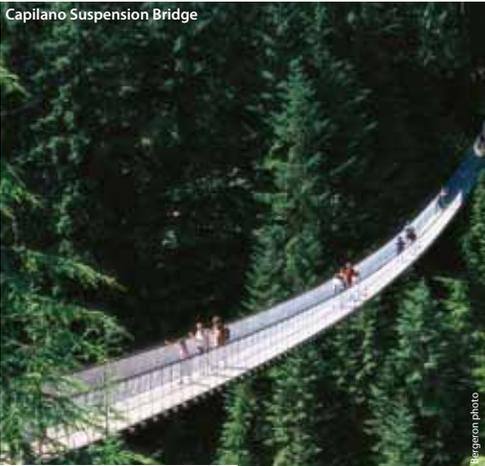


Capilano Suspension Bridge



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TRIP IDEAS

FAMILY ACTIVITIES IN VANCOUVER

Family activities in Vancouver range from visiting mountain-top grizzlies to tasting 218 flavours of gelato, or exploring a whole building full of toy stores.

For more great Trip Ideas visit HelloBC.com

Stanley Park

See a dolphin show, walk through a rainforest and visit the otters at the Vancouver Aquarium, then cool off at the nearby Variety Kids Water Park; it's on the waterfront just past the picnic area. Ride a miniature train through the forest, climb on a fire truck or swoosh down the water slide at Second Beach. Tour the park by horse-drawn wagon or ride bikes all the way around the seawall – families will never run out of things to do in Vancouver's favourite park.

Granville Island

Ride a mini foot-passenger ferry to Granville Island, then get soaked at the free water park. The Kids' Market is a whole building full of toy stores and play areas; there's even a ball room upstairs. Wander the island to find performing buskers, jugglers or clowns, or maybe a glass blower or a boat builder. Catch a show at Carousel Theatre (it specializes in theatre for young people). Snacks? The public market has lots of healthy stuff, plus treats (two words: Candy Kitchen).

North Shore

Swing and sway on the Capilano Suspension Bridge, hanging 70m/230ft above the Capilano River. Want more excitement? Walk high above the Capilano River on Cliffwalk, a series of cantilevered and suspended platforms attached to a granite cliff face. Both are at Capilano Suspension Bridge park on Vancouver's North Shore.

Top the day off with a ride on North America's biggest aerial tramway to the top of Grouse Mountain. Check out the views of the city, watch lumberjack shows, try ziplining, and don't forget to visit Grinder and Coola, two orphaned grizzlies living in a mountain-top sanctuary.

Beaches

Take the buckets, spades and skim boards to Spanish Bank or Locarno on Vancouver's west side for warm shallow water and wide stretches of sand, or check out the huge pool, beach volleyball and playground at busier Kitsilano Beach. In Stanley Park, Second Beach has the playground, but Third Beach has better sand.

Museums

For rainy day activities in Vancouver, visit one of the museums:

- Lift a 200-kg/440-lb hippopotamus, watch scientists blow things up, and catch a big screen movie at Science World.

- Catch a star show, feel the heat of exploding star material in the GroundStation Canada theatre and see what the family would look like as aliens at H.R. Macmillan Space Centre.

- Drive a tugboat, check out the historic boats moored nearby, and see the famous RCMP ship the St. Roch at the Vancouver Maritime Museum.

- Examine artifacts from the past, see glowing neon and watch a movie of Vancouver in 1907 at the Museum of Vancouver.

Family Friendly Restaurants

Grab a big juicy burger and fries from local chainlet Vera's Burgers (with outlets around town) or newcomer Nimby Burger near Kitsilano Beach. Little Nest, on Commercial Drive, has a play area and organic, locally sourced food. The menu changes often, but count on whole wheat baguette sandwiches, organic salads and peanut-free treats.

For treats, head for La Casa Gelato on Venables Street near Vancouver's funky Commercial Drive neighbourhood, and try to pick one of the 218 flavours available.

Other local treats? Bubble tea, fruity drinks laced with big gooey bubbles sucked through an extra fat straw; and Nanaimo bars, a home-grown chocolate, coconut and icing concoction available at bake shops around town.

Family Friendly Hotels

The Four Seasons Hotel Vancouver provides a range of amenities for families, including a resort-style indoor and outdoor pool, cribs, high chairs, strollers and babysitting services. The Best Western Plus Chateau Granville Hotel offers a Family Room Suite package that can accommodate up to five family members at the same price.

Vancouver Transportation

Trains, boats and buses: kids love them, Vancouver has them. Ride the SkyTrain to Richmond or New Westminster for a roof-top view of the city (grab the seat at the front of the train to feel like the driver), or sail on the SeaBus for a water level view of the working harbour.

Take a ferry tour around False Creek or, depending on the ages involved, walk, bike, in-line skate or push the stroller along Vancouver's seawall path; it follows the waterfront for 22km/13.7mi. Got a stroller? No problem. Vancouver is one of the world's most accessible cities, even on public transport.



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