Vancouver Travel Guide

Vancouver: Where Mountains Meet the Sea

Canada · Generated October 2, 2026 · mycitytravelguide.com/canada/vancouver/

Things to do in Vancouver

Landmarks & Monuments

Vancouver's iconic landmarks showcase the city's unique blend of modern architecture and historic heritage. From the sail-shaped structure of Canada Place to the historic Gastown neighborhood, these monuments define the city's character and offer stunning photo opportunities.



Must See

Canada Place

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

An iconic landmark featuring distinctive white sail-like roof structures on Vancouver's waterfront. Built for Expo 86, it houses the Port of Vancouver museum, convention center, and cruise ship terminal. The building offers panoramic views of Burrard Inlet, the North Shore mountains, and downtown Vancouver skyline. Perfect for photography, especially at sunset.



Must See

Gastown Steam Clock

30 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

A historic Victorian-era steam-powered clock located at the corner of Cambie and Water Streets. Built in 1977, it's one of the world's few steam-powered clocks and a beloved symbol of Gastown. The clock whistles on the hour, drawing crowds of visitors and photographers to this charming cobblestone district.

Tips for Landmarks & Monuments

- Visit Canada Place early morning for fewer crowds and better lighting for photos
- Gastown Steam Clock is most photogenic at night with street lighting
- Check the cathedral website for concert schedules and special events
- The area is best explored on foot with comfortable walking shoes

Museums & Galleries

Vancouver's world-class museums and galleries showcase everything from Indigenous art and natural history to contemporary works. These institutions provide deep cultural insights and interactive experiences for all ages.



Must See

Museum of Anthropology

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

One of Canada's finest museums, featuring extensive Indigenous art collections including totem poles and masks. Located at the University of British Columbia, it showcases Pacific Northwest First Nations heritage alongside global ethnographic artifacts. The museum features expansive gallery spaces with natural light, rotating exhibitions, and beautifully displayed artifacts from around the world.



Must See

Vancouver Art Gallery

1.5-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A prestigious art institution featuring contemporary and historical artworks, with a strong focus on Canadian artists. The gallery showcases rotating exhibitions ranging from modern art to photography and design. Located in a heritage building in downtown Vancouver, it offers educational programs, guided tours, and special cultural events throughout the year.



Top Pick Book Ahead

Science World

2-3 hours Book Ahead

Map

A hands-on science museum housed in the distinctive geodesic dome built for Expo 86. Features interactive exhibits covering physics, biology, technology, and space exploration. Perfect for families and curious minds, with live demonstrations, planetarium shows, and OMNIMAX films. The exterior architecture is as impressive as the interior exhibits.

Tips for Museums & Galleries

- Book Science World tickets online for better prices and to skip lines
- The Museum of Anthropology is quietest on weekday mornings
- Check the Vancouver Art Gallery's site for free or by-donation hours

Parks & Gardens

Vancouver's green spaces offer respite from urban life with stunning natural beauty. From century-old parks to meticulously maintained gardens, these areas showcase the region's rich biodiversity and provide endless recreational opportunities.



Must See

Stanley Park

2-4 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A 405-hectare urban forest and iconic Vancouver destination featuring a scenic seawall walk, pristine beaches, and dense old-growth forest. The park includes attractions like the Vancouver Aquarium, Lost Lagoon, Brockton Point lighthouse, and numerous hiking trails. The seawall offers spectacular mountain and ocean views, while the park's interior provides peaceful nature trails and picnic areas.



Must See

Queen Elizabeth Park

1.5-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Vancouver's second-largest park, featuring beautiful gardens, scenic viewpoints, and the Bloedel Conservatory. Located on a hilltop offering 360-degree views of the city and surrounding mountains, it's perfect for picnicking and photography. The park features diverse plant collections, peaceful walking paths, and seasonal flower displays that change throughout the year.



Top Pick

VanDusen Botanical Garden

1.5-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A 22-hectare botanical garden featuring plants from around the world, including rare and endangered species. The garden showcases themed sections like the Sino-Japanese Garden, Mediterranean Garden, and Tropical Plant House. Perfect for botanical enthusiasts and casual walkers, with peaceful paths, decorative ponds, and seasonal highlights from spring blooms to fall colors.

Tips for Parks & Gardens

- Stanley Park seawall is best at sunrise or sunset for optimal lighting and fewer crowds
- Rent bikes to explore Stanley Park more efficiently - about 1-1.5 hours by bike for the full seawall loop (longer on foot)
- Queen Elizabeth Park viewpoint is stunning at night when the city lights come alive
- Visit VanDusen in spring (April-May) for cherry blossoms and tulip displays

Neighborhoods & Districts

Vancouver's diverse neighborhoods each have distinct character and charm. From historic Gastown to vibrant Chinatown and trendy Kitsilano, these districts offer unique shopping, dining, and cultural experiences that reflect the city's multicultural identity.



Must See

Gastown

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Vancouver's oldest neighborhood featuring historic Victorian buildings, cobblestone streets, and the famous Steam Clock. Once a rough-and-tumble port district, Gastown has transformed into a charming area with independent boutiques, galleries, restaurants, and pubs. The neighborhood blends heritage architecture with contemporary businesses, making it one of Vancouver's most walkable and photographed districts.



Must See

Chinatown

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

One of North America's oldest and most vibrant Chinatowns, featuring authentic Asian restaurants, herbal medicine shops, and cultural landmarks. The neighborhood is known for the ornate Dragon's Gate, colorful street markets, and authentic cuisine. Explore narrow alleys with Chinese characters on storefronts, visit the Chinese Cultural Centre, and experience the energy of this historic community that dates back to the 1880s.



Top Pick

Kitsilano

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A trendy residential neighborhood known for its laid-back West Coast vibe, boutique shops, and excellent restaurants. Home to Kitsilano Beach where locals gather year-round, the area features colorful heritage homes, a thriving arts scene, and a strong community atmosphere. The neighborhood offers shopping on West 4th Avenue and dining options ranging from casual cafes to fine dining establishments.

Tips for Neighborhoods & Districts

- Visit Gastown on weekday mornings to avoid crowds while exploring shops and galleries
- In Chinatown, dine at dim sum restaurants early (11am) for the best selection and authentic experience
- Kitsilano Beach is perfect in summer for swimming; year-round for scenic walks
- Each neighborhood is compact and best explored on foot with comfortable walking shoes

Tours & Activities

Vancouver offers diverse tour and activity options for all interests and fitness levels. From water-based adventures to cultural experiences, guided tours provide insider knowledge and access to unique perspectives of the city and surrounding regions.



Must See Book Ahead

Whale Watching Tours

4-6 hours Book Ahead

Experience Vancouver's marine wildlife through guided whale watching tours departing from the harbor. These tours visit Johnstone Strait and the Gulf Islands in search of orcas, humpback whales, and other marine mammals. Highly trained naturalists guide the experience, sharing knowledge about local marine ecosystems. Tours typically run 4-6 hours and operate seasonally, with highest sightings in summer months.



Must See

Seabus & Harbor Tours

30 minutes to 2 hours No Booking Needed

The iconic Seabus ferry offers scenic transportation between downtown Vancouver and North Shore, providing stunning harbor views. A 12-minute journey crosses Burrard Inlet with views of mountains, ships, and the city skyline. Alternatively, harbor tour boats provide guided experiences with narration about local history, marine life, and geography. An affordable and photogenic way to experience Vancouver's waterfront.



Top Pick Book Ahead

Capilano Suspension Bridge Walk

1.5-2 hours Book Ahead

A thrilling walk across a historic suspension bridge about 137 meters long, high above Capilano River Canyon. Built in 1889, the bridge provides adrenaline-pumping views of old-growth forest and river gorge. The park also features Treetops Adventure and Cliffwalk attractions for additional perspectives of the rainforest canopy. Educational signage explains local ecology and Indigenous history.

Tips for Tours & Activities

- Book whale watching tours in advance during summer for best availability
- Use the Seabus for a budget-friendly scenic experience - it's part of public transit
- Visit Capilano Suspension Bridge early morning or late afternoon to avoid crowds
- Many tours offer combination packages for better value

Day Trips & Excursions

Vancouver's location provides easy access to spectacular natural attractions and charming communities within short driving distances. These day trips offer diverse experiences from mountain adventures to coastal explorations.



Must See Book Ahead

Whistler Blackcomb

Full day or overnight Book Ahead

Map

North America's largest ski resort located just 2 hours north of Vancouver in the Coast Mountains. Whistler and Blackcomb mountains offer world-class skiing and snowboarding in winter, and hiking, mountain biking, and scenic chairlift rides in summer. The charming village features restaurants, shops, and accommodations. Even non-skiers enjoy the mountain scenery, outdoor activities, and vibrant village atmosphere year-round.



Must See

Victoria & Butchart Gardens

Full day to overnight No Booking Needed

Map

British Columbia's capital city located on Vancouver Island, accessible via a scenic 1.5-hour ferry journey. Victoria features British charm with Parliament buildings, museums, and waterfront attractions. The famous Butchart Gardens, located nearby, showcase 22 hectares of exquisite gardens including the Sunken Garden, Italian Garden, and Japanese Garden with seasonal flower displays. A perfect combination day trip.



Top Pick

Sea-to-Sky Gondola & Squamish

3-4 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A spectacular 10-minute gondola ride The gondola summit is at 885 m; Mount Habrich is a nearby peak, not the summit destination. Offers 360-degree views of Howe Sound, Squamish, and surrounding mountains. The Sky Pivot observation platform at the summit is thrilling. Located in the charming outdoor recreation town of Squamish, about 1 hour from Vancouver, with excellent rock climbing, hiking, and waterfall attractions nearby.

Tips for Day Trips & Excursions

- Whistler is best visited in winter for skiing or summer for hiking - spring can be muddy
- Book ferry tickets to Victoria in advance during summer weekends
- Sea-to-Sky Gondola is excellent for photography, especially at sunset
- Consider renting a car for day trips to maximize flexibility and access remote attractions

Religious Sites

Vancouver's religious sites reflect the city's cultural diversity and heritage. From historic churches to Indigenous sacred sites, these locations offer spiritual significance and architectural interest to visitors of all backgrounds.



Must See

Christ Church Cathedral

45 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

A magnificent Gothic Revival cathedral built in 1929 in downtown Vancouver, featuring intricate stonework, beautiful stained glass windows, and soaring interior spaces. The cathedral represents important architectural heritage and maintains an active Anglican community. Regular services, concerts, and guided tours are available to visitors interested in the building's history and spiritual purpose.



Top Pick

First Nations Totem Poles

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Ancient cedar totem poles representing First Nations artistic and spiritual traditions are displayed throughout Vancouver, especially in Stanley Park. These carved poles depict clan crests and tell stories of Indigenous peoples. The Museum of Anthropology and public parks feature excellent examples with interpretive signage explaining their cultural significance and artistic craftsmanship.



Top Pick

Sikh Temple (Gurdwara)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Vancouver has one of North America's largest Sikh communities with impressive temples featuring traditional architecture and community services. The Gurdwara welcomes visitors to observe services and learn about Sikhism. Many temples provide free community meals (langar), offering authentic vegetarian cuisine and cultural immersion. Visitors should remove shoes and cover their heads as a sign of respect.

Tips for Religious Sites

- Check service times before visiting religious sites as they may have limited public access hours
- Show respect by dressing modestly when visiting temples and removing shoes when required
- Many temples offer guided cultural tours and educational programs for visitors
- Ask staff about specific customs and photography policies at each location

Food & Dining

Real, highly-rated Restaurants in Vancouver, sourced from Google Places (rating above 4★).



JOEY Burrard★★★★★ 4.7 (11,597)

1-2 hours

Map

JOEY Burrard is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.7★ from 11597 reviews. Located at 820 Burrard St, Vancouver, BC V6Z 1X9, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 11:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Tuesday: 11:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Wednesday: 11:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Thursday: 11:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Friday: 11:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Saturday: 11:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Sunday: 11:00 AM – 1:00 AM



Coast★★★★★ 4.7 (6,521)

1-2 hours

Map

Coast is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.7★ from 6521 reviews. Located at 1054 Alberni St, Vancouver, BC V6E 1A3, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 11:30 AM – 10:30 PM
- Tuesday: 11:30 AM – 10:30 PM
- Wednesday: 11:30 AM – 10:30 PM
- Thursday: 11:30 AM – 10:30 PM
- Friday: 11:30 AM – 10:30 PM
- Saturday: 11:30 AM – 10:30 PM
- Sunday: 11:30 AM – 10:30 PM



Riley's Vancouver★★★★★ 4.7 (3,785)

1-2 hours

Map

Riley's Vancouver is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.7★ from 3785 reviews. Located at 200 Burrard St, Vancouver, BC V6C 3M1, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Tuesday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Wednesday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Thursday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Friday: 11:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 10:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 10:30 AM – 10:00 PM



Blue Water Cafe★★★★★ 4.7 (3,855)

1-2 hours

Map

Blue Water Cafe is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.7★ from 3855 reviews. Located at 1095 Hamilton St, Vancouver, BC V6B 2W9, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 4:30 – 10:30 PM
- Tuesday: 4:30 – 10:30 PM
- Wednesday: 4:30 – 10:30 PM
- Thursday: 4:30 – 11:30 PM
- Friday: 4:30 – 11:30 PM
- Saturday: 4:30 – 11:30 PM
- Sunday: 4:30 – 10:30 PM



Botanist★★★★★ 4.6 (1,942)

1-2 hours

Map

Botanist is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.6★ from 1942 reviews. Located at 1038 Canada Pl, Vancouver, BC V6C 0B9, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM
- Tuesday: 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM, 5:30 – 10:00 PM
- Wednesday: 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM, 5:30 – 10:00 PM
- Thursday: 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM, 5:30 – 10:00 PM
- Friday: 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM, 5:30 – 10:00 PM
- Saturday: 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM, 5:30 – 10:00 PM
- Sunday: 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM



Cardero's Restaurant★★★★★ 4.6 (7,180)

1-2 hours

Map

Cardero's Restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.6★ from 7180 reviews. Located at 1583 Coal Harbour Quay, Vancouver, BC V6G 3E7, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 11:30 AM – 10:30 PM
- Tuesday: 11:30 AM – 10:30 PM
- Wednesday: 11:30 AM – 10:30 PM
- Thursday: 11:30 AM – 10:30 PM
- Friday: 11:30 AM – 11:30 PM
- Saturday: 11:30 AM – 11:30 PM
- Sunday: 11:30 AM – 10:30 PM



Glowbal★★★★★ 4.6 (10,054)

1-2 hours

Map

Glowbal is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.6★ from 10054 reviews. Located at 590 W Georgia St, Vancouver, BC V6E 1A3, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Tuesday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Wednesday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Thursday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Friday: 11:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 10:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 10:30 AM – 10:00 PM



Osteria Savio Volpe★★★★★ 4.6 (3,638)

1-2 hours

Map

Osteria Savio Volpe is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.6★ from 3638 reviews. Located at 615 Kingsway, Vancouver, BC V5T 3K5, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM
- Tuesday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM
- Wednesday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM
- Thursday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM
- Friday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM
- Saturday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM
- Sunday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM



Tap & Barrel★★★★★ 4.6 (3,441)

1-2 hours

Map

Tap & Barrel • Bridges is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.6★ from 3441 reviews. Located at 1696 Duranleau St, Vancouver, BC V6H 3S4, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 11:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 11:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Wednesday: 11:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Thursday: 11:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Friday: 11:00 AM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: 10:00 AM – 12:00 AM
- Sunday: 10:00 AM – 10:00 PM



Miku Vancouver★★★★★ 4.6 (8,312)

1-2 hours

Map

Miku Vancouver is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.6★ from 8312 reviews. Located at 200 Granville St #70, Vancouver, BC V6C 1S4, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Tuesday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Wednesday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Thursday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Friday: 11:30 AM – 10:00 PM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 10:00 PM
- Sunday: 12:00 – 10:00 PM



Ask For Luigi Restaurant★★★★★ 4.6 (3,237)

1-2 hours

Map

Ask For Luigi Restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.6★ from 3237 reviews. Located at 305 Alexander St, Vancouver, BC V6A 1C4, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM, 5:00 – 10:00 PM
- Tuesday: 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM, 5:00 – 10:00 PM
- Wednesday: 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM, 5:00 – 10:00 PM
- Thursday: 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM, 5:00 – 10:00 PM
- Friday: 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM, 5:00 – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 10:00 AM – 2:30 PM, 5:00 – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 10:00 AM – 2:30 PM, 5:00 – 10:00 PM



Elisa★★★★★ 4.6 (3,254)

1-2 hours

Map

Elisa is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.6★ from 3254 reviews. Located at 1109 Hamilton St, Vancouver, BC V6B 5P6, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 4:30 PM – 12:00 AM
- Tuesday: 4:30 PM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 4:30 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 4:30 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 4:30 PM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: 4:30 PM – 12:00 AM
- Sunday: 4:30 PM – 12:00 AM



St. Lawrence Restaurant★★★★★ 4.6 (1,495)

1-2 hours

Map

St. Lawrence Restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.6★ from 1495 reviews. Located at 269 Powell St, Vancouver, BC V6A 1G3, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: Closed
- Tuesday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM
- Wednesday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM
- Thursday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM
- Friday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM
- Saturday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM
- Sunday: 5:00 – 10:30 PM



Nightingale★★★★★ 4.5 (4,006)

1-2 hours

Map

Nightingale is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.5★ from 4006 reviews. Located at 1017 W Hastings St, Vancouver, BC V6C 2G6, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 11:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 11:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Wednesday: 11:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Thursday: 11:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Friday: 11:30 AM – 11:30 PM
- Saturday: 11:30 AM – 11:30 PM
- Sunday: 11:30 AM – 11:00 PM



Chambar Restaurant★★★★★ 4.5 (4,389)

1-2 hours

Map

Chambar Restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Vancouver, rated 4.5★ from 4389 reviews. Located at 568 Beatty St, Vancouver, BC V6B 2L3, Canada.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 4:30 – 10:30 PM
- Tuesday: 4:30 – 10:30 PM
- Wednesday: 4:30 – 10:30 PM
- Thursday: 4:30 – 10:30 PM
- Friday: 4:30 – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 9:00 AM – 10:30 PM

Practical Information

Best Time to Visit Vancouver

Vancouver has a mild, maritime climate with distinct seasons. **Summer (June-September)** offers warm, dry weather perfect for outdoor activities, though it's the busiest tourist season. Temperatures range from 20-25°C (68-77°F). **Spring (March-May)** brings blooming flowers and moderate crowds with temperatures around 15-20°C (59-68°F). **Fall (September-November)** features beautiful weather with fewer tourists and autumn foliage. **Winter (December-February)** is mild by Canadian standards with occasional rain, rarely heavy snow in the city, though nearby mountains receive snow perfect for skiing.

Shoulder seasons (April-May and September-October) offer the best combination of pleasant weather, fewer crowds, and value on accommodations.

Getting Around Vancouver

Public Transit: Vancouver's TransLink system includes SkyTrain (automated light rail), buses, and the scenic Seabus ferry. A single ticket costs CAD $3.15, or purchase a day pass (CAD $10.50) for unlimited travel. The system is clean, efficient, and covers most tourist areas.

Taxis & Ride-sharing: Uber and Lyft operate throughout Vancouver, offering convenient point-to-point service. Traditional taxis are also available at hotels and major transit hubs.

Biking: Vancouver is very bike-friendly with extensive bike lanes and the famous Stanley Park Seawall cycling path. Bike rental shops are abundant throughout the city (around CAD $25-40 per day).

Walking: Downtown Vancouver is highly walkable with concentrated attractions. Neighborhoods like Gastown, Chinatown, and Kitsilano are best explored on foot.

Rental Cars: Driving is convenient for exploring nearby areas like Whistler, Victoria, or Capilano Suspension Bridge. Roads are well-maintained, and GPS navigation is essential.

✈ Airport Transfer

Vancouver International Airport (YVR) to city center:

- **Canada Line SkyTrain:** Direct to downtown Waterfront Station in about 25 minutes, The YVR AddFare is CAD $6.50 as of July 1, 2026; the total depends on the underlying fare and payment method.
- **Express Bus 620:** Connects to Tsawwassen ferry terminal in around 40 minutes, CAD 3.15 with Compass fare
- **Taxi:** Metered fare to downtown takes about 30 minutes and costs roughly CAD 35 to 45
- **Private Transfer:** Pre-booked sedan or SUV service to downtown hotels in about 25 minutes, typically CAD 90 to 120

Shopping in Vancouver

Department Stores & Shopping Centers: Pacific Centre downtown features luxury brands; Metrotown in Burnaby offers extensive mall shopping; The Vancouver Centre and Lincoln Park are popular shopping destinations.

Local Boutiques: Gastown features independent clothing stores, art galleries, and specialty shops. Kitsilano's West 4th Avenue offers trendy boutiques, home decor, and vintage shops. Vancouver has a strong independent retail scene with unique, locally-owned businesses.

Markets: Granville Island Public Market features produce, seafood, crafts, and prepared foods in a historic setting. The Chinatown Night Market (summer evenings) offers street food and Asian goods. Commercial Drive features multicultural markets and independent shops.

What to Buy: Look for Canadian merchandise including maple products, Indigenous art and crafts, quality outdoor gear from local brands, fresh salmon and seafood, and craft beers from BC breweries.

Annual Events & Festivals

Spring: The event is called the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival; the 2026 festival ran March 27–April 12, Vancouver International Children's Festival (May).

Summer: Canada Place’s Canada Day fireworks were permanently discontinued after 2022; check for current Canada Day events instead.; Vancouver International Jazz Festival (June-July); Vancouver Pride Festival (August); Fringe Festival (August-September); The 2026 PNE Fair ran August 22–September 7, with some days in August.

Fall: Vancouver International Film Festival (September-October) featuring world cinema; Vegan Festival (October).

Winter: Christmas markets and lights throughout the city; New Year's Eve celebrations at various venues including Art Gallery forecourt; Boxing Day sales following Christmas.

Weekly Events: Sunday markets, farmers markets operating year-round, and regular street fairs in various neighborhoods.

Sample Day Itineraries

Day 1 - Downtown & Waterfront: Start with breakfast in downtown, visit Canada Place and take photos of the iconic architecture, explore the Seabus for harbor views, lunch at Granville Island Public Market, visit Vancouver Art Gallery, dinner in Gastown with evening photo of the Steam Clock.

Day 2 - Stanley Park Adventure: Rent bikes and ride the Stanley Park Seawall (entire loop about 1-1.5 hours by bike or 2.5 hours on foot, or choose sections), visit Brockton Point lighthouse, explore the Vancouver Aquarium, picnic lunch in the park, afternoon hike on forest trails, sunset views from Prospect Point.

Day 3 - Museums & Culture: Morning at the Museum of Anthropology (arrive early), lunch at a nearby cafe, afternoon exploring Chinatown and Dragon's Gate, dim sum dinner, evening stroll through historic neighborhoods and visit a local brewery or cafe.

Day 4 - Gardens & Views: Visit Queen Elizabeth Park for morning city views, explore Bloedel Conservatory, lunch at a nearby restaurant, afternoon at VanDusen Botanical Garden, dinner in Kitsilano, evening beach walk at Kitsilano Beach.

Day 5 - Adventure Day: Day trip to Capilano Suspension Bridge (with Treetops and Cliffwalk), explore the rainforest scenery, lunch in North Vancouver, afternoon waterfall hike or visit local outdoor recreation areas, return to downtown for dinner and evening entertainment.

Best Photography Locations

Golden Hour Champions: Canada Place is stunning at sunset with the North Shore mountains in the background. Queen Elizabeth Park offers 360-degree city views, especially beautiful at sunset. Seawall along Stanley Park provides endless photo opportunities with mountains, ocean, and city combined.

Iconic Landmarks: Gastown Steam Clock is perfect at night with atmospheric street lighting and crowds creating vibrant scenes. Christ Church Cathedral's Gothic architecture is striking in overcast daylight. Capilano Suspension Bridge offers thrilling perspective shots and forest canopy photography.

Water Reflections: False Creek offers excellent reflections of the city and mountains, best at sunrise or sunset. The Seabus journey itself provides constantly changing perspectives of the harbor.

Street Photography: Chinatown's narrow alleys, colorful storefronts, and market scenes are perfect for vibrant urban photography. Granville Island Public Market offers market-fresh local color and character shots.

Natural Landscapes: Stanley Park's beaches and forest paths offer nature photography. Mountain views from various vantage points throughout the city are best on clear days. Sunrise over the harbor from various waterfront locations captures dramatic light.

Electricity & Power

Voltage: Canada uses 120 volts AC, 60Hz electrical standard.

Plug Types: Standard North American two-pin (flat parallel) and three-pin (grounded) outlets are used. The plug type is sometimes referred to as NEMA 5-15 for three-pin and NEMA 1-15 for two-pin.

Adapters & Converters: International visitors with different plug types will need travel adapters. Many hotels provide adapters upon request at the front desk. Universal travel adapters are widely available at airport shops and electronics retailers throughout the city.

Device Compatibility: Most modern electronics support 110-240 volts and work seamlessly with Canadian outlets. Check your device specifications before use.

USB Charging: Many public spaces, hotels, cafes, and transportation hubs offer USB charging ports, making it convenient to charge mobile devices.

Must-Try Foods & Dining

Local Specialties: Fresh Pacific salmon prepared multiple ways (grilled, smoked), Dungeness crab, halibut, and wild seafood are specialties. BC oysters are exceptional quality. Indigenous-inspired cuisine featuring foraged ingredients is increasingly popular.

Must-Try Dishes: Fish and chips (Vancouver style), Bao sandwiches from Asian markets, dim sum in Chinatown, sushi and Japanese cuisine reflecting Vancouver's Asian influence, poutine (Canadian fries with gravy and cheese curds), butter chicken and Indian cuisine from the diverse community.

Dining Experience Tips: Tipping 15-20% is standard at restaurants. Gratuity is not typically included in the bill. Many excellent restaurants don't take reservations, so arrive early or expect to wait. Street food markets and casual eateries offer great value.

Dining Neighborhoods: Gastown and downtown feature upscale restaurants; Chinatown offers authentic and affordable Asian dining; Kitsilano has trendy cafes and restaurants; East Vancouver features hip food scene and multicultural options; Granville Island Public Market has diverse food stalls and fresh options.

Dietary Options: Vancouver is very accommodating to vegetarian, vegan, and dietary restriction requirements. Most restaurants clearly label menu items or readily modify dishes.

Tourist Passes

TransLink Day Pass

An all-day unlimited travel pass for Vancouver's public transit system including SkyTrain, buses, and Seabus. An adult all-zone DayPass costs CAD $12.55 as of July 1, 2026. Available at SkyTrain stations, London Drugs retailers, and many 7-Eleven locations. Saves money compared to purchasing individual journey tickets.

www.translink.ca

Vancouver Attraction Pass

Combines admission to popular attractions like Science World, Capilano Suspension Bridge, and the Vancouver Aquarium in bundle packages. Options range from single attraction passes to multi-pass combinations. Offers flexibility to choose attractions based on interests. Can be purchased online or at individual attraction venues with discounts for purchasing combinations.

www.tourismvancouver.com