

VICTORIA

BC, CANADA

ARTS, CULTURE, AND HISTORY

Three Day Sample Itinerary



Victoria, one of the oldest cities in the Pacific Northwest, boasts a rich and fascinating history. Explore Victoria's past and celebrate the rich culture through a variety of galleries, museums, heritage sites, and cultural events that are scattered throughout our city. Victoria features events throughout all seasons, with line-ups of entertainment bursting with talent!



DAY ONE

Start your day at the must-see **Royal BC Museum**, experiencing British Columbia's history through unique displays and galleries. Highly realistic and inviting displays provide visitors with the sense of having truly experienced these authentic settings. International "pop-up" exhibits are hosted here as well, ensuring that no two museum visits are the same.

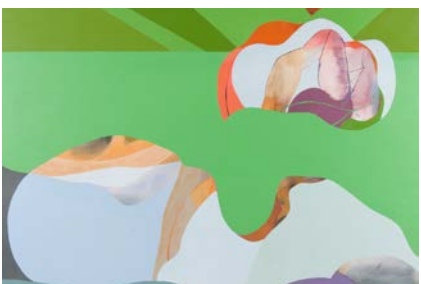


Following your museum visit, walk across the street to the **Parliament Buildings** where elected representatives meet to shape the future of the province of British Columbia. This 12.5 acre property has served as the site of government in British Columbia since 1864. Architect Francis Rattenbury, was just 25 years old when he won the competition to design the new buildings. Visitors are also welcome to participate in one of their free 45-minute guided tours!



Continue walking on Belleville Street to **the Bateman Foundation and Gallery**, which displays the largest exhibit of original works by the legendary wildlife artist, featuring over 160 pieces. A total of ten galleries cover different aspects of Bateman's work, and two of these galleries are of special interest to youth and children. The Family Gallery includes a hands-on nature play area for children under 10, and the Kathryn Iredale Gallery focuses on Bateman's work about birds. Here, children can explore the collection interactively by orchestrating multiple bird calls through a multi-channel sound system and sensors on the paintings.





DAY TWO

Be sure to make a trip to [Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse](#), a National Historic Site located just a 20 minute drive from downtown Victoria. It is a coastal artillery fort built in the late 1890s to defend Victoria and the Esquimalt Naval Base. Signs, audio and video stations, and friendly, knowledgeable staff tell the stories of this site. While the kids investigate the lighthouse, parents can enjoy the spectacular ocean and mountain views over a picnic lunch for a half-day well spent.

After your picnic, make sure to visit [Hatley Park National Historic Site](#), one of Canada's largest and most diverse National Historic Sites. At the center is a magnificent castle built in 1908 by James Dunsmuir, former British Columbia Premier and coal baron. Authentic and beautifully preserved, this 565 acre Edwardian estate is nestled on the southern tip of Vancouver Island, just 25 minutes from downtown Victoria. Echoes from the past link you to present day adventure as you enjoy daily tours of Hatley Castle, visit the museum and gift shop or stroll through the Japanese, Italian, and Rose Gardens. The intimate setting and gracious hospitality are ideal for weddings, meetings, retreats, conferences, corporate team building, motion picture films, or special events.

DAY THREE

The [Art Gallery of Greater Victoria](#) is located just 10 minutes from downtown Victoria in a beautiful park-like setting. The Gallery is housed in a combination of contemporary exhibition spaces and the remarkable 1889 Spencer mansion. It is the largest public art gallery on Vancouver Island and one of the most significant in Canada, with its important collection of visual and decorative arts. In addition to historical and contemporary art, the Gallery has an outstanding collection of art from Asia, including one of the only authentic Shinto shrines outside of Japan.

Next, wander along Fort Street to [Craigdarroch Castle Historic House Museum](#). You can also opt to take the hop-on-hop-off bus tour with [Gray Line Sightseeing Victoria](#) - this will provide transportation to the Castle, as well as other notable sites in Victoria. The Castle is an 1890's mansion with exquisite stained-glass windows, woodwork, and period antiques. Just like Hatley Castle, it was built by the wealthy Dunsmuir family and is a stunning example of the fine architecture, materials and craftsmanship available in the Victorian era. Climb 87 steps on the spectacular oak staircase to the top of the Tower for some of the best views in Victoria.



After your tour of the grand Castle, meander over to the **Government House**. This National Historic Site is considered the official residence of the Lieutenant Governor, as well as the ceremonial home for all British Columbians. From dawn to dusk, you can grab a breath of fresh air on their 36-acre grounds filled with mesmerizing gardens and a forested Garry Oak ecosystem. Their beehives and bountiful vegetable and fruit gardens source the dishes offered at **Rudi's Teahouse**, on-site, opening from May to September for take-out or picnics.



On your way back downtown along Fort Street, don't miss a stop at **Wentworth Villa Architecture Heritage Museum**. Originally the home of Captain Henry Bailey Ella and his family, Wentworth is now a museum focusing on Victoria's residential heritage. The rooms on the first floor of the Villa are exhibition spaces that feature other heritage homes from the region built sometime between the late 19th century and the interwar years of the 20th century. The upper level rooms feature artefacts of the Villa on display. These include an array of items ranging from dinnerware and tombstones to layers of wallpaper uncovered during restoration. These rooms provide a space to see what went on during restoration of Wentworth Villa and gain insight into heritage home preservation.



Make sure to visit the birthplace and childhood home of **Emily Carr**, one of Canada's most famous artists and authors, located in historic James Bay. Built in 1863, **Carr House** is just minutes away from the Inner Harbour. It has been restored to accurately depict the Victorian household and lifestyle of the Carr family. Emily's childhood home features a people's Gallery, which alternates between featured works by local artists and original works by Emily Carr. If you can't get enough of this artist, there is also a **famed bronze statue** of her in front of the **Fairmont Empress**, depicted with her dog "Billie" and Javanese monkey, "Woo".



CONTACT US

For more information on this and other itinerary suggestions, contact the Travel Trade team at Destination Greater Victoria.

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