

Time to Travel

DGV's travel trade newsletter



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.

Hello,

As we transition into fall and enjoy Victoria's famously mild climate, the city takes on a special kind of charm. From Halloween fun winding through historic streets to the twinkle of holiday lights around town, there's a festive energy that fills the air — cozy, welcoming, and full of spirit.

Here's to wrapping up the year with holiday cheer, community and a little island magic!



What's Happening

We're proud to share that Victoria has once again been named the **Best Small City in the World** by Condé Nast Traveler readers — for the third year in a row!

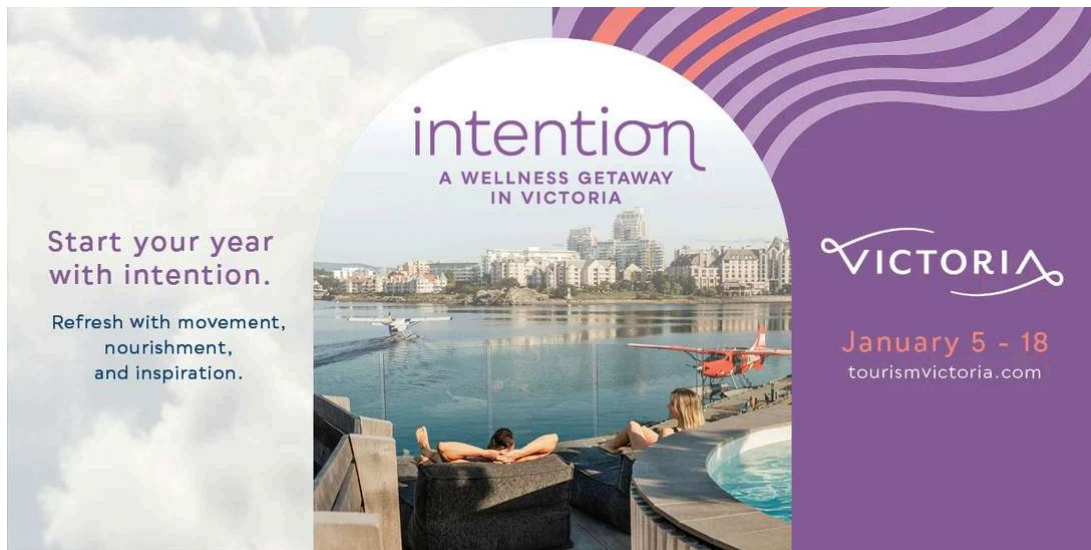
This incredible recognition speaks to the unique charm of our beautiful city. From strolling the scenic Inner Harbour and vibrant arts scene, to indulging in world-class, locally sourced cuisine and relaxing into the laid-back island pace, it's easy to see why travellers continue to fall in love with Greater Victoria.

Read more to find out why Victoria has become a top travel destination!

1. **Dine around & Stay in Town (January 23rd – February 8th, 2026):**

Presented by Destination Greater Victoria and the BC Restaurant & Foodservices Association (BCRFA), the annual Dine Around & Stay in Town program returns for 17 days of curated dining experiences across Greater Victoria. Over **50 restaurants** will feature multi-course, prix fixe menus at a variety of price points, ranging from **\$25 to \$75**. From cozy brunch spots to upscale dinners, there's something to satisfy every palate and budget. Pair your meal with exclusive hotel deals for the ultimate staycation.

2. **Intention (Jan 5th – 18th, 2026):** Intention is a two-week **wellness-focused initiative** designed to support healthy habits and mindful living at the start of the new year. This program features speaker sessions, guided workouts, cooking classes, and more. Offering travellers a chance to reset, reflect, and recharge after the holiday season. Participating hotels will provide special wellness-focused packages with **spa perks and nourishing extras**, allowing guests to craft a personalized wellness journey and reconnect with what matters most.



Product Updates

Butchart Gardens' Christmas lights return:

One of Victoria's most iconic attractions, [The Butchart Gardens](#), will once again transform into a winter wonderland with its [annual Christmas Lights](#) display, running from December 1st, 2025 to January 6th, 2026. Visitors can stroll through themed gardens illuminated with thousands of lights, creating a festive experience for all ages. Also, back for the first time in five years, is there outdoor skating rink! Tickets are on sale now, and advance bookings are strongly recommended.

Seair expands service:

On October 20th, [Seair](#) launched five daily flights between Victoria's Inner Harbour and Downtown Vancouver, making island getaways and city meetings more convenient. This new service significantly enhances connectivity between the two city centres, providing more flexibility for both leisure and business travellers. For more information click [here](#).



Image: Ariel view of Victoria & a Seair Seaplane

Image Courtesy Seair Seaplanes

Janevca Named a Finalist in Air Canada's Best New Restaurants:

Air Canada has revealed its list of [Canada's Best New Restaurants of 2025](#), and [Janevca](#) in Esquimalt has made it to the finalists list! Housed inside the historic [Rosemead House](#), Janevca blends old-world charm with bold, fire-driven cuisine inspired by Chef Andrea Alridge's Filipino and Jamaican roots. The Top 10 restaurants will be announced on November 17th. Janevca's nomination puts [Greater Victoria's culinary](#) scene firmly on the national map.

Curiosities of Craigdarroch:

The After-Hours Tour Returns! Just in time for spooky season, [Craigdarroch Castle](#) brings back its popular Curiosities of Craigdarroch after-hours tour, running Saturdays and Sundays from 4:30pm to 6pm, through to November 2nd. This 90-minute guided experience dives into the darker side of Victorian life — from séances and hair art to eerie Dunsmuir family stories. Due to mature content, this tour is recommended for adults. Tickets are available in advance [here](#).



Image: Courtesy Craigdarroch Castle

Ærth Saunas now open in Victoria's Inner Harbour:

Victoria's new outdoor sauna sanctuary, [Ærth](#), is receiving glowing feedback from both locals and visitors. Guests are praising the space for its thoughtful design, inclusive approach, and relaxing rituals like cold plunges and guided sauna experiences. The accessibility features—including full wheelchair access—are setting a new standard for wellness in the region.

Holiday Experiences & New Spa Ritual at the Fairmont Empress:

[Fairmont Empress](#) invites guests to relax, indulge, and celebrate with a variety of festive experiences. Starting December 1st, the **Festive Afternoon Tea** returns with holiday-inspired sandwiches, sweets, and the hotel's iconic scones. **S'mores on the Veranda**, offered Fridays to Sundays till the new year, continue to be a popular way to enjoy fireside treats after a stroll through Victoria's holiday lights. New this fall, the [Empress Blue Ritual](#) at [Fairmont Spa](#) is a 90-minute treatment inspired by the hotel's guest favourite Blue Suede Shoes Tea, featuring a honey and tea body polish, a tea-infused soak, and full-body massage.

New Hyatt Centric Hotel coming to Downtown Victoria:

Victoria's hotel scene is growing! A new 167-room, eight-storey Hyatt Centric has broken ground and is set to open in 2028 on Broad Street. The project will blend modern design with history by incorporating the heritage Duck's Building into the hotel and retail space.



Image: New Hyatt Centric Hotel

Cruise Updates

Celebrating the Success of the 2025 Cruise Season

Victoria's 2025 cruise season officially concluded on October 18th, marking the end of another strong year for the region. With over 300 cruise ship calls at Ogden Point, this season brought significant visitor volume and economic benefit to Greater Victoria.

New Holland America "Great Bear Rainforest" itinerary

Holland America Line has introduced a new seven-day Great Bear Rainforest cruise, with two departures aboard the Noordam — October 5th, 2025 and April 19th, 2026. This itinerary offers an immersive experience through coastal British Columbia, including rare scenic transits and a full-day call in Victoria before returning to Seattle. View the itinerary [here](#).

Victoria named #2 cruise destination in the world

Victoria has been named the second-best cruise destination in the world by *Compare the Market Australia* analyzed over 100 global ports. With its walkable charm, stunning scenery, and warm hospitality, Victoria continues to impress international travellers.



Image: Cruise Ships at Ogden Point

Sustainable Spotlight

The [IMPACT Sustainability Travel and Tourism Summit](#) returns to Victoria from **January 26th to 28th, 2026**, with an optional pre-conference day of IMPACT on January 25th. This annual event brings together tourism leaders, innovators, and changemakers to explore how the industry can drive resilient economies, healthy ecosystems, and thriving communities. The 2026 program will feature hands-on workshops, global case studies, and discussions on key topics like food security, AI in tourism, destination carrying capacity, and more. With a focus on moving ideas into action, IMPACT continues to shape how sustainable and regenerative tourism is practiced across Canada and beyond. Go to the [schedule page](#) to get an early peak at the scheduled speakers and click [here to register](#).



Upcoming Events & Shows

ATIA Annual Convention & Trade Show (October 21st - 23rd | Alaska)

Destination Greater Victoria will be attending the Alaska Travel Industry Association annual convention and trade show in Anchorage, Alaska. Our team will network with tourism businesses – including tour operators, wholesalers, vendors, destination marketing organizations, and elected officials – while learning the latest travel industry best practices and business skills with a focus on cruise.

Signature Travel Network Annual Conference (November 10th –14th, 2025 | Las Vegas)

Destination Greater Victoria will attend the Signature Travel Network's Annual Conference, a key event bringing together over 2,400 travel advisors, suppliers, and industry partners. This event is a valuable platform to showcase Victoria as a destination of choice to a global audience of high-performing agencies.

USTOA (December 1st–5th, 2025 | Gaylord National Resort, National Harbor, MD)

Destination Greater Victoria will also be attending the 2025 USTOA Annual Conference & Marketplace, a key industry event connecting North America's top travel companies with global tourism suppliers. Attending this exclusive member-

only event gives DGV a valuable platform to meet with key North American tour operators and strengthen international interest in Victoria.

DGV lead US Sales Mission (October 28th-29th | Washington): Travel Trade Manager, Ari Martinez will lead a U.S. sales mission to Washington State alongside member partners. The schedule includes a travel trade show in [Port Angeles on the evening of October 28th](#) and a [Special Networking event at the Bell Harbour Conference Center](#) in Seattle on October 29th. This mission provides valuable opportunities to engage with industry stakeholders and strengthen regional partnerships. We still have a few spots open for our VIP Seattle event. To confirm your participation please RSVP below!

You're invited



Connect with Victoria, BC: Networking Event

Please join [Destination Greater Victoria](#) for an evening at the Bell Harbor International Conference Center to connect with key tourism partners from Victoria, BC, Canada. Enjoy light refreshments, expand your network, discover the latest updates from Victoria, and take part in our prize draw. We look forward to seeing you there!

Wednesday, October 29th, 2025

TIME: 5:00-8:00pm

LOCATION: Bay View Room, Bell Harbor International Conference Center
2211 Alaskan Way, Pier 66, Seattle, WA 98121 (parking available)

QUESTIONS? traveltrade@tourismvictoria.com

RSVP

PLEASE RSVP BY
OCTOBER 27TH, 2025

DESTINATION GREATER
VICTORIA
BC, CANADA

Below is our Activity Calendar for 2025. We hope to see you at our upcoming events!

Oct 24-25: [Crafted Farmhouse Fall Market](#)

Oct 24 - Dec 1: [Victoria Art Council's Pop-Up Venue](#)

Oct 25: [Halloween Party at Market Square](#)

Oct 25-26: [Fright Nights at Ocean View Estate](#)

Oct 26: [11th Thrifty Foods Wicked Victoria presented by Chek Media](#)

Oct 31: [Garden City Improv Presents: Sketch Night Live](#)
Nov 1-2: [Victoria Symphony Presents: E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial in Concert](#)
Nov 1-2: [17th Annual Intuitive Arts Festival](#)
Nov 7-8: [O Christmas Tea: A British Comedy](#)
Nov 7-21: [Stress Reduction Through Creativity Workshop](#)
Nov 8: [Welcome to the Creepshow: A Burlesque and Drag Spectacle](#)
Nov 9: [Orchard Market at Junction Cidery](#)
Nov 10: [Choir! Choir! Choir! An EPIC Queen Sing-Along](#)
Nov 14-15: [Christmas Vintage Fair Sip & Shop](#)
Nov 16: [Victoria Symphony Presents: Kluxen & Tam - Bartók Violin Concerto & Beethoven's Eroica](#)
Nov 18 - Dec 9: [Holiday Wreath Making at Bilston Creek Farm](#)
Nov 20: [Colin Mochrie & Brad Sherwood: Asking for Trouble](#)
Nov 20-29: [Incoming Festival at Intrepid Theatre](#)
Nov 21-22: [Still With Us: A Legacy of HIV/AIDS in the Arts](#)

Contact your Travel Trade Reps

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