



# Vancouver Holiday

THIS SUSTAINABLY MINDED METROPOLIS BOASTS WORLD-CLASS DINING AND STUNNING MOUNTAIN AND SEA LANDSCAPES

BY AMBER GIBSON

**O**ne of North America's most beautiful cities, Vancouver comes to life each May with summer festivals and warm, sunny days. Winter here may be rainy, but the reward is a lush, verdant summer season. The Economist regularly ranks Vancouver as one of the world's most livable cities, and with a strong U.S. dollar, there has never been a better time to visit.

The culinary scene in Vancouver is world class, as the city's new Michelin guide attests, with eight restaurants earning stars in the inaugural guide. The city excels in the realm of affordable tasting menus, with restaurants like Burdock & Co., St. Lawrence, and AnnaLena shining bright. Summer is a perfect time to enjoy a bounty of local Pacific seafood, from salmon and sablefish to oysters, sea urchin, and spot prawns. Vegetarians and vegans have plenty of options too, and local summer produce from Fraser Valley appears on menus across town.

Urban green spaces and proximity to nature are some of Vancouver's top selling points. Enjoy time outdoors, whether it's a leisurely pedal around the Stanley Park Seawall or a grueling morning hike up Grouse Mountain. Outdoor adventures are the best way to work up an appetite, and the city has so many culinary delights to discover.

## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

You can fly direct to Vancouver International Airport (YVR) from more than a dozen U.S. cities, so it's a convenient summer getaway. The airport is actually in neighboring Richmond, just 30 minutes from downtown Vancouver. American citizens do not need a visa to visit and the customs process is efficient, even when lines are long upon arrival. It's easy to hail a cab from the airport, but you can also take the SkyTrain Canada Line directly downtown to within a few blocks of most hotels. The SkyTrain rapid transit system is clean, safe, and convenient. During rush hour, it can be faster than traveling by car. The Fairmont Vancouver Airport is one of the best airport hotels in the world, so if you have an early morning flight out, consider staying the prior night for a less stressful and more luxurious travel day.

The U.S. dollar is very strong right now, so even though Vancouver is considered expensive among Canadians, the favorable exchange rate makes



everything much more affordable for American travelers. Sightseeing from the water is one of the best ways to enjoy the city, and you can learn a lot about the city's history on a harbor cruise too. If you know a local with a boat who will take you fishing, that's even better.

## ATTRACTIONS

### POLYGON GALLERY

Located within the trendy Shipyards District in North Vancouver, this non-profit photographic gallery is the best contemporary art museum in the city. It's small but well curated, reminis-

cent of the Saatchi Gallery in London. Admission is on a donation basis and exhibits change frequently. The museum gift shop is a great place to browse design-focused souvenirs, homewares, and jewelry by local Vancouver artisans too. It's easy to get here via the scenic SeaBus ferry from downtown. The coffee shop next door – Nemesis Coffee – has the best cup and croissants in the city. **101 Carrie Cates Court, North Vancouver, [thepolygon.ca](http://thepolygon.ca)**

### FLYOVER CANADA

This immersive, multi-sensory ride is more captivating than any amusement park attraction and a jolly time for all ages, although children must be at least 40 inches tall to ride. You'll soar over remote areas of the Canadian Rocky Mountains, from turquoise lakes and snow-capped peaks to dramatic vistas overlooking Jasper, Banff, and Yoho National Parks. Weather-simulating effects and location-specific scents feel remarkably realistic and really bring the experience to life. Plus, it might just spark ideas for your next Canadian adventure. [flyovercanada.com](http://flyovercanada.com)



## WHERE TO STAY

### SHANGRI-LA VANCOUVER

Understated elegance and a distinctly Asian aesthetic set Shangri-La apart

## [TRAVEL]

from the rest. From the underground valet entrance to the marble bathrooms with soaking tubs and special bath menus by Bathorium, discretion and comfort are paramount. Chi, the Spa at Shangri-La features six spacious spa suites, each equipped with a bath, steam shower, and private changing area. Body treatments use locally made Sangre de Fruta Botanical scrubs and creams in your choice of rose, neroli, or jasmine scents, revealing baby soft skin. All-day dining at Carlino by renowned local hospitality group Kitchen Table Restaurants specializes in Northern Italian cuisine, like cjarsons, a delectable Friulian pasta stuffed with homemade ricotta and dressed in sage brown butter sauce with bits of pancetta and hazelnut crumble. 1128 West Georgia Street, [shangri-la.com/vancouver](http://shangri-la.com/vancouver)

### ROSEWOOD HOTEL GEORGIA

History buffs will appreciate the classic elegance of this magnificently restored Georgian Revival building. Icons like Ginger Rogers, Katharine Hepburn, Frank Sinatra, and Elvis Presley have all held court at 1927 Lobby Lounge, named for the year the hotel originally opened. Rosewood's signature stamp of luxury is apparent, with thoughtful attention to detail, personalized con-



cierge service, and requisite modern amenities like Bose docking stations and Nespresso coffee makers in every room. Massages at Sense, A Rosewood Spa magically melt away muscle tension and mental stress. After, take a dip in the only heated indoor salt water lap pool in the city. 801 West Georgia Street, [rosewoodhotelgeorgia.com](http://rosewoodhotelgeorgia.com)

### THE DOUGLAS, AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION

Named for the indigenous tree that made Vancouver a thriving lumber town

in the mid 1800s, this 188-room hotel in the Parq Vancouver is a true urban oasis, with some of the most spectacular specialty suites in town. The sixth floor lobby opens up to a verdant rooftop terrace, and the reception desk is a 25-foot long, glass-encased Douglas fir. Guest rooms balance modern amenities with retro accents, with a locally sourced minibar and cozy cabin vibes. Visit the spa, shared with JW Marriott Parq Vancouver next door, for forest-inspired body treatments and excellent massages. The Douglas is attached to a casino complex with eight food and beverage outlets, and within easy walking distance of Yaletown for more dining and shopping. 45 Smithe Street, [thedouglasvancouver.com](http://thedouglasvancouver.com)

## DAY TRIPS AND TOURS

### WATERFALLS & WHISTLER TOUR

Be Wild Adventures operates excellent full-day hiking trips and waterfall tours between May and October. The Waterfalls & Whistler tour is their most popular, with a chance to see three beautiful waterfalls – Shannon, Brandywine, and Alexander – plus several hours to explore



## [TRAVEL]

Whistler Village on your own. Friendly tour guides pick you up in a clean, spacious SUV from your Vancouver hotel before heading north for a scenic drive on the Sea-to-Sky Highway to Whistler. The trails to each waterfall are short and well marked, suitable for all athletic abilities with minimal elevation. [bewildadventures.com](http://bewildadventures.com)



### DINE LIKE A CRITIC

The Globe and Mail's veteran Vancouver restaurant critic and *Iron Chef Canada* judge Alexandra Gill leads exclusive culinary experiences and private food tours customized for every palate. Explore the depths of Richmond's Chinese culinary scene, including classic dim sum and restaurants without English menus, or take a walking tour of downtown Vancouver hitting the most creative sushi, seafood, and farm-to-table restaurants along the way. Whatever you're craving, Gill has the knowledge, rolodex, and relationships to make your dining dreams come true. [dinelikeacritic.com](http://dinelikeacritic.com)

## DINE AND DRINK

### FIVE SAILS

This iconic restaurant in Canada Place has long been known for its sweeping



mountain and harbor panoramas, but a new team of young creatives is elevating the food, drinks, and service to match the impressive views. Executive chef Robbie Robinson and pastry chef Daria Andriienko capture the natural flavors of British Columbia with haute cuisine precision, and the service is warm and attentive without seeming stuffy. Request a table by the windows and order the off-menu tableside flaming coffee with dessert. The tasting menu here is always a good idea, and great value too, with wine pairings that highlight local producers in British Columbia. 999 Canada Place, Suite 410, [fivesails.ca](http://fivesails.ca)



### VIGNETTE

Vancouver's hottest new restaurant is a hip coffee shop by day and chic wine lounge with an ambitious tasting menu come evening. The sister restaurant to Michelin-starred Published on Main is led by chef de cuisine Ashley Kurtz whose eclectic menu includes upscale twists on junk food favorites like ketchup chips and a McChicken sandwich. A zero-waste cooking philosophy inspires delicate scallop crudo with whey and leek oil, and the sole Véronique is textbook Escoffier. The wine list here is focused on natural wines and small producers, both



from Canada and beyond. Don't worry if nothing looks familiar; it's all good juice. 2650 Main Street, [restaurantvignette.com](http://restaurantvignette.com)

### LAO WAI

Hidden behind the facade of a casual dumpling shop is Vancouver's coolest speakeasy, fashioned after 1930s Shanghai, with each signature cocktail inspired by a historical figure in Chinese history. The menu reads like a storybook, with each drink accompanied by a short biography and illustration of its namesake. In the front lounge, a flock of 50 custom-made, phoenix-in-flight light fixtures illuminate the space from above, while in the back room, rooted peacock lustre lamps lend a feeling of intimacy between the banquettes. Drinks are excellent, as are the dumplings, and they have the largest selection of baijiu, a distilled Chinese liquor, in Canada. There are no reservations and phones are verboten, just one reason this has become a favorite celebrity hangout. 251 East Georgia Street, [laowai.ca](http://laowai.ca) **P**