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OCTOBER 2018

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## A GLORIOUS WEEKEND IN VANCOUVER

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Meet the quirky  
desert community  
of Joshua Tree

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Top restaurants  
bring something  
new to Manila's  
food halls

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Ghost-themed  
walking tours  
in Melbourne





# C O N T E N T S

OCTOBER 2018



IMAGE: ANDREA FERNANDEZ

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## VANCOUVER: SASCHIE MACLEAN

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Working at Vancouver's tourism board, Saschie MacLean knows all the best spots in her city. From inventive avocado-flavored cocktails and plant-based gelato to a breathtaking Chinese courtyard garden, her weekend tour has all the ingredients of a delicious jaunt to the seaport city.

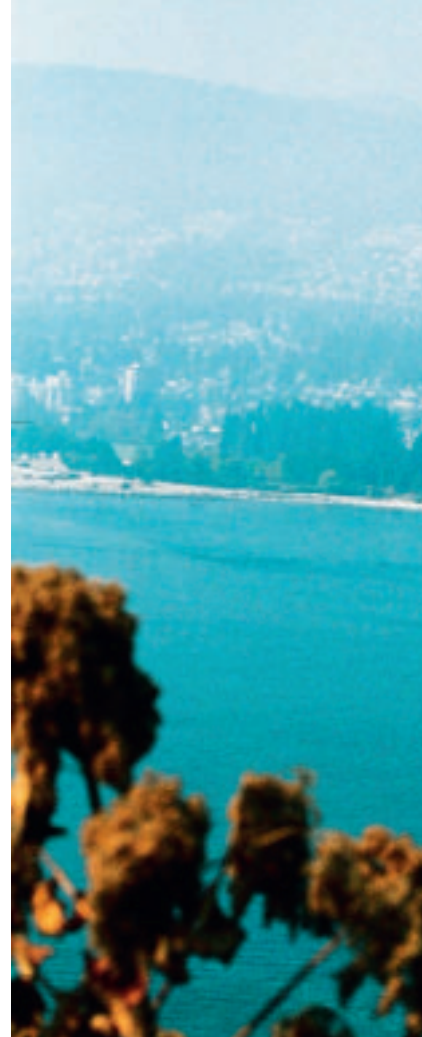
GOING GLOBAL

# Vancouver

WITH SASCHIE MACLEAN

Working at Vancouver's tourism board, Saschie MacLean knows all the best spots in her city. From inventive avocado-flavored cocktails and plant-based gelatos to a breathtaking Chinese courtyard garden, her weekend tour in and around the edgy neighborhood she calls home has all the ingredients of a delicious jaunt to the seaport city

As told to **Amber Gibson**  
Photography **Andrea Fernandez**







I have two jobs – as a communication specialist at Tourism Vancouver, where I work with media outlets, and as the co-founder of RSVP 33, where I organize dance classes and workshops held at dance studios in Vancouver, Calgary and Toronto. Both roles are important to me, but RSVP 33 holds great sentimental value. I started it after I lost my younger sister, Chantal, in 2014 when she was just 17. I found dance as a therapeutic outlet as I worked through my grief. I started RSVP 33 for myself, but it has now evolved into a program where thousands of women across the country come to share an hour of joy and wellness. It's a judgment-free zone and anyone is free to join in – even those learning how to dance for the first time.

I was born and raised in Vancouver, but between the ages of two and four, I lived in Metro Manila with my maternal grandmother, who was married to a Philippine Airlines pilot. My last visit two years ago was my first time seeing Parañaque as an adult – before that, my only memory of the city was as a nine-year-old – and what struck me the most was seeing my grandmother at home. I was always aware of her strong and





powerful presence, but seeing her on her home turf was utterly inspiring. She lost her child and brother years ago, and has experienced other tragedies in life, yet she still stands strong and evokes a brightness that I think is quintessentially Filipino. My favorite memory of that visit was joining her for a breakfast of fresh pandesal in her garden while she told me stories of her life. While Vancouver has a Filipino community, it's a different feeling to be in the Philippines and immersing myself locally. My visit there gave me a newfound appreciation for the roots and history of my people.

In Vancouver, we are surrounded by incredible nature – there are nearby mountains calling for a hike and bodies of water begging for a dip – and I think this has shaped our outdoorsy lifestyle. People here are laid-back, kind and open. We are intensely proud of our culture – like Filipinos.

My husband, Roman, was born in Canada and is also of Filipino heritage. We both love Filipino food and we cook familiar dishes every couple of weeks. My go-to is tocilog for brunch, which my mother taught me how to make – though







## CITY GUIDE

### Saturday

**Eastwood X**  
154 West Hastings St  
[eastwoodx.com](http://eastwoodx.com)

**Nelson the Seagull**  
315 Carrall St  
[nelsontheseagull.com](http://nelsontheseagull.com)

**East Van Roasters**  
319 Carrall St  
[eastvanroasters.com](http://eastvanroasters.com)

**Oak + Fort**  
355 Water St  
[oakandfort.com](http://oakandfort.com)

**Nouvelle Nouvelle**  
302 West Cordova St  
[nouvelleenouvelle.com](http://nouvelleenouvelle.com)

**Old Faithful Shop**  
320 West Cordova St  
[oldfaithfulshop.com](http://oldfaithfulshop.com)

**Park & Fifth**  
#240, 430 Railway St  
[parkandfifthco.com](http://parkandfifthco.com)

**The Good Spirit**  
309 Cambie St  
[thegoodspirit.ca](http://thegoodspirit.ca)

**Nemesis Coffee**  
302 West Hastings St  
[nemesis.coffee](http://nemesis.coffee)

**The Juice Truck**  
Corner of West Cordova  
and Cambie St  
[thejuicetruck.ca](http://thejuicetruck.ca)

**Dr Sun Yat-Sen  
Classical Chinese  
Gardens**  
578 Carrall St  
**vancouver**  
[chinesegarden.com](http://chinesegarden.com)

**Saku**  
1773 Robson St  
**+1 778 379 5872**

**Snowy Village**  
1696 Robson St  
[snowyvillages.ca](http://snowyvillages.ca)

**L'Abattoir**  
217 Carrall St  
[labattoir.ca](http://labattoir.ca)



if I'm being honest, I still ask her to make the marinade. I need to master kaldereta – my cousin makes such a good one!

We live in Railtown, an edgy neighborhood that's host to tech startups and hip shops, and I love the fact that I can walk to work in just 15 minutes. We live in a converted warehouse with beautiful loft spaces and an amazing rooftop garden. It's an artists-only building and a friend referred Roman, who's a video director and mixed media artist.

My favorite thing about Vancouver is the incredible dining scene, which reflects our diverse and multicultural population. I like to explore it on weekends.

## SATURDAY

### 9am

I kick off the weekend with a spin class at **Eastwood X**, a boutique studio with Moroccan-inspired décor and a welcoming energy, in between Vancouver's oldest neighborhood, Gastown, dating back to 1867, and Yaletown, which is known for its snazzy restaurants and indie boutiques. The 60-minute exercise helps me feel less guilty about last night's happy hour cocktails – and the treats that are sure to follow throughout the day.

### 11am

My husband and I grab our laptops and put in a couple of hours' work on RSVP 33, which we own together. At **1 2 Nelson the Seagull** we order an avocado toast served with poached eggs; they make their own bread and the sourdough is just beautiful! This is a quintessentially Gastown café in the sense that it was opened by three South Africans – the café's name pays homage to Nelson Mandela – and so much of Gastown and its surrounding area was built by immigrants. A couple of doors over is **East Van Roasters**, a bean-to-bar chocolate and coffee shop, where I reward myself with my favorite salted chocolate chip cookies. I feel good knowing that the owners give back to the community by employing women re-entering the workforce.

### 1pm

I spend the afternoon exploring Gastown's fashion boutiques. **Oak + Fort** is a Vancouver-based brand that has modern





## STREET ART SPOTTING



**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT.** Street murals by artists David Shillinglaw; Paul Windsor and Jeska Slater; Lowbros; and NEVERCREW

Like any urban hub worth its stripes, Vancouver has its fair share of gorgeous murals. Street art can bring a fresh and energetic vibe to a city, and the wildly successful Vancouver Mural Festival has been doing just that every year since 2016. Held every August in the adjoining neighborhoods of Mount Pleasant and Downtown Eastside, this year's special focus was on diversity and local artists, ushering in more than 30 new permanent murals. Explore Main Street to view all the works made for the Vancouver Mural Festival over the past three years – including our colorful cover image, which was painted by the Low Bros and can be viewed on the walls of City Centre Motel. [vanmurfest.ca](http://vanmurfest.ca)



and minimalist designs, while **Nouvelle Nouvelle** carries independent designers from around the world. I pop into **Old Faithful Shop** for home inspiration – the selection of beautifully designed products is intended to stand the test of time. Another favorite is **3 4 Park & Fifth**, which sits right outside Gastown. The store designs dresses in classic silhouettes that are sustainably manufactured in Vancouver.

### 3pm

Back in Gastown is **3 4 The Good Spirit**, which sells crystals, smudge sticks and wellness books. I've made an appointment for a tarot card reading, so to give me some privacy, Roman goes down the street for an almond milk latte and a bite of kouign-amann at **Nemesis Coffee**. Across from it is the unmissable **The Juice Truck**, where you can pick up cold-pressed juice from the bright, watermelon-red vehicle.





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**We are surrounded by incredible nature – there are nearby mountains calling for a hike and bodies of water begging for a dip**

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**6pm**

I take the long way home and cut through Chinatown so I can visit the breathtaking **Dr Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden**. Built in 1986 and modeled after a Ming dynasty scholar's home, it was the first-ever Chinese courtyard garden built outside of China. I love taking the guided tour, which is included with the admission price, so I can learn more about the intention behind each design element. The atmosphere is calming and reflective, a perfect and unexpected escape.

**7pm**

I love how Vancouver's dining scene is so multicultural – you can have an authentic Japanese or Korean meal knowing that you're helping Canadian producers, too, since many restaurants source locally. When I'm in the mood for Japanese food, I head to **7 Saku**, a newly opened tonkatsu place on Robson Street in the residential West End neighborhood which uses pork from nearby Fraser Valley. Saku's version reminds me of the tonkatsu I fell in love with in Tokyo last year. After dinner, I cross the street and line up for **Snowy Village**, a Korean dessert shop that has a cult following for its mango *bingsu*, or shaved ice, and uses only 100% fresh Canadian milk.

**10pm**

I head back to Gastown to meet up with friends at **8 9 10 L'Abattoir**. The menu is heavily influenced by French cuisine but I'm here for their inventive cocktails and order an Avocado Gimlet, which uses rosemary and olive-infused gin, freshly squeezed lime juice, apfelkorn liqueur and, of course, fresh avocado. It's creamy and refreshing. After one drink, I call it a night and walk home.





## SUNDAY

9.30am

📍 **Granville Island** can be packed with tourists, so when I do go on Sundays, I time my visit to **Granville Island Public Market** early in the morning and start with a chai latte at **Granville Island Tea Company** – they have a special mix that's steeped in butter and blended in a Vitamix. It's a creamy jolt of energy! Well-fueled, I pass by the fruit and vegetable stands and say hello to my favorite vendors, like **Oyama Sausage Co** and **Benton Brothers Cheese**, and get a seasonal bouquet for my dining table at **Our Little Flower Company**. I never leave the market without a honey-glazed donut from **Lee's Donuts**. I love the fancy donuts trend, but I am a sucker for a good classic.

11am

I walk down to **The Liberty Distillery** for a bottle of their Endeavour Pink gin, which has rose notes and a light pink hue, and some premium tonics for a cocktail party I'm planning with close friends. Also on Granville Island is **Artisan SakeMaker**, which produces junmai sake made from rice grown in Fraser Valley. With over 50 licensed distilleries, British Columbia is at the forefront of the Canadian distillery boom. Vancouver has had its share of craft beer and now craft distilleries are coming in hot.

12pm

Being right by the sea, Vancouver has amazing seafood and Granville Island has no shortage of eateries serving fresh prawns, oysters and lobsters. Located next to the farmers market and newly opened by four of Vancouver's top chefs is 📍 **Popina Canteen**, a healthy fast-food eatery housed in a converted shipping container in a former parking lot. Their unconventional parking lot has allowed them a prime waterfront location where they serve up lobster rolls, seafood trays and puffcreams – soft serve ice cream in cream puffs that are a nod to chowders served in bread bowls. I take in the views of Vancouver and False Creek as I enjoy lunch.

1pm

After a culinary-focused morning, I head to the neighborhood of Kitsilano for a walk



## CITY GUIDE Sunday

**Granville Island  
Public Market**  
1669 Johnston St

**Granville Island  
Tea Company**  
[granvilletea.com](http://granvilletea.com)

**Oyama Sausage Co**  
[oyamasausage.ca](http://oyamasausage.ca)

**Benton Brothers Cheese**  
[bentonscheese.com](http://bentonscheese.com)

**Our Little  
Flower Company**  
[olfco.ca](http://olfco.ca)

**Lee's Donuts**  
[leesdonuts.ca](http://leesdonuts.ca)

**The Liberty Distillery**  
1494 Old Bridge St,  
Granville Island  
[thelibertydistillery.com](http://thelibertydistillery.com)

**Artisan SakeMaker**  
1339 Railspur Alley,  
Granville Island  
[artisansakemaker.com](http://artisansakemaker.com)







along the water. Often I'll bike other portions of this route as Vancouver has the world's longest uninterrupted waterfront path. The 28km Seaside Greenway includes the famed 📍 **Stanley Park Seawall** that runs from the Vancouver Convention Centre to Spanish Banks Beach Park. In the summers, I spend warm nights in Kitsilano Pool, Canada's longest saltwater pool at 137m. Kitsilano has a distinctly relaxed vibe, with many pedestrians making their way to yoga and fitness classes – as indicated by their activewear – a common sight. They're often seen repping Lululemon, the Vancouver-founded yoga wear company.

### 2.30pm

On my way home I pass by Downtown Vancouver and visit the 📍 **Vancouver Art Gallery**, which is showing the works of Chinese designer Guo Pei until January next year. A prominent couturière from Beijing, Guo is known for the stunning marriage of contemporary aesthetics and materials with ancient Chinese tradition, history and mythology in her works. Guo and her avant-garde silhouettes caught



### CITY GUIDE Sunday

**Popina Canteen**  
Ferry Dock,  
Granville Island  
[popinacanteen.com](http://popinacanteen.com)

**Stanley Park Seawall**  
Stanley Park Dr  
[vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture/seawall.aspx](http://vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture/seawall.aspx)

**Vancouver Art Gallery**  
750 Hornby St  
[vanartgallery.bc.ca](http://vanartgallery.bc.ca)

**Downlow  
Chicken Shack**  
905 Commercial Dr  
[dlchickenshack.ca](http://dlchickenshack.ca)

**Pepino's Spaghetti House**  
631 Commercial Dr  
[pepinos.ca](http://pepinos.ca)

**Umaluma**  
235 East Pender St  
[umaluma.com](http://umaluma.com)







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**Work it out**

Drop in for one of Saschie MacLean's RSVP 33 dance classes (C\$20) and shake it like a Polaroid picture with Outkast or run the world with Beyoncé.

Club Row is Vancouver's first rowing studio, and classes (C\$21) combine rowing with a sweaty dance club party. First-timers need to come 15 minutes early to learn the technique.

At Lagree West, burn more than 800 calories in just 40 minutes with a high-intensity low-impact workout inspired by Pilates. First-timers get two classes for the price of one (C\$35). [rsvp33.com](http://rsvp33.com); [clubrowfitness.com](http://clubrowfitness.com); [lagreewest.com](http://lagreewest.com)

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**My favorite thing about Vancouver is the incredible dining scene, which reflects our diverse and multicultural population**  
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Swingaround tour package: [swingaround.philippineairlines.com](http://swingaround.philippineairlines.com)

the world's attention after Rihanna wore her Yellow Empress cape (dubbed "the omelet dress") to the 2015 Met Gala.

**4pm**

Commercial Drive is considered the city's Little Italy and it makes for a nice afternoon of people-watching. My husband wants a snack so we swing by the newly opened **Downlow Chicken Shack** which has quickly become Vancouver's favorite fried chicken joint. I don't have a high threshold for heat, so I don't go all-in with the spice. I settle for the pickles that are served on the side.

**7pm**

Further down on Commercial Drive, we meet friends at **Pepino's Spaghetti House** for dinner. Opened this year, the restaurant is located where the legendary Nick's Spaghetti House (1955-2017), helmed by Naples-born chef Nick Felicella, used to be. Pepino's was opened by the same team that gave Vancouver Savio Volpe, which has been named one of the city's best restaurants. With the warm vibe and comfort foods like spaghetti and meatballs, pork chop parmesan and prime rib, dining here reminds me of my favorite Italian restaurants in New York.

**9pm**

For a sweet end to the weekend, we visit **Umaluma**, a dairy-free gelato shop. A cashew nut butter base is combined with coconut milk or hemp-seed milk to produce their 100% plant-based gelato. I'm an ice cream lover, but I welcome this non-dairy alternative! There are 20 flavors to choose from and they even offer gluten-free waffle cones. My husband and I share a scoop of Strawberry Malbec to end the night.

