

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.

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 of 18 members Biosphere Certified; 50+ members Biosphere Committed.

Victoria has been named the most sustainable destination in North America by the 2024 Global Destination Sustainability-Index (GDS-Index)

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



Placemaking Project Celebrating lək'wəŋən Artworks

The [Greater Victoria Harbour Authority](#) (GVHA), together with Xwsepsem Nation and Songhees Nation, has launched a collaborative placemaking project installing lək'wəŋən artworks in downtown Victoria, aimed at connecting residents and visitors to the area's rich First Nations' culture. Placemaking is a concept that expresses a community's identity through art, design, or architecture. The project's first artworks are viewable at the Inner Harbour causeway, including four red and yellow octopus umbrellas designed by Songhees artist and educator Clarence "Butch Dick" (Yux'wey'lupton).

Songhees Tours

Starting July, 2025, Songhees Tours is offering immersive, Indigenous-led canoe and walking tours through the heart of Victoria's Inner Harbour. Deeply driven by authenticity, the tours are guided by lək'wəŋən hosts who bring guests onto the highways of their ancestors, where every paddle stroke and footstep is grounded in truth, protocol, and lived experience. Proudly owned by Songhees Nation, Songhees Tours is the only Indigenous-owned and operated tour provider in the Inner Harbour. Supported by community Elders, these experiences invite guests into real cultural exchange—where oral history, language, and place-based teachings come together in unforgettable ways.



GETTING HERE AND GETTING AROUND



Porter Airlines

Starting May 15, 2025, service between Ottawa International Airport (YOW) and Victoria International Airport (YYJ) will operate for the summer season with up to seven weekly roundtrip flights.

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 extends its connectivity to Victoria with seasonal service between Tacoma's Ruston Way and Victoria's Inner Harbour. The daily service runs from May 15 to September 15, 2025. This new service offers the fastest and most scenic route to Victoria for South Sound residents. Kenmore Air provides connectivity to Victoria from Seattle, Tacoma, and the San Juan Islands.



HeyYa Cart Rentals

Opened April 11, 2025, HeyYa Rentals takes exploring Victoria and Oak Bay to a new level! Renting an electric golf cart will offer a fun, eco-friendly way to see the city at your own pace. With 4, 6, and 8-seater HeyYa Carts, you can cruise nearly anywhere—historic streets, scenic waterfronts, and vibrant shopping districts.

Perfect for families, tourists, and groups, the carts let you explore without the noise and emissions of traditional vehicles.

HOTELS & ACCOMMODATION

MICHELIN KEY DESIGNATIONS



Fairmont Empress Hotel

The Fairmont Empress is the iconic “Castle on the Coast” with sweeping views of Victoria’s Inner Harbour. It is an ultimate blend of modern and historic charm. Its Gold Floor was fully renovated in 2023, and is not to be missed. Designated a National Historic Site of Canada, the Empress has hosted royalty and celebrities from around the world and is well known for its afternoon tea. The Empress should also be known for its commitment to sustainability, certified as a Biosphere property – the fifth hotel in British Columbia to achieve the designation.

The Magnolia Hotel & Spa

The Magnolia Hotel & Spa is a modern boutique through and through. With sixty-four rooms it’s kept to a personable scale, and the service is pure West Coast charm. The décor is classic, never breaking the spell that’s cast by the views of the historic downtown, and the bathrooms stick with tradition as well – deep soaking tubs are a highlight. In fact indulgence, in one form or another, is what the Magnolia is all about: the Spa Magnolia cements the hotel’s status as a getaway destination, and The Courtney Room, just off the lobby, would have suited the Victorian Victoria just as it does the modern one.





Rosemead House

Esquimalt's Old English Inn will reopen as Rosemead House following extensive restoration, for full, luxury hotel service July, 2025. The newly restored hotel features 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 opened to the public in October of 2024, to set the stage for Rosemead House.

Sooke Harbour House

After a four-year renovation, Sooke Harbour House is welcoming guests to the completely renovated hotel and dining room overlooking stunning coastal and shoreline views. Sooke Harbour House offers an exquisite culinary experience, where the menu reflects a commitment to farm-to-table principles, showcasing the finest local ingredients from Vancouver Island. Where guest can savour a menu that evolves with the seasons, featuring expertly crafted dishes that highlight the region's bountiful produce and seafood, providing a truly immersive and unforgettable dining experience.



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.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Intention: A Wellness Getaway in Victoria

January 5-18, 2026: Start your year centered with the 2nd annual Intention. A wellness getaway in Victoria. Immerse yourself in wisdom, community and uplifting practices on an intuitive wellness journey. Reconnect to practices that bring you balance and clarity, with experiences like speaker series, cooking classes, and guided workouts. Whether you're seeking moments of zen, restful sleep programs, or awe-inspiring views, Victoria's hotels offer unique ways to help you flourish. Reaffirm your goals and rediscover what wellness means to you in this community-centered, vibrant city.



Stargazing Sauna - Oak Bay Beach Hotel

The custom-built Stargazing Sauna is an immersive new wellness experience. Crafted by WildWood Saunas and positioned poolside for maximum impact, the cedar sauna offers sweeping 180-degree views of the Salish Sea. The Stargazing Sauna opened April, 2025 with the full hydrotherapy journey launching in May alongside the refreshed Boathouse Spa, reopening after an inspired renovation. The experience expands with the addition of two cold plunge pools, allowing guests to complete a full hydrotherapy circuit that invigorates the body, restores balance, and deepens the connection to the sea air and coastal surroundings.

ATTRactions

Victoria Tours

Launched June 10, 2024, Victoria Tours is a local company specializing in walking, cycling, journaling, and painting tours of downtown Victoria. A Very Victorian Writing Tour allows you to slow down and reflect on the places and people unique to Victoria using writing tools taught during the tour by Giller Prize nominee author Claire Hulligan. The tour features crafted writing prompts inspired by history, nature & architecture of Victoria. Victorian Vistas Watercolour Experience allows you to learn a painting technique and dedicate time to practicing and applying your new skills.



ART, FESTIVALS AND EVENTS



Dungeness Crab Festival

June 29, 2025 at Ship Point - Get ready for The Authentic BC CrabBoil & Festival, where fresh, sustainably caught Dungeness crab takes center stage! Dive into a bucket filled with crab, mussels/clams, BC shrimp/prawns and more!! This communal dining experience brings people together over incredible flavours, local drinks, and entertainment.

Chinese Canadian Museum - Fan Tan Alley Exhibit

Originally opened as a temporary exhibit, the Victoria Chinatown Museum is now a permanent museum. Located in Fan Tan Alley (Canada's narrowest street), the Victoria Chinatown Museum explores the distinctive story of Victoria's Chinatown (Canada's first Chinatown) and examines the roles that Chinese-Canadians played in building modern day Victoria through stories of community support, entrepreneurship, and personal accomplishment.





Royal BC Museum – Beyond the Beat: Music of Resistance and Change

The Summer 2025 exhibition, *Beyond the Beat*, showcases artists who have used their talents to promote equality and freedom. Popular music has a long history of uplifting and supporting collective movements and personal struggles for human rights. *Beyond the Beat* presents historical and contemporary examples of how musicians and audiences have used music to make a difference.

Explore ground-breaking and history-making moments where music played a pivotal role in social and political transformation. See legendary instruments and remarkable stage outfits. Interact with dynamic music and video exhibits and experiences. Learn about music that changed the world.

AWARDED RESTAURANTS



Café Malabar

Café Malabar took the number five spot on the Top 10 list of Air Canada's Best New Restaurants 2024. Head Chefs Kiran Kolathodan and Karma Tenpa opened in June, 2023, at Victoria Public Market. As a small restaurant, this recognition reflects the dedication of their team and the warm embrace of the community, which has allowed them to share the vibrant flavours of Kerala.

In February, Café Malabar has relocated in February, 2025 to 407 Swift Street — bigger, better, and just around the corner from where it used to be, continuing their culinary journey in an even more welcoming space.

Pizzeria Prima Strada

Pizzeria Prima Strada has been ranked the 100th best pizzeria in the world by 50 Top Pizza, an online network that's been highlighting the world's most extraordinary pizza since 2017.



AWARDED RESTAURANTS



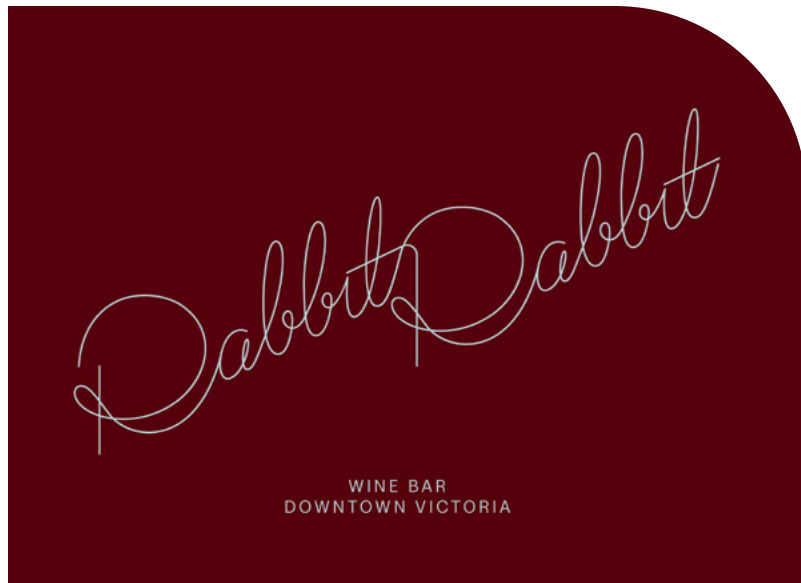
The Butchart Gardens – The Dining Room

OpenTable's Top 100 Restaurants 2024. Enjoy the stunning floral display gardens, plus the restaurant's historic surroundings and contemporary, fresh local foods. Located in the original Butchart family residence, you can experience spectacular views of the Private Garden, the Italian Garden and Tod Inlet. Indulge in Afternoon Tea in our Spring and Summer seasons, or High Tea which offers more warm savories from October through the winter months. Lunch and dinner are served seasonally with a strong presence of local sustainable ingredients.

Marilena Cafe & Raw Bar

Canada's 100 Best (#27) Toptable Group's first restaurant in Victoria. Back-lit art, dramatic lighting, plush banquettes, an open kitchen with its own tasting bar, a separate raw bar with stools of its own, a traditional bar with a vast wall of glinting bottles behind it. Its culinary ambition makes this place interesting. The goal was to give coastal Victoria the grand, modern seafood restaurant it's theoretically entitled to. To get that job done, you'll find Clark Park at the raw bar, and in the main kitchen, the exceptionally talented Kristian Eligh.





Rabbit Rabbit Wine Bar

A new wine bar concept is opened in Downtown Victoria (658 Herald Street) in December 2024. Rabbit Rabbit's kitchen is helmed by executive Chef Billy Nguyen. Billy's memorable and inspired dishes took him to the finale of Top Chef Canada Season 9, where he finished as the runner-up. Since his time on Top Chef, Billy has run a series of successful pop ups, worked with Michelin starred chefs, and honed his unique style of transforming the tastiest bites from his childhood into new memories, by combining nostalgic flavour profiles with progressive and innovative techniques.

Macaloney's Island Distillery

On January 16, Macaloney's Island Distillery took home Canadian Whisky of the Year honours for its Peat Project Moscatel Barrique single malt, at the 2025 Canadian Whisky Awards.

The 100% malted barley whisky received the top overall score from a panel of 14 judges, who tasted and scored around 200 competing whiskies in blind tastings. The whisky was distilled using local barley and peat-smoked at the distillery, then matured in a European Moscatel wine barrique.



Better Acres Ice Cream

Opened September, 2024, Lori Joyce, owner of Better Acres Ice Cream, combines her farm-grown values with her passion for food to make small-batch ice cream that's as fresh and wholesome as it gets. Made nearby in the countryside with fresh BC cream and a clean ingredient list, Better Acres Ice Cream is a taste of how ice cream used to be—pure, natural, and gluten-free. It's the perfect way to bring a little country charm to Government Street.

Pendray Inn – New Evening Scottish High Tea

Discover the hearty elegance of Scottish High Tea, a new evening dining experience introduced at Pendray Tea House. Unlike the refined Afternoon Tea, traditionally associated with light bites and delicate flavours, Scottish High Tea originated as a robust evening meal for workers in Scotland and Northern England. It features a satisfying mix of savoury dishes, freshly baked scones, and seasonal sweets—all crafted with premium, locally sourced ingredients that showcase the best of our region.



A Taste of Victoria Food Tours

Two Exciting New Culinary Experiences:

Alleyways and Ales

For beer lovers and history buffs alike, the Alleyways and Ales Craft Beer Tour provides a fascinating journey through Victoria's historic Chinatown and Old Town.

This 2.5-hour walking tour guides guests through hidden alleyways and iconic pubs, stopping at four local breweries for four beer tastings and three food tastings from local vendors. Between tastings, guests learn insider information about local brewers and enjoy a fun dialogue on the rich history of these historic districts.

Vistas and Views

For those seeking a more upscale dining experience, Vistas and Views takes guests on a progressive-style lunch/dinner, visiting three of Victoria's finest restaurants for a complete 3-course meal. Each stop showcases a different gourmet course, accompanied by stunning views ranging from the Inner Harbour to the snow-capped Olympic Mountains. Guests can opt to enhance their experience with local beer or wine pairings.





Bengal Lounge - Fairmont Empress

The Bengal Lounge is undergoing renovations and will be reopening at the Fairmont Empress.

Anticipated July, 2025.

2025 Anniversaries

Wilson's Transportation
45th Anniversary



Crystal Garden
100th Year Celebration



Flower Count
50th Anniversary



**Best Western Plus
Emerald Isle Hotel**
40th Anniversary



**Swan Lake Christmas Hill
Nature Sanctuary**
50th Anniversary



Rogers Chocolate
140th Anniversary



**Brentwood Bay
Resort & Spa**
20th Anniversary



**Royal Victoria
Marathon**
45th Anniversary



**Beacon Hill
Children's Farm**
40th Anniversary



Awards, Accolades & Designations



- Top 10 Most Walkable Cities in the World - Skyscanner 2025
- #1 sustainable destination in North America by the 2024 Global Destination Sustainability-Index (GDS-Index)
- #1 Small City in the World in 2023 and 2024 – Conde Nast Traveler Reader's Choice Awards
- #1 Friendliest City in the World in 2024 - Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards (US)
- #2nd Favorite Cities in Canada of 2024 - Travel + Leisure Readers'
- #2 Best Island in the World (Vancouver Island) - Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards
- 2024 Good Housekeeping Family Travel Awards Must See City
- 2025 Good Housekeeping Family Travel Award Winner
- [Resale Capital of Canada](#)