



Destination Guide: Vancouver



Top Picks From AAA Travel Editors - Travel information you can trust

AAA Destination Guide: Official AAA maps, travel information and top picks

AAA Destination Guide: Vancouver includes trip-planning information covering AAA recommended attractions and restaurants, exclusive member discounts, maps and more.



Vancouver has won many accolades as one of the top cities in the Americas, and for very good reasons. Set against a backdrop of majestic snow-capped mountains, the city lies on a peninsula that juts into the Pacific Ocean. This spectacular setting allows for a plethora of outdoor adventures, including skiing, sailing, hiking, scuba diving, fishing and more.

Explore cosmopolitan Vancouver's diverse neighborhoods, ranging from trendy Yaletown to dynamic Gastown to Granville Island with its outdoor food market, where more than 50 permanent vendors vie for your attention with such treats as sourdough baguettes, homemade goat cheese, spicy sausages and crisp apples. If you're in the mood for fine dining, indulge in fresh regional seafood, a Vancouver specialty, at one of the city's first-rate restaurants.

Must-sees include Stanley Park and Grouse Mountain. Stanley Park is a veritable oasis with its beaches, gardens, woodlands, and splendid views of the waterfront, while the view from a gondola atop Grouse Mountain will leave you breathless. For a memento of your trip, shop for some original First Nations art at local galleries. With all that Vancouver has to

offer, your most difficult task will be choosing what to do during your visit. But remember, you can always come back.

Essentials

One of the world's great outdoor food markets, Granville Island Market is the place to go for a slice of Vancouver life as well as the freshest fruits, vegetables, cheeses, meats, candy, baked goods and flowers.

Downtown's Robson Street beckons shoppers with its trendy designer boutiques, bookstores, jewelry shops and more. When you need a break, grab a seat and a cappuccino at a bistro or coffee shop and watch the world go by.

Enjoy fabulous waterside views while strolling, bicycling or rollerblading around the perimeter sea wall of Stanley Park. Beaches, gardens and woodland glades complete this 405-hectare (1,000-acre) urban sanctuary.

White beluga whales steal the show at Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre; competing for attention are the center's other 8,000 marine animals including sea lions, sharks and walruses as well as rainforest creatures such as iguanas and crocodiles.

On a clear day, you can see forever at Grouse Mountain; the Skyride, an aerial cable car, presents a breathtaking view of Vancouver and the harbor.

Spot pods of orcas and other sea creatures on a whale-watching cruise.



Essentials Map



Get maps and turn-by-turn directions using [TripTik Travel Planner on AAA.com](#)

Dine in restaurants that rival New York's; an array of multicultural cuisines is available, but don't leave town without savoring mouth-watering Pacific Northwest and Asian cuisine featuring freshly caught seafood.

Discover one of Vancouver's trendiest neighborhoods; Yaletown has earned comparisons to New York's SoHo and rightfully so. Once a warehouse district, the area now attracts the young and hip with its of-the-moment boutiques, galleries, loft apartments, pubs and outdoor cafés.

Confront your fear of heights with a walk across the Capilano Suspension Bridge in North Vancouver; it sways 70 metres (230 ft.) above the Capilano River Canyon.

Essentials Details - Get additional information on [AAA.com](#)



- GEM Attraction offers a *Great Experience for Members*



- Exclusive AAA member discounts available

1. Stanley Park

7500 Stanley Park Dr
Vancouver, BC V6G 1Z4
Phone: (604) 681-6728



3. Grouse Mountain

6400 Nancy Greene Way
North Vancouver, BC V7R 4K9
Phone: (604) 980-9311



2. Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre

845 Avison Way
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X6
Phone: (604) 659-3474



4. Capilano Suspension Bridge

3735 Capilano Rd
North Vancouver, BC V7R 4J1
Phone: (877) 985-7474



Vancouver in 3 Days

Three days is barely enough time to get to know any major destination. But AAA travel editors suggest these activities to make the most of your time in Vancouver.

Vancouver in 3 Days – Day 1 Map



Get maps and turn-by-turn directions using TripTik Travel Planner on AAA.com

Day 1: Morning

Kick off your tour of Vancouver at the Vancouver Lookout at Harbour Centre. A glass elevator zips to the top of this 177-metre-tall (581-ft.) building, where 360-degree views of the city skyline, the North Shore Mountains, English Bay, Coal Harbour, Stanley Park and the Port of Vancouver take your breath away.

Day 1 Details - Get additional information on AAA.com;


AAA Diamond Rating information available on AAA.com/Diamonds

 - GEM Attraction offers a *Great Experience for Members*

1. Vancouver Lookout at Harbour Centre
555 W Hastings St
Vancouver, BC V6B 4N6
Phone: (604) 689-0421

2. Stanley Park
7500 Stanley Park Dr
Vancouver, BC V6G 1Z4
Phone: (604) 681-6728


3. Stanley Park Horse-drawn Tours
7500 Stanley Park Dr
Vancouver, BC V6G 1Z4
Phone: (604) 681-5115

4. Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre
845 Avison Way
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X6
Phone: (604) 659-3474


5. The Fish House in Stanley Park
8901 Stanley Park Dr
Vancouver, BC V6G 3E2
Phone: (604) 681-7275

6. Chinatown
East Pender St & Gore St
Vancouver, BC V6B 6M4
Phone: (604) 658-8850

7. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden
578 Carrall St
Vancouver, BC V6B 5K2
Phone: (604) 662-3207

8. Pink Pearl Chinese Restaurant
1132 E Hastings St
Vancouver, BC V6A 1S2
Phone: (604) 253-4316

9. Wild Rice
117 W Pender St
Vancouver, BC V6B 1S4
Phone: (604) 642-2882

10. Yaletown Brewing Company
1111 Mainland St
Vancouver, BC V6B 5P2
Phone: (604) 681-2739

11. Sandman Hotel Vancouver City Center
180 W Georgia St
Vancouver, BC
Phone: (604) 681-2211

Catch a bus to your next destination (Translink offers bus service to points throughout Vancouver). [Stanley Park](#) boasts dense forests, beautiful waterfront views, beaches, gardens, totem poles and a children's farmyard on its 405 hectares (1,000 acres). Watch or join joggers, cyclists and inline skaters as they follow the park's 8.8-kilometre-long (5.5-ft.) sea wall. Or explore the park on a leisurely 1-hour trolley ride, offered by [Stanley Park Horse-drawn Tours](#).

Afternoon

Stanley Park also is home to the [Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre](#), where you'll meet beluga whales, sea lions, otters, dolphins, sharks and other creatures of the deep. When hunger strikes, you won't have to go far; lunch on floppingly fresh seafood and raw oysters at [The Fish House in Stanley Park](#). Afternoon tea, served daily at the restaurant from 2-4, features delightful finger sandwiches, miniature desserts, fragrant teas and cordials.

Venturing out of Stanley Park, head east on W. Georgia Street, then east on W. Pender Street to North America's second-largest and very vibrant [Chinatown](#), between Carrall and Gore streets. Snap up some souvenirs at colorful emporiums; choose from Chinese décor, crafts, curios, jewelry, foods and fashions as well as bamboo, jade, brass and silk goods. Note the poppy-red street signs accentuated with golden dragons and Chinese lanterns.

Escape the bustling crowds at Chinatown's [Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden](#). Experience peace and harmony as you stroll the paths of this Ming Dynasty-style garden accented with pagodas, plum trees, bamboo and jade-hued ponds.

Evening

When in Chinatown, eat where the locals do. Fresh local seafood and vegetables hold center stage at the 700-seat [Pink Pearl Chinese Restaurant](#). If you arrive earlier in the day, sample the dim sum; it's considered one of the best in the area. [Wild Rice](#) serves up a modern interpretation of Asian cuisine and is open late for night owls.

If you love the nightlife and you love to boogie, and you've got some surplus energy, Vancouver clubs run the gamut from frenetic discos, intimate lounges and swanky cabarets to beery pubs, sports bars and stadium concerts. You'll find these just about anywhere in the metro area, but some neighborhoods offer clusters of clubs if you prefer to park once and barhop the rest of the night. Downtown's Granville Street is where the 24-hour party people go; try Crush Champagne Lounge, Stone Temple Nightclub and Tonic.

Gastown, Kitsilano and Yaletown also are popular with clubgoers. Gastown boasts The Drink, The Modern, Shine and Sonar, all places to drink, dance and be merry. Kitsilano (or Kits, as the natives call it) is home to the well-known Cellar Restaurant and Jazz Bar which hosts local and international talent. Wondering where to watch some good flamenco dancing in Vancouver? The Kino Café on Cambie Street is just the place; sip some sangria and clap along to the music.

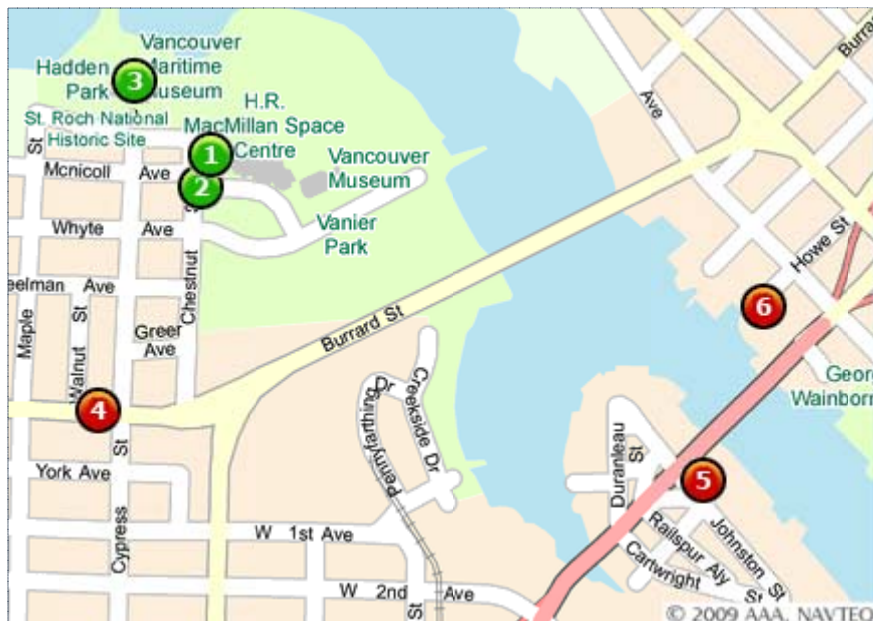
Finally, Yaletown, home base for the city's young, stylish professionals, is where you'll find hipper-than-thou hangouts. Bar None on Hamilton Street is a SoHo-style spot with a cigar lounge and martini bar, while [Yaletown Brewing Company](#) is popular with the 9-to-5 crowd for microbrews and burgers; it has a homey feel complete with a fireplace and pool tables. If you just want to trip the light fantastic, hit Richard's on Richard's—its popular with the locals for its large dance floor and live DJs; be sure to look sharp as there's a dress code. On Seymour Street is AuBar; Vancouver is known as Hollywood North and it's not unusual to find celebs at this au courant club. Go four blocks east and you'll find a different vibe at The Shark Club, a sports bar in the [Sandman Hotel Vancouver City Center](#) on W. Georgia Street; masculine, modern décor, pool tables, big-screen TVs and hockey fans fill the joint. After 10 p.m., live DJs and go-go dancers get the party started.

Day 2: Morning

Take the Aquabus ferry across False Creek to Granville Island. At Granville Island Market, peruse stalls showcasing every type of edible imaginable—all locally produced—and gather a variety of scrumptious

goodies for breakfast on the go. A warm, chewy bagel, some sweet strawberries, and a steaming cup of freshly roasted coffee will fuel you for your second day in Vancouver.

Vancouver in 3 Days – Day 2 Map



Get maps and turn-by-turn directions using [TripTik Travel Planner on AAA.com](#)

While you're munching, settle on a bench near the market to watch lively street performers, including musicians, jugglers and flamethrowers. Afterwards, make your way to Granville Island's shops and studios, where you can observe artisans creating jewelry, pottery, glass, textiles, furniture and works of art.

Afternoon

From Granville Island, hop back on the Aquabus to Vanier Park, home to the [Museum of Vancouver](#), [H.R. MacMillan Space Centre](#) and the [Vancouver Maritime Museum](#). At the Vancouver Maritime Museum, tour a 1960s submarine and a 1940s schooner, the first vessel to circumnavigate North America.

Between museum visits, grab a bite at [Vera's Burger Shack](#), half a kilometre (.3 mi.) south on Cornwall Avenue. Expect a well-worth-it wait; the award-winning hamburgers are so popular they can't make them fast enough.

Stop back at the Museum of Vancouver; its wealth of exhibits focuses on the region's art and history from the days of the original Vancouverites -- the First Nations tribes -- to the 20th century. If time permits, engage in some stargazing at the planetarium or travel through space on a full-motion simulator at the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre.

Day 2 Details - Get additional information on [AAA.com](#);

AAA Diamond Rating information available on [AAA.com/Diamonds](#)



- GEM Attraction offers a *Great Experience for Members*



- Exclusive AAA member discounts available

1. Museum of Vancouver

1100 Chestnut St
Vancouver, BC V6J 3J9
Phone: (604) 736-4431



2. H.R. MacMillan Space Centre

1100 Chestnut St
Vancouver, BC V6J 3J9
Phone: (604) 738-7827



3. Vancouver Maritime Museum

1905 Ogden Ave
Vancouver, BC V6J 1A3
Phone: (604) 257-8300

4. Vera's Burger Shack

1925 Cornwall Ave
Vancouver, BC V6J 1C8
Phone: (604) 228-8372

5. The Sandbar Seafood Restaurant

1535 Johnston St
Vancouver, BC V6H 3R9
Phone: (604) 669-9030

6. C Restaurant

2-1600 Howe St
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2L9
Phone: (604) 681-1164



Vancouver in 3 Days

Map and Details - *Get additional information on AAA.com;*

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- GEM Attraction offers a *Great Experience for Members*



- Exclusive AAA member discounts available

1. Grouse Mountain

6400 Nancy Greene Way
North Vancouver, BC V7R 4K9
Phone: (604) 980-9311



2. Capilano Suspension Bridge

3735 Capilano Rd
North Vancouver, BC V7R 4J1
Phone: (877) 985-7474



3. Moustache Café

129 W 2nd St
North Vancouver, BC V7M 1C5
Phone: (604) 987-8461

4. Cactus Club Café

1598 Pemberton Ave
North Vancouver, BC V7P 2S2
Phone: (604) 986-5776

5. The Edge Bistro

3135 Edgemont Blvd
North Vancouver, BC V7R 2N7
Phone: (604) 985-9125

6. Harbour Cruises

501 Denman St
Vancouver, BC V6G 2W9
Phone: (604) 688-7246

Evening

For your evening repast, choose from Vancouver's vast selection of fine restaurants, many with picturesque waterfront views. Some of the best include The Sandbar Seafood Restaurant on Granville Island, or C Restaurant just across the Granville Street Bridge.

After dinner, catch a hockey game when the Canucks take to the ice at General Motors Place, 800 Griffiths Way. Alternatively, cap off your day at a high-energy nightclub, an Irish pub or a concert by local or international performers; Vancouver's thriving nightlife caters to all tastes. See Day One's list for suggestions.

Day 3: Morning

Board the SeaBus downtown to cross Burrard Inlet, then it's on to Lonsdale Quay, where a Translink bus will take you to Grouse Mountain in North Vancouver. Depending on the season, activities include skiing, ice-skating, sleigh rides, helicopter tours, a lumberjack show...and that's

just the tip of the iceberg. The panorama of downtown Vancouver from the mountain is simply sublime.

About 3 kilometres (1.9 mi.) from Grouse Mountain, the 137-metre-long (450-ft.) [Capilano Suspension Bridge](#) challenges you to tread 70 metres (230 ft.) above the Capilano River through the rain forest. After you brave the bridge, take in the totem pole park, gardens and First Nations dancers.

Afternoon

North Vancouver has a number of quaint bistros to quell your lunchtime appetite. The [Moustache Cafe](#) specializes in Pacific Rim cuisine, the [Cactus Club Café](#) has casual fare and wild BC salmon, and [The Edge Bistro](#) features Mediterranean cuisine and delectable tiramisu.

Head back to downtown Vancouver and explore some of the city's many distinctive neighborhoods. You'll find funky boutiques, bookstores and coffee shops on Kitsilano's West Fourth Avenue, while antique shops, art galleries, pubs and street vendors line Gastown's cobblestone streets. Formerly an industrial area, the trendy Yaletown district now houses swank furniture and clothing shops, cafes and hip nightclubs. Robson Street, between Burrard and Jervis streets, has the feel of an outdoor mall with such well-known chains as Banana Republic and BCBG Max Azria as well as a wide selection of popular restaurants and coffeehouses.

Evening

Marvel at downtown's nighttime skyline ablaze with lights as you tour Vancouver's waters on a dinner cruise provided by [Harbour Cruises](#); you'll be treated to a tasty West Coast-style buffet and live music. Watch an awe-inspiring sunset over the Pacific Ocean and check out the picture-postcard scenery, including the snow-sprinkled North Shore Mountains and West Vancouver's shoreline.

Restaurants

Some of Vancouver's finest restaurants can be found downtown. Freshly caught seafood and Pacific Rim cuisine are the mainstays of many of

them; originality and creativity are chief ingredients in all. On trendy Denman Street in Vancouver's West End, with excellent views of English Bay, the name of [Rain City Grill](#) was chosen as a not-so-subtle reference to the misty Vancouver climate. Menu selections at this true Pacific Northwest eatery are created with the freshest regionally produced fish, meats and vegetables. In keeping with the Pacific theme, there is an extensive selection of wines from British Columbia, Washington and Oregon as well as wines from California. If you're bound and determined to drive, take advantage of the evening valet parking service as parking can be very difficult to find on your own.

On Robson Street, a window-shopper's dream, [CinCin](#) (pronounced chin-chin), with its bustling atmosphere, is known as the place to see and be seen. Film stars like to dine here, so have a look around and see if you can spot someone famous. The large, open-kitchen concept features a unique wood-fired brick oven where juicy rotisserie chicken turns slowly. The special wood-oven pizzas fill the restaurant with a delightful aroma. For meat lovers, fresh seafood and meats are grilled over alderwood, enhancing them with a unique flavor. During warmer weather the heated outdoor terrace is open and overlooks colorful Robson Street below.

[Joe Fortes Seafood & Chop House](#) is a popular San Francisco-style seafood grill found on one of Vancouver's busiest downtown corners just off Robson Street. Just who is Joe Fortes? Vancouver's beloved turn-of-the-20th-century hero was one of the city's first lifeguards who taught hundreds of local children how to swim. When he died in 1923 a monument was erected in his honor at English Bay which reads simply "Little children loved him." Today, the classically styled Canadian seafood restaurant and bustling oyster bar named after Joe is one of the city's hidden pleasures. In a typical year more than 300,000 fresh-shucked oysters will be served and more than 100 types of just-caught fish are grilled to perfection. Try Joe's signature hand-cut steaks or Salt Spring Island lamb chops. Sunday brunches feature lobster benedict, seafood hash and live entertainment. One special highlight is a delightful rooftop garden open year-round.

Hervé Martin, the chef/owner of [The Hermitage](#), received his training in France and served as private chef to the King of Belgium as well as head chef in some of the finest hotels in Europe. This charming French restaurant on Robson Street combines a casual yet refined atmosphere with a regularly changing menu, reflecting a Burgundian style mixed with the bounty of the Pacific Northwest. In warmer weather, a courtyard patio invites you to dine alfresco. The highly rated wine cellar includes fine burgundies from the owner's family vineyard in Chamilly, France.

[Bacchus Restaurant](#) has been a CAA/AAA Four Diamond Award winner since 1998. This luxurious restaurant is in [The Wedgewood Hotel & Spa](#), a swank boutique hotel in downtown Vancouver. The windows in the piano lounge open after dusk in the balmy summer months, providing diners and lounge patrons a great spot for people watching. The creative menu with a heavy French accent features *à la carte* menu items or a three-course *prix fixe* menu, with or without wine pairings from its spectacular globe-spanning wine list. Choose from delectable dishes such as pan-seared British Columbia salmon or grilled Alberta "Sterling Silver" beef tenderloin. Afternoon tea and brunch are served on weekends. You might start brunch with a kir royale and progress to such treats as banana and pecan pancakes and sausage of wild boar.

Voted Best New Vancouver Restaurant for 2002 in a local opinion poll, [Glowbal Grill & Satay Bar](#) is in the funky Yaletown district, Vancouver's hot mecca for food and fashion. This hip grill's mid-century modern décor with illuminated cubes, groovy pendant lamps and mod carpet draws both the young and the young-at-heart. Wonderful West Coast regional cuisine is influenced by different cultures and flavors from around the world. Sizzling satays, tuna tartare and grilled beef tenderloin are just a few items sure to please your palate. The most recent addition to Glowbal is the sexy Afterglow, a 50-seat lounge that is "the" place to be on weekends.

At the end of Davie Street adjacent to False Creek, [Provence Marinaside](#) serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. Named after a small marina nearby, this restaurant's main emphasis is on freshly caught seafood, and lots of

it. An extensive antipasti menu includes grilled items such as squid, eggplant, asparagus and rosemary polenta. A raw oyster bar presents a sizable selection to fans of the bivalve mollusks. If you prefer the fruits of the sea grilled, steamed or seared, wise choices include seared ahi tuna and wild Pacific sea tiger prawns Provençal. Give yourself plenty of time to peruse the voluminous wine list.

The [Shaughnessy Restaurant at VanDusen Garden](#) sits amid the 22-hectare (55-acre) [VanDusen Botanical Garden](#) and features creative contemporary West Coast cuisine. You'll find fresh ingredients from the garden in many of the lunch and dinner entrées. Try the afternoon tea or the daily specials of homemade soups, or ask about the chicken pot pie, a longtime favorite.

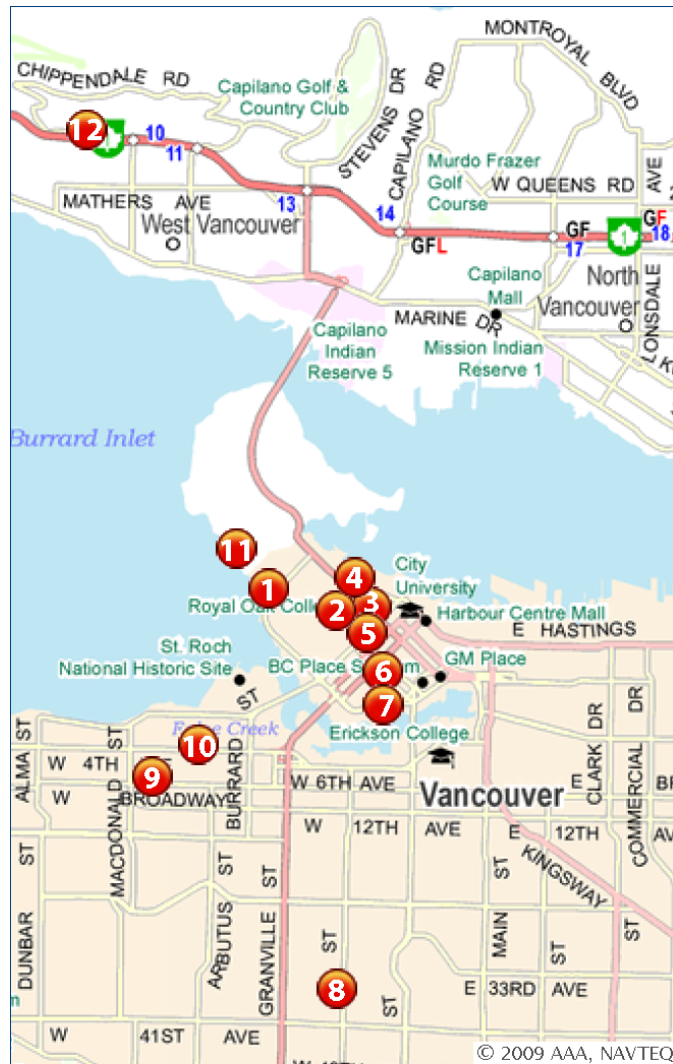


[Lumiere](#), about a 10-minute drive west of downtown Vancouver, is a wonderful award-winning restaurant presenting the ultimate dining experience. Chef/owner Robert Feenie has trained with some of the most notable chefs in the world, including Emile Jung at Au Crocodile in Alsace and Jean-Georges Vongerichten at New York's Jean-Georges. Feenie also won the Iron Chef America contest in 2005 and is a regular on Canada's Food Network TV. The preset menu with a

choice of nine or 13 courses changes monthly at this formal French restaurant; wine pairings are optional and a vegetarian version is available. You also may order from an *à la carte* menu; seasonal selections might include split pea crusted halibut or *sous vide* saddle of lamb.

Regularly voted Vancouver's most popular restaurant, advance reservations are the only way in the door at [Bishop's](#), west of downtown. In business for more than 20 years, the restaurant serves contemporary North American cuisine. It's an intimate, very upscale room on two levels where presentation of food is a painstaking performance. The menu

Restaurants Map



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weekly but always includes the season's freshest ingredients and local organic produce. Entrées might include Fraser Valley lamb, roasted Cowichan Bay Farm duck breast or Dungeness crab cake. Service is very attentive but sometimes demands a wait. Owner John Bishop is a well-known fixture on the restaurant scene and a consummate host who often caters to a film star crowd.

**Restaurants Details - Get additional information on [AAA.com](#);
AAA Diamond Rating information available on [AAA.com/Diamonds](#)**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Rain City Grill </p> <p>1193 Denman St Vancouver, BC V6G 2N1 Phone: (604) 685-7337</p> <p>2. CINCIN </p> <p>1154 Robson St Vancouver, BC V6E 1B5 Phone: (604) 688-7338</p> <p>3. Joe Fortes Seafood & Chop House </p> <p>777 Thurlow St Vancouver, BC V6E 3V5 Phone: (604) 669-1940</p> <p>4. Bacchus Restaurant </p> <p>845 Hornby St Vancouver, BC V6Z 1V1 Phone: (604) 608-5319</p> <p>5. The Hermitage </p> <p>115/1025 Robson St Vancouver, BC V6E 4A9 Phone: (604) 689-3237</p> <p>6. Glowbal Grill & Satay Bar </p> <p>1079 Mainland St Vancouver, BC V6B 5P9 Phone: (604) 602-0835</p> | <p>7. Provence Marinaside </p> <p>1177 Marinaside Crescent Vancouver, BC V6Z 2Y3 Phone: (604) 681-4144</p> <p>8. Shaughnessy Restaurant At VanDusen Garden </p> <p>5251 Oak St Vancouver, BC V6M 4H1 Phone: (604) 261-0011</p> <p>9. Lumiere </p> <p>2551 W Broadway Vancouver, BC V6K 2E9 Phone: (604) 739-8185</p> <p>10. Bishop's </p> <p>2183 W 4th Ave Vancouver, BC V6K 1N7 Phone: (604) 738-2025</p> <p>11. The Fish House in Stanley Park </p> <p>8901 Stanley Park Dr Vancouver, BC V6G 3E2 Phone: (604) 681-7275</p> <p>12. Salmon House on the Hill </p> <p>2229 Folkestone Way West Vancouver, BC V7S 2Y6 Phone: (604) 926-3212</p> |
|--|---|

The Fish House in Stanley Park is an urban gem and can be found in Stanley Park next to the tennis courts. Reminiscent of a lush, old country estate and surrounded by vibrant gardens, the restaurant has earned raves from both patrons and media for its “seafresh” seafood menu. Several favorites are worth noting: the seafood bowl, a Pacific Northwest bouillabaisse of shellfish and local fresh fish; flaming prawns flambéed tableside or the grilled wild salmon with maple glaze. A daily fresh sheet provides an abundant choice of simply prepared local and imported fish. Afternoon tea is served daily from 2 to 4. While this is a celebration of a British tradition, this event offers a new twist on the classic tea sandwiches and scones.

Across English Bay in West Vancouver on your way to the Horseshoe Bay Ferry Terminal or heading to Whistler, the hilltop Salmon House on the Hill restaurant has been creating some of the best Pacific Rim cuisine for more than 23 years. Dramatic panoramic views of English Bay and the downtown core can be seen from every table. Fish and meats are smoked or flame-grilled and flavored with smoky-sweet green alderwood. Barbecued fresh BC salmon is Salmon House’s signature dish along with a wide selection of Pacific Northwest wines. You simply can’t beat the views or the food here if you’re looking for a truly memorable Vancouver experience.

Attractions

In a city with dozens of attractions, you may have trouble deciding where to spend your time. Here are the highlights for this destination, as chosen by AAA editors. GEMs are “Great Experiences for Members.”

A good way to start your visit is with an eagle’s-eye view of Vancouver as seen from Vancouver Lookout at Harbour Centre. You’ll be whisked up 169 metres (554 ft.) via glass elevators to the observation deck, where you’ll see sweeping views of the city as well as its shimmering harbor and snow-dusted mountains. In North Vancouver, you can ride an aerial cable car to view Vancouver from a vantage point of 1,100 metres (3,609 ft.) at AAA GEM attraction Grouse Mountain. The view is nothing short of

spectacular and there’s plenty to do, including helicopter and sleigh rides, guided forest strolls, a lumberjack show and a wildlife refuge. Also in North Vancouver is AAA GEM attraction the Capilano Suspension Bridge, where you’ll cautiously walk 70 metres (230 ft.) above a 300-year-old rain forest. Watch First Nations artists carve totem poles at the carving center.

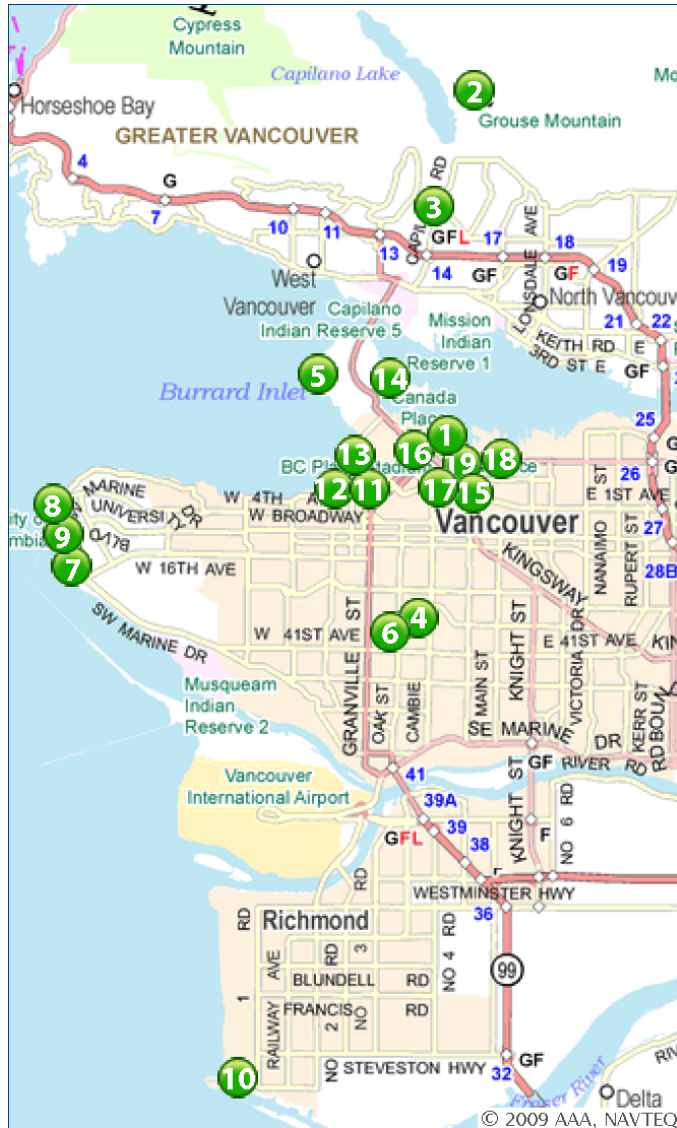
The highest point in Vancouver is the incongruously named Little Mountain at Queen Elizabeth Park. You’ll marvel at the 360-degree view of the city’s skyline from Little Mountain’s lookouts. The park also contains a dry quarry garden and an arboretum with specimens of nearly all of Canada’s trees.

Vancouver’s moderate climate and frequent but light rains create the perfect environment for lush gardens throughout the city. Stanley Park, a AAA GEM attraction, gives credence to this fact with its elegant manicured gardens interspersed with tangles of old-growth forests. The park, surrounded on three sides by water, also features several beaches and is bordered by a 10-kilometre (6.5-mi.) seawall. Horse-drawn carriage rides are a pleasing way to take in this bit of heaven on earth.

VanDusen Botanical Garden is another AAA GEM attraction that has taken full advantage of the local climate. You’ll find 40 themed gardens, including a Rhododendron Walk and a Sino Himalayan Garden, as you wander the meandering paths of this 22-hectare (55-acre) paradise. A highlight is a hedge maze made of 3,000 pyramidal cedars. The 28 hectares (69 acres) of UBC Botanical Garden at the University of British Columbia include the Asian Garden, where you can admire the rare blue Himalayan poppy. A native British Columbian garden, alpine garden, 16th-century monastic herb garden and traditional Japanese tea and stroll garden are other treasures you’ll unearth.

While you’re on the UBC campus, take some time to explore its notable museums. The UBC Museum of Anthropology showcases the art and culture of British Columbia’s aboriginal people; among the masterpieces in its modern galleries are one of the world’s finest collections of totem poles as well as aboriginal jewelry and ceremonial masks.

Attractions Map



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2. Grouse Mountain
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North Vancouver, BC
V7R 4K9
Phone: (604) 980-9311



3. Capilano Suspension Bridge
3735 Capilano Rd
North Vancouver, BC
V7R 4J1
Phone: (877) 985-7474



4. Queen Elizabeth Park
Cambie St & W 33rd Ave
Vancouver, BC V5X 1C5

5. Stanley Park
7500 Stanley Park Dr
Vancouver, BC V6G 1Z4
Phone: (604) 681-6728



6. VanDusen Botanical Garden
5251 Oak St
Vancouver, BC V6M 4H1
Phone: (604) 878-9274



7. UBC Botanical Garden
6804 SW Marine Dr
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4
Phone: (604) 822-9666

8. UBC Museum of Anthropology
6393 NW Marine Dr
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2
Phone: (604) 822-5087

9. The Pacific Museum of the Earth
6339 Stores Rd
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4
Phone: (604) 822-6992

10. Gulf of Georgia Cannery Nat'l Historic Site
12138 Fourth Ave
Richmond, BC V7E 3J1
Phone: (604) 664-9009



11. H.R. MacMillan Space Centre
1100 Chestnut St
Vancouver, BC V6J 3J9
Phone: (604) 738-7827



12. Museum of Vancouver
1100 Chestnut St
Vancouver, BC V6J 3J9
Phone: (604) 736-4431



13. Vancouver Maritime Museum
1905 Ogden Ave
Vancouver, BC V6J 1A3
Phone: (604) 257-8300

14. Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre
845 Avison Way
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X6
Phone: (604) 659-3474



15. Science World at TELUS World of Science
1455 Quebec St
Vancouver, BC V6A 3Z7
Phone: (604) 443-7443



16. Vancouver Art Gallery
750 Hornby St
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2H7
Phone: (604) 662-4719



17. B.C. Sports Hall of Fame and Museum
777 Pacific Blvd S
Gate A
Vancouver, BC V6B 4Y8
Phone: (604) 687-5520

18. Chinatown
East Pender St & Gore St
Vancouver, BC V6B 6M4
Phone: (604) 658-8850

19. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden
578 Carrall St
Vancouver, BC V6B 5K2
Phone: (604) 662-3207

The [Pacific Museum of the Earth](#) houses an 80-million-year-old Lambeosaurus dinosaur skeleton and a piece of the Acasta Gneiss, reputedly the oldest rock in the world at more than 4 billion years old.

Neighboring [Richmond](#) is home to another AAA GEM attraction, the [Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site](#). Take a tour of the restored 1894 salmon cannery and learn about the “fishtory” of one of Vancouver’s key industries.

Vancouver’s Vanier Park is home to a trio of popular attractions: H.R. MacMillan Space Centre, a AAA GEM attraction, and Museum of Vancouver and Vancouver Maritime Museum. [H.R. MacMillan Space Centre](#) will take you straight to the moon as well as any other planet of your choosing via a virtual voyage on a 30-passenger spaceship, laser shows set to contemporary music and original planetarium shows. [Museum of Vancouver](#) features innovative exhibits that will both amuse and enlighten you about the region’s history, art and culture. Galleries are filled with such diverse items as aboriginal art, an Egyptian mummy, Pacific Rim artifacts and exhibits about 1950s’ bobby-soxers and 1960s’ hippies. At the [Vancouver Maritime Museum](#), climb aboard the restored *St. Roch*; in 1944 it became the first ship to sail back and forth across the Northwest Passage. Children will be captivated by the museum’s discovery center, where they can pilot a deep-sea robot or navigate a tugboat.

Marine animals are the main attraction at [Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre](#), a AAA GEM attraction. White beluga whales, dolphins, seals and otters share the aquarium with rain forest creatures such as piranhas, sloths and crocodiles, while a tropical zone houses sharks, moray eels and brilliantly colored warm-water fish. Investigate scientific phenomena at AAA GEM attraction [Science World at TELUS World of Science](#): kids of all ages will enjoy skiing on a simulated race course, inventing new gadgets, conducting a virtual orchestra or peaking inside a real honey-bee hive in this center that makes science just plain fun.

Lest you think that science and history are the only subjects of Vancouver’s many museums, visits to the following will banish that

thought. [Vancouver Art Gallery](#) is the place to go to see works by regional, national and international artists, including native Emily Carr, best known for her modernist landscapes of Vancouver’s rain forests and paintings of First Nations’ totem poles. Sports aficionados will feel at home at [B.C. Sports Hall of Fame and Museum](#), which pays homage to British Columbian sports from the 1700s to the present in its 20 galleries.

A trip to Vancouver would not be complete without exploring its Asian heritage. The city’s bustling [Chinatown](#) is one of the largest in North America; shop its gilded emporiums for imported bargains such as fine linens and silks, jade and brassware. On summer weekends, the outdoor night market makes for a fun evening; pick up some take-out and watch street entertainers perform. The [Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden](#) in Chinatown provides a respite from the hubbub of the neighborhood’s streets. The authentic garden’s design is based on the principle of yin and yang, offering peace and tranquility to all who enter.

Events



In addition to its many cultural and historic landmarks, this destination hosts a number of outstanding festivals and events that may coincide with your visit. GEMs are “Great Experiences for Members.”

Vancouver is an energetic city with plenty to celebrate, and its citizens know how to start the year off right. On January 1, more than 1,000 fearless swimmers brave the icy waters of English Bay in the annual [Polar Bear Swim](#). The event includes a 91-metre (100-yd.) race and attracts thousands of spectators, some dressed in wild costumes.

Kung Hay Fat Choy! You’ll probably hear this traditional Chinese blessing over and over during Chinese New Year. Vancouver, home to its own Chinatown, hosts an event honoring this Chinese holiday which occurs between late January and mid-February. The [Chinese New Year Festival and Parade in Chinatown](#) begins with activities at the [Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden](#); have your fortune told, learn calligraphy,

watch martial artists and listen to storytellers. A parade winds through the streets of Chinatown in the afternoon.

Celebrate the return of spring in April with the [Vancouver Sun Run](#), reputedly the second largest 10K run in North America. Cheer on tens of thousands of participants as they sprint or stroll through downtown, enjoying views of English Bay and Stanley Park with live music played along the route.

The [Vancouver International Children's Festival](#) in May is a weeklong party for kids at Vanier Park. Entertainers from around the globe put on plays and puppet shows as well as dance and musical performances. Activities include face painting, kite flying and playing in clay; jugglers, stilt-walkers, clowns and wandering minstrels create a carnivallike atmosphere.

You'll fall in love with Shakespeare at the [Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival](#) from early June through September. Watch tragedies and comedies staged in front of the mountains and English Bay in Vanier Park. Select performances include a salmon Bard-B-Q during intermission and fireworks after the show.

Bop 'til you drop at the [Vancouver International Jazz Festival](#). From late June to early July, the festival features legendary jazz musicians and vocalists from around the globe playing at various jazz joints, parks and public places; past performers include Miles Davis, Wynton Marsalis, Tito Puente and Diana Krall. Has all that jazz put you in the mood for more music? If you're in Vancouver during a 2-week period in early August, check out [MusicFest Vancouver](#) at various venues. Take your pick from such genres as classical, opera, world music, jazz, children's music, chamber music—the list (and the beat) goes on.

Your childhood memories of the county fair will come rushing back at [The Fair at Pacific National Exhibition](#) in late August. Ride the merry-go-round, root for your favorite swine at a pig race, bite into a crisp candy apple and try your luck on the midway. You'll also find live music, agricultural exhibits, a beer garden, talent contests and much more.

For 10 days in September, step outside of the norm at the [Vancouver Fringe Festival](#). Uncensored theatrical shows by about 100 international groups and performers defy the rules of conventional theater. Most of the shows take place on Granville Island.

December brings several holiday-themed events to the city. During the [Christmas Carol Ships Parade of Lights](#), vessels adorned with Christmas lights and decorations sail in Vancouver Harbor almost every night, passing many Vancouver neighborhoods. Landlubbers celebrate with live music, craft workshops, bonfires and hot chocolate.

Commemorate the beginning of winter at the [Solstice Lantern Festival](#), held on a late-December evening. Join a procession of lantern-holding revelers accompanied by drummers, beginning at either [Science World at TELUS World of Science](#) or Strathcona Community Centre and ending at Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, where you'll enjoy ethereal music and enchanting lighted gardens.

More than a million shimmering lights greet you at [VanDusen Botanical Garden](#) during the [Festival of Lights](#). Dancing lights on Livingstone Lake twinkle in time to holiday music, and a water terrace is turned into a "magic marsh" complete with fiber-optic lights and whimsical creatures. Choral music and a storytelling Santa add to the magic.

Things to Do

Shopping

When you set out on a Vancouver shopping expedition be sure to bring along the AAA street map, because you're definitely going to want to hang out in every one of this town's cool and distinctively different urban neighborhoods.

The West End is as good a starting point as any. Denman Street anchors this area of leafy blocks and old apartment buildings backed up by downtown's office high-rises, with English Bay and Stanley Park at its doorstep. Sidewalk restaurants and cafes, specialty shops and the 30-

odd stores of Denman Place Mall fill the six blocks of Denman between Davie and Robson streets.

Yaletown, reached via Davie Street, is the *de rigueur* downtown residential address for successful young professionals (just look at all those glass-walled condo towers). This former 19th-century rail yard district has morphed into an uber-stylish urban enclave; the industrial brick warehouses of yore are now hip clothing boutiques and designer furniture outlets.

Multilevel Chintz & Company (950 Homer St.) has a dazzling assemblage of interior design furnishings and accessories; browsing here is sensory overload. Art galleries are concentrated along Homer and Mainland streets; the Coastal Peoples Fine Arts Gallery (1024 Mainland St.) has an excellent collection of Northwest Coast Native artwork. Yaletown's many dog owners shop for trendy canine accessories at The Dog & Hydrant (1146 Pacific Blvd.).

Robson Street, however, is downtown's shopping central. Stand at the intersection of Robson and Burrard on any given day and it's a sea of shopping bag-toting humanity. From Burrard up to Jervis Street Robson offers an uninterrupted stretch of window gazing: men's and women's fashions and accessories, shoes, jewelry, eyewear, gifts, chocolates, cosmetics and luggage, plus more restaurants than you can shake a stick at. For high-quality outdoor wear go to Roots, a popular Canadian chain. There are two locations, one for adults (1001 Robson St.) and one for kids (1153 Robson St.).

Very touristy but always enjoyable Gastown, the oldest section of the city, runs for several blocks along Water Street. The atmosphere is turn-of-the-20th-century renovated, with handsome brick buildings and white-globed lamp posts bedecked with flowery hanging baskets. There are lots of art galleries, antique shops and places to buy Canadian souvenirs. But Gastown isn't all about maple candy or a moose in a can; trendy home furnishings stores like Koolhaus (1 Water St.) sell sleekly contemporary furniture by well-known Canadian and international designers.

There's a Coastal Peoples Fine Arts Gallery here as well (312 Water St.). Visit the Jeffrey Boone Gallery (1 E. Cordova St.) and the Canvas Gallery (99 Powell St.), which is associated with a popular Gastown nightspot, the Canvas Lounge. Urbanity (207 Abbott St.) sells beautiful knit sweaters, coats and blankets. There also are specialty shops like Button Button (422 W. Cordova St.), with buttons in all shapes and sizes from around the world, and Kites on Clouds (201 Water St.), which stocks cool windsocks and mobiles as well as kites.

Walk a few blocks down Carrall Street into Chinatown (*see attraction listing*), another neighborhood made for sidewalk exploration. You'll probably look rather than buy, since most of the businesses are where residents do their shopping. The produce and food markets lining Keefer and Main streets are fascinating, with unusual vegetables and bins full of dried fish, mushrooms and other foodstuffs. You'll also find a couple of jewelry shops selling bead necklaces and various trinkets.

Note: While the main thoroughfares in Gastown and Chinatown are fun to visit during the day, use big-city common sense regarding any encounters with panhandlers and street people, and avoid wandering around side streets after dark.

Downtown certainly isn't the only place to shop. In Kitsilano, along the south shore of English Bay, the blocks of West 4th Avenue between Fir and Larch streets are filled with grocers, wine shops and stores selling fashions, sportswear and sports gear from bikes to skis to snowboards.

Also within "Kits," the 10-block stretch of Granville Street between 6th and 16th avenues—dubbed South Granville—is where old-money families do their shopping; think expensive clothing boutiques, upscale furniture retailers and a plethora of home accessories stores like 18 Karat, 3039 Granville St. (at 14th Avenue W.) and Chachkas (2423 Granville St.).

Much more down to earth is Commercial Drive, east of Kitsilano via Broadway E. From Venables Street south to Broadway is one of Vancouver's funkiest shopping experiences. Most of the shops and

businesses are owner-operated; chains are few, which means that it's really fun to explore. Hit "the Drive" on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. The heart of Commercial Drive is between Venables Street and 6th Avenue E. Books, CDs, vintage clothing and unusual gifts are all good bets.

Punjabi Market, in South Vancouver's Sunset neighborhood, is a small commercial district (along Main Street between 48th and 51st avenues) that serves the city's Indo-Canadian community and draws tourists as well. Restaurants and Indian businesses (grocers, sweet and spice shops, jewelry and fabric stores, Hindi video rentals) line Main Street. Several store windows feature mannequins outfitted in flowing, multicolored saris. Pick up some incense or a silk scarf.

You could easily spend an entire day doing Granville Island, but shoppers and foodies should focus on the Granville Island Public Market. The big building is crammed with vendors: produce, meat, seafood, baked goods, coffee and a head-spinning array of specialty foods. Take advantage of fresh B.C. salmon, artisanal cheeses and ripe, regionally grown fruit. Have lunch here, too; takeaway fast food counters offer Asian, Mexican, Indian, sushi, pizza and just about everything else.

There also are plenty of shops outside the market selling regionally produced art, food, jewelry, clothing, kids' toys and the like. And don't drive—it's much easier to take the False Creek Ferry. It's a 10-minute ride to Granville Island from the Aquatic Centre dock just off Beach Drive in the West End (ferries also depart from the dock at the foot of Davie Street in Yaletown).

Another popular destination is the Lonsdale Quay Market, at the foot of Lonsdale Avenue in North Vancouver. The lower level is a fresh market with vendors selling produce, seafood, baked goods and delicatessen items; specialty boutiques are on the upper level. Get a crab roll, fish and chips or a panini sandwich from one of the numerous stands at the international food bar and enjoy it outside on the dock, which has a great view of downtown and the harbor (don't feed the seagulls; they'll snitch a bite at any opportunity). There's a parkade for market customers (2 hours

of free parking with proof of purchase, \$1.50 per additional hour), but it often fills up; you also can take the Seabus, which shuttles between the downtown and North Vancouver terminals every 15 minutes.

Malls? Vancouver has several, if that's your shopping thing. Downtown, upscale Pacific Centre (corner of Georgia and Howe streets) is anchored by Sears and tony Holt Renfrew; other stores offer men's and ladies' wear, casual clothing, fashion accessories, shoes, electronics, sporting goods, handbags and cosmetics. On the North Shore, Park Royal (on either side of Marine Drive, just west of Taylor Way and the Lions Gate Bridge) consists of two enclosed malls with more than 280 stores and restaurants, plus The Village, specialty shops and cafés in an open-air setting.

For a true mega-mall experience, head to Burnaby and Metropolis at Metrotown, off Kingsway (Hwy. 1A/99A) between McKay and Nelson avenues. It's the province's largest shopping center, with The Bay (outfitters for the Canadian Olympic team), Sears and more than 450 other stores on three sprawling levels. Expect the usual chains and specialty outlets—everything from Absolute Dollar to Zellers—plus a food court and the latest box-office biggies at Famous Players SilverCity. Parking (plenty of it) is free.

Nightlife

Hip, cosmopolitan Vancouver has a buzzing nightlife, with plenty of spots where the young and beautiful congregate—and there are even a few options for the rest of us. Among the latter are several sophisticated hotel lounges where you can relax over drinks in a quiet, elegant atmosphere. The bar inside Yew, the restaurant at the Four Seasons Hotel Vancouver (downtown at 791 W. Georgia St.) is a lovely place to put a capper on a busy day. A 40-foot ceiling makes this a breathtakingly lofty space, warmed by wood-paneled walls and a big sandstone fireplace. The bar is open until midnight Sun.-Wed., 1 a.m. Thurs.-Sat.

Bacchus Piano Lounge, in The Wedgewood Hotel & Spa (downtown at 845 Hornby St.), is an equally elegant spot to enjoy a glass of B.C. wine or a martini in surroundings that exude luxury—subdued lighting, antique furniture and vases of fresh flowers, with a softly tinkling piano in the background. There's dancing Thursday through Saturday evenings. Do dress up.

Opus Bar, in the Opus Hotel (350 Davie St. at Hamilton Street) is a cool, sleek lounge in hot-to-trot Yaletown. The decor is stylish with a capital "S": designer furniture, iridescent mood lighting, shimmer screens and live video feeds that allow you to keep an eye on the action at the bar and in the lounge. DJs spin dance music for a fashionably dressed, upwardly mobile crowd.

Baby boomers will feel right at home in The Cascade Room, 2616 Main St. (a block south of Broadway). This restaurant and bar is a transplanted bit of British pub culture: Lampshades feature Queen Victoria's likeness, and a large glass panel advises patrons to "Keep calm and carry on"—a World War II slogan uttered by stiff-upper-lip Brits. Slide into one of the horseshoe-shaped booths for a cocktail, a beer or a pint of lager.

Granville Street is hopping with nightclubs, all with reasonable cover charges. Thirty-somethings hang out at Republic, (958 Granville St.). A bar runs almost the full length of the dance floor on the main level; a lounge with a glass-enclosed patio overlooking the Granville street scene is upstairs. DJs play music that varies from hip-hop, house and electro to dance mix mashups and reggae. The Caprice (967 Granville St.) has a lounge with an outdoor patio and TV screens showing sporting events. Special event nights augment DJ music (Wednesday through Saturday) that tends toward Top 40, R&B and dance hits.

The Roxy (932 Granville St.) draws a young, ready-to-party crowd with house bands pumping out rock and Top 40 and bartenders who put on their own show. If you don't feel like dancing, watch TV or play pool. It's open until 3 a.m. nightly. More sophisticated is Au Bar (674 Seymour St.), which has a New York feel—candlelit tables, intimate seating areas, two bars and a VIP lounge. There's usually a long line of very attractive

people waiting to get in, and it's known to attract Hollywood types who are in town for on-location filming.

Touristy Gastown throngs with nightspots. The Steamworks Pub & Brewery (375 Water St.) is named for the Gastown steam line that runs through the premises. The hoist of choice here is beer (brewed onsite), from signature Lions Gate lager and Cascadia cream ale to such concoctions as Heroica oatmeal stout and sour cherry ale. Coffee drinkers will appreciate the Steamworks Grand, a combo of espresso and stout. The basement looks like a Bavarian-style drinking hall, while upstairs the atmosphere is clubbier, with leather chairs and windows overlooking the harbor.

In contrast, The Modern (7 Alexander St.) is an ultra-contemporary dance club replete with smoked glass and mirrors at every turn, the better to check out the scene as you sip a custom cocktail. The emphasis is on music, and the club books both Canadian and international DJ talent to provide hot dance mixes for cool kids. Cool kids also hang at Celebrities (1022 Davie St.) in Davie Village. Visiting DJs like Boy George take advantage of state-of-the-art sound and lighting, and the dance floor is invariably packed with chiseled, often shirtless young men. It's open every night but Monday.

Live music venues are plentiful. Richard's on Richards (1036 Richards St.) in Yaletown has shows several nights a week, a mix of hip-hoppers, world music artists and of-the-moment buzz bands like Crystal Antlers. It's also a nightclub with a huge dance floor, a circular balcony and several bars. The Commodore Ballroom (868 Granville St.) is an old-time dance hall that books everything from gospel choirs to death metal quadruple bills. This is the place to see up-and-coming bands as well as established acts that don't sell out arenas. The dance floor is in front of the stage and table seating is limited; arrive early unless you don't mind standing in the back of the room.

For a mellow evening, make it O'Doul's Restaurant & Bar (1300 Robson St. at Jervis, in the Listel Hotel). The West Coast cuisine is expertly prepared, the wine list is outstanding and live music is provided by the

city's top jazz names. Solo artists perform Sunday through Wednesday, ensembles Thursday through Saturday. The music starts at 9 p.m.

If you want to hear blues in Vancouver, you go to the Yale Hotel (1300 Granville St., just south of Davie Street). This tavern has a lot of history—it was once a Canadian Pacific Railroad bunkhouse and then a hostelry with a reputation for wild nights—just the place, in other words, for musicians to get down and do their thing. Big names like Johnny Winter and Buckwheat Zydeco come through regularly, but there's plenty of local talent on tap, too. The Yale's weekend blues jams (Sat.-Sun. 3-7, no cover) are a tradition.

And here's a beautifully simple suggestion. On a balmy summer evening, head down to English Bay Beach (just off Beach Avenue at the south end of Denman Street). First, stop and get an ice cream cone or something from Starbucks (there's one at the corner of Davie and Denman). Then sit on a beach log or a bench, or stroll along the seawall promenade, and watch the sun set over the bay and the mountains rising beyond the North Shore, turning the water a pale luminescent blue or perhaps streaking the clouds fiery orange or crimson. It's just you and nature—plus the company of similar-minded souls.

Note: The *Georgia Straight*, a news and entertainment weekly that comes out on Thursday, has extensive arts and entertainment listings for greater Vancouver.

Sports and Recreation

Vancouver offers such a diversity of recreational opportunities that anyone with a yen for variety can ski on Grouse Mountain in the morning, golf on the banks of the Fraser River in the afternoon, fish for salmon in Horseshoe Bay at dusk and top off the day with a dip in English Bay.

Vancouver's park system has tennis courts, swimming pools, putting greens, golf courses, lawn bowling greens, hiking paths and a comprehensive bike route. For park information phone the Vancouver Park Board at (604) 257-8400.

Swimming is available along English Bay, which is bordered by beaches from West Point Grey to Stanley Park. Beaches are easily accessible from Northwest Marine Drive in West Point Grey, Point Grey Road in Vancouver West and from Beach Avenue downtown.

White-water rafting is available April through September on the nearby Chilliwack River and a little farther afield on the Lillooet, Fraser and Thompson rivers. Vancouver rafting companies offering day trips as well as multiday trips include REO Rafting Adventure Resort, (604) 461-7238 or (800) 736-7238, and Kumsheen Rafting Resort, (250) 455-2296 or (800) 663-6667. Lotus Land Tours offers sea kayaking trips on Indian Arm and whale-watching tours from Steveston; phone (604) 684-4922 or (800) 528-3531.

Winter visitors with a penchant for skiing can tackle the challenging slopes of Grouse Mountain or Mount Seymour Park in North Vancouver. East of Vancouver are Hemlock Valley and Manning Park ski resorts, offering both downhill and cross-country treks. Cypress Provincial Park in West Vancouver also has cross-country and downhill skiing. Skiers can head north of Vancouver to Whistler and Blackcomb Mountains; site of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

When the waters sparkle from the summer sun, Vancouver becomes a boating paradise. For visitors without a boat, several companies have craft for hourly or daily rental. For charter yachts phone Harbour Cruises, (604) 688-7246, or Westin Bayshore Yacht Charters, (604) 250-8008. For fishing charters and boat rentals phone Sewell's Ltd., (604) 921-3474, at Horseshoe Bay.

Vancouver residents love spectator sports, especially football, hockey and soccer. The B.C. Lions of the Canadian Football League play before capacity crowds in B.C. Place Stadium. The Canucks of the National Hockey League compete in General Motors Place. For football and hockey ticket information phone TicketMaster, (604) 280-4444. Baseball is played by the Vancouver Canadians at Nat Bailey Stadium; phone (604) 872-5232 for schedule and ticket information. Indoor lacrosse can

be enjoyed at Bill Copeland Sports Centre in Burnaby, (604) 291-1261; and at Queens Park Arena, (604) 777-5111, in New Westminster.

Thoroughbred racing with pari-mutuel betting is held at Hastings Park Race Course on the grounds of the Pacific National Exhibition; phone (604) 254-1631

Note: Policies concerning admittance of children to pari-mutuel betting facilities vary. Phone for information.

Performing Arts

The Centre in Vancouver for Performing Arts, 777 Homer St., is a premier facility for theater, dance and music; phone (604) 602-0616 for event information. The Queen Elizabeth Theatre at the intersection of Hamilton and Georgia streets, (604) 665-3050, is home to Ballet British Columbia, (604) 732-5003, and the Vancouver Opera Association, (604) 683-0222. The adjacent Vancouver Playhouse presents professional theater, recitals and chamber music; phone (604) 873-3311. The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra performs at the Orpheum Theatre, Smithe and Granville streets; phone (604) 876-3434 for ticket information.

Other prominent metropolitan theaters presenting dramatic productions include the Arts Club Theatre, on Johnston Street on Granville Island, (604) 687-1644; the Metro Theatre, 1370 S.W. Marine Dr., (604) 266-7191; Studio 58, 100 W. 49th Ave., (604) 323-5227; and the Vancouver East Cultural Centre, 1895 Venables St., (604) 251-1363.

During the summer concerts and musicals are presented in Stanley Park's Malkin Bowl. Kitsilano Showboat at Kitsilano Beach presents an outdoor variety show Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 7:30 p.m. during July and August (weather permitting). For more information phone (604) 734-7332.

Concerts in such genres as classical, country, pop and rock are presented year-round at the Pacific Coliseum, 100 N. Renfrew St., (604) 253-2311, and General Motors Place, 800 Griffiths Way, (604) 899-7444.

Daily papers carry listings of cultural events, as do weekly and monthly magazines. Ticket outlets include Ticketmaster Head Office, 1304 Hornby St.; and Ticketmaster, Pacific Centre Mall, 700 W Georgia St.

Special Events

Life in a city where your office is only 25 minutes from a ski slope is worth celebrating, and the residents of Vancouver celebrate their setting throughout the year. New Year's Day sees the Polar Bear Swim at English Bay; the event draws many swimmers and hundreds of spectators. February brings the Chinese New Year and with it the Vancouver Chinese New Year Parade, with colorful entries marching through Chinatown in a splendid celebration of the Chinese lunar year.

The Vancouver Children's Festival in May ushers in summer, while cultural entertainment sails in with the Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival in mid-June. The Vancouver Folk Music Festival draws fans from as far away as Los Angeles for concerts during mid-July. HSBC Celebration of Light features 4 nights of fireworks displays and is held at English Bay the last week of July and the first week in August.

For 2 weeks in early August and staged in 10 venues throughout the city, MusicFest Vancouver runs the gamut in musical offerings including classical, opera, jazz and chamber music. Virtually all facets of life and work in British Columbia are celebrated in the Pacific National Exhibition, held at the Exhibition Grounds from late August through Labour Day. In late September and early October the Oktoberfest is held at the Exhibition Grounds, where the revelry continues into the wee hours.

The Christmas season begins with the Christmas Carol Ships, which lead a flotilla of private watercraft decorated with Christmas lights around the harbor in mid-December. Bright Nights in Stanley Park, a 20-year-old holiday tradition, turns the forest, the train and the Children's Farmyard into a wonderland with more than a million lights and animated displays. More information about events is available from your CAA or AAA club.

2010 Olympic Venues

Competition and non-competition venues for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games are spread among four different locations on the Lower Mainland. Following is a list of events and where they take place:

Vancouver

Canada Hockey Place, 800 Griffiths Way, adjacent to BC Place Stadium (ice hockey)

Vancouver Olympic/Paralympic Centre, south of downtown in the Riley-Hillcrest neighborhood (curling)

Pacific Coliseum, 100 N. Renfrew St. (at Hastings Street) in Hastings Park (figure skating, short-track speed skating)

UBC Thunderbird Arena, 6066 Thunderbird Blvd. on the University of British Columbia campus (ice hockey, ice sledge hockey)

BC Place Stadium, 777 Pacific Blvd. (Olympic Winter Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies, Paralympic Games Opening Ceremony, nightly Victory Ceremonies presentations)

Whistler

The Whistler Sliding Centre, southeast slope of Blackcomb Mountain (bobsleigh, luge and skeleton competitions)

Whistler Creekside, Dave Murray Downhill and Franz's Run, Whistler Mountain (alpine skiing)

Whistler Olympic/Paralympic Park, three stadiums and approximately 15 kilometres (9 miles) of trails (cross-country skiing, biathlon, ski jumping)

Whistler Olympic Celebration Plaza, Whistler Village (Paralympic Games Closing Ceremony, nightly Victory Ceremonies presentations)

Richmond

Richmond Olympic Oval, on the banks of the Fraser River about 14 kilometres (9 miles) south of downtown Vancouver (speed skating)

West Vancouver

Cypress Mountain, off Trans-Canada Hwy. exit 8 in Cypress Provincial Park (freestyle skiing, snowboarding)

More information about the 2010 Winter Games can be found online at vancouver2010.com. In Whistler, visitors can speak with knowledgeable staff at the Vancouver 2010 Information Centre at 4365 Blackcomb Way. The center is open daily 11-5.

Insider Info

The Thrill of Victory

The eyes of the world truly will be on British Columbia as Vancouver and Whistler host the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. The Opening Ceremonies signal the start of 17 days of Olympic Games events (Feb. 12-28, 2010) and 10 days of Paralympic Games events (Mar. 12-21, 2010).

The Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) is responsible for the ambitious agenda of planning, organizing, financing and staging the XXI Olympic Winter Games and the X Paralympic Winter Games. The numbers are impressive: more than 80 countries participating in the Olympic Winter Games; more than 40 countries participating in the Paralympic Winter Games; some 6,850 participating athletes and officials; and an estimated global television audience of some 3 billion people.

Locations for Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games events stretch from the shores of the city of Richmond north to the snow-covered mountain peaks framing the year-round recreational mecca of Whistler—a distance of 120 kilometres (about 75 miles). All sites are within a 2-hour drive of downtown Vancouver.

The Opening and Closing Ceremonies for the Olympic Winter Games and the Opening Ceremony for the Paralympic Winter Games will be held at BC Place in downtown Vancouver. Featuring the largest air-supported stadium roof in North America, this enclosed venue allows games organizers to take advantage of state-of-the-art lighting, projection, sound and special effects technologies. Nightly Victory Ceremonies presentations will take place at an outdoor plaza in Whistler's town

center. In addition to honoring the day's medal winners, the plaza will be the site of the Paralympic Winter Games Closing Ceremony.

2010 Winter Games competition venues are spread among four locations. In downtown Vancouver, events take place at Canada Hockey Place, home of the NHL Vancouver Canucks. Other venues include Pacific Coliseum, about 5 kilometres (3 miles) east of downtown; UBC Thunderbird Arena, on the University of British Columbia campus; and the Vancouver Olympic/Paralympic Centre, south of downtown near Queen Elizabeth Park.

In Whistler, Whistler Creekside—well known for its challenging downhill runs—is the setting for Olympic and Paralympic alpine skiing events. The Whistler Sliding Centre on Blackcomb Mountain hosts the bobsleigh, luge and skeleton competitions. Whistler Olympic/Paralympic Park in Callaghan Valley encompasses a core area with three stadiums as well as 15 kilometres (9 miles) of competition trails for cross-country skiing and biathlon.

Freestyle skiing and snowboard competitions take place on Cypress Mountain in the district of West Vancouver. One of British Columbia's most popular skiing areas, the mountain offers spectacular views of downtown Vancouver and its harbor. Speed skaters take to the ice at the Richmond Oval, on the banks of the Fraser River across from Vancouver International Airport.

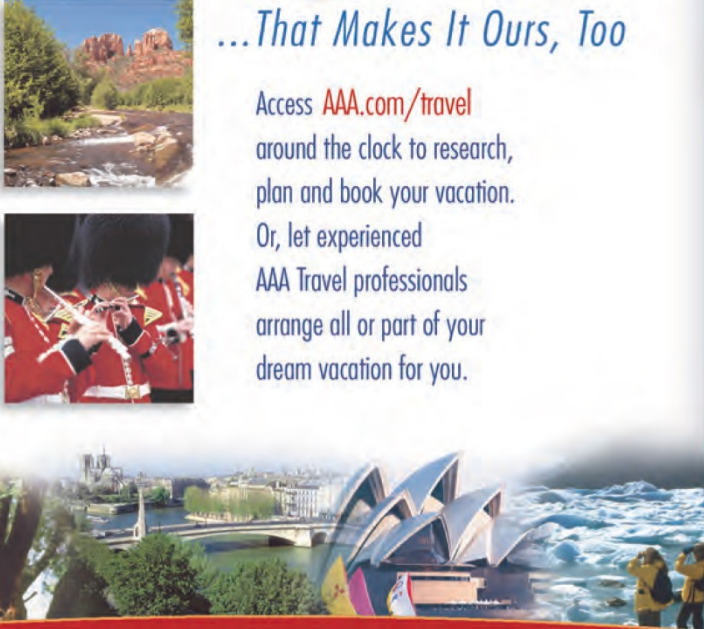
More information about the 2010 Winter Games can be found online at vancouver2010.com. In Whistler, visitors can speak with knowledgeable staff at the Vancouver 2010 Information Centre at 4365 Blackcomb Way. The center is open daily 11-5.

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