

DESTINATION GREATER  
**VICTORIA**  
BC, CANADA

# *What's New in Victoria*



*Destination Greater Victoria is honoured to be based on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen-speaking peoples, whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.*

UPDATED JULY 2024

# Sustainability

Destination Greater Victoria is the first Destination Marketing Organization in North America to achieve Climate Positive designation. Destination Greater Victoria is proudly certified Climate Positive by Ostrom Climate and Synergy Enterprises. In March 2023, Greater Victoria became Biosphere Certified, a prestigious tourism designation. Seventeen of our members are Biosphere Certified, including the Victoria Conference Centre—the most of any North American Destination. A further 47 members are Biosphere Committed.

When you visit Victoria, you're met with green initiatives right out of the gate! New to the Victoria International Airport, YYJ, is a native species pollinator garden with more than 2,000 flora planted in 1,100 square metres of garden to help pollinators thrive.



# Accessibility

Victoria recently completed an accessibility audit to ensure travellers of all abilities can enjoy this beautiful city. What makes Greater Victoria special is the ease with which travellers of all abilities can access our world class activities, luxurious accommodations and elegant dining options.

## Victoria International Airport Launches Accessibility Initiative MagnusCards

Victoria Airport Authority (VAA), in partnership with Magnusmode, has launched a new accessibility initiative, MagnusCards®, to assist travellers. MagnusCards is a smartphone application available for iOS and Android, offering travellers step-by-step visuals, audio, and text how-to's to make everyday activities more manageable for people of all abilities. This initiative helps to improve the passenger experience at Victoria International Airport (YYJ) by reducing barriers for travel and ensuring that everyone that uses our airport can navigate their journey safely and efficiently.



# INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES

## Explore Songhees

“əyʔ skʷéčəl “good day” The Songhees Nation welcomes all visitors to Lekwungen Traditional Territory to partake in meaningful Indigenous cultural experiences. The Songhees Wellness Centre is the cultural hub where people and traditions come to meet. It offers incredible views, an art gallery + cafe and full-service event facilities for over 600 people.

Established in 2008, the Seven Signs of the Lekwungen is an interpretive walkway along the Inner Harbour and surrounding areas that honours the art, history and culture of the Coast Salish people who have resided in the Victoria area for hundreds of years.



# GETTING HERE AND GETTING AROUND



## Porter Airlines

Porter Airlines began service between Toronto Pearson International Airport (YYZ) and Victoria International Airport (YYJ) with the new Embraer E195-E2 aircraft in September 2023.

## Kenmore Air

Kenmore Air provides connectivity to Victoria from Seattle and the San Juan Islands. New for 2024, Kenmore Air launched seaplane service between Friday Harbor Marina and downtown Victoria, while maintaining their existing seaplane connection between Seattle (Lake Union & Lake Washington) and Victoria's Inner Harbour.





## Helijet

Helijet International announced plans to add Canada's first order for an electric, vertical-takeoff aircraft to add to its fleet of passenger and cargo helicopters. The ALIA aircraft will provide quick, quiet, and more efficient landings and takeoffs from hospitals and other emergency zones. Anticipated by 2026 for private and commercial flights.

## Harbour Air

Harbour Air is actively moving to transform to an all-electric fleet.

In April 2024, Harbour Air shared that they had signed a letter of intent with magniX to purchase 50 magni650 electric engines—a significant step in its commitment to sustainable aviation.



## OUTDOOR ADVENTURE



## 100th Anniversary Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary

2023 marked the 100th year anniversary of the Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary. The sanctuary is the oldest and largest in BC, along with Esquimalt Lagoon and Shoal Harbour Bird Sanctuary.

# HOTELS & ACCOMMODATION

## Rosemead House

Esquimalt's Old English Inn will reopen as Rosemead House following extensive restoration, for full, luxury hotel service this fall 2024. The newly restored hotel will feature 28 unique guest rooms, suites, the signature Janevca Kitchen and Lounge, Salt and Ivy Spa, and more. The historic property was originally designed by architect Samuel Macclure, best known for developing the Government House (with Francis Rattenbury) and Hatley Castle. Janevca Kitchen and Lounge will open to the public in the summer of 2024, to set the stage for Rosemead House.

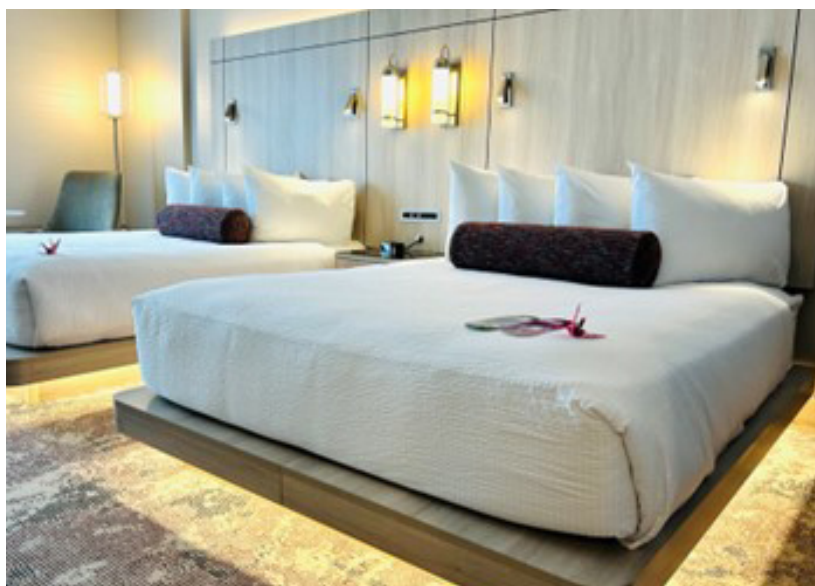


## Huntingdon Hotel & Suites

After completing renovations to more than 38 loft rooms this spring 2024, Huntingdon Manor Hotel rebranded to Huntingdon Hotel & Suites. The loft rooms are new products, and they are quite different than our other rooms.

## Coast Victoria Hotel & Marina by APA

Coast Victoria guest room renovations commenced to offer guests an elevated Refreshingly Local™ experience with a focus on comfort, intuitively designed rooms and suites, and unparalleled service. Completed spring 2024.





## Fairmont Empress

The newly redesigned Fairmont Gold at Fairmont Empress, the brand's exclusive 'hotel within a hotel' experience, re-opened in summer 2023, which also marked the Empress' 115th anniversary. The expanded Fairmont Gold Lounge is located on the first floor of the heritage building with a private lounge and terrace that features dedicated concierge service. Fairmont Gold is designed to fulfill the needs of discerning travellers, ensuring their stay is nothing short of unforgettable. The reimaged Gold Floor and guestrooms celebrate both the history and natural beauty of the west coast, and elevates the historical property further into a new era of modern luxury.

## Wild Renfrew Seaside Cottages

### NEW FOREST VIEW STUDIO

In January, 2024, Wild Renfrew introduced a new Forest View Studio. With unique and special features such as an outdoor shower, outdoor jetted tub, private patio and a gas fire-pit., this Studio makes for a vacation never to be forgotten. This studio sits on the edge of a little forest, located away from all of the other units, granting a private and peaceful evening and night.



## New Hotel in Old Town

Victoria Council has approved a project to overhaul two heritage buildings in Old Town to make way for a 139-room hotel. UVic Properties and Chard Development plan to use the site to build a Hyatt-centric, branded hotel covering almost a full block of Broad Street. The proposal preserves the front and rear walls and parts of the side walls of the Duck's historic building, as well as an original rock wall of the Carriage Factory, which dates to 1874.

## Abigail's Hotel

Tucked away in a gorgeous neighbourhood just three blocks from downtown Victoria. Abigail's Hotel mixes historic charm and modern luxury and recently expanded to add eight new luxury guestrooms.

Abigail's Hotel has received outstanding recognition including #2 Hotel in Canada in the 2024 Trip Advisor Traveler's Choice Awards.



## The Vic, Ascend Hotel Collection

Opened in 2023, the Vic Hotel is a boutique hotel located near the stunning Selkirk Trestle, featuring upscale, spacious, apartment-style suites with rainfall showers, refrigerators, microwaves, and kitchenettes. Also offering pet-friendly Gorge Waterway accommodations.

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

### HAVN Saunas

HAVN is a floating park-like environment on the edge of Victoria's Inner Harbour. Lush outdoor green spaces, cold pools, hot tubs, an indoor lounge space, and hand-built saunas provide a vibrant self-care experience. Located on a 44-meter marine barge built in 1943 that was originally used as a floating wartime workshop for welders and other tradesman.







## Wildwood Saunas

Wildwood Saunas recently found a new home at the scenic Bilston Creek Lavender Farm in Metchosin – July 2023. This relaxing 90-minute wood-burning Sauna and Cold Plunge Cycle features cold plunge tubs, a designated relaxation area, and cold outdoor showers, each with a window framing the views of Metchosin's lush forest.

## ATTRACTIONS

### The Flavour Trails extend to Greater Victoria's Westshore

This July, a new route was added to the Flavour Trails, self-guided agritourism itineraries. Barns, Beaches and Beyond showcases makers, farmers and producers in Langford, Metchosin and Sooke. Whether the new trail is explored as a loop, or as a collection of experiences, farm-fresh options abound. Highlights include a delightful brunch featuring locally sourced ingredients and an African twist, a charming lavender farm, delightful sugar shack, friendly barnyard buddies, and a blacksmith forge. The [Flavour Trails](#) also offer itineraries on the Saanich Peninsula and Southern Gulf Islands.



### Victoria Butterfly Garden – Juvenile Cuvier's Dwarf Caiman

The Victoria Butterfly Gardens proudly announced a significant addition to its jungle experience with the acquisition of a Cuvier's Dwarf Caiman, the smallest living New World crocodilian. Javier, the caiman, is being cared for by the Victoria Butterfly Gardens on behalf of Environment and Climate Change Canada.

## Underground Donut Tour

In August 2023, Victoria's newest food tour launched with a focus exclusively on everyone's favourite pastry – donuts! Taking you to four of the best donut shops in Victoria, learn about the history of each of the shops, the neighbourhood and greater Victoria while enjoying a delicious treat.



## Victoria Cannabis Tours

Vancouver Island's first cannabis tour company opened on April 20th, 2023, with a mission to provide unique and unforgettable experiences for cannabis enthusiasts and curious explorers alike. Guests can enjoy a captivating driving adventure through Vancouver Island's cultural landscape, enriched by ocean vistas and mountain views. The tours include scenic routes, charming streets, and hidden gems with opportunity to enjoy cannabis in a 100% legal, safe, and professional environment.

## Victoria Tours

Launched June 10th, 2024, Victoria Tours specializes in walking tours of downtown Victoria. Victoria Then & Now, starts at the cenotaph outside the parliament buildings and ends up in Chinatown, giving an overview of Victoria's past, present, and future by tying together history, fascinating facts, and current events through story and interactive fun. Their tips-based tours offer personalized recommendations for food and fun for each client's stays - like a concierge for the whole city!





## Electric Alpine Biking Inc.

Established in 2023, amplify your cycling ability and ride the scenic 55-km Galloping Goose Regional Trail with their premium fleet of e-bikes. Ride further with their accessible Hybrid/Electric shuttle bus, the “Galloping Goose Bike Shuttle.” Depart with your own bike or add an E-bike rental, and embark on an unforgettable journey along the Galloping Goose Regional Trail.

## ART, FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

### Chinese Canadian Museum - Fan Tan Alley Exhibit

“First Steps: Chinese Canadian Journeys in Victoria”, is a new temporary exhibition that highlights important starting points for Chinese Canadians in Victoria. Examples of intergenerational resilience and agency are shared through stories of community support, entrepreneurship, and personal accomplishment.



### Royal BC Museum – New Stonehenge Exhibit

May 10, 2024–January 5, 2025

The Stonehenge exhibit is making its North American debut at the Royal BC Museum. Featuring 400+ ancient artifacts along with archaeological insight and cutting edge scientific research, this exhibition explores this iconic 5,000-year-old World Heritage Site.

## ENROUTE TOP NEW RESTAURANTS OF THE YEAR 2023



### Marilena Cafe + Raw Bar

Toptable Group opened their first restaurant in Victoria, which happens to be Executive Chef Kristian Eligh's hometown.

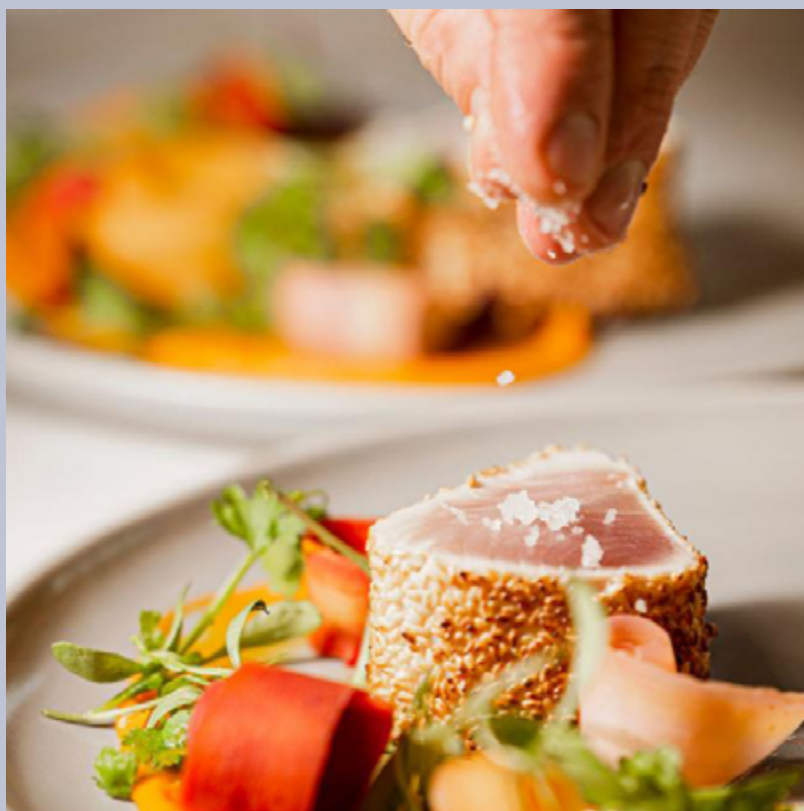
The Marilena team is dedicated to delivering unforgettable dining experiences through the passion of award-winning chefs and dedicated staff.

Chef Eligh has crafted a menu that draws inspiration from memorable West Coast cuisine with an emphasis on local and globally sourced seafood.

### The Ugly Duckling

New in 2023, Ugly Duckling is a fine dining restaurant that takes its inspiration from the intersection between Vancouver Island's magical terroir and the rich cultural heritage of North America's first Chinatown.

Its experiential dining is built around two promises: to serve only those things which they have made by hand; and to work really, really hard to make guests smile.





## Shuck Taylor's

Shuck Taylor's is a new oyster house that opened end of September 2023. With a focus on fresh shellfish, their menu is expected to change with the tides. Local oyster and seafood master, Jess Taylor, began by running his own catering business, Wandering Mollusk. He's excited to now operate a permanent location where his passion for local and quality internationally selected oysters and seafood can attract customers right to the heart of downtown Victoria.

## Rudi

Rudi opened in late 2023. Rudi is short for Rudolph, a traditional German name that is inspired by owner, Jesse Dame's, grandfather. Rudi is a place to come together and share food, drinks and stories. Expect a menu inspired by traditional European cuisine and beloved family recipes passed down through generations – with tweaks and new ideas added over time.



## OEB Breakfast Co.

OEB Breakfast Co. officially opened their doors in Victoria, March 2024. They pride themselves on a vision that supports their people – from farming partners to chefs, managers, employees, and finally, their incredible guests. They aim to invest in, educate and broaden horizons with every connection they make. OEB menu is purposeful, filled with items that simply can't be made at home, balanced by lighter fare and vegan options. OEB pushes the culinary boundaries of breakfast food to bring you the best in quality and craftsmanship.

## Uncle Terry's Patio at Delta Hotels by Marriott Ocean Pointe Resort

Named after beloved Banquet Chef, Terry Gerard, Uncle Terry's Patio embodies his spirit of warmth, hospitality, and culinary excellence. Experience the vibrant pulse of summer with Uncle Terry's Patio, the newest pop-up event at Delta Hotels by Marriott Ocean Pointe Resort. Set against the picturesque backdrop of our Harbour Patio, this trendy, casual, and upbeat gathering promises an unforgettable culinary journey inspired by the personalities of our talented kitchen team including LIVE music and a DOG friendly pet menu for your furry four legged best friends.



## Fairmont Empress Sunset Sips

Back by popular demand, Fairmont Empress announces the return of 'Sunset Sips' for the spring and summer season. Starting on Friday, May 3, 2024, guests can once again indulge in the elevated night-time experience that puts a twist on tradition with tea infused cocktails and mocktails presented in elegant glass teapots.

## Duo Café at Inn at Laurel Point

Coffee culture is alive and well in Victoria. Inn at Laurel Point is upping the coffee scene with a new café for guests and locals alike. Opened February 2024, featuring their freshly baked croissants (the best in the city) and the growl of the espresso machine, Duo Café Bakery will entice those looking for the perfect takeaway coffee or a great local spot to meet friends.





## Clive's Classic Lounge

Clive's Classic Lounge, located in the Chateau Victoria Hotel and Suites completed renovations April 2024, aligning with the celebration of their 15th anniversary. Clive's Classic Lounge has been recognized as the Whiskey Hotel Bar of the Year 2023 by Whiskey Magazine's Icons of Whiskey annual awards.

## Floyd's Diner Gorge

The new location of Floyd's Diner officially opened on February 15th, 2024! Home of the Mahoney, their new location resides at The Vic, Ascend Hotel Collection. Established in 2004, Floyd's Diner is a fun and friendly, family-oriented atmosphere for all to enjoy. Feeling lucky? Order The Mahoney (Chef's choice), you'll have the chance to flip a coin for double or nothing!



## Block Kitchen + Bar

Block Kitchen + Bar opened in 2023, in Victoria, offering a dynamic, global menu with Asian flair, creative cocktails, an extensive wine list and local beers, all in the heart of Victoria.

## Steve's Poke Bar

Steve's Poke Bar opened in Vic West and Langford in December 2023. Steve wanted to preserve the method and traditional way of serving authentic Hawaiian Poké, the way he grew up with poké, with the option of adding various toppings to complete a healthy meal.



## Kahuna

Kahuna blends owners Jay Oppelaar and Robert Stutzman's love for Hawaii's beauty and traditions with the vibrant and serene landscapes of Vancouver Island. With poke, burgers that are so stacked they can be hard to wrap your mouth around, plates and desserts, guests to Kahuna never leave hungry. Since November 2023, they have been winning over guests with specialties like their Oahu burger, served on a ramen noodle bun!

## Good Ovening

Established in 2023, Good Ovening restaurant has been a beacon of innovation in the culinary landscape. Rooted in a passion for promoting healthier dining choices, Biosphere Committed Good Ovening takes pride in deviating from the norm. They specialize in serving oven-roasted, wholesome chicken, providing a delightful departure from the traditional deep-fried options commonly found in Korea.





# 2024 Anniversaries

**The Butchart Gardens**  
120th Anniversary



**Spinnakers Gastro  
Brewpub**  
40th Anniversary



**Victoria Film Festival**  
30th Anniversary



**Ska & Reggae Festival**  
25th Anniversary  
(June 19 – 23 2024)



**Victoria Pedicab**  
25th Anniversary



**Marriott Victoria Inner  
Harbour**  
20th Anniversary



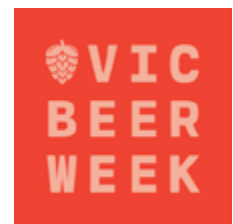
**Il Covo**  
10th Anniversary  
(June 19th)



**Sea Cider**  
20th Anniversary



**Victoria Beer Week**  
10th Anniversary  
(March 1-9th)



**Wilson's Transportation**  
45th Anniversary  
(December 2025)



**Crystal Garden**  
100th Year Celebration  
(2025)



# Awards, Accolades & Designations



- #1 Best City in the World - *Condé Nast Traveler's Reader's Choice Awards*
- #1 Best Midsize City in the World - *Travel Awaits*
- #1 Most Walkable Destination Outside of the US - *Travel Awaits*
- #1 Friendliest City in the World - *Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards (US)*
- #2 Sustainable Destination in North America - *Global Destination Sustainability Index*
- #2 Favourite City in Canada - *Travel + Leisure Readers' 5 Favourite Cities in Canada*
- #3 Friendliest City in the World - *Condé Nast Traveler's Reader's Choice Awards*
- #4 Best Island in the World (Vancouver Island) - *Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards*
- #8 Best City in the World for Food - *Condé Nast Traveler's Reader's Choice Awards*
- *Sunset Magazine's 2023 Travel Award Winner "Best City Getaways"*
- *Good Housekeeping 2024 Family Travel Awards Must See City*
- *Canada's Most Livable City - The Globe and Mail*