

Aboriginal dance performance at Museum of Anthropology



Tourism BC/Kevin Arnold photo

## TRIP IDEAS

# VANCOUVER VACATION

Vancouver really is one of the greatest cities in the world to live in or visit; it's also one of the best places to shop, hike or bike with some of the world's sportiest urbanites. Explore neighbourhoods that range from historic to beachside, and be sure to sample some of Vancouver's award-winning restaurants.

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## Stanley Park Seawall

Pedal (or walk, or in-line skate) along the 9-km/5.6-mi Stanley Park Seawall path, and take in views of the downtown skyline, the North Shore mountains and English Bay. One recommended stop: The Vancouver Aquarium for a dolphin show and a visit with the otters and belugas.

## Granville Island

Hop a mini foot-passenger ferry and head to art-filled Granville Island. Shop for hand-thrown pots, crazy hats and silver jewellery, or watch a glassblower, a boat builder, a goldsmith or a totem carver at work. Mix with art students, buskers and locals at the public market. Grab a scrumpet or a thali from the food court, or savour a long lunch and a marina view at Bridges or Docks Restaurant at the Granville Island Hotel.

## Gastown

Wander through Victorian nooks, crannies and hidden courtyards in Gastown, Vancouver's oldest neighbourhood. Gastown has recently morphed into one of the city's trendiest districts, with an influx of nightclubs, chic restaurants (try the epicurean charcuterie at Salt Tasting Room or a pint of Guinness at the Irish Heather), vintage clothiers and local design boutiques (flick through the racks at Dream or the Block).

## Yaletown

Yaletown, a stylish neighbourhood with 19th-century brick-lined warehouses and cobbled streets, is home to galleries, design studios and many of the city's top eateries. Old loading docks are now restaurant patios, so in summer whole streets come alive with al fresco dining.

## Chinatown

In Chinatown, browse the herbalists and tea shops (Ten Ren Tea & Ginseng on Main Street has hundreds of blends), then admire the balance of yin and yang in the serene Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden, a traditional Ming Dynasty scholar's garden. On summer weekends, shop for Asian styles and sip bubble tea at the Chinatown Night Market. Or head south to the city of Richmond to check out the popular, multicultural Summer Night Market.

## Kitsilano

Explore funky new age shops and sidewalk cafés in laid back Kitsilano ("Kits" to the locals), then spend some relaxation time on Kits Beach before taking in some beachside Shakespeare at the Bard on the Beach festival, held every summer at Kits' Vanier Park.

## Museum and Gardens

The Museum of Anthropology at UBC displays one of the world's best collections of Northwest Coast First Nations art. Step into the Great Hall to see towering cedar poles and admire Bill Reid's iconic "The Raven and the First Men" sculpture, then wander outside among totems and Haida houses. The

museum is about 20 minutes from downtown Vancouver by bus or car. While at the UBC campus, stroll the lakeside pathways at the Nitobe Memorial Garden, a traditional Japanese garden near the museum; explore the rainforest canopy on the Greenheart Canopy Walkway at the UBC Botanical Garden; or see a full blue whale skeleton at the Beatty Biodiversity Museum.

## Vancouver Restaurants

Vancouver's dining scene is famous for fresh seafood, top Chinese cuisine and a wealth of locally sourced fare (the 100 Mile Diet – eating only what can be raised within a 100-mile radius – was invented right here). Sample Chef Robert Clark's twice-cooked sablefish at the waterside C Restaurant, or try the almost exclusively local fare at the beach-view Raincity Grill.

For legendary sushi, grab a seat at Tojo's and ask chef Hidekazu Tojo for "omakase," meaning "chef's choice." Chinese food is serious business in a city where a third of the population can claim Asian roots. Kirin Restaurant and Sun Sui Wah are top choices for fine dining, Asian style. For cheap eats, head to Go Fish (near Granville Island) for a salmon taccone, or grab a Japadog – hot dogs topped with seaweed, plum sauce or edamame – from a downtown cart.

## Shopping

On Robson Street, cafés and people-watching mix with boutiques and chains (think Gap, Club Monaco and Banana Republic). For local designs and great deals, fashionistas like Main Street around 25th Avenue. Top finds here include Barefoot Contessa and Eugene Choo. Head for South Granville Rise (Granville Street between 5th and 16th avenues) for designer goods and galleries; try Bau-Xi Gallery (Canadian contemporary art) and Douglas Reynolds Gallery (northwest coast Aboriginal art and jewellery).

## Vancouver Accommodation

Looking for luxury? The stylish Hyatt Regency Vancouver Hotel and the refurbished heritage St. Regis Hotel are located in the heart of Vancouver, close to shopping and world-class dining.

Delta Vancouver Suites' central downtown location means easy access to attractions such as Science World, the Vancouver Aquarium and Chinatown.

## Vancouver Transportation

Vancouver's downtown core is compact and most sites are linked by public transport. The SkyTrain, Vancouver's rapid transit system, travels in and around the city, with buses and cabs filling in the gaps. A 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. SkyTrain's Canada Line whisks visitors from the airport to downtown in just 25 minutes.



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