea: the Renaissance Vancouver Hotel Harbourside (its ocean views and swimming pool mean kayakers are never far from the water).

Then join Lotus Land Tours for a kayaking trip into Indian Arm, a slice of wilderness just 30 minutes from town (the tour's minibus picks up from hotels). Paddle through clear waters and watch for harbour seals, herons, eagles and sea stars, then pull up at an uninhabited island for a salmon barbecue lunch.

Or head to the seaside village of Deep Cove (near North Vancouver) and paddle away with Deep Cove Canoe & Kayak. Follow a day on the water with Salt Spring Island mussels at the village's Arms Reach Bistro.

Cycle to Restaurants

Back in Vancouver, take a bike ride around the 9-km/5.6-mi Stanley Park Seawall before stopping for a pint at the Mill Marine Bistro & Pub's seaside patio. For dinner, try the twice-cooked sablefish at C Restaurant, Chef Robert Clark's waterfront room on the seawall, or head to Blue Water Café + Raw Bar in Yaletown for Qualicum Bay scallops or Dungeness crab. Make a stop at Granville Island's Sandbar Seafood Restaurant to try a local sushi speciality – the "BC Roll" is made with barbecued salmon and cucumber.

When dining, look for the Ocean Wise symbol on the menu. It's a programme launched by the Vancouver Aquarium to help restaurants ensure they are serving sustainably caught seafood.

Whistler Rail and Air Adventure

The Whistler Air Adventure starts with a ride on Rocky Mountaineer's Whistler Sea to Sky

Climb along Howe Sound and into the Coast Mountains. Spend the day in Whistler ziplining, hiking, riding the Peak 2 Peak Gondola and lunching al fresco at a village patio (try the upbeat Caramba! or the organic-leaning Ciao-Thyme Bistro). After that? Soar over glaciers and waterfalls while flying back to Vancouver by floatplane.

Rafting and Lunch

For something even more fast-paced, join REO Rafting for a one-day whitewater adventure complete with a buffet lunch; a choice of five rivers lets rafters pick the speed, from easy floats to raging rapids. Back in town, stop for a tasting at Swirl Wine Store, a Yaletown outlet specializing in BC vintages – it's the next best thing to a trip to the Okanagan Valley.

Dinner Ideas

Savour the best of BC, from Fraser Valley poultry and pork to Salt Spring Island mussels, at Raincity Grill, an English Bay restaurant and one of the first restaurants in the city to focus on regional fare. Or head to view-rich West Vancouver for The Salmon House's Uniquely BC menu. The menu, from the alder-grilled salmon to the local cheese plate, uses ingredients sourced from each of BC's six regions.

For a nightcap, check out Vancouver's Granville Street entertainment district, perhaps with a Champagne cocktail at Ginger 62. If it's a clear night, take the Skyride to the peak of Grouse Mountain and survey the city from a window seat at Altitudes Bistro.

Vancouver Accommodation

Fairmont Pacific Rim Hotel boasts spectacular views of Coal Harbour and the North Shore Mountains, and offers diners the choice of Oru, a Pan-Asian themed restaurant, or a bistro-style experience at Italian cafe and wine bar Giovane.

The Granville Island Hotel is walking distance to the famous Granville Island Public Market, filled with vendors and artisans selling local food and goods, as well as the Granville Island Brewery. The Renaissance Vancouver Harbourside Hotel is located centrally, with easy access to trendy restaurants in Gastown or on Robson Street.

Vancouver Transportation

Getting around Vancouver is a breeze thanks to the Translink system of rapid transit trains, buses and ferries, including the Canada Line from the airport to downtown. One fun way to get to Granville Island is by Aquabus or False Creek Ferries, little foot-passenger ferries that dart around scenic False Creek harbour.