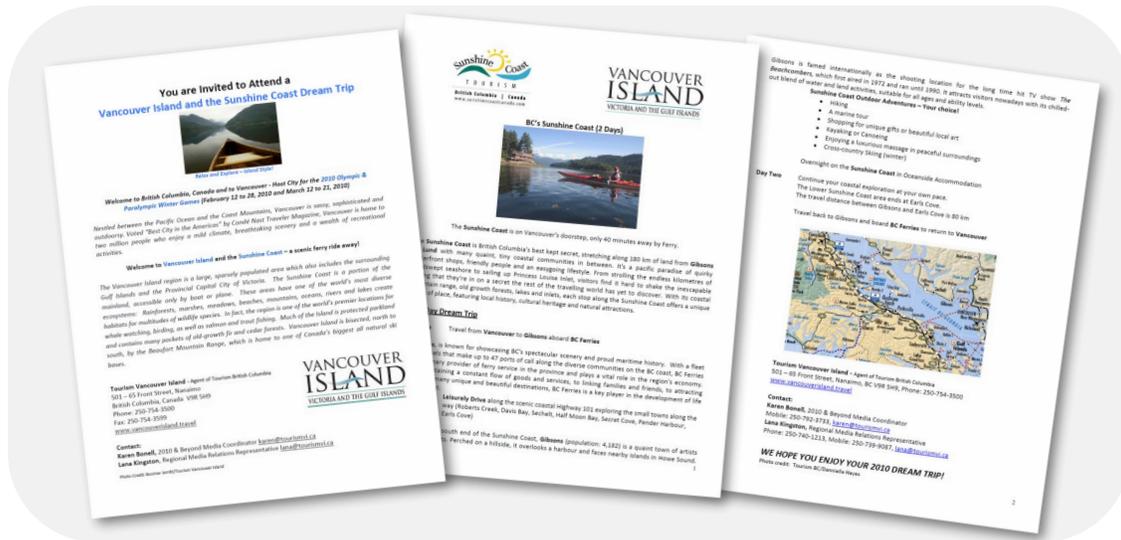




Tourism Vancouver Island

2010 and Beyond Strategy

A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE ISLAND COASTAL ECONOMIC TRUST AND TOURISM VANCOUVER ISLAND



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Tourism Vancouver Island

2010 and Beyond Strategy

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2010 and Beyond Strategy

Executive Summary

The Vision of the *Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast 2010 and Beyond Strategic Plan* partnership with Island Economic Trust was:

To leverage the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games by effectively coordinating opportunities to maximize Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast's exposure and thus increase tourist visitation, investment, relocation and ultimately economic growth.

The strategic focus of effort was to create greater awareness of the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions by motivating and educating an audience that could influence a desire to live, work, play and invest in these areas pre-, post- and during the Games.

Process Time-line

The *Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast 2010 and Beyond Strategic Plan* was the culmination of several years planning, discussion, negotiating, proposal development and fine-tuning.

The impetus for the plan was the recognition that the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions could capitalize on and maximize the opportunities presented by the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games, and to do so would require extensive preparation, financial and human resources.

A task force was struck and the first meeting was held September 2005 with representatives from:

- Mount Washington Alpine Resort
- Comox Valley Economic Development
- The City of Nanaimo
- Cowichan Valley Economic Development Corporation
- Tourism Vancouver Island

The primary discussion for the inaugural task force meeting focused on:

- A four-year plan leading up to the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics
- Potential Partnerships Opportunities with major events sponsors: for example, Coca Cola
- Potential Partnership Opportunities with senior Destination Marketing Organizations: for example, Tourism Victoria, Tourism British Columbia (TBC)
- How to capitalize on the lead up to the Games via media relations
- TV rights to major networks
- Post 2010 marketing initiatives
- Communication with community Spirit of BC committees

These broad discussion areas were integrated into a 2010 Opportunities Planning Session hosted by Tourism Vancouver Island where participants identified opportunities, possible partnerships and potential solutions to challenges.

Tourism British Columbia was identified as a partner and invited to engage in the planning process. As a result, Tourism BC facilitated a planning session facilitated by Raymond Chan, Vice President, TBC 2010 and Corporate Relations and attended by representatives from:

- Mount Washington Alpine Resort
- Comox Valley Economic Development Society
- The City of Nanaimo
- Cowichan Valley Economic Development Corporation
- Oceanside Tourism Association
- Tourism Victoria
- Tourism Vancouver Island

The initial working objective for the Tourism Vancouver Island 2010 Olympic Task Force Marketing Plan was identified as:

To leverage the 2010 Winter Olympic games by effectively coordinating opportunities to maximize Vancouver Island's exposure and thus increase tourist visitations and revenue.

The primary areas of engagement had broadened since the initial Task Force meeting to address and discuss the role of:

- Media Relations
- Torch relay
- Opening and Closing Ceremonies
- Travel Trade
- Presence in Beijing 2008
- Corporate Sponsorships
- Partnerships: regional and local governments, transportation providers, First Nations, DMOs, and visitor service
- Paid Media

The planning process took place over a twelve-month period and included consultation with Tourism BC's Media and Travel Trade Departments. After much discussion and fine-tuning of what was achievable, Media and Travel Trade Relations initiatives coordinated with Tourism BC were identified as the primary focus and provided the greatest opportunity for Tourism Vancouver Island's marketing strategy and forms the foundation of the *2010 and Beyond Strategic Plan*.

The focus of effort would be directed towards unpaid or earned media attention with Media who are known to have published stories in key markets and would be critical to the success of the regions after 2010.

The key strategy was to attract unaccredited media who be looking for 2010 Vancouver

Winter Olympics Games related stories not necessarily connected directly to the athletes' performance during the Games.

The *2010 and Beyond Strategic Plan* comprised six projects that were designed to provide a cohesive and comprehensive program. One project was eventually cancelled, leaving five projects which were successfully executed.

Once the projects were defined and the initial plans were proposed, it was clear that a significant level of funding was necessary to proceed with the strategic plan. The original strategy was to solicit the support of industry and corporate sponsors, however this did not materialize and this approach was canceled.

Subsequently, the Island and Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) were approached to support the *2010 and Beyond Strategic Plan* and presented with a comprehensive plan that would contribute significantly to the success of this very import project.

ICET was originally invited to support the project by cost-sharing a total gross budget of \$1,275,000 with a contribution of \$600,000; the balance which would be supported by regional communities and businesses, in addition to support from community DMOs, EDCs and Tourism Vancouver Island.

After negotiation and project cost rationalization, the total gross budget was amended to \$730,513 with a request for \$465,257 from ICET. The amended budget was accepted and the five projects were duly undertaken and completed.

Financial Summary

Tourism Vancouver Island

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Original Gross Budget	Amended Gross Budget Dec.09	Amended ICET Contributions	Actual Gross Spend	Variance Actual versus Gross Budget (D - B)	Actual ICET Contributions	Variance Actual vs. ICET Budgeted Contributions (F - C)
Phase I: Paid expenses	175,514.00	172,126.30	86,063.15	172,363.57	237.27	86,063.15	\$ -
HD B-Roll Shooting	200,000.00	215,073.85	215,073.85	215,073.85	-	215,073.85	\$ -
Legacy DVD Production	77,000.00	73,240.00	36,620.00	72,625.99	(614.01)	36,005.99	(\$614.01)
Connecting with Canadians	20,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	\$ -
Pre-written Stories	20,000.00	25,000.00	12,500.00	23,983.65	(1,016.35)	11,483.65	(\$1,016.35)
Media Familiarization	138,000.00	138,000.00	69,000.00	135,143.36	(2,856.64)	67,571.68	(\$1,428.32)
Taste of Vancouver Island	100,000.00	100,000.00	50,000.00	104,118.84	4,118.84	46,970.54	(\$3,029.46)
Total	730,514.00	723,440.15	469,257.00	723,309.26	(130.89)	463,168.86	(\$6,088.14)
						Holdback	\$38,432.78

The five successful projects were:

- *High Definition B-Roll Acquisition*

The project provided communities, economic development offices and tourism organizations with high quality finished video files that would be used now and in years-to-come to promote their communities as destinations to live, work, play and invest. The results would drive economic growth throughout the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions.

A significant inventory of the High Definition Video was used by the Olympic Secretariat BC Stories and BC Explore campaigns. The video footage is available to all municipal governments, economic development offices and tourism organizations for long-term promotion of the Vancouver Island region and the Sunshine Coast as places to live, work play and invest.

- *Legacy DVD Production*

This project used the raw video assets acquired through the High Definition B-roll Acquisition project. Tourism Vancouver Island worked with interested communities to determine storylines to inspire investors, re-locators and tourists to choose the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions as their destination of choice.

This project required matching investment from communities; the first step was to approach the communities for their support. The initial budget was based on four communities participating at \$6,500 per community; a regional economic development organization participating at \$5,000 and Tourism BC participating at \$5,000 for a total matching of \$36,000. Regional community leaders were approached with a proposal to produce two x four- minute videos, one for economic development and one for tourism promotion. Each community had unique applications for the video files; therefore, by making the final output options more flexible the partnership goals were met.

- *Press Materials*

The project goal was to prepare exciting media packages to assist five Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regional community clusters to capitalize on media who visited British Columbia for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The outcomes and deliverables of the media packages focused on media opportunities during the critical eight to twelve month post-games window.

- Tourism BC (overseas offices in UK and Germany)
- Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC)
- Destination Nanaimo - The City of Nanaimo
- Tourism Cowichan - Cowichan Valley Economic Development

- Comox Valley Economic Development
- Vancouver Island North Tourism
- Tourism Powell River Society

The Tourism Partners were provided materials that would support their proactive media relations programs.

This project was directly linked to *A Taste of Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast* project by providing a USB containing all Press Materials to the media in attendance at the event. Press materials were distributed to attendees at *A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast* event and to journalists in the unaccredited media centre at Robson Square.

In addition, the press materials were posted on Tourismvi.ca website and dispersed to key Tourism BC and Canadian Tourism Commission media contacts, and journalists that were attracted to the region by the story ideas. The participating Community Destination Marketing Organizations also provided the Press Materials for distribution to their media contacts, who will use the press materials now and into the future.

- *Media Relations & Familiarization (FAM)*

The 2010 and Beyond Media Relations Familiarization Project was developed and completed by Tourism Vancouver Island's Media Department. *Karen B Marketing* was contracted as marketing consultant to the project.

The consultant planned the logistics and coordination of *2010 Winter Olympic Games* Press trips, planned the media trip itineraries for Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions and solicited new media trips to visit Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions in conjunction with Tourism Vancouver Island's Media Department.

The project strategy implemented the Media FAM program in the run-up to the *2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games* and continues to capitalize on the post-event media attention.

The plan to attract 'unaccredited' media was a focused strategy on media who were 'outside the fence' during the event. These media engaged in delivering stories that were not directly tied to the performance of athletes which provided a necessity to post stories about the destinations during the Games.

This was a very challenging project because of the sheer volume of press contacts and organizations attending the *2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games* and the logistics required to coordinate media relations and FAM trips over the life of this project. However, the efforts of the teams overcame the challenges and were very successful in executing this project.

- *A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast*

A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast was a high energy media-engagement initiative that targeted qualified media representatives who told the exciting story of the opportunities to Live, Work, Play and Invest in the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions. The event aimed to attract potential visitors to the regions by educating audiences about the depth and sophistication of the 'local' culinary movement by using the lure of the regions culinary experience.

A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast was held in the Commerce Centre of Robson Square on the eve of the opening ceremonies of the 2010 Winter Olympics. The event was an interactive sensory experience inviting guests to see, hear, taste, smell and touch throughout the event. This event would WOW guests with the destinations' excellence in wine, cuisine and local agricultural product such as ciders, hand-crafted beers, wine, seafood, and other locally produced and sourced products.

Tourism Vancouver Island was the lead agency in this event and secured partnership-funding support from the Island Coastal Economic Trust. In spite of the challenges posed by the uncertain economy and competition for resources for other Games events, numerous municipal organizations and tourism stakeholders invested in and participated in all aspects of this event.

The products were provided by the sponsors as valuable in-kind contributions and were integral to the success of the event. The market value of the wine, beer, and cider is estimated at \$2,000; the seafood value estimated at \$20,000 plus the cost of in-kind wages, travel and representation by the vintners and the shellfish growers association would conservatively place the value of kind-contributions at \$30,000. Similarly the professional services of the guest chefs were provided by time-donation at an estimated value of \$5,000.

All five projects were completed on-time, on or under-budget, and successfully fulfilled the goals and objectives of each project culminating in the successful execution and delivery of *Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast 2010 and Beyond Strategic Plan*.

Tourism Vancouver Island is confident that the results of this strategic plan will resonate into the future and provide on-going economic and social benefits to the citizens of British Columbia, Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions.

2010 and Beyond Strategy

Project #1 - HD B-roll Acquisition



Abstract

The Island Coastal Economic Trust and Tourism Vancouver Island formed a partnership to capitalize on the potentially unprecedented media awareness created by the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games being hosted in Vancouver/Whistler. The HD B-roll project provides media with the video assets to promote the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions as a location to live, work, play and invest.

Project Goal

The Vision of the *Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast 2010 and Beyond Strategic Plan* partnership with Island Economic Trust was:

To leverage the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic games by effectively coordinating opportunities to maximize Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast's exposure and thus increase tourist visitation, investment, relocation and ultimately economic growth.

To provide communities, economic development offices and tourism organizations with high quality finished video files that would be used in years-to-come for the purpose of promoting their communities as destinations to live, work, play and invest. The anticipated results of these efforts would be to drive economic growth throughout the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions.

To acquire a significant inventory of High Definition Video that would be available to the Olympic Secretariat for use in their BC Stories and BC Explore campaigns. This video footage would also be available to all municipal governments, economic development offices and tourism organizations for long-term promotion of the Vancouver Island region and the Sunshine Coast as places to live, work play and invest.

Summary of Work and Methodology

In the initial project outline there were several objectives defined with specific tactics utilized to achieve the objectives. The following details the methods utilized to complete the project as outlined.

Project Objectives:

- Identify the gaps in available HD Video representing the Vancouver Island region and the Sunshine Coast.

Go Roberts was contracted to interview municipal governments, economic development offices and tourism organizations throughout the jurisdiction. During the spring of 2009 Go Roberts and Tourism Vancouver Island representatives attended meetings with economic development officers, tourism representatives and municipal representatives in the Campbell River region, the Comox Valley, the Cowichan region, the Mount Washington region, the Nanaimo region, the North Island region, the Oceanside region, the Alberni Valley region, Tofino, Ucluelet and the Sunshine Coast region. At each of these meetings the program scope was explained and the participants were asked to identify gaps in their HD video assets. In most cases there were little or no assets or inventory that was current and of high definition quality. At each session there was a local coordinator identified to assist in determining HD Video requirements or to develop a wish list of footage that would be most effective in further promoting their jurisdiction as a place to live, work, play and invest.

Additionally, both the 2010 Olympic Secretariat and Tourism BC provided information regarding the HD Video assets. Go Roberts reviewed all available HD video to determine available content and determine whether the available footage met minimum quality standards. This process was completed in the late spring of 2009.

- Determine the specific priorities of HD Video required for the purpose of building an asset library that would support the needs of the Olympic Secretariat and the communities throughout the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions.

Again, meetings were facilitated by Go Roberts and Tourism Vancouver Island with stakeholders in all regions. At this stage the inventory of existing video assets was available and the participants were able to determine gaps and determine which assets needed to be acquired. This resulted in the development of the shot list and in turn the filming schedule. All participants from each of the regions determined, in priority order, what their video requirements were and Tourism Vancouver Island and Go Roberts compared the requests to the available inventory to determine a final shot list.

The challenge at this stage of the process was controlling expectations, as some jurisdictions were demanding considerably more video than others. This was partially mitigated by allocating the film crew's time commitment equally to each of the regional groups and further determining the priorities. This was not a perfect science, however there would be some shots that would be generic enough to be utilized in multiple jurisdictions which made the process fairly equitable.

The shot list developed was extensive, consisting of the following:

Campbell River and Area:

Quinsam Hatchery	City Shots
Destiny River Adventures	Snorkeling with Salmon
Haig Brown House	B&Bs
Heritage Sites	Campbell River Museum
Dolphin's Resort	Anglers Restaurant
Riptide Pub	Wei Wai Kum Gallery
Henderson Carving Shed	Bear Watching

Comox Valley:

City Shots	Nymph Falls
Brambles Market	The Broken Spoke
Courtenay Museum	Locals Restaurant
Island Timber Frame	Surgenor Brewery
Beaufort Winery	Natural Glacier Water
CX03 Food Producers	Farmers Market
Hazelmere Farms	Natural Pastures Cheese
Fanny Bay Oysters	Gunter Bros Meats
Island Bison	Kingfisher Resort and Spa
IHOS Gallery	Puntledge River Campground
Nim Nim Interpretive	IHOS Bighouse
Native Dancers and Singers	Crown Isle Resort
Crown Isle Golf Course	Mount Washington - Accommodation

Cowichan Valley

Cherry Point Winery	Merridale Cidery
Zanatta Vineyard	Cowichan Culinary Festival
Chemainus Ferry	Chemainus Theatre
Horse Drawn Carriage	Mount Brenton Golf Course
Ladysmith Harbour	Ladysmith Marina
Maritime Society Tours	Waterfront Art Gallery
Sea Legs Kayaking	Forest Discovery Centre
Feast of Fields	Cowichan Bay
Maple Bay	Cowichan River

Mt. Washington

Skiing	Snowboarding
Resort Area	

Nanaimo

Nanaimo Harbour	Grand Hotel
Nanaimo Airport	VIU Shellfish Health Lab
VIU Chemistry	VIU Library
Woodgrove Mall	

Vancouver Island North

Port Hardy Town Scenes	Cape Scott Water Taxi
Port McNeill Town Scenes	Kingfisher Kayak
Coal Harbour	Hyde Creek
Sointula	Telegraph Cove
Woss	Port Alice Golf
Copper Coast Housing	Ice Rink
Marble River	Neucel Pulp Mill
Alert Bay	Ecological Reserve
U'Mista Cultural Centre	Marine Harvest
Orcas Sand and Gravel	Western Forest Product
Western Log Sort	Nimmo Bay Resort

Oceanside

Parksville Beaches	Qualicum Beaches
Horne Lake Caves	Paradise Adventure Golf
Wildlife Recovery Centre	World Parrot Refuge
Cathedral Grove	Englishman River Falls
Sunrise Ridge Resort	Tiger Lily Farm
Parksville Beach Festival	Sandcastle Competition

Port Alberni

Alberni Valley	Harbour Quay
Farmers' Market	Maritime Discovery Centre
MV Frances Barkley	Victoria Quay
Sproat Lake	Cameron Lake
Agriculture	Hupacasathe House
Port of Port Alberni	Alberni Pacific
Alberni Museum	Kayaking
Windsurfing	Waterskiing
Soaring	Alberni Golf Course
Mountain Biking	Sproat Falls
Thunder in the Valley	

Sunshine Coast

Gibsons Landing	Fibre Art Festival
Upper Gibsons	Howe Sound
Bonniebrook	Sechelt
Davis Bay	Saltery Bay Ferry
Little River Ferry	Texada Island Ferry

Powell River Harbour	Willingdon Beach
Myrtle Point Golf	Eagle River Falls
Mermaid Cove	Blackberry Festival
Community Shots	

Tofino

O'Neill Cold Water Classic	Chesterman Beach
Storm Watching	Wickaninnish Inn
Pointe Restaurant	Radar Hill
Schooner Cove	Town Shots

Ucluelet

Town Shots	Black Rock Resort
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This shot list was the frame for the videographers instruction. However, they were also instructed to make best use of time and to find active and colorful additions to the basics. There is actually considerably more detail of shots that are presently being key-worded and Meta tagged for web-based searching (this work is being done outside of the original scope of the project).

- Acquire HD B-roll to fulfill the requirements determined through the focus groups.

Quotations for the shooting, editing, digitalizing, mastering and cataloguing were reviewed and the contract was awarded to CIVI Television. Go Roberts was retained to schedule, direct and manage CIVI work related to the video shoots, editing and cataloguing of the required HD B-roll.

CIVI was contracted to provide 26 days of video shooting with a cameraman and onsite producer. In addition to the actual shoot time, CIVI was contracted for over 20 days of editing, digitizing, producing dubbing, cataloguing and packaging. This process took place in a period of just over six months and was very dependant on weather conditions and considerable rescheduling on the fly. Travel expenses were mitigated by private sector in-kind contributions of accommodations and transportation such as helicopters, aircraft and boats.

Although the initial expectation was to acquire approximately 120 minutes of finished B-roll, the film crew's productivity was fantastic and over 22 hours of exceptional HD video footage was acquired. Based on the huge surplus of quality footage a new challenge was created related to storage and distribution. Digitized, the storage needs became close to three terabytes. With the approval of ICET for an additional \$4,000 and the reallocation of funds from other components of the initial application, we were able to purchase a number of portable hard drives and make three complete sets of fly-packs. The footage has been catalogued and stored on three sets of fly-pack hard drives.

In addition we have loaded all content onto CDs and DVDs. The CDs are of value to view the B-roll, but are of lower resolution and are not usable for downloading. The Blu-ray DVDs, however can be used by production companies to extract video footage for production purposes. Each community has received CDs and Blu-ray discs containing all footage shot in their area.

Even this distribution process is cumbersome and time consuming, so outside the scope of this project we are developing a web-based digital asset management system (DAMS), which is scheduled to launch in October 2011. This system will make all the digital assets fully searchable and available 24/7 online. This significantly improves distribution and eliminates the cost of shipping.

Statement of Project Completion

The HD Video Acquisition project, as a portion of the 2010 and Beyond Strategy, was completed on time and on budget. The final product quality and quantity surpassed all initial expectations. This footage was provided to the 2010 Olympics Secretariat for use in the BC Stories and BC Explorer programs. It has also been provided to Tourism BC and has been utilized by many media during games time.

Community Partner Endorsements

The b-roll footage produced during the 2010 & Beyond project has been a huge asset for the Vancouver Island North region. This footage was used in the creation of a tourism film and an economic development film used to promote the region. We have also accessed this footage for use in production of the TSN series LUMBERJACKS, along with coverage of the Logger Sports event in Port McNeill. Three episodes were produced in 2010 and three episodes were produced in 2011. These were aired, and re-run, on TSN as well as uploaded to YouTube for online access. The b-roll footage allowed this series to feature more than just the event, but also highlight the Vancouver Island North region as an attractive destination by mixing in footage of our communities, activities, wildlife and natural environment.

- Joli White, Tourism Coordinator, Vancouver Island North

Employment Created

There was a considerable amount of employment created in relation to this project including project managers, videographers and editors. Although difficult to provide an exact accounting of the employment, it is estimated that there would be the equivalent of two man-months related to this project.

Economic Impact

The scope of this project creates a legacy of video assets that will be utilized by many community organizations over the next ten years to promote economic development and tourism. Results will be best measured by year over year comparisons of economic and tourism growth between now and 2020.

Financial Review

This project was a component of the 2010 and Beyond Strategy with 100% financial support from ICET. The original contribution agreement was \$200,000, however the agreement was amended on Dec. 09, 2009 increasing the ICET contribution to \$215,073.85. Based on the amended budget this project was completed on budget.

The project commenced in June of 2009 and was successfully completed on March 31, 2010.

Project Income 06/01/2009 to 03/31/2010

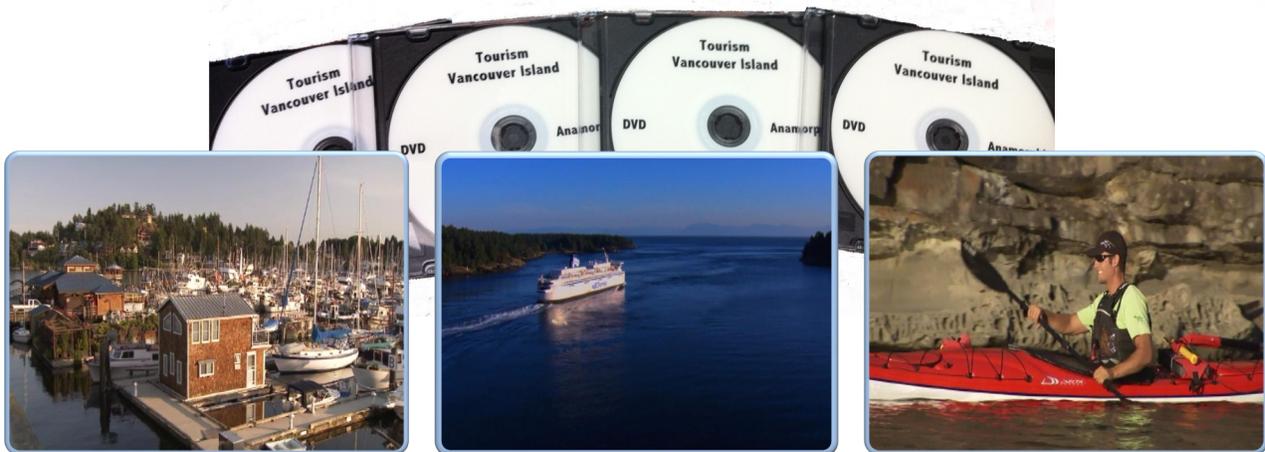
2010 HD B-Roll Project		
REVENUE		
	North Island-Coast Development Initiative Trust	215,073.85
TOTAL REVENUE		215,073.85
EXPENSE		
	Management Fees	16,861.33
	Production and Design	156,018.47
	Contract Service	32,999.98
	Travel & Promotion	9,194.07
TOTAL EXPENSE		215,073.85
REVENUE minus EXPENSE		-

I hereby certify that these financial statements are an accurate representation of all project expenditures and sources of income.

Sharon Scott
Financial Services and Operations Manager

Dave Petryk
President and Chief Executive Officer

2010 and Beyond Strategy Project #2 - Legacy DVD Production



Abstract

The Island Coastal Economic Trust and Tourism Vancouver Island formed a partnership to capitalize on the potentially unprecedented media awareness created by the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games being hosted in Vancouver/Whistler. The Legacy DVD Production component of the 2010 and Beyond Strategy utilized the HD Video footage acquired through the HD B-roll Acquisition.

Project Goal

The Vision of the *Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast 2010 and Beyond Strategic Plan* partnership with Island Economic Trust was:

To leverage the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic games by effectively coordinating opportunities to maximize Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast's exposure and thus increase tourist visitation, investment, relocation and ultimately economic growth.

To provide communities, economic development offices and tourism organizations with high quality finished video files that would be used in years to come for the purpose of promoting their communities as destinations to live, work, play and invest. The anticipated results of these efforts would be to drive economic growth throughout the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions.

The original scope of the project was based on community partnerships that would result in the production of:

- One 12-minute regional tourism promotion video
- One 12-minute regional economic development video
- Four 4-minute community tourism videos
- Four 4-minute community economic development videos

Summary of Work and Methodology

This project was developed to capitalize on the raw video assets acquired through the High Definition B-roll Acquisition project. The methodology was to work with interested communities to determine storylines that would inspire investors, re-locators and tourists to choose the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions as their destination of choice.

As the success of getting this project initiated required matching investment from communities, the first step was to approach the communities for their support. The initial budget was based on four communities participating at \$6,500 per community; a regional economic development organization participating at \$5,000 and Tourism BC participating at \$5,000 for a total matching of \$36,000. We initially approached community leaders throughout the region with a proposal to produce two 4-minute videos, one for economic development and one for tourism promotion. We quickly realized that each community had very different ideas of how they would work with these video files, so we made the final output options more flexible. With this new flexibility we were able to achieve our partnership goals. The following are the organizations that participated:

- Comox Valley Economic Development
- The City of Nanaimo – Destination Nanaimo
- The Regional District of Mt. Waddington
- Campbell River – Rivercorp and Tourism Campbell River and Region
- Tourism Powell River Society
- Vancouver Island Economic Alliance
- Vancouver Island North Tourism
- Tourism BC (Tourism Partners Program)

Project Objectives and work performed:

- To determine community needs for finished high quality video production that would assist them in promoting economic development and tourism growth.

Two companies were contracted for this project, Go Roberts for project management and Hot House Media for the production of the video files. The contractors facilitated meetings with each of the partners to determine specific goals and desires of the finished video. This process was complex as each partner had different expectations and uses. Some were looking for a straightforward promotional video while others wanted shorter files that could be used for video streaming and social media. The contractors worked with these groups to eventually determine the initial storylines.

From this point the contractors and the partners continued to refine the storylines and script until a finalized version was approved.

- Produce a series of HD DVD files that would fit the specific needs of each

participant. The original scope included the production of the following components:

- One 12-minute video promoting the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coasts region from an economic development prospective.
- One 12-minute video promoting the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions from a tourism perspective.
- One 4-minute video for each of the four participating communities promoting the communities from an economic development perspective.
- One 4-minute video for each of the four participating communities promoting the communities from an tourism perspective.

The scope of this project was amended to be more succinct with the needs of the community partners, as each community had various uses and tactics relative to their marketing strategies. The following describes the revised scope of outputs:

- One 12-minute video was produced in partnership with the Vancouver Island Economic Alliance. This video was formatted to promote the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions from an economic development perspective.
- One 12-minute video was produced in partnership with Tourism Vancouver Island. This video was formatted with shorter outtakes that promoted several tourism related activities.
- One 4-minute tourism video and one 4-minute economic development video was produced for the City of Nanaimo.
- One 4-minute tourism video and one 4-minute economic development video was produced for the Comox Economic Development Society
- One 4-minute economic development video was produced for the Regional District of Mount Waddington.
- One 4-minute tourism video was produced for Vancouver Island North Tourism.
- Two 2-minute tourism videos were produced for Rivercorp and Campbell River and Region Tourism.
- One four4-minute tourism video was produced for the Sunshine Coast

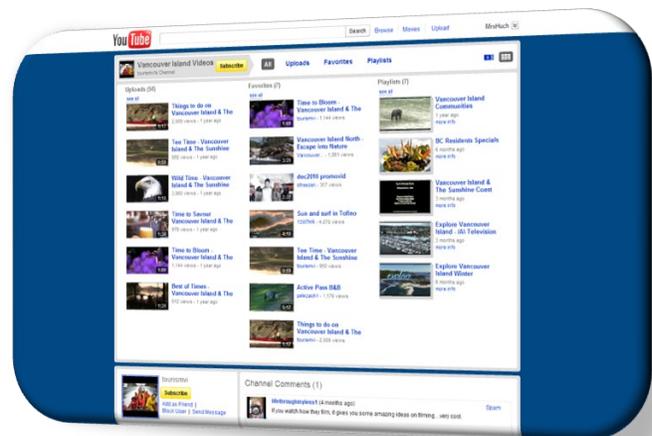
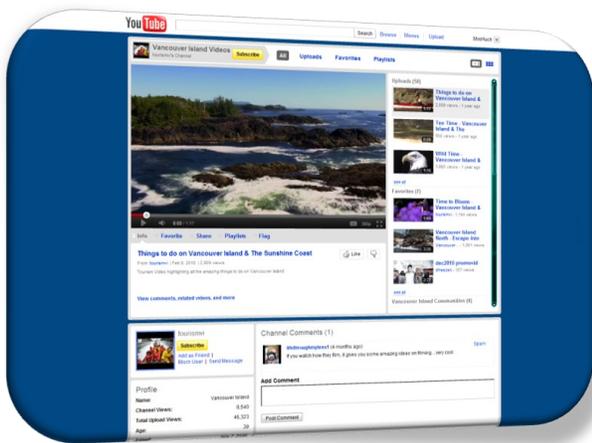
Once the final expectations of all partners were determined Hot House began the task of editing the HD video, selecting and laying down the music and selecting voice talent to bring storylines and scripts to life. All partners were engaged in several reviews and edits during the process.

Final files were delivered to the partners in DVD, Blu-ray and digital file formats. This enables each partner to utilize these productions in ways that best suit their individual needs.

Statement of Project Completion

This project was completed on time and on budget to the satisfaction of all partners involved. Final distribution varied from community to community dependant on the involvement in the editing process. Final video was delivered in a variety of formats to suit the partners' needs. All finished video has been formatted to Blu-ray, which is of the highest quality and may be utilized for future edits.

Additionally all videos produced have been uploaded to the Tourismvi YouTube channel, which has had 8,477 channel views since its inception.



Community Partner Endorsements

The 2010 and Beyond Legacy DVD Project has created a bank of HD footage that has generic as well as specific footage for a Campbell River & Region Legacy DVD. Already this summer we have had a number of opportunities to access this footage for productions in both the UK and the USA. I am sure in future this bank of HD footage and the Legacy DVD will become one of our best assets.

- Teresa Davies: River Corp/ Tourism Campbell River and Region, Campbell River

Vancouver Island North had a Tourism film and an Economic Development film produced during the 2010 & Beyond project. The tourism film is featured on the front page of our regional tourism website and is a great visual for visitors to get a sense of the experiences this area has to offer. The Economic Development film is featured on the Regional District of Mount Waddington's website and features incredible industry footage. These films were well produced and are a great tool for the promotion of both tourism and economic development.

- Joli White, Tourism Coordinator, Vancouver Island

Employment Created

The scope of work related to this project was primarily carried out by the contractors from a project management and production point of view and would be estimated at one man-month of employment.

Economic Impact

The economic impact related to this project will only be able to be measured by each of the partners and is a component of their overall marketing strategies. Production of these materials results in assets that will be utilized over several years.

Financial Review

This project was a component of the 2010 and Beyond Strategy with 50% financial support from ICET: Total Budget was \$72,000. The original contribution agreement from ICET was \$36,006 matched by funds from the communities of Comox Valley, Nanaimo, Mount Waddington Regional District/North Island, Campbell River, Powell River, in addition to the Vancouver Island Economic Alliance and Tourism BC Partners Program for a joint contribution of \$36,620.

Total disbursements were: \$72,625.99.

Based on the proposed budget this project was completed on-time and on-budget. The project commenced in Fall 2009 and was successfully completed Winter 2010.

Community Contributions	
Comox Valley Economic Development Corporation	\$6,500
Destination Nanaimo-City of Nanaimo	\$6,500
Regional District of Mount Waddington	\$3,250
Campbell River/Rivercorp	\$3,560
Tourism Powell River Society	\$3,560
Vancouver Island Economic Alliance	\$5,000
Vancouver Island North Tourism	\$3,250
<u>Tourism BC Partners Program</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>
Total	\$36,620

Project Income 07/01/2009 to 03/31/2011

2010 Legacy DVD Project		
REVENUE		
	North Island-Coast Development Initiative Trust	36,005.99
	Communities	26,620.00
	Vancouver Island Economic Alliance	5,000.00
	Tourism Vancouver Island	5,000.00
TOTAL REVENUE		<u>72,625.99</u>
EXPENSE		
	Management Fees	5,954.31
	Production and Design	52,633.47
	Contract Service	13,000.02
	Shipping	28.57
	Travel & Promotion	1,009.62
TOTAL EXPENSE		<u>72,625.99</u>
REVENUE minus EXPENSE		<u>-</u>

I hereby certify that these financial statements are an accurate representation of all project expenditures and sources of income.

Sharon Scott
Financial Services and Operations Manager

Dave Petryk
President and Chief Executive Officer

2010 and Beyond Strategy Project #3 - Press Materials



Abstract

The Island Coastal Economic Trust and Tourism Vancouver Island formed a partnership to capitalize on the unprecedented media awareness of the region as a destination to live, work, play and invest. The Press Materials Project was to benefit from the media attention that would focus on British Columbia during, and most critically, after the Games. This is the final report on the results of this partnership.

Project Goal

The Vision of the *Tourism Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast 2010 and Beyond Strategy Plan* partnership with *Island Coastal Economic Trust* was:

To leverage the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic games by effectively coordinating opportunities to maximize Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast's exposure and thus increase tourist visitation, investment, relocation and ultimately economic growth.

The strategic focus of effort was to create greater awareness of the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions by motivating and educating an audience that could influence a desire to live, work, play and invest in these areas pre-, post- and during the Games. The purpose of the **Press Materials Project** was to benefit from the unprecedented media attention that would focus on British Columbia during, and most critically, after the Games. The project was designed to provide media with more than enough materials to support their coverage of the regions during and after the Games.

The project goal was to prepare exciting media packages to assist five Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regional community clusters to capitalize on media who visited British Columbia for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The outcomes and deliverables of

the media packages focused on media opportunities during the critical eight to twelve month post-games window.

Tourism Partners involved in this project included:

- Tourism BC (overseas offices in UK and Germany)
- Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC)
- Destination Nanaimo - The City of Nanaimo
- Tourism Cowichan - Cowichan Valley Economic Development
- Comox Valley Economic Development
- Vancouver Island North Tourism
- Tourism Powell River Society

The Tourism Partners were provided with a complete package of the press materials developed in this project and were encouraged to distribute these materials to qualified accredited and unaccredited media.

This project was also directly linked to the *Taste of Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast* project through providing a USB containing all Press Materials to the media in attendance at the event (Please see USB provided with this report). Press materials were also distributed to targeted media at the unaccredited media centre at Robson Square.

In addition, the press materials were made available on the Tourismvi.ca website and dispersed to key Tourism BC and Canadian Tourism Commission media contacts, as well as journalists that were pitched various story ideas to attract them to the region. It is anticipated that the Community Destination Marketing Organizations who participated in this project also provided access to the Press Materials to their media contacts who will use the press materials for years to come.

Some examples from Comox Valley, Powell River, and the Sunshine Coast:

<http://www.discovercomoxvalley.com/news-and-media/recent-articles.htm>

<http://www.discoverpowellriver.com/media/stories.php?id=23>

<http://www.sunshinecoastcanada.com/sunshine-coast/media.php>

Summary of Work and Methodology

Project Objectives:

- To attract a minimum of five community partners each investing \$2,500

As this project required funds to match the ICET investment of \$12,500 a program was developed to attract a minimum of five communities each investing \$2,500. This investment would benefit them by providing much needed press materials for the community, as well as supporting the community marketing through inclusion in media relations efforts being conducted by Tourism Vancouver Island.

These efforts were successful and the program was subscribed to by the following five community partners:

- Comox Valley Economic Development Corporation
 - Destination Nanaimo/City of Nanaimo
 - Tourism Cowichan/Cowichan Valley Economic Development Corporation
 - Tourism Powell River Society
 - Vancouver Island North Tourism
- To determine key storylines and press material needs for each of the participating partners.

An RFP was released to acquire a professional journalist that would work with community partners in developing the key storylines and in turn develop the press materials required to assist the media in posting stories about the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions and the communities.

Kathy Eccles of On Cue Communications was the successful proponent and began the process of consulting with the communities to determine storylines and material needs. On Cue spent between 1 and 1 ½ days in each community interviewing partners and researching story ideas.

- To develop a complete package of press materials for each of the participating communities.

Following the community consultation process the contractor developed a comprehensive collection of press materials that could be distributed by the community, Tourism Vancouver Island, Tourism BC and the Canadian Tourism Commission. This process followed on the initial interviews and included several consultations and re-edits to complete a professional package of press materials.

Each community involved a three to four-week editorial process and a typical schedule looked like this:

Community #1

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| • October 28 | First community sponsorship secured |
| • Week of November 1st | First community visited |
| • November 18 | First package draft completed |
| • November 23 | Edits returned by clients |
| • November 25 | Second draft completed |
| • November 29-30 | Final edits were completed and submitted |

- To distribute the materials to qualified media representatives pre, during and post games time

The distribution process was complex and included utilizing outreach partners such as the Canadian Tourism Commission and Tourism BC, in addition to

distributing the materials to media in the unaccredited media centre at Robson Square. These materials were also used as a take-away at the Taste of Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast event and through the Familiarization Tour process.

Materials:

- **Overview** – A concise snapshot at the unique attributes of the community were developed in consultation with community representatives, which allowed the writing to focus on relevant brand characteristics of the entire community, (e.g., natural attractions, First Nations heritage, nature close to small town urban amenities, unique cultural experience, landmarks, etc.). The Overview listed the towns and urban centres within the community, accompanied by detailed descriptions.
- **Town Talking Points** – Each town in the greater community was written about separately with an established format of quick facts and easily digestible information including: history, population, claims to fame, famous hometown celebrities and sports heroes, buildings of note, arts and cultural draws, etc. These were developed to conform to the current style of regional write-ups found on Tourism BC's website, to ensure that the information was effective for partner tourism agencies.
- **Story Ideas and Top Things to Tweet About** – As a fun and accessible way to package story starters for each community, story ideas were condensed into 140-character tweet formats for Twitter and linked to relevant information that media both used and passed along. The tweet formats were used as lead-ins to the same story ideas – in a longer, more detailed version – packaged in Tourism BC's current format of 50 to 200 words, written in the third person, and encompassing set criteria, (e.g., new or seasonal products, growing trends, 'voluntourism', 'mancations', arts & culture, themes).
- **Pre-written Stories** – Three blog-style articles were written for each community in 350-500 words. The approach was first person wherever possible and written in a chatty and informal, fun manner. Topics included personal accounts of local attractions and adventure; coverage of unique restaurants, wineries, walking tours, museums, festival and sights; and/or profiles of local sports heroes, artists or colourful characters and their favourite things about their hometowns. 'Round-up' articles of 'top 10' lists and thematic stories were also written (Please see attachments).
- **Dream Day Trip** – One basic itinerary was developed to link each of the towns in the community by car on a scenic day trip. Links led media to sources for other customized and tailor-made itineraries; however, this one sample itinerary provided directional information from major centres and lent a sense of place to the community and region (Please see attachments).

- **Links** – Hyperlinks were imbedded in the text in all electronic versions of the package. A list of relevant links would be provided at the end of written materials.
- **Imagery** - In addition, significant inventory of High Definition Video was acquired in partnership with Island Coast Economic Trust that was made available to the Olympic Secretariat for use in their BC Stories and BC Explore campaigns. This video footage was also accessible by all municipal governments, economic development offices and tourism organizations for long-term promotion of the Vancouver Island region and the Sunshine Coast as places to live, work play and invest.

Statement of Project Completion

The primary challenge for this project was the relatively short turn-around required to complete the project in time for *A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast* event, and in time for the run-up to the *2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics*. However, the project was completed on time and under budget and utilized by numerous media during and after the games who posted editorial as a result of this initiative.

Community Endorsements

The media kit material developed during the 2010 & Beyond project has been a great resource for travel media and communication regarding the communities and activities on Vancouver Island North. Information from this package has been included on our website and materials are provided to visiting travel writers. The Vancouver Island North region covers a large geographic area so when travel writers visit, rarely do they get a chance to see all that this area has to offer. This material introduces all of the region's communities, activities, and attractions that they may not have had a chance to see during this trip, but will hopefully plan to return for.

- Joli White, Tourism Coordinator, Vancouver Island North

Employment Created

It is difficult to calculate the level of direct and indirect employment created by this project. However, based on payment of direct expenditures, approximately 6.9 employment man-months were supported.*

Economic Impact

The project goal was to prepare media packages to assist five Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast community clusters to capitalize on media who visited British Columbia for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The outcome and deliverables of the media packages focused on media opportunities during the critical eight to twelve month post-games window.

The media packages have a long shelf-life and are therefore eminently useable over an

* \$24,000/\$25 per hour/35 hour week/4 weeks=6.9 man-months

extended time period post-Winter Games. However, it is difficult to accurately gauge the packages' effectiveness in building awareness of the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast region because of the relatively long time-window and the challenges involved with tracking visitation to the region.

Financial Review

This project was a component of the 2010 and Beyond Strategy with 50% financial support from ICET. The original contribution agreement was \$12,500 of the amended budget of \$25,000 of which \$11,483.65 was disbursed. The final gross budget for the project was \$23,983.65.

Based on the amended budget this project was completed and under-budget. The project commenced in October of 2009 and was successfully completed by January 31st, 2010.

Project Income 10/01/2009 to 03/31/2010

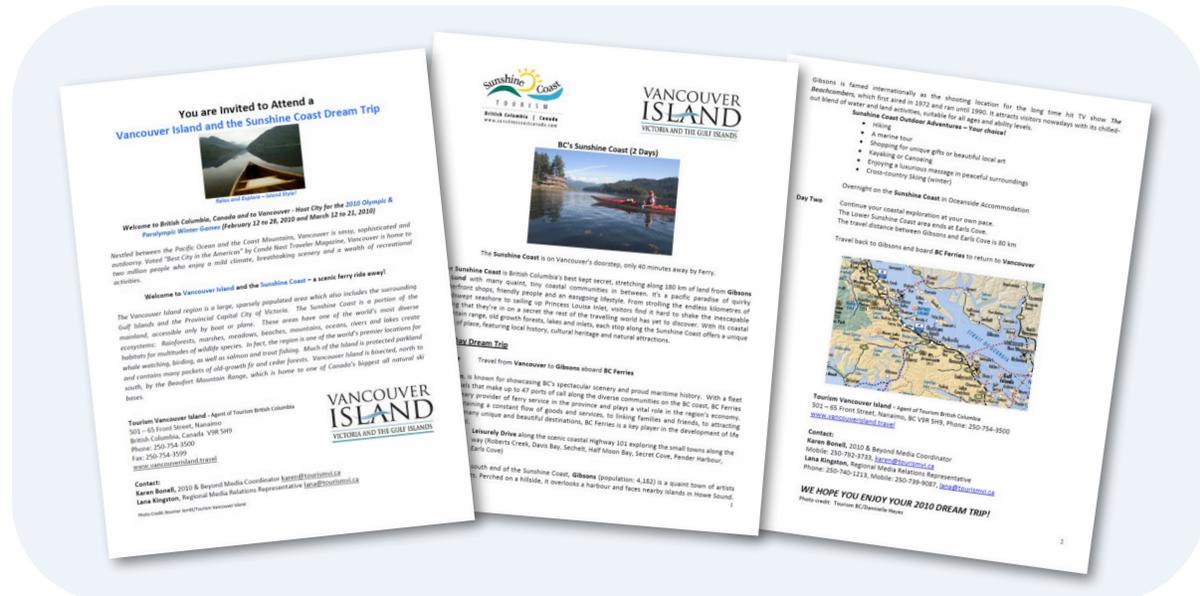
2010 Community Pre-written Stories		
REVENUE		
	North Island-Coast Development Initiative Trust	11,483.65
	Communities	12,500.00
TOTAL REVENUE		<u>23,983.65</u>
EXPENSE		
	Management Fees	3,832.80
	Contract Service	20,150.85
TOTAL EXPENSE		<u>23,983.65</u>
REVENUE minus EXPENSE		<u>-</u>

I hereby certify that these financial statements are an accurate representation of all project expenditures and sources of income.

 Sharon Scott
 Financial Services and Operations Manager

 Dave Petryk
 President and Chief Executive Officer

Project #4 - Media Familiarization



Abstract

The Island Coastal Economic Trust and Tourism Vancouver Island formed a partnership to capitalize on the unprecedented media awareness of the region as a destination to live, work, play and invest. The purpose of the Media Relations Familiarization Project (FAMs) was to benefit from the media attention that would focus on British Columbia before, during, and most critically, after the Games. This is the final report on the results of this partnership.

Project Goal

The Vision of the *Tourism Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast 2010 and Beyond Strategic Plan* partnership with *Island Coastal Economic Trust* was:

To leverage the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic games by effectively coordinating opportunities to maximize Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast's exposure and thus increase tourist visitation, investment, relocation and ultimately economic growth.

The strategic focus of effort was to create greater awareness of the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions by motivating and educating an audience that could influence a desire to live, work, play and invest in these areas pre-, post- and during the Games. The purpose of the **Media Relations Familiarization Project (FAMs)** was to benefit from the unprecedented media attention that would focus on British Columbia before, during, and most critically, after the Games.

Tourism Partners involved in this project included Tourism BC (overseas offices in UK and

Germany), Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), Tourism Victoria, Oceanside Tourism, Destination Nanaimo, Tourism Cowichan, Comox Valley Economic Development, North Central Island Tourism, Vancouver Island North Tourism, Tourism Tofino, Port Alberni Tourism and Sunshine Coast Tourism. The Tourism Partners were given access to the materials developed in this project.

Summary of Work and Methodology

The 2010 and Beyond Media Relations Familiarization Project was developed and completed by Tourism Vancouver Island's Media Department. *Karen B Marketing* was contracted as marketing consultant to the project on a self-employed basis.

Project Objectives and work performed.

The consultant, Karen Bonell, was retained to plan the logistics and coordination of *2010 Winter Olympic Games* Press trips, plan the media trip itineraries for Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions and to solicit new media trips to visit Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions in conjunction with Tourism Vancouver Island's Media Department.

The project strategy was to implement the Media FAM program in the run-up to the *2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games* and continue through 2011 to capitalize on the post-event media attention.

The plan to attract 'unaccredited' media was a focused strategy founded on the high probability that media who were 'outside the fence' during the event would be engaged in delivering stories that were not directly tied to the performance of athletes and therefore had a desire to post stories about the destinations during the *2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games*. Stories about the performance of the athletes would be filed by 'accredited' media.

This was a very challenging project because of the sheer volume of press contacts and organizations attending the *2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games* and the logistics required to coordinate media relations and FAM trips over the life of this project. However, the efforts of the teams overcame the challenges and were very successful in executing this project.

The project is best summarized by the following time line and description of key strategies:

Fall, 2009

Karen B Marketing and Tourism Vancouver Island's Media Department:

- Established sample press trip itineraries.
- Established initial distribution database.
- Distributed communications and invitations to the media contact database.

- February, 2010 Karen B Marketing and Tourism Vancouver Island:
- Hosted *A Taste of Vancouver Island & the Sunshine Coast* on the eve of the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games at the Commerce Centre at Robson Square in Vancouver.
 - Developed a strong media focus for the event.
 - Enhanced the database of media contacts resulting from the oversubscribed *Taste* event.
- Year – 2010 Karen B Marketing and Tourism Vancouver Island’s Media Department:
- Continued to work with Tourism BC and media contacts attracting new media attention for Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions.
 - Invited Media to visit Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions in 2010 and beyond.
 - Coordinated additional press visits on Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions throughout 2010 and into 2011 for media to explore the many regions and activities available.
- Year – 2011 Karen B Marketing and Tourism Vancouver Island’s Media Department:
- Continued to pro-actively solicit media to visit Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions.
 - Sent information about the regions and their vast selection of activities and attractions.
 - Continued to coordinate press visits.

Key Strategies

Key strategies were developed and implemented by Karen B Marketing and Tourism Vancouver Island’s Media Department.

- Created “Dream Trip” Itineraries for qualified media. Five sample trip itineraries were created, which were filled with ideas to entice the media to visit Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions.
- Secured complimentary or industry rates for travel, accommodation, meals and activities for the media to experience for themselves the many tourism products offered on Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions.

Worked with Tourism Partners including Tourism BC (overseas offices in UK and Germany), Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), Tourism Victoria, Oceanside Tourism, Destination Nanaimo, Tourism Cowichan, Comox Valley Economic Development, Campbell River & Region, Vancouver Island North Tourism,

Tourism Tofino, Port Alberni Tourism and Sunshine Coast Tourism.

- Leveraged the funds with Tourism BC programs, Canadian Tourism Commission programs, Community Destination Organizations and Industry Tourism Suppliers on Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions.
- Collected a list of qualified Media from a variety of sources including *A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast* event in Vancouver during the 2010 Olympics, Media Centre enquires at the unaccredited media facility in Robson's Square, Olympic Teams training on Vancouver Island, and, the increased international media database developed Tourism BC contacts.
- Pro-actively solicited international and national media to participate in Press Trips to Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions.
- Followed-up on a regular basis with leads generated through press trip invitations.

Geographic Target Markets included:

- Canada
- USA
- Germany
- France
- UK
- Netherlands
- Australia
- Asian countries (Japan, South Korea, China – Hong Kong)

Statement of Project Completion

Summary of Press Trips

The following is a list of Media who visited Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast as part of the 2010 & Beyond Program:

- SBS TV (Korea)
- Rights Holding Broadcast, crew from Living Team (not sports), maximum exposure featuring Vancouver Island as a premier travel destination
- Newsis (Korea)
- Accredited Media, second largest news agent in Korea, news linked with Korea's top portal
- NBC's Today Show (USA)
- Total morning news show viewership averages 12.8 million
- Channel 9 (Australia) Audience share 26.8% Nationally: ninemsn.com.au
- CNN (USA)
- Cable News Network broadcast area includes the United States, Canada and Worldwide

- TZ Newspaper (Germany)
- TZ (circulation 147,774) Münchner Merkur (circulation: 276,136) major dailies in Munich area, online for ZDF.de
- Wordpress Blog (USA)
- Website, Eco Tourism & Food and Wine, Green blog network and local food and wine, wordpress.com
- Uit & Reis Magazine (Netherlands)
- Uit Magazine circulation of 60,000, Camper Reis Magazine, cir. 40,000, Local papers from BDU (combined cir. 110,000), Radio 794 (local radio station)
- Welt am Sonntag and Tages-Anzeiger Newspapers (Germany and Switzerland)
- Two of Europe's largest newspapers
- Countryman Press Great Destinations Guide Book and Freelance travel writers (USA)
- Weekly TV Guide (Germany, Austria and Switzerland)
- 537,000 copies / 1.72 million readers in Germany, Austria and Switzerland
- Lonely Planet (Canada and Pacific NW, USA)
- Toronto Sun (Canada)
- Family Faire feature column 1.2 M distribution plus online and affiliate papers
- The Guardian Newspaper (UK)
- UK Circulation 380,693
- Tourist Guide Canada (Italy)
- Calgary Herald (Canada)
- Circulation 115,612 Daily plus online
- Visão Magazine (Portugal)
- Total circulation 97,306, The Vision is the largest magazine weekly Portuguese information
- AutoNerve Magazine (Canada)
- Metro Vancouver, Alberta and Ontario, 13,500 copies / 54,000 circulation
- Die Südostschweiz Newspaper (Switzerland and Liechtenstein)
- The circulation in Switzerland (and neighbouring country Liechtenstein) 234,000 readers
- Senior Living Magazine (Canada)
- Distributed throughout the lower mainland and Islands (700 outlets), over 100,000 readership, TWT papers, combine circulation of five papers 271,000

A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast event was also attended by the one-man Ghanaian ski-team, downhill Skier Kwame Nkrumah-Acheampong, better known around the world as the Snow Leopard. Kwame has become a media sensation and boasts a legion of adoring fans and has featured in media outlets from Vancouver to Calgary and Montreal and even on Australian TV (ATV).

The 2010 and Beyond program assisted the Ghana ski team and its media entourage with accommodation and activities in partnership with many other tourism suppliers and sponsors.

As a follow-up to the Olympics, Kwame has partnered with Tourism Mount Washington, Mount Washington Alpine Resort and the Canadian Tourism Commission and is twinning

Mount Washington, Vancouver Island and the Senkwa Mamfe Alpine Ski Resort in Ghana. The goal is to begin various collaborations between the two communities that will bring about mutually beneficial interactions.

Regions explored on the Press Trips included:

- Mount Washington
- Campbell River
- Cowichan Valley
- Cowichan Bay
- Quadra Island
- Parksville
- Ucluelet
- Salt Spring Island
- Cumberland
- Nootka Sound
- Zeballos
- Powell River
- Comox Valley
- North Island
- Sunshine Coast
- Nanaimo
- Port Hardy
- Qualicum Beach
- Tofino
- Gabriola Island
- Gold River
- Kyuquot
- Sooke
- Lund

Tourism Victoria offered an add-on to the press trips which many media chose to take as it was their first visit to Vancouver Island.

The Press Trips from International media were longer visits than originally anticipated (sample press trips were set for two to five days, but most visits were much longer – up to ten days). The additional trip time helped to maximize the exposure of all of Vancouver Island’s regions plus the Sunshine Coast. The individual tourism businesses have embraced the additional worldwide exposure and were very supportive of hosting the media.

Examples of Media coverage:

- Printed copies of media articles included in this report (Please see attachments).
- “Dream Itinerary” Samples (Please see attachments)
- DVD’s from media coverage included in this report:
 - Inside Luxury Travel – included segments on Victoria, Desolation Sound and Sonara Resort
 - Australian Channel 9 – included segments on Victoria and a special feature of the Snow Leopard skiing at Mount Washington in the Comox Valley and taking a boat trip from Campbell River
 - Scenic Tours – Best of Canada showcasing Victoria and Knight Inlet Lodge

Employment Created

It is difficult to calculate the level of direct and indirect employment created by this project. However, based on payment of direct contractor fees approximately 4.12 employment man-months were supported. In addition, it is estimated that private sector support to this project with accommodation, meals and travel at little or no cost, was equivalent to approximately \$50,000.

*($\$57,700 / \25 per hour/ 35 hours per week/ $4 = 4.12$ months)

Note: from Jan 1/10 to Mar 31/10, 275 editorials were catalogued. Value of \$2,503,639.81. Minimum impressions of 64,9 million.

Economic Impact

The project goal was to motivate media to attract and educate their audiences to visit Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast by capitalizing on media who covered British Columbia for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games. Media coverage from FAM trips was planned to extend through 2011 providing continued exposure to the regions.

However, it is difficult to accurately gauge the FAMs and related activities' effectiveness in building awareness of the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast region because of the relatively long time window and the challenges involved with tracking visitation to the region. There were an estimated minimum of 102 editorials tracked that focus on 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics. The advertising equivalency value of the editorials was tracked at \$836,437.75*.

Financial Review

This project was a component of the 2010 and Beyond Strategy with 50% financial support from ICET. The original contribution agreement was \$69,000 of the total budget of \$138,000 of which \$67,571.68 of ICET's agreed contribution was received and \$67,571.68 disbursed. Tourism Vancouver Island matched wages and benefits from the Media Department for its contribution for this project. Tourism Vancouver Island coordinated parts of various press trips, as well as catalogued editorials coming in. Our established relationships with private sector assisted the contractor with securing private sector investment. Tourism Vancouver Island staff resources were allocated to assist with press trips as required, for mentoring purposes, and for documentation.

Based on the budget this project was completed and under-budget.
The project commenced in Fall 2009 and was completed by Fall 2011.

Project Income 10/01/2009 to 03/31/2010

2010 Media Familiarization		
REVENUE		
	North Island-Coast Development Initiative Trust	67,571.68
TOTAL REVENUE		<u>67,571.68</u>
EXPENSE		
	Management Fees	- 295.10
	Production and Design	155.60
	Contract Service	57,700.00
	Travel & Promotion	186.92
	Media Marketing	9,824.26
TOTAL EXPENSE		<u>67,571.68</u>
REVENUE minus EXPENSE		<u>-</u>

2010 and Beyond Strategy

Project #5 - Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast



Abstract

The Island Coastal Economic Trust and Tourism Vancouver Island formed a partnership to capitalize on the unprecedented media awareness of the region as a destination to live, work, play and invest. The purpose of *A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast* was to draw on the unprecedented media attention that would focus on British Columbia during, and most critically, after the Games. This is the final report on the results of this partnership.

Project Goal

The Vision of the *Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast 2010 and Beyond Strategic Plan* partnership with Island Economic Trust was:

To leverage the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic games by effectively coordinating opportunities to maximize Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast's exposure and thus increase tourist visitation, investment, relocation and ultimately economic growth.

The strategic focus of effort was to create greater awareness of the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions by motivating and educating an audience that could influence a desire to live, work, play and invest in these areas pre-, post- and during the Games. The primary focus was unpaid or earned media attention attracting Media outlets that have published stories in key markets and are critical to our success beyond 2010. The purpose of *A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast* was to draw on the unprecedented media attention that would focus on British Columbia during, and most critically, after the Games.

The Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions are ideally situated to capture the attention of accredited and unaccredited media which would enhance the regions' presence in the international market. Further, nurturing contacts with media personnel would provide a unique 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to develop current and future relationships.

A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast was a high energy media-engagement initiative targeting qualified media representatives who would tell the exciting story of the opportunities to Live, Work, Play and Invest in the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions. The event also aimed to attract potential visitors to the regions by educating audiences about the depth and sophistication of the 'local' culinary movement by using the lure of the regions' culinary experience.

The event was an interactive sensory experience inviting guests to see, hear, taste, smell and touch throughout the event. This event would WOW guests with the destinations' excellence in wine, cuisine and local agricultural product such as ciders, hand-crafted beers, wine, seafood, and other locally produced and sourced products.

The products were provided by the sponsors as valuable in-kind contributions and were integral to the success of the event. The market value of the wine, beer, and cider is estimated at \$2,000; the seafood value estimated at \$20,000 plus the cost of in-kind wages, travel and representation by the vintners and the shellfish growers association would conservatively place the value of kind-contributions at \$30,000. Similarly the professional services of the guest chefs were provided by time donation at an estimated value of \$5,000.

A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast was held in the Commerce Centre of Robson Square on the eve of the opening ceremonies of the 2010 Winter Olympics.

Summary of Work and Methodology

Project Objectives:

The primary objectives of this project were:

- to attract a significant number of qualified media to attend;
- to WOW their senses to motivate inspiring stories;
- to attract sponsor partners.

Tourism Vancouver Island was the lead agency in this event and secured partnership-funding support from the Island Coastal Economic Trust. In spite of the challenges posed by the uncertain economy and competition for resources for other Games events, numerous municipal organizations and tourism stakeholders invested in and participated in all aspects of this event.

A project objective was established to target qualified media representatives who would tell the exciting story of the economic development and tourism opportunities to Live, Work, Play and Invest in the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions to regional, national and international audiences and markets.

The plan to attract ‘unaccredited’ media was a focused strategy founded on the high probability that media who were ‘outside the fence’ during the event would be engaged in delivering stories that were not *directly* tied to the performance of the athletes and therefore had a desire to post stories about the destinations during the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games. Stories about the performance of the athletes would be filed by ‘accredited’ media.

To this end, *A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast* was conceived as an interactive sensory experience with media and guests invited to experience *Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast* by seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and touching throughout the event. The event was also attended by the one-man Ghanaian ski-team, downhill Skier Kwame Nkrumah-Acheampong, better known around the world as the Snow Leopard. Kwame has become a media sensation and boasts a legion of adoring fans and has been featured in media outlets from Vancouver to Calgary and Montreal and even on Australian TV (ATV).

The event garnered positive blog and other media coverage including:

- Coast Reporter
- Powell River Peak
- YouCook Blog
- Gratinee Blog
- Suzanne Ahearne Blog
- VanFoodies.com
- Beacon Magazine
- Daily Telegraph (UK)
- Nanaimo Daily news
- Nanaimo News Bulletin
- You Cook Blog
- Peti Chef Blog

The positive response to the event was initiated by a cost-sharing program proposal developed by Tourism Vancouver Island for potential participants. The appropriate Request for Proposal was developed and completed after gauging the interest of regional organizations and tourism stakeholders: interest proved to be exceptionally strong and the program was subscribed to capacity.

Event Sponsors:

- Comox Valley Economic Development
- Campbell River Economic Development (RiverCorp)
- Tourism Cowichan
- Destination Nanaimo
- Oceanside Tourism
- Alberni Valley Tourism
- Sunshine Coast Tourism
- Tourism Tofino
- Tourism Victoria
- BC Ferries Corporation
- Blackball Ferry Line (MV Coho)
- Ecosummer Expeditions
- Golf Vancouver Island
- City of Langford
- BC Shellfish Growers Association
- Wine Islands Vintners Association (WIVA)

Subsequently, a very well qualified special events company, Cossette Communication Group (CCG), was awarded the project and contracted to provide event services in cooperation with Tourism Vancouver Island. An event program was developed after discussion and negotiation with committed participants.

Program Outline:

The event was held in the Commerce Centre of Robson Square the night prior to the opening ceremonies of the 2010 Winter Olympics.

The event program unfolded thus:

- On arrival, guests experienced a traditional song and dance of the First Nations by the Le-La-La Dancers. The group performs a variety of animal and spirit dances, which have been passed down from generation to generation, and each with its own legend, and made for a truly memorable experience. Through their vibrant regalia, cedar masks, and heartbeat drum rhythms, media gained precious insight into First Nation culture and history.
- Media were encouraged to explore the multi-media area where beautiful imagery and video from Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions were looped. The imagery and video were the primary deliverables of the ICET supported and partnered projects *2010 and Beyond HD-B-roll Video Acquisition* and *2010 and Beyond HD Video Production*, respectively.
- Carey Newman, a Coast Salish/Kwagiulth artisan worked on cedar carvings throughout the event highlighting the skill and craftsmanship of his forbearers who originate from the two regions. Most of Carey's carvings are commissioned by private collectors; however, he has also undertaken work from corporations, government agencies and international museums.
- Media and guests were encouraged to sample hors d'oeuvres prepared with local ingredients including BC shellfish, as well as local beer, wine and cider. One of the major event sponsors, BC Shellfish Growers Association, provided an amazing array of local grown and harvested seafood product to the guest chefs who prepared tasty hors d'oeuvres for event guests. Similarly, Wine Islands Vintners Association (WIVA), also a major sponsor, provided an impressive array of locally produced wines, ciders, and beers which were also enthusiastically received by event guests.
- Celebrity TV Chef Bob Blumer held cooking demonstrations with four Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast Region chefs - Ken Nakano, Ronald St. Pierre, Stafford Lumley and David Bowes - throughout the evening to showcase local ingredients. Guests then had the opportunity to sample the prepared food and beverages and were encouraged to network throughout the evening.
- Bob Blumer, chef and acclaimed cook-book author, is the star and host of the highly-rated Food Network TV shows *The Surreal Gourmet* and *Glutton for Punishment*. Ken Nakano is a veteran chef who is currently Executive Sous Chef at the prestigious *Fairmont Empress Hotel* and is a key member of the Island Chefs Collaborative. Ronald St. Pierre is co-owner and chef of *Locals* restaurant in Courtenay. *Locals* specializes in high-quality sustainable and local products and is a leader and innovator in the Comox Valley culinary community. Stafford Lumley and

David Bowes are co-owners and chefs at Smitty's Oyster House in Gibsons BC, which opened to rave reviews in several high-end publications including *The New York Times* and *Enroute Magazine*.

- Media were provided with a USB containing images and more details about the participating partners' products and services from Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast regions. The USB contained sample itineraries, pre-written stories, press coverage details, a media kit and other media related support materials. The sample itineraries and press materials were the primary deliverables of the ICET supported projects *2010 and Beyond Press Materials* and *2010 and Beyond Media Relations*, respectively.
- Staging an event of this magnitude presented some, albeit surmountable, challenges by the very nature of the main event, which, of course was the *Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games*. In the context of event timing, *A Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast* took place on the very eve of the Games opening day and coincided with many concurrent events in the City. Competing events occurred at the last minute potentially drawing media away from the Taste Event, however, the event was subscribed to capacity and attracted in excess of sixty media personnel and was deemed successful from an attendance perspective. In addition, competition to use the venue from other organizations was fierce especially in light of the event's proximity to Opening Day.

Event Sponsor Contributions:

Alberni Valley Tourism	5,000.00
BC Ferries	1,000.00
Black Ball Ferry Line	1,000.00
Black Rock Oceanfront Resort	1,000.00
Coast Community Builders Association	1,000.00
Comox Valley Economic Development	5,000.00
Destination Nanaimo - City of Nanaimo	5,000.00
Ecosummer Expeditions Ltd	1,000.00
Galiano Oceanfront Inn & Spa	1,000.00
Go2 the Resource for People	1,000.00
Golf Vancouver Island	1,000.00
Oceanside Tourism Association	5,000.00
Sooke Harbour House	1,000.00
The Chemainus B.I.A.	1,000.00
Tourism Campbell River & Region	5,000.00
Tourism Cowichan	5,000.00
Tourism Tofino	5,000.00
Tourism Victoria	5,000.00
Vancouver Coast & Mountains Tourism	5,000.00
WildPlay Element Parks	1,000.00
Total:	\$56,000
North Island-Coast Development Initiative Trust	\$46,971
Grand Total	\$102,971

Statement of Project Completion

The event proved successful beyond expectations and attracted almost seventy media representatives from Vancouver, Victoria, Montreal, Associated Press, CBC TV & Radio, CTV, Italy, and Spain as well as numerous freelance media and also representatives for Chinese-language media. A special guest was Kwame Nkrumah-Acheampong better known as the Snow Leopard. Kwame was the first Ghanaian to compete in a Winter Olympics and he qualified to represent Ghana at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics in downhill alpine skiing.

The event also attracted dignitaries and politicians from Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast including Ken McRae, Mayor of Port Alberni, John Ruttan, Mayor of Nanaimo and acting Mayor of Sechelt, Allan Warren.

Community Endorsements

Although I am not sure that we received more media stories than we would have if we didn't participate but feel we definitely created a buzz and had exposure that we would not have been able to obtain on our own. This is without a doubt a first for the number of participants who collaborated to promote Vancouver Island as a destination and I was pleased to be a part of it.

- Teresa Davies: River Corp/ Tourism Campbell River and Region, Campbell River

I found the 2010 Winter Olympics Event to be valuable compliment to Tourism Tofino's Media Relations and Marketing initiatives. Each element of the event thoughtfully and appropriately represented an important aspect of British Columbia's vast natural and cultural offerings.

The culinary features of the event were particularly well done with a wide variety of delicious choices representing many of the province's food and dining options.

Our team was able to converse directly with several key members of the media and we also developed some new story ideas to share with them as a result of the event. It was also very valuable to be able to strengthen our relationships with other members of the industry in such a fun and inspiring environment.

- Lynda Kaye, Principal, Kaye Public Relations for Tourism Tofino

The Taste of Vancouver Island event afforded the Comox Valley a unique opportunity to present its tourism product under the umbrella of the Vancouver Island destination, and access key National and International media connected to the Olympics.

The integration and participation of our culinary and shellfish industries in the event further enhanced the awareness of these key sectors. The resulting media coverage and relationships were extremely valuable for the Comox Valley. Tourism Vancouver Island did a superb job in delivering a top-caliber event and opportunity for Vancouver Island communities.

- Lara Greasley, Marketing and Communications Specialist
Comox Valley Economic Development Corporation

As a partner in the Taste of Vancouver Island media event prior to the opening of the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, Tourism Victoria met and mingled with over 65 local and international media that were in town covering the games. This provided the organization the opportunity to make and develop new relationships while sharing targeted story ideas on British Columbia's capital city!

- Holly Lenk Manager, Travel Media Relations Tourism Victoria

The event was successful in attracting a solid group of local and international media with a real interest in learning more about the Vancouver Island region, particularly its culinary, wine and agri-tourism tourism experiences. The format gave us the opportunity to meet journalists in person and educate them about our ferry service and related culinary tourism packages.

We took a broad view in attending the event, knowing that increased awareness and media coverage for the destination would ultimately benefit our business. The actual event was really just the 'appetizer', the long-term benefits continue to come from the follow-up done by TAVI's media relations staff during and post-Games. We continue to work with TAVI on supporting media visits and events that put the Vancouver Island story in front of more potential visitors.

- Bill Eisenhauer, Good Relations Inc., Black Ball Ferry Line Media Representative

Employment Created

It is difficult to estimate employment creation provided by this project, however, fees for service were paid for contracted services such as event management, catering, security, promotion and associated activities. An estimate based on 'fees paid for services' calculated that approximately 28 man-months were created by this project.

Economic Impact

The scope of this project was to create a high-energy media-engagement initiative targeting qualified media representatives who would tell the exciting story of the opportunities to Live, Work, Play and Invest in the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions.

The economic impacts are difficult to measure in direct absolute terms, however the high degree of media involvement indicated that the region would experience enhanced media coverage pre-, post- and during the 2010 Olympics.

Financial Review

This project was a component of the 2010 and Beyond Strategy with 50% financial support from ICET. The original contribution agreement was \$50,000 of which \$ 46,970 was disbursed. Approximately \$57,000 was contributed of in-kind market value of shellfish, vintner product and by donation of chefs and vintners expertise and time.

Based on the amended budget this project was completed and under-budget.

The project commenced in December of 2009 and was successfully completed on February 28th, 2010.

Project Income 12/01/2009 to 06/30/2010

2010 Taste of Vancouver Island		
REVENUE		
	North Island-Coast Development Initiative Trust	46,970.54
	Communities	42,550.00
	Tourism Businesses	9,598.30
	Vancouver Coast & Mountains Tourism	5,000.00
TOTAL REVENUE		<u>104,118.84</u>
EXPENSE		
	Management Fees	16,447.81
	Production and Design	4,220.20
	Contract Service	77,777.48
	Shipping	173.72
	Travel & Promotion	5,499.63
TOTAL EXPENSE		<u>104,118.84</u>
REVENUE minus EXPENSE		<u>-</u>

I hereby certify that these financial statements are an accurate representation of all project expenditures and sources of income.

Sharon Scott
Financial Services and Operations Manager

Dave Petryk
President and Chief Executive Officer

Appendices

1. Media Familiarization

- A. Dream Trip Itinerary - BC's Sunshine Coast (2 Days)
- B. Dream Trip Itinerary - Eat, Drink & Be Merry (3 Days)

2. Press Materials

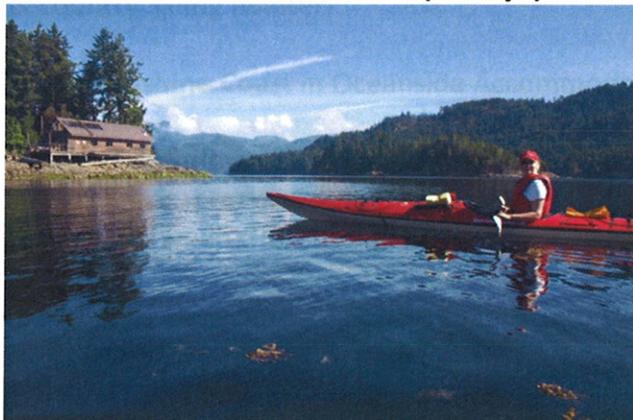
- C. Comox Valley: Overview
- D. Comox Valley: Communities
- E. Comox Valley: Story Starters
- F. Comox Valley: Full Story: Adventure Tourism
- G. The Cowichan: Overview
- H. The Cowichan: Towns
- I. The Cowichan: Story Starters
- J. The Cowichan: Full Story: Cittaslow
- K. Nanaimo: Overview
- L. Nanaimo: History
- M. Nanaimo: Story Starters
- N. Nanaimo: Ideal Day Trip
- O. Nanaimo: Full Story: Harbour Air
- P. Vancouver Island North: Overview
- Q. Vancouver Island North: Towns
- R. Vancouver Island North: Story Starters
- S. Vancouver Island North: Full Story: Adventure Tourism
- T. Sunshine Coast: Overview
- U. Sunshine Coast: Towns
- V. Sunshine Coast: Story Starters
- W. Sunshine Coast: Full Story: Outdoor Activities
- X. Press USB stick

Taste of Vancouver Island and The Sunshine Coast

- Y. List of Media Attendees
- Z. List of Sponsor and Participant Attendees
- AA. URL List of Media Coverage of Event



BC's Sunshine Coast (2 Days)



The **Sunshine Coast** is on Vancouver's doorstep, only 40 minutes away by Ferry.

The **Sunshine Coast** is British Columbia's best kept secret, stretching along 180 km of land from **Gibsons** to **Lund** with many quaint, tiny coastal communities in between. It's a pacific paradise of quirky waterfront shops, friendly people and an easygoing lifestyle. From strolling the endless kilometres of windswept seashore to sailing up Princess Louisa Inlet, visitors find it hard to shake the inescapable feeling that they're in on a secret the rest of the travelling world has yet to discover. With its coastal mountain range, old growth forests, lakes and inlets, each stop along the Sunshine Coast offers a unique sense of place, featuring local history, cultural heritage and natural attractions.

Two Day Dream Trip

Day One Travel from **Vancouver** to **Gibsons** aboard **BC Ferries**

BC Ferries, is known for showcasing BC's spectacular scenery and proud maritime history. With a fleet of 36 vessels that make up to 47 ports of call along the diverse communities on the BC coast, BC Ferries is the primary provider of ferry service in the province and plays a vital role in the region's economy. From maintaining a constant flow of goods and services, to linking families and friends, to attracting tourists to many unique and beautiful destinations, BC Ferries is a key player in the development of life on BC's coast.

Leisurely Drive along the scenic coastal Highway 101 exploring the small towns along the way (Roberts Creek, Davis Bay, Sechelt, Half Moon Bay, Secret Cove, Pender Harbour, Earls Cove)

Located at the south end of the Sunshine Coast, **Gibsons** (population: 4,182) is a quaint town of artists and fishing boats. Perched on a hillside, it overlooks a harbour and faces nearby islands in Howe Sound.

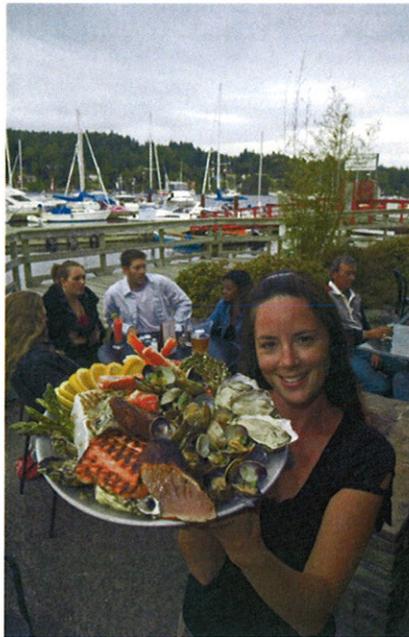
VANCOUVER ISLAND

VICTORIA AND THE GULF ISLANDS

Eat, Drink and Be Merry (3 Days)

Featuring:

Salt Spring Island, the Cowichan Valley, and Nanaimo on Vancouver Island



The **Cowichan Valley** with its culinary offerings is an ideal location for food and wine enthusiasts.

Three Day Dream Trip

Day One Travel from **Vancouver** to **Salt Spring Island** aboard **BC Ferries**

BC Ferries, is known for showcasing BC's spectacular scenery and proud maritime history. With a fleet of 36 vessels that make up to 47 ports of call along the diverse communities on the BC coast, BC Ferries is the primary provider of ferry service in the province and plays a vital role in the region's economy. From maintaining a constant flow of goods and services, to linking families and friends, to attracting tourists to many unique and beautiful destinations, BC Ferries is a key player in the development of life on BC's coast.

The best-known of British Columbia's Gulf Islands, **Salt Spring** is inhabited by easygoing, green-oriented free spirits. A high per-capita assortment of dining options, specialty food producers, bakeries, coffee shops and farmers selling fresh-picked organic produce reflect the island's passion for creature comforts. The central harbour town of Ganges is home to most of the island's funky, independent restaurants and

retailers. During the summer months on Saturdays, the island's legendary open-air market commandeers the town centre with its unique selection of crafts, artwork and local produce.

Salt Spring Island Activities – Your choice!

- Artisan Tour
- Hiking
- Cycling
- Swimming
- Birding
- Kayaking

Overnight on Salt Spring Island

Day Two Travel from Salt Spring Island aboard **BC Ferries** to the **Cowichan Valley** on Vancouver Island

Cowichan Valley Food and Wine

In the Cowichan Valley discover a land of fishermen, foragers, vintners, organic farmers, artisanal cheese makers, and slow-food chefs. The Cowichan Valley is blessed by a warm climate, ideal growing conditions for grapes and other fruits and vegetables. Tour and sample award-winning wineries and heritage farms in the area, or plan a trip to the impressive Vancouver Island's largest Farmers' Market in **Duncan**. Indulge at local restaurants – the astounding regional bounty produces some of the best food in the Pacific Northwest, or visit British Columbia's first cidery.

Chemainus Theatre and Outdoor Murals

Chemainus features more than 40 outdoor wall paintings and a dozen more sculptures with their own colourful stories which are best explored walking or by horse-and-buggy.

Overnight in the Cowichan Valley

Day Three Travel from the **Cowichan Valley** to **Nanaimo**

Nanaimo is officially known as the Harbour City for good reason. Stretched like a long, lean finger along the east coast of south-central Vancouver Island, British Columbia's sixth-largest city gets its identity, history and a wealth of recreation from a lovely, island-sheltered harbour right in the heart of town. Hiking, boating, kayaking, biking and world-class scuba diving and snorkelling are everyday activities at the bustling waterfront, as seaplanes take flight from sparkling blue waters.

Nanaimo Activities – Your choice!

- Diving
- Golf
- Kayaking
- Shopping

Travel back to **Vancouver** aboard **BC Ferries** (95 minute cruise)



Tourism Vancouver Island - Agent of Tourism British Columbia
501 – 65 Front Street, Nanaimo, BC V9R 5H9, Phone: 250-754-3500
www.vancouverisland.travel

Contact:

Karen Bonell, 2010 & Beyond Media Coordinator

Mobile: 250-792-3733, karen@tourismvi.ca

Lana Kingston, Regional Media Relations Representative

Phone: 250-740-1213, Mobile: 250-739-9087, lane@tourismvi.ca

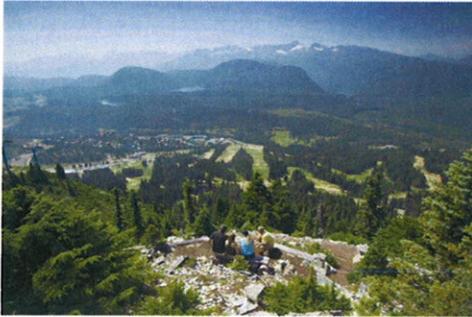
WE HOPE YOU ENJOY YOUR 2010 DREAM TRIP!

Photo Credit: Boomer Jerritt/Vancouver Island Tourism

OVERVIEW

Comox Valley: The Land of Plenty

The **Comox Valley** is a diverse region on [Vancouver Island](#)'s east coast situated between the [Beaufort Range](#) and the [Comox Glacier](#) to the west and the Strait of Georgia to the east. It stretches from the ocean to the alpine, Fanny Bay in the south to Miracle Beach in the north, including the main communities of Courtenay, Comox and Cumberland. It's a vibrant mix of urban and rural, cosmopolitan and wilderness, well-known holiday destinations and hidden gems all within a 30-minute drive.



The [Comox Valley](#) has always been known as the Land of Plenty, first by the [K'ómoks First Nation](#) for its food sources, and today by residents and visitors who enjoy its rich diversity. Boasting some of the best agricultural land on Vancouver Island, the *terroir* of the Valley can be tasted in the extraordinary quality of the local products found in year-round farmers' markets and used by local chefs. Named a [Cultural Capital of Canada](#) in 2007, the region is a haven for more than 1,000 artists. The Valley's music and arts scene comes alive at local theatre venues, art galleries, studios and annual festivals. With access to skiing and snowboarding at Mount Washington and year-round golfing, fishing, mountain biking, hiking and paddling, the Comox Valley is custom-made for non-stop outdoor adventure. When it's time to unwind, the area's rejuvenating spas and beaches are among the Island's best.

Nicknames: Land of Plenty; Valley of Festivals

Population: [62,326](#) (Source: BC Statistics)

Urban Centres: [Courtenay](#): pop. 21,940; [Comox](#): pop. 12,136, [Cumberland](#): pop. 2,762 (Source: [Invest Comox Valley](#))

Weather: The Comox Valley enjoys a coastal marine climate with warm, dry summers and short, mild winters. Average July high temperatures are 22.5°C (72.5°F) with average January low temperatures of 0.3°C (32.5°F). It is one of the few places in Canada where you can both golf and ski in the winter.

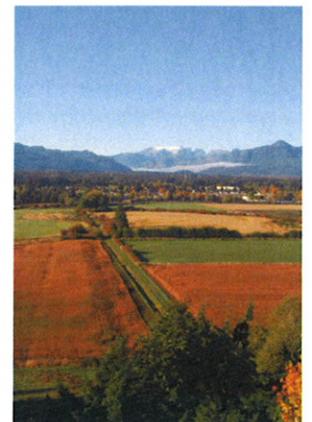


Economic Drivers: Courtenay, Comox and Cumberland are surrounded by 99,503 acres of provincially protected farmland. More than 450 operating farms contribute \$30 million annually to the Comox Valley economy. Transportation, technology and tourism are other [major economic contributors](#), as is value-added wood processing and niche wood products.

Comox Valley Celebrities: Kim Cattrall, actor, (*Sex in the City*) raised in Courtenay; Brendan Fletcher, actor, (*Freddy v. Jason*) born in the Comox Valley; Cam Neely, NHL Vancouver Canucks/Boston Bruins hockey player, (retired) born in Comox; BC author Jack Hodgins (*Spit Delaney's Island*) grew up in Merville. The 2001 feature film *Trapped*, starring Kevin Bacon and Charlize Theron, was shot in the Comox Valley.

Claims to Fame:

- [445 farms](#) producing everything from oysters, bison and wasabi to wine, vodka and cheese
- [BC farmed shellfish](#) is a premium quality [Ocean Wise](#) sustainable seafood choice
- [Brambles Market](#) in Courtenay, BC's only grocery store selling 100% locally sourced products
- [Mount Washington Alpine Resort](#), Vancouver Island's biggest ski hill
- 12 nations have sent Olympic-calibre athletes to the Comox Valley for [pre-2010 training](#)
- A Cultural Capital of Canada (2007) with more than 50 annual [festivals and events](#)
- Della Falls in [Strathcona Provincial Park](#), at 440 m (1,452 ft), is Canada's highest waterfall
- [Hornby Island](#) is one of the few places in the world where scuba divers can see rare six-gill sharks
- Discovery of the fossilized bones of a prehistoric [Elasmosaur](#) along the Puntledge River
- The arrival of up to 3,000 magnificent [Trumpeter Swans](#) in the Valley in early November



Best Beaches: Saratoga Beach, Goose Spit, Miracle Beach, Nymph Falls, Trent River, Puntledge River, Comox Lake and Tribune Bay on Hornby Island.

Major Attractions:

- The [Comox Valley Heritage Experience](#), four well-marked self-tours of the Comox Valley
- 80 million year old fossils at the [Courtenay & District Museum & Palaeontology Centre](#)
- 19 Wing Comox heritage and WWII vintage aircraft on display at the [Comox Air Force Museum](#)
- The fascinating history of the multicultural coal mining village of [Cumberland](#)
- The seaside boardwalk, fishing harbour, diverse cafés and art galleries at [Comox by the Sea](#)
- Boutique shopping in [Courtenay](#), named “the most charming small town on Vancouver Island”
- Over 3,000 varieties of rhododendrons at [Kitty Coleman Woodland Gardens](#)
- [More than 40 parks](#) for hiking, biking, fishing, swimming and horseback riding
- Scenic Comox Valley farms, farmers’ markets, vineyards and [agri-tours](#)
- [Nine golf courses](#), from a championship course to mini-golf, with six open year-round
- Camping on the Puntledge River next to the [Nim Nim Interpretive Centre](#)
- Yoga, a seaside spa and the Pacific Mist Hydropath at [Kingfisher Oceanside Resort and Spa](#)

Arts & Culture:

To commemorate the Comox Valley’s status as a Cultural Capital of Canada, an [Artist in Residency](#) ceramic mural is on permanent display outside the [Comox Valley Art Gallery](#). There are more than 1,000 artists and craftspeople living and working in the Comox Valley, twice the national average. The K’ómoks First Nations grounds is the site of the [I-Hos Gallery](#) and the I-Hos Arts Festival in July. You can visit artists at work during the [Denman Island Pottery Tour](#) in May and the annual [Artists of the Comox Valley Studio Tour](#) in June. [Hornby Island](#) is also home to many internationally acclaimed artists and their studios.



Festivals & Events:

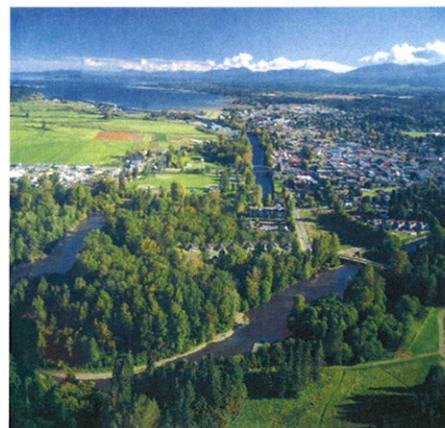
- [The Filberg Festival](#), four days of arts music, food and fun in Comox
- [Vancouver Island Music Fest](#), three days of outdoor concerts near Courtenay
- [Cumberland Empire Days](#), since 1891, an annual celebration with a street market and parade
- [Comox Nautical Days](#), launched in 1958, includes dragon boat races, music and fireworks
- [Comox Valley Exhibition Fall Fair](#), open-air markets and mainstage entertainment
- [Comox Valley Shellfish Festival](#), BC Shellfish Farmers celebrate with local food and wine producers

Transportation Links: The [Comox Valley Airport](#) (YQQ) provides access to all points on central and northern Vancouver Island with daily direct flights from major Canadian cities, including Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton. Find information on flight schedules and car rentals at www.comoxairport.com

- Floatplane service on [West Coast Air](#) is available between downtown Vancouver and the Comox Bay Marina. Visit www.westcoastair.com
- [BC Ferries](#) terminals are located on Vancouver Island in Victoria (Swartz Bay) and in Nanaimo (Departure Bay or Duke Point) providing service to and from the Vancouver area. The BC Ferries terminal at Comox provides services to and from Powell River on the Sunshine Coast. For schedules or reservations, go to www.bcferrries.com
- The Comox Valley is just a 2.5 hour drive from Victoria and only 1¼ hours from Nanaimo. Once north of Nanaimo, the fastest route is to take Highway 19. But the scenic [Oceanside Route](#) along Highway 19A is well worth the slightly longer trip. Port Hardy is 3¼ hours north of the Comox Valley at the end of Highway 19
- VIA Rail operates one daily roundtrip on the [Malahat](#) dayliner from Victoria to Courtenay www.viarail.ca
- [Greyhound Canada](#) provides service to and from the Comox Valley. www.greyhound.ca

Comox Valley Communities

Top Destinations in the *Land of Plenty*



Black Creek: A 20 minute drive along the Island Highway north of Courtenay, Black Creek lies at the far northern end of the Comox Valley. You'll know you've arrived at this picturesque rural community when the Black Creek Country Market comes into view. **Attractions:** [Miracle Beach Provincial Park](#), Oyster River Hatchery, [Saratoga Speedway](#), top Vancouver Island salmon fishing, [Saratoga Beach Golf Course](#), [Seaview Game Farm](#)

Comox: The town of Comox has recently undergone a revitalization that has enhanced the historic ambiance of this lively waterfront community, sometimes called Comox by the Sea. In Comox, you can stroll the boardwalk to Fisherman's Wharf to buy fresh seafood right off the boat, then shop the boutiques, antique stores and galleries along the friendly downtown Avenue. The town is also home to Canadian Forces Base 19 Wing Comox and the Comox Airport. **Attractions:** [The Filberg Festival](#), [Comox Fisherman's Wharf](#), [Comox Nautical Days](#), [The Filberg Heritage Lodge and Park](#), [Glacier Greens Golf Course](#), [Comox Golf Club](#). For more, visit www.comoxbythesea.com

Courtenay: The only incorporated city in the region, Courtenay is the urban and cultural core of the Comox Valley. Courtenay was named "most charming small town on Vancouver Island" by *Vitality Magazine* and with its colourful boutiques, artisans' shops, theatres and restaurants, it's easy to see why. **Attractions:** [Sid Williams Theatre](#), [Comox Valley Art Gallery](#), [Courtenay & District Museum & Palaeontology Centre](#), [Kitty Coleman Woodland Gardens](#), [Vancouver Island Music Fest](#). For more, visit www.downtowncourtenay.com

Cumberland: The historic village of Cumberland was a bustling coal mining community from 1888 to 1966, attracting workers from Europe, China and Japan. Today, the village keeps its multicultural history alive through its heritage buildings, Heritage Walking Tour, and historic sites like #6 Memorial Mine Park and well-kept local Japanese and Chinese graveyards. **Attractions:** [Cumberland Museum & Archives](#), [Cumberland Empire Days](#), [The Big Time Out](#). For more, visit www.cumberlandbc.org

Denman Island: A 15-minute ferry ride from Buckley Bay, 20 minutes south of Courtenay, takes you to the beaches, trails and artisan studios of tranquil Denman Island. **Attractions:** [Fillongley Provincial Park](#), [Boyle Point Provincial Park](#), canoe and kayak rentals, views of [Chrome Island Lightstation](#), an art gallery and museum in Denman Village.

Fanny Bay/Union Bay/Royston: These three rural oceanside hamlets in Comox Valley south are world famous for premium farmed oysters, clams, mussels and scallops from the pristine waters of Baynes Sound. These sustainable products are used by top chefs across Canada and exported to Europe, Asia and the United States. **Attractions:** [Fanny Bay Oysters](#) (in Union Bay), [Fanny Bay Inn](#), farmers' market stands, boat launch, dive shop, Royston shipwreck sites, spectacular ocean scenery, historic [Union Bay Post Office](#).

Hornby Island: A two-ferry, 50-minute trip takes you from Buckley Bay to Denman Island and onto Hornby Island. Explore fine sand beaches at beautiful Tribune Bay and Whaling Station Bay. The Hornby Island Co-op grocery store and surrounding artisans' shops are the social hub of the island. Cycling and mountain biking are popular here. **Attractions:** [Helliwell Provincial Park](#), the [Hornby Festival](#), [BikeFest](#), [Ford's Cove Marina](#) and art gallery, [diving](#) among rare deep water six-gill sharks up to 12 metres long.

K'ómoks First Nations: The K'ómoks First Nations (also Comox First Nations) operates several successful businesses from traditional band territory on the Puntledge River, located between Courtenay and Comox. Shop in the carved cedar housefront of the I-Hos Gallery for Northwest Coast First Nations prints, jewellery, textiles, clothing, wood carvings and masks. **Attractions:** [I-Hos Gallery](#), [Puntledge RV Campground](#) and the Nim Nim Interpretive Centre, [I-Hos Arts Festival](#), [Multicultural Festival](#). For more, visit www.comoxband.ca

Merville: This small hamlet at the north end of the Comox Valley was initially inhabited by a group of Canadian soldiers and their families who settled here after WWI and named it after a town in France where Canadians were headquartered during the war. The area's provincial parks offer excellent wildlife viewing, mountain biking and beachcombing. **Attractions:** [Miracle Beach Provincial Park](#), [Seal Bay Nature Park](#), Bates Beach saltwater fishing.

Mount Washington: Vancouver Island's largest ski hill and year-round family resort, Mount Washington (1588 m elevation) offers one of the most spectacular coastal alpine settings in North America and has a consistent record for "the deepest natural snowpack in Canada." Currently, 12 countries have sent Olympic athlete hopefuls here for pre-2010 training. Winter activities include Nordic sports, alpine, cross-country and night skiing, snow tubing, snowboarding and snowshoeing. Mountain biking, hiking and wildlife viewing are big summer draws. **Attractions:** Gateway to [Strathcona Provincial Park](#), Nordic Centre, Snow Tube Park, scenic chairlift rides, [Stay & Play](#) packages. For more visit, www.mountwashington.ca or www.discovermountwashington.com



19 Wing Comox: Secretly constructed in 1942, the Canadian Forces Base (CFB) at 19 Wing Comox today is home to 442 Search and Rescue (SAR) Squadron and Canadian Forces School of Search and Rescue. SAR aircrews launch more than 200 missions a year and are responsible for an area that stretches from the Arctic to the Washington State border, and from the Canadian Rockies 1,200 km into the Pacific Ocean. The CFB Comox airfield is also used by the Comox Airport (YQQ). **Attractions:** Flights connections from [YQQ](#), spring training grounds for the [Snowbirds](#) aerobatic team, [Y2K Spitfire](#) restoration project, [Comox Air Force Museum](#).

Saratoga Beach: At the mouth of the Oyster River, this recreational area in Comox Valley north offers one of the most beautiful sand beaches on the east coast of Vancouver Island. At low tide, it becomes a quarter-mile ocean playground for kids and beachcombers. Swimming, camping, saltwater fishing and kite flying on the beach are popular pastimes, along with fly fishing on the Oyster River. **Attractions:** Oyster Bay Shoreline Regional Park, Trumpeter Swans at [Woodhus Slough](#), storm-watching, [Miracle Beach Adventure Mini-Golf](#).

For more information on Comox Valley communities, visit www.discovercomoxvalley.com/about-comox-valley/communities.htm

Photos courtesy of Mount Washington Alpine Resort/discovercomoxvalley.com, David Bazett/discovercomoxvalley.com

Comox Valley Story-starters
www.discovercomoxvalley.com



Winter 2010

Spot Olympians in training in the Comox Valley

Just because you didn't score a ticket to the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games, doesn't mean you can't enjoy a front row seat watching some of the world's future Olympians in action. Hundreds of athletes on 22 teams from 12 nations – including Germany, France, Finland, Sweden, Canada and the U.S – are undergoing pre-2010 training at the new 7,500 square foot training facility, the biathlon stadium and on the slopes at Mount Washington Alpine Resort in the Comox Valley. The



climate, elevation and snow conditions at Vancouver Island's largest ski hill are equivalent to the 2010 Nordic site near Whistler. Keep your eyes peeled for athletes in training for Olympic Snowboarding, Ski Cross, Snowboard Cross, Biathlon, Cross Country and Free Style Skiing. For more, go to www.sportcomoxvalley.com and www.mountwashington.ca

BC farmed shellfish from the Comox Valley is something to celebrate

More than 50 percent of all farmed oysters, mussels, scallops and clams in BC comes from the pristine ocean environment of Baynes Sound in Comox Valley south. Look for top producers like Fanny Bay Oysters (Union Bay) and Thetis Queen Seafoods (Black Creek) on the Vancouver Aquarium's highly respected list of sustainable Ocean Wise suppliers. In downtown Comox, Anderton Bistro offers an array of Ocean Wise seafood choices on its menus. Each year, BC Shellfish Farmers celebrate "sea to table traditions" with local chefs, food producers, winemakers and culinarians during the Comox Valley Shellfish Festival in June. Anytime of year, shellfish lovers can enjoy a self-guided "Bounty from the Sea" driving tour of picturesque Baynes Sound. An easy-to-follow map is included in the *Comox Valley Growers Guide* available at local food retailers, the Comox Valley Visitors Centre and online at www.agrifoodcomoxvalley.com. See also www.fannybayoysters.com; www.andertonbistro.com; www.comoxvalleyshellfishfestival.ca

New boutique distillery to produce single malt whiskey in the Comox Valley

Intrepid Scot Andrew Currie, together with Managing Director Jay Odleifson and local farmer Patrick Evans, plan to become the first to start a boutique farm-based distillery in Canada, producing traditional single malt whiskey in the Comox Valley. Shelter Point Distillery is under construction on one part of 1,746 acres of farmland on the Oyster River, the site of a former

University of British Columbia research farm. The trio plan to use locally grown barley, stills manufactured in Scotland, high quality barrels and their own malting equipment. The secret ingredient: pure Oyster River water flowing from the Beaufort Mountain Range. The ultimate result: the "Water of Life," traditional single malt whiskey made the old way like they do in Scotland. An initial run of 25,000 litres is planned for 2010. www.shelterpointdistillery.com

Comox Valley spas draw inspiration from local waters



Spa experiences at Kingfisher Oceanside Resort & Spa are all about ocean-fresh air and the calming environment of the sea. Spa etiquette here requires turning off cell phones and tuning out stress. The Pacific Mist Hydropath is a one-hour relaxing, detoxifying treatment in a West Coast setting of indoor sandstone-sculpted caves and pools. Other signature treatments include: Coastal Trek Foot Therapy, Restore Moor Mud Body Wrap and yoga sessions at the resort's Starfish Studio. In Courtenay, Oh Spa at the Old House Village Hotel & Spa is the Comox Valley's newest spa sanctuary. Unique treatments include the soothing rainforest Vichy Shower and the Hydro-Therapy Tub, which touts benefits for circulation and blood oxygenation. Oh Spa's heated outdoor pool and hot tub are open year-round with lovely Courtenay River views. Elegant spa cuisine is

served in front of the fire in spacious couples' spa suites. Spa indulgences can be booked at www.kingfisherspa.com and www.oldhousevillage.com.

I-Hos Gallery 100% owned and operated by the K'ómoks First Nations

In the beautiful cedar housefront of the I-Hos Gallery on the traditional lands of the K'ómoks First Nations (also Comox First Nations) legends are told through intricate carvings. A double-headed sea serpent (I-Hos) and a white whale (Queenesh) are incorporated into the design along with a masked *sxwayxwey* dancer wearing a tunic of swan feathers and shaking a scallop shell rattle. Inside the gallery, browse the artwork and crafts of a legion of talented First Nations artists. You'll find gold and silver jewellery, prints, textiles, wood carvings and masks that reflect the Comox Band's vibrant Northern Coast Salish history. www.ihosgallery.com

Comox Valley Story-Starters

Spring 2010

Tour the Land of Plenty with the *Comox Valley Growers Guide*

On 99,503 verdant acres of provincially protected farmland, some of British Columbia's most passionate and environmentally responsible farmers have created a growers' paradise in the Comox Valley. It's no surprise that the Valley is now rated as one of Canada's top agricultural

destinations. Pick up your copy of the *Comox Valley Growers Guide* and get the inside scoop on weekly farmers' markets, u-pick farms, market stands and where to buy fresh, local and direct from Valley farmers, food producers and winemakers. The Growers Guide provides maps and directions to lead you to more than 70 farms on three driving tours that include: "Bounty from the Sea" (oysters, scallops, clams) along Baynes Sound, "Land, Sights, Tastes and Traditions," a tour of boutique farms, bakeries, markets and cheesemakers, and the northern "Farm to Fork" tour (wine, sausages, meat and poultry). Along the way, discover the Valley's rich bounty from hand-collected fireweed honey to certified organic wasabi to grass-fed bison and pasture-raised free-range chicken. The *Comox Valley Growers Guide* is available at local retail food outlets, the Comox Valley Visitors Centre, visitorinfo@comoxvalleychamber.com, and can be downloaded online at www.agrifoodcomoxvalley.com

Taste Comox Valley year-round at farmers' markets and a 100% local grocery store

A tayberry tastes like a burst of summer. This sweet, juicy cross between a blackberry and raspberry hits the peak of freshness from July to mid-August and is one of the many ripe, fresh-picked treats at Comox Valley farmers' markets in the summer. With the phenomenal diversity of products being "grown, raised, baked or gathered" in the region, the Comox Valley Farmers' Market is open year-round at two outdoor Courtenay locations in the warmer months, moving indoors from October to mid-April to the Comox Band Hall. In June 2009, Brambles Market opened in Courtenay as BC's (possibly Canada's) only grocery store stocked with 100% local food and products, promoting an "eat local" 50-km diet. Year-round, there's always something fresh, local and in season in the Valley. For more on Taste Comox Valley venues, events and seasonal specials, go to www.comoxvalleyfarmersmarket.com; www.bramblesmarket.ca; www.discovercomoxvalley.com

Comox Valley artists welcome visitors at annual studio tours and festivals

The fertile environment of the Comox Valley isn't just ideal for farming; creativity flourishes here too. Painters, sculptors, potters, textile weavers, wood carvers, jewelry makers and craftspeople are among the more than 1,000 artists who live and work in the inspirational Comox Valley – more than twice the national average. Several times throughout the year, artists in the region open their doors to welcome visitors and showcase their works. The Annual Artists of the Comox Valley Studio Tour in July shines a spotlight on almost 40 local artists including Hornby Island's Brian Scott, whose distinctively colourful paintings can be seen in galleries, restaurants and public areas around Vancouver Island. In July, Comox Valley artists take to the streets, joining local merchants, musicians and entertainers at the Local Colours Downtown Courtenay Arts Festival.

For more on these and other artists' events, visit www.comoxvalleyarts.org



Comox Valley golf courses maximize alpine views and local terrain

Views of the snow-capped Beaufort Mountains add a distinctive Valley element to playing 18 holes of championship golf at Glacier Greens Golf Course, just past the Comox Airport. Sunnydale Golf & Country Club in Courtenay has a Valley history going back to 1923. It was once owned by a group of Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) pilots from 442 Squadron in Comox and, at one time, was the only 18-hole golf course north of Nanaimo. Sunnydale's mix of challenges and terrain in a majestic Comox Valley setting has made it a popular course to play for more than 80 years. Bring your A-game to the award-winning, platinum-rated Crown Isle Resort and Golf Community in Courtenay, featuring spectacular close-up Beaufort Mountain views, verdant rolling fairways and 11 lakes. www.glaciergreens.com; www.sunnydalegolf.ca; www.crownisle.com/golf.asp;

Kayak around the shallow-water Royston shipwrecks

A book titled the *The Ghost Ships of Royston*, published by the Underwater Archaeological Society of BC (www.uasbc.com), describes how more than a dozen ships were towed into Royston harbour to act as a breakwater. On calm days at low tide, kayakers can paddle around the shallow water to view the hulks of old whaling boats, schooners, WWII frigates and scuttled tugs, along with the wreck of the *Melanope*, a 79-metre 1876 three-masted sailing ship. Comox Valley Kayaks leads guided excursions around the rich marine environment of Goose Spit, around the Royston shipwrecks and into the marinas in Comox harbour, a Valley hub for sailboats, power yachts and salmon fishing charters. www.comoxvalleykayaks.com/tours/comox-valley.html; www.comox.ca/discover-comox/marinas

Comox Valley Adventure Ranges from Mountains to Sea

By Kathy Eccles



From alpine meadows and lush rainforest to coastal waters and the rugged Comox Glacier – nicknamed by some after the great white whale Queenesh – the Comox Valley’s extraordinary landscape is custom-made for outdoor adventure enthusiasts.

Designated in 1911, Strathcona Provincial Park in the Comox Valley is BC’s oldest provincial park and Vancouver Island’s largest. It’s dominated by snow-covered peaks, alpine tarns and glacier-fed waters. Here, you’ll find the highest mountains in the Vancouver Island ranges and



spectacular 440 m (1,452 ft) Della Falls, Canada’s highest waterfall. Hike or backpack on Strathcona Park trails and you’re treading on 380-million-year-old terrain. Prehistoric history is clearly carved into the landscape of the park’s preserved wild beauty, once the site of active volcanoes and ancient sea beds, its mountains forged by now-vanished ice sheets. It’s a spectacular setting for modern-day outdoor adventure.

The Upper Campbell Lake and Buttle Lake are popular places to canoe and kayak, with Buttle Lake offering the added bonus of excellent fishing for cutthroat and rainbow trout.

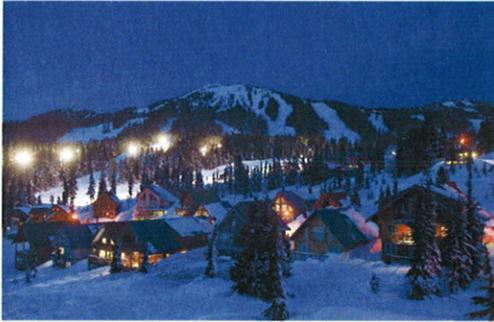
A hike to hilly Forbidden Plateau reveals the abandoned chairlifts and remnants of a former ski lodge that burned down in 2002, as well as magnificent views of the Comox Valley and the Strait of Georgia. In spring and summer, trails on Mount Beecher lead to brilliant alpine meadows of Indian paintbrush, Alaska saxifrage, stonecrop and the Olympic onion – the only place in Canada that it grows.

For intrepid climbers with their own gear – and plenty of skill and experience – the Crest Creek Crags surrounding Crest Lake offer 19 climbing crags for various skill levels, including Cougar Rock, Pipeline Bluff, Oz Wall, the Attic and Two Tree Edge.

Whether you’re hiking, cycling, fishing or cross-country skiing in Strathcona Park, bring your camera to catch rare wildlife like Roosevelt Elk, the endangered Vancouver Island Marmot, elusive



Vancouver Island Wolves, black bears, cougars and Coastal Black-tailed Deer. Bird-watchers will be thrilled to spot Ruffed Grouse, Trumpeter Swans, American Bald Eagles and Vancouver Island White-tailed Ptarmigan.



Mt. Washington Alpine Resort

Adjacent to Strathcona Provincial Park, visitors will find Mount Washington Alpine Resort, Vancouver Island's largest ski hill. In November 2009, Mount Washington recorded more than 440 cm of snow, breaking previous years' records and demonstrating why the Comox Valley resort regularly lays claim to the highest snowfalls of any ski resort in North America.

Mount Washington's climate, elevation and snow conditions have been compared to Whistler's Callaghan Valley and the resort successfully attracted 22 teams from 12 nations to participate in pre-2010 Olympic training at its sophisticated new training facility and biathlon stadium.

Alpine skiers and snowboarders enjoy nine chairlifts and 60 runs on 1,600 acres of skiable terrain at Mount Washington. Night skiing, the Ozone Snow Tubing Park and lively après-ski bars, grills and cafes are other big draws at this popular all-season resort.

Nordic sports enthusiasts, typically start at the resort's Raven Lodge then head out to explore more than 55 km (34 mi) of machine-groomed cross-country trails in Paradise Meadows. Snowboarders, too, can look forward to 20 km (12 mi) of scenic trails through a forested winter wonderland, winding up at the popular Snowshoe Fondue served at Raven Lodge. For summer sightseeing, there is one kilometre of disabled access boardwalk at the Paradise Meadows trailhead, suitable for wheelchairs and battery-powered scooters.



Ocean adventure goes deep

A true alpine-to-ocean destination, the Comox Valley offers open water adventure from kayaking around shipwrecks in Royston harbour to diving among massive deep water six-gill sharks near Hornby Island. But fishing is definitely one of the biggest attractions in the region. Salmon, halibut, and red snapper are popular catches in protected saltwater areas, while freshwater anglers head to local lakes and rivers for steelhead and cutthroat trout.

At Comox Fisherman's Wharf and Comox Harbour Marina, pleasure boaters will find a full range of services, plus all the shopping, culture and amenities of downtown Comox just minutes away. From here, they can also rent sailboats and yachts (up to 50 ft) and arrange for skippers and bareboat training courses.

Gulf Island heli-tours, horseback trail rides, eco-paddling trips, whale-watching excursions and boat tours to see grizzly bears in the wild can all be arranged from the Comox Valley region or from close-by communities.

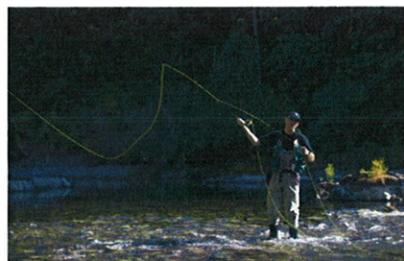
And for those who prefer outdoor adventure of a quieter kind, swimming, sunbathing or simply relaxing by the pool, Comox Valley beaches and resorts will not disappoint. Many offer everything from fine dining to luxury day spas to championship golf courses. For more on the Comox Valley's alpine-to-ocean outdoor attractions and 40-plus parks, visit www.discovercomoxvalley.com.

Approx. 770 words



Things look better from here

Cowichan: “The Warm Land”



The **Cowichan region** of Vancouver Island encompasses 373,000 hectares (921,703 acres) of verdant farmland, deep ocean bays, whitewater rivers, sun-bathed lakes and low rolling mountains. Cowichan extends along the east coast of Vancouver Island to south of Mill Bay and north of Ladysmith, and includes Nitinat Lake and the old-growth wilderness of Carmanah Walbran Provincial Park on the west coast. Local lakes and rivers offer year-round sport from winter kayaking to spring angling for Chinook salmon to summer wakeboarding. Gulf Island boaters enjoy full-service amenities and lively cafes and pubs at the many sheltered marinas in the region. Visitors can almost hear the past echo of train whistles as they cross over historic railway trestles on local portions of the Trans Canada Trail. A series of low-rise mountains – known as the Cowichan “mounts” – are prime recreational playgrounds for hikers, mountain bikers and hang gliders, as well a for those who come to explore the area’s ecological wildflower reserves, brilliant in the spring with blue camas and shooting stars.

One of the top culinary destinations in Canada, Cowichan is home to medal-winning wineries, organic farms and innovative artisan food-producers who, over the last two decades, have created a thriving central Island agritourism industry based on the mantras of fresh, local, seasonal and sustainable. Along with a dozen top wineries, a cidery, a distillery and a brew pub, everything from asparagus to kiwis, pasture-raised meat to French lavender is cultivated here. Visitors can also take part in guided foraging for many varieties of wild mushrooms, including coveted porcinis and chanterelles. Well-maintained country roads meander throughout the region revealing First Nations and pioneer history in turn-of-the-century graveyards, rustic stone churches and heritage farmhouses. Cowichan’s pretty towns and villages – including Chemainus, Ladysmith, Duncan, Cobble Hill and Cowichan Bay – offer everything from art galleries, outdoor murals and antique malls to country fairs, fishing piers and farmers’ markets.



Nicknames: The Warm Land, from the First Nations Coast Salish, who named the area Quw’utsun’ or Cowichan, meaning “land warmed by the sun.”

Population: 80,100 (source: www.tourismcowichan.com). Largest communities: [Ladysmith](#) (over 8,000) [Duncan](#) (5,000), [Chemainus](#) (3,900).

Weather: Canada’s only maritime Mediterranean climatic zone, Cowichan boasts the warmest mean year-round temperatures in Canada and the country’s longest growing season. Summer temperatures average 23°C (73°F), while winter months average 6°C (42°F). Cowichan logs 1,845 average annual hours of sunshine, making this a prime Vancouver Island wine region.

Economic Drivers: Historically, logging and forestry operations were Cowichan's economic mainstays; however, in recent years, the local economy has diversified with the growth of the marine, tourism, agricultural and manufacturing sectors.

Hometown Celebrities: Pamela Anderson, actor, born in Ladysmith; brothers Geoff Courtnall and Russ Courtnall, National Hockey League (NHL) players, raised in Duncan. Parts of the 1994 movie *Little Women* (based on the novel by Louisa May Alcott) were filmed in the Cowichan village of Cobble Hill.

Claims to Fame:

- Eco-friendly [Cowichan Bay](#), North America's first [Cittaslow](#) (Slow City) community.
- More than 80 carved Cowichan First Nations totems in Duncan, the "[City of Totems](#)."
- The world famous outdoor gallery of [murals](#) showcasing the history of seaside [Chemainus](#).
- Turn-of-the-century architecture in [Ladysmith](#), named one of Canada's 10 prettiest towns.
- Vancouver Island's largest [farmers' market](#), open year-round, in downtown Duncan.
- The second largest [wine region](#) in BC, with vineyards dating back to 1860.
- [Cowichan River](#), a Canadian Heritage River, with a 20-km (12 mi) footpath running its length.
- Restoration of the 44 m (145 ft) high [Kinsol Trestle](#), the tallest standing railway bridge in Canada.
- [South Cowichan Lawn Tennis Club](#), the world's oldest grass tennis courts after Wimbledon.
- Vancouver Island's second largest lake, 34-km (21-mi) long [Cowichan Lake](#).
- The [world's largest hockey stick](#) and puck at the Cowichan Arena.

Best Hiking/Biking Trails: Cowichan Valley Trail (an extension of the Trans Canada Trail), Cobble Hill Mountain Recreation Area, the Kinsol Trestle, Spectacle Lake Park, the Cowichan River Footpath, Mount Tzouhalem, Mount Prevost and the West Coast Trail.

Major Attractions:

- Self-guided [gastro-tours](#) of Cowichan wineries, farms, culinary retreats and artisan food shops.
- First Nations arts, cuisine and interpretive tours at the [Quw'utsun' Cultural & Conference Centre](#).
- Historic steam locomotive rides around the 100-acre [BC Forest Discovery Centre](#).
- Birds of prey and the popular "hawk walk" at [Pacific Northwest Raptors](#).
- Year-round professional theatre performed at the [Chemainus Theatre Festival](#).
- [Whippletree Junction](#), 14 restored shops and heritage buildings, 7 km (4 mi) south of Duncan.
- Gulf Island boating from the sheltered marinas at [Maple Bay](#), [Genoa Bay](#) and [Cowichan Bay](#).
- Historic [trolley](#) rides and [summer harbour tours](#) aboard the *Maritimer* in Ladysmith.
- Scuba diving in the artificial reef of a [sunken Boeing 737](#) between Chemainus and Thetis Island.
- [Floatplane sightseeing charters](#) and [whale-watching eco-tours](#) from Cowichan Bay.
- Canoeing and kayaking in [Cowichan River Provincial Park](#), west of Duncan.
- Mountain biking, hang gliding and paragliding from the top of [Mount Prevost](#).
- [Windsurfing](#) and kite-boarding at Nitinat Lake, one of North America's best windsurfing sites.
- The old-growth forest sanctuary of [Carmanah Walbran Provincial Park](#) on the west coast.



Arts & Culture:

The free year-round [Visions Art Studio Tour](#) leads visitors on a self-guided tour of the studios, galleries and showrooms of Cowichan's finest artists and artisans; maps are available throughout the region. First Nations culture is brought to life through ancient hands-on crafts like felt-making, weaving, knitting and carving at the Quw'utsun' Cultural & Conference Centre, where visitors can also purchase authentic hand-made Cowichan sweaters. The [Cedar Yellow Point Artisan Association's](#) annual Christmas Tour showcases more than two dozen rural artists and artisans. The [Cowichan International Aboriginal Festival of Film & Art](#) spotlights indigenous cultures and independent filmmakers around the world. Live theatre, opera, classical concerts and children's shows are performed throughout the year at Chemainus Theatre Festival, [Cowichan Theatre](#), [Duncan Garage Showroom](#) and Ladysmith's Little Theatre. Cowichan history is on display at several fascinating museums in the region, including the [Cowichan Valley Museum & Archives](#) in a 1912 E&N Railway station in Duncan, the [Cowichan Bay Maritime Centre](#), the [Kaatza Station Museum](#) in Lake Cowichan and the [Shawnigan Lake Museum](#).



Festivals & Events:

- [Annual Wooden Boat Celebration](#) at Maple Bay Marina
- [Lavenderfest](#), farm tours, artisans, crafts and music in Cobble Hill
- [Ladysmith Days](#), an annual parade, concerts and fireworks
- [Sunfest](#), Cowichan Valley outdoor musical concerts
- [Cowichan Valley Grape Escape](#), an annual bike tour to benefit the MS Society
- [Cowichan Wine & Culinary Festival](#), self-guided winery tours and tastings
- [The Great Lake Walk and UltraMarathon](#), around Cowichan Lake
- [Salmon and Mushroom Festival](#), in a west coast garden
- [Somenos Return of the Swans Festival](#), winters in Duncan
- [Ladysmith Festival of Lights](#) and annual light-up ceremony

Transportation Links:

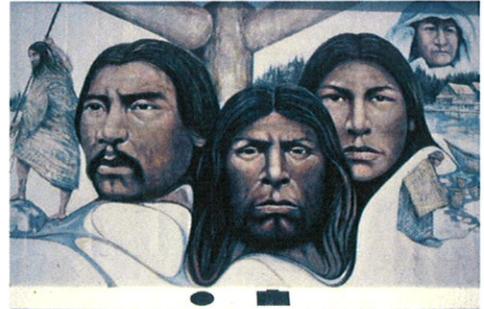
- Cowichan's main communities are about 40 minutes equidistance from Vancouver Island's two largest cities of Victoria and Nanaimo. For more on driving times and distances, visit "Getting Here" at www.tourismcowichan.com.
- [Harbour Air](#) provides daily floatplane service from its terminal at Maple Bay Marina to downtown Vancouver and Nanaimo. [SaltSpring Air](#) operates daily seaplane flights from downtown Vancouver and the Vancouver International Airport to Maple Bay and Salt Spring Island.
- [Victoria International Airport](#) (YYJ) and [Nanaimo Regional Airport](#) (YCD) are both less than an hour from Cowichan communities, while [Comox Valley Airport](#) (YQQ) is about a 1.5 hour drive.
- Two [BC Ferries](#) terminals are located in Nanaimo providing access to the Duke Point-Twassassen route and the Departure Bay-Horseshoe Bay route. The ferry at [Mill Bay](#) connects Cowichan to Brentwood Bay and the Saanich Peninsula, outside Victoria.
- Gulf Island ferry routes include the [Crofton to Salt Spring Island](#) run and the [Chemainus ferry](#) to Thetis Island and Kuper Island.
- For those arriving by private boat, marinas are located in Chemainus, Cherry Point, Cowichan Bay, Crofton, Genoa Bay, Ladysmith, Maple Bay, Mill Bay and Thetis Island.
- Vancouver Island Coach Lines and Greyhound/Island Coach Lines operate [bus service](#) to and from Cowichan to other major Vancouver Island destinations.
- [Via Rail](#) operates daily service from Victoria to Courtenay on the E&N rail line, aboard the *Malahat* dayliner, with convenient stops in many Cowichan communities.



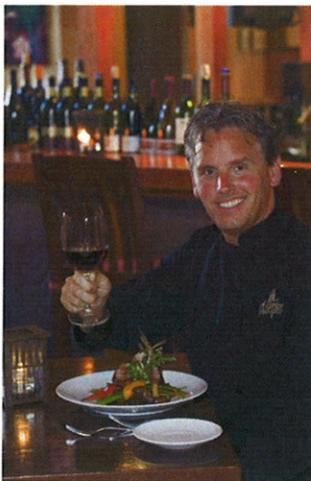
Things look better from here

Cowichan Communities Top Destinations in *The Warm Land*

Chemainus: More than 250,000 visitors a year flock to this picturesque seaside community to follow the yellow footprints on a self-guided tour of more than 40 outdoor murals and 13 sculptures depicting the local history of the First Nations and early pioneers. The number of murals has been growing since 1982 and today visitors can tour the world's largest outdoor art gallery on foot, in a horse-drawn carriage or trolley, or aboard a simulated steam train. The town's quaint core is lined with art galleries, antique malls, gift shops and cappuccino bars –along with old-fashioned ice cream parlours. The Chemainus



Theatre Festival offers year-round professional musical theatre and comedy, along with a gallery showcase for BC artists and artisans. A passenger-only ferry leaves from here to Thetis Island and Kuper Island. The world's only artificial aircraft reef was created in local waters when a Boeing 737 was sunk in Stuart Channel in 2006, attracting scuba divers from around the world. Waterwheel Park is a popular place to picnic and offers a playground where children can climb in a tall ship and paddle a canoe. There are several original mill houses along Chemainus Road, as well as historic character homes in the Old Town. www.chemainus.com; www.muraltown.com; www.tourismchemainus.com



Cobble Hill: The slow pace and old-fashioned country life in this tiny agricultural village has attracted an influx in recent years of skilled winemakers, chefs, organic farmers, and artists and artisans. Several well-known wineries are located in Cobble Hill, including Glenterra Vineyards, Venturi-Schulze Vineyards and Cherry Point Vineyards, known for its fine blackberry dessert wines and summer concerts in the vineyard. Cobble Hill is also home to Merridale Ciderworks, producers of traditional ciders and distillers of a Calvados-style apple brandy. Visitors can spend a night in a yurt here, have a pedicure in the vinegar room and dine on fresh local cuisine on the bistro deck. Horseback riding is a popular pastime along the Koksilah River to the Kinsol Trestle. There is scenic hiking and mountain biking on the network of trails criss-crossing Cobble Hill Mountain, offering lofty views at the top across the Cowichan Valley to the Gulf Islands. The Cobble Hill Fall Fair is a showcase for local farmers, food-producers and

artisans each August. Cobble Hill is also home of the Arbutus Ridge Golf Club, awarded four stars for "Best Places to Play" by *Golf Digest* 2009. www.tourismcowichan.com

Cowichan Bay:

When Europeans sailed into Cowichan Bay in the 1850s, they discovered waters teeming with steelhead and salmon, sheltered deep bay harbours for their ships, rich forests for timber and a warm micro-climate ripe for farming. The seaside village of Cowichan Bay became internationally famous in 2009 when it was designated as North America's first Cittaslow town. Cittaslow, meaning Slow City, originated in Italy, but is now a worldwide movement rating eligible towns on everything from friendliness to environmental policies. Cowichan Bay is a hub of boutique cheese, seafood and ice cream shops, cafes and artists' showrooms, including the well-known Arthur Vickers Shipyard Gallery. Visitors can dine with a view of the fish boats, floating homes and buildings on stilts on "Cow Bay's" historic pier and Fisherman's Wharf. Local maritime history is celebrated at Cowichan Bay Maritime Centre where wooden boat and model tall ships are on display, and visitors can meet a Coast Salish carver, the artist-in-residence. Ocean kayaking, whale-watching and floatplane sightseeing charters can all be arranged here. Close by is the South Cowichan Lawn Tennis Club, built in 1887, a reminder of a British pioneer past. Also in the area are the hiking, mountain biking and nature trails of Hecate Park, Mount Tzouhalem and Kingscote Heritage Trail. Birdwatching is big at the Cowichan Bay Estuary, home to an estimated 220 species of migrant shorebirds and waterfowl. www.cowichanbay.com; www.slowcowichan.com



Duncan: The commercial centre of the Cowichan region, Duncan is a city of contrasts. Along the highway, the new Cowichan Commons, BC's first Walmart supercentre, has become a prime central Island retail destination. Off the Island Highway, are the trendy boutiques, art and antique galleries, fashionable restaurants and local brew pub in historic downtown Duncan, known as the City of Totems. Up to 80 carved totem poles erected around Duncan depict the proud legends of the Cowichan First Nations. At the beautiful Quw'utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre, visitors can experience First Nations' culture, crafts, ceremonies and cuisine firsthand, and visit a gallery showcasing up to 100 Coast Salish artists. A popular stop on the E&N railway line from Victoria, the Duncan train station, built in 1887, is a National Historic Site. Major area attractions include the BC Forest Discovery Centre, the Somenos Marsh Bird Sanctuary, and the birds of prey demonstrations at Pacific Northwest Raptors. The world's largest hockey stick and puck are on display at Island Savings Centre, a recreational multiplex.

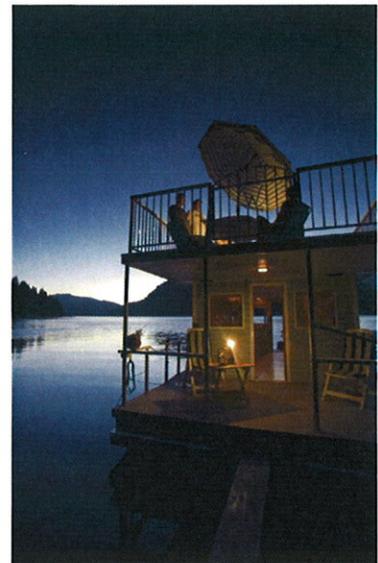


Northwest of Duncan, Chemainus River Provincial Park provides a river corridor for protected Roosevelt elk, and is where anglers head for abundant spring and summer runs of steelhead. The clean Cowichan River, a designated Canadian Heritage River, flows from Cowichan Lake through Duncan, offering excellent "source to sea" whitewater kayaking year round. For culinarians, some of the Island's best wineries and farms are near Duncan, including Alderlea Vineyards, Blue Grouse Vineyards, Zanatta Winery and Vineyard, as well

as Fairburn Farm and Deerholme Farm, both famous for their cooking classes. www.duncan.ca; www.duncancc.bc.ca; www.downtownduncan.ca; www.hellobc.com/en-CA/RegionsCities/Duncan.htm

Ladysmith: Historically preserved Ladysmith has won a lot of beauty contests over the years, including first place in its category in the national “Communities in Bloom” contest in 2003. Before that, it was named one of the 10 prettiest towns in Canada by *Harrowsmith Country Life Magazine*. The town’s turn-of-the-century Edwardian architecture can be toured free, aboard the San Francisco-style Ladysmith trolley. A year-round schedule of events focuses on the vibrant local arts scene, as well as Ladysmith’s maritime history. The Christmas light-up ceremony and parade, the last Thursday in November, kicks off the annual Festival of Lights, a spectacular 250,000-light display that in 2009 attracted an estimated 20,000 spectators and a visit from home-town celebrity Pamela Anderson. The self-guided Ladysmith Heritage Artifact Route takes visitors to see old shipping, mining and logging artifacts, including a 1900s steam donkey and a 1923 logging locomotive. Transfer Beach is the popular swimming beach, a launch point for Gulf Island kayakers and the place to watch summer fireworks on Ladysmith Days. Ladysmith extends to the Yellow Point and Cedar countryside, whose rural attractions include Hazelwood Herb Farm, McNab’s Corn Maze, Yellow Point Cranberries, the Cedar Farmers’ Market at the Crow & Gate Pub, and the Cedar Yellow Point Artisan Association’s annual self-guided tours. www.tourismladysmith.ca

Lake Cowichan: Cowichan Lake or “Kaatza” (the Big Lake) is the second largest lake on Vancouver Island and a major recreational hub in the Cowichan region. Located where the lake meets the Cowichan River, the town of Lake Cowichan is the largest of several small lakeside communities in the area that include Honeymoon Bay, Mesachie Lake and Youbou. The town is a gateway to some of the best hiking, camping and fishing on the Island and a terminus for the Trans Canada Trail, which follows the Cowichan River into Duncan. En route, hikers can see the restored 66-Mile and Holt Creek train trestles. Lakeview Park Campsite is ideal for picnics, swimming and boating. Visitors can rent everything here from kayaks and wakeboards to houseboats. For a sense of walking on water, the floating boardwalk from the campsite leads to the Cowichan Lake Education Centre, an outdoor learning and vacation centre in a 42-acre forest of Douglas fir. The local Kaatza Station Museum’s permanent pioneer displays include a store, post office, mine shaft and 1925 schoolhouse, as well as historic logging and rail exhibits, including rolling stock from the 1920s. www.town.lakecowichan.bc.ca



Mill Bay: The panoramic views of the Strait of Georgia from this coastal South Cowichan village rival anything on Vancouver Island. The cozy waterfront community of Mill Bay is the first stop north over the 25-km (16 mi) portion of the Island Highway known as “The Malahat.” It’s also the site of the ferry to and from Brentwood Bay (home to world famous Butchart Gardens), offering drivers and cyclists from the Saanich Peninsula and Victoria a quick and scenic way to access Cowichan’s attractions, without having to drive The Malahat route. BC Ferries calls it “Vancouver Island’s most beautiful shortcut.” Bamberton Provincial Park in Mill Bay offers excellent saltwater fishing and a 225-metre (738-foot) long sandy beach ideal for families and beachcombers. Mill Bay Nature Park is a great place for birdwatching and to explore intertidal life along the shore. The private Brentwood College School, host of the Brentwood International Regatta, has been located in Mill Bay since 1961. www.tourismcowichan.com

Youbou: Youbou is the second largest community on Cowichan Lake. A former mill town, this pretty village on the lake's north shore – about 25 minutes west of the larger town of Lake Cowichan – charms visitors with its natural beauty and historic buildings. The local church and community hall were both built in 1937. Boating and fishing on Cowichan Lake are major draws, as are hiking, sightseeing and camping along its shores. Boat launches and camping facilities can be found at Pine Point and Maple Grove recreation sites, west of Youbou. On the second Saturday in August, lakeside Arbutus Park plays host to the Youbou Regetta that starts with a pancake breakfast and carries on throughout the day with a parade (some call the world's shortest), canoe races, a boat flotilla, live music and BBQ concession, winding up with a sunset cruise and dance in the Youbou Hall. The annual 56-km (35 mi) Great Lake Walk and Marathon in September starts in Youbou and continues to Honeymoon Bay and Mesachie Lake, ending in the town of Lake Cowichan. www.greatlakewalk.com; www.tourismcowichan.com

For more information on Cowichan communities, visit www.cvrld.bc.ca and www.tourismcowichan.com.



Things look better from here

Cowichan Story-starters
www.tourismcowichan.com

Cowichan Tribes enrich the arts, culture and economy of the Cowichan region

Probably best known for their signature hand-knitted Cowichan sweaters, the highly organized Cowichan Tribes were also instrumental in boosting the central Vancouver Island economy by about \$30 million when they hosted the North American Indigenous Games in 2008. The event attracted 7,000 athletes, 3,000 volunteers and included 2,000 cultural performances. The largest single First Nations Band in BC, the 4,000-member Cowichan Tribes, a Coast Salish people, live in seven traditional villages on nine reserves covering 2,400 hectares (5,900 acres). An entrepreneurial force in the region, the Cowichan Tribes employ about 700 Band members at various enterprises, making it one of the largest employers in Cowichan. Its best-known operation is the renowned Quw'utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre on the banks of the Cowichan River – a designated Canadian Heritage River – in downtown Duncan. Visitors here learn about the Cowichan Tribes “traditional but progressive” history and culture through art, cuisine, interpretive tours and an emotional multi-media presentation titled *Great Deeds*.

www.cowichantribes.com; www.quwutsun.ca



Quw'utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre embraces community through art

First Nations artist Joanne Circle moved to Cowichan from St. Louis, Missouri because she fell in love with the Koksilah River; she now makes her home along its banks. “It’s fed by many creeks,” she says, describing its many attractions as hiking, fir trees, swimming holes and cool water. Now as an enthusiastic local she, together with members of the Cowichan Tribes, is spearheading a community art project at the Quw'utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre called *The Gathering*. The project, open to the community, has attracted everyone from 8 to 80-year olds to learn the ancient craft of felt-making. Circle teaches participants how to take twisting cords of brightly coloured wool fibres (some look like Rastafarian curls) and hand-comb them into layered shapes to be moistened into felt squares. The individual squares from the project will then be joined into one extraordinary felt mosaic. *The Gathering* mosaic will be unveiled at the Cowichan International Aboriginal Festival of Film & Art, April 15-19, 2010 in Duncan, BC. www.quwutsun.ca; www.aff.cowichan.net

Explore Canada's version of Provence on a Cowichan region gastro-tour

Cowichan vintners, farmers, fishermen and artisan food-producers have enthusiastically embraced the ideas behind the 100-Mile Diet, promoting locovore concepts that what is grown, caught, raised or produced closest to home is best for the body, soul and the environment. Field-to-table cooking here includes everything from organic lamb to emus, kiwis to asparagus, and hazelnuts to herbs. Local vintners produce medal-winning reds and whites, as well as premium balsamic vinegars and oak-aged blackberry wines. The region boasts a cidery, a new apple brandy distillery and a brew pub. Island foodie and radio host, Kathy McAree of CFX 1070's "In Good Taste" (Saturdays from 1-2 pm), leads guided group or private "Cowichan Valley Cuisine and Wine Day Tours" from Victoria through her company Travel with Taste. Visitors can also take their own self-guided gastro-tours of Cowichan by picking up a *2010 Official Cowichan Travel Planner* guide at Visitor Centres in Chemainus, Lake Cowichan, Duncan, Mill Bay, Ladysmith, Victoria and Nanaimo. The Southern Vancouver Island Growers 2009/10 *Farm Fresh* guide to buying direct from the farm is available at participating farm stands.

www.travelwithtaste.com; www.wineislands.ca; www.islandfarmfresh.com; www.tourismcowichan.com.



Beat the tour buses to the world's largest outdoor gallery in seaside Chemainus

At 8:30 am all is quiet on the quaint streets of Chemainus. The neon glow of an "Open" sign leads to the smell of hot coffee in a cozy cafe. It's just the beginning of a relaxing winter day touring Chemainus, its 13 sculptures and 40-plus outdoor murals painted on town halls and buildings, each one detailing a different aspect of local First Nations, logging, mining and maritime history. Visitors can tour the murals by following the yellow footsteps on the streets or can arrange with Chemainus Tours to see the sights in a horse-drawn trolley, carriage or simulated steam train. Forward-thinking town organizers, faced with a declining forest industry, kicked off the mural project in 1982, earning Chemainus the title of the "little town that did." Today, this tiny village is also known as a top Vancouver Island theatre destination. The Chemainus Theatre Festival offers year-round professional theatre, including award-winning musicals, comedy and drama. Other bonuses on a Chemainus getaway: gorgeous gift shops and art galleries, historic mill houses, the Old Town, heritage B&Bs and old-fashioned ice cream parlours. www.chemainus.com; www.muraltown.com; www.tourismchemainus.com; www.chemainustours.com; www.chemainustheatrefestival.ca

The two sides of shopping in Duncan – from small boutiques to a retail supercentre

Some locals call it Duncan's new "man mall." And there's no doubt the new Cowichan Commons is retail nirvana for do-it-yourselfers of both sexes. Called Walmart's first BC supercentre, the 17-hectare (42-acre), 46,450 sq m (500,000 sq ft) Cowichan Commons will have cost developers somewhere between \$80 and \$90 million to complete. Anchor tenant Walmart, alone, takes up 15,790 sq m (170,000 sq ft), features a full grocery section and employs about 400 people. Other major tenants are Home Depot, Rona, Canadian Tire and Future Shop. The commercial centre of the Cowichan region, Duncan, although relatively small, offers a surprising amount of choice. Along the highway, are the supercentre and malls. Off the Island Highway, visitors will discover the small trendy boutiques, antique galleries, shops and

funky restaurants of historic downtown Duncan. They'll find European designer footwear at Cardino's Shoes, local micro-ales at the Craig Street Brew Pub, elegant Cowichan cuisine at Bistro 161 and nightly cabaret-style entertainment at the Duncan Showroom Garage. Plus, Market in the Square, the Island's largest farmers' market, is open year-round in downtown Duncan. www.downtownduncan.ca; www.duncan.ca; www.duncancc.bc.ca;

Winter is about whitewater kayaking on the Cowichan River waterway

Ocean kayakers may hang up their wetsuits for the winter, but the river kayaking season in Cowichan is still in prime time. Local Cowichan tourism promoter Don Barrie, and his partner Rose Sirois, operate the Warm Rapids Inn and Kayak Centre, offering lessons and guided all-season adventures on the Cowichan River. Both are CanoeKayak Canada certified instructor-trainers and experienced guides who love to



kayak in the ocean, river and surf. But, for them, winter is all about the Cowichan River's whitewater. "Experienced river paddlers use ferrying techniques to make their way onto standing waves that can be surfed—which is a lot of fun," Barrie explains. From 34-km (21 mi) long Cowichan Lake, the Cowichan River is a two-day, 40 km (25 mi) source-to-sea paddling experience. For those who love the adrenalin sport of whitewater kayaking, Barrie recommends the swift upper reaches of the waterway. He notes the slow-moving down river stretches are ideal

for canoeing. Overall, he adds, "Once you sink your teeth into river kayaking, not only will it improve your sea kayaking skills, but you'll also love venturing out in the rain." www.warmrapidsinn.com

The Visions Art Studio Tour in Cowichan is free, self-guided and year-round

One of the most enjoyable ways to tour the pastoral country back roads of Cowichan is to take a self-guided tour of the home studio galleries of the region's many potters, painters, sculptors, weavers, jewellery makers and fabric designers. Outside Duncan, east of the Island Highway, visitors will drive past First Nations villages and graveyards, historic Anglican churches and old farmhouses, following the Visions Art Studio Tour map to Khenipsen Road, where a cluster of fine artists work and live. At the Log House Gallery, overlooking Cowichan Bay, visitors can see the romantic watercolours of well-known painter Jennifer Lawson. At Sacred Mountain Studio, Nan Goodship makes hand-painted custom ceramics for tiles, sinks, tables, floors and counters, while her partner, painter Peter Spohn showcases his bold landscapes of the Cowichan Valley, the Gulf Islands and Mexico. In Crofton, glass artist Peggy Brackett designs drichoic (two-coloured) glass jewellery, while glass artist Jo Ludwig creates unique glass vessels, vases and fruit bowls. Check the website for a full list of artists or pick up a copy of the Visions Art Studio Tour brochure at various Cowichan locations. www.visionsarttour.ca; www.jenniferlawsonart.com; www.sacredmountainstudio.ca; www.kilnartglass.com

Images courtesy of Tourism Vancouver Island/Boomer Jerritt



Things look better from here

Cittaslow translates to a lovely life in Cowichan Bay

By Kathy Eccles

Vancouver Island's Cowichan Bay has made a name for itself around the world with its July 2009 designation as the first Cittaslow town in North America. Behind the prestigious title are the stories of a committed group of local chefs, bakers, cheesemakers, proprietors and food activists, who are turning the Cowichan region into one of Canada's hottest agritourism destinations.

Posted on the walls at Hilary's Artisan Cheese and True Grain Bakery – cozy side-by-side storefronts in Cowichan Bay – a colourful hand-drawn map of local wild and cultivated foods was the impetus that inspired a small working group of foodies to put their community on the world's Cittaslow map.

At the helm was local chef Mara Jernigan of Fairburn Farm Culinary Retreat and Guesthouse, who has spent the last 10 years promoting the goals of the slow food movement in Canada, along with Cowichan culinary events like the Vancouver Island Feast of Fields, a fundraiser for the Farm Folk/City Folk Society. Food writer Mia Stainsby of *The Vancouver Sun* calls Jernigan the "Alice Waters of the Cowichan Valley."



Other members of the group included Hilary Abbott of Hilary's Artisan Cheese, Bruce Stewart of True Grain Bakery, Vanessa Elton of Affinity Guesthouse, (located nearby on the Cowichan River Estuary), and the Cowichan Valley Regional District, which provided both staff support and funding.

Cittaslow (meaning Slow City) is an accreditation that originated in Italy, but has now spread worldwide to an ever-growing 120 cities in 18 countries. It is open to cities with a population of less than 50,000. Cittaslow is part of the international slow food – and overall slow lifestyle – movement. Towns undergo a stringent 52-point inspection under six areas of excellence, from friendliness to infrastructure to environmental policy.

Scoring an impressive 93 percent – among the highest of all towns that have applied – Cowichan Bay fits the Cittaslow bill perfectly with its tiny population of just under 3,000. There's nary a fast food outlet or big-box store in sight. Instead, visitors are treated to a vibrant working waterfront, boutique-size agricultural operations, farmgate wineries, friendly proprietors, scenic surrounding green space and the historic First Nations lands of the well-organized Cowichan Tribes.

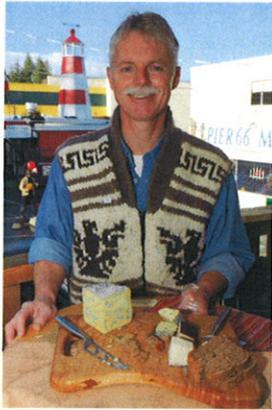
"It became an intriguing idea among a few of us that this would be a designation that Cowichan Bay could apply for. That was the springboard," explained Abbott, who added that more people became involved from there. Food journalist and University of Victoria food culture instructor Don Genova is another epicurean booster for the Cowichan region, who got behind the Cittaslow application.

He's the new Convivium leader for Slow Food Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands. While he and his wife still travel to Vancouver for work reasons, they make their home in Cowichan because of the casual, unrushed lifestyle. "It's the friendliness of the people, the dedication to quality and the overall atmosphere of enjoying good food and learning what to do with all the raw ingredients we have here," he explained from his home in Cobble Hill. "People care about what they're selling," he stressed.

True Grain Breads exemplifies that care. Stewart mills heirloom Red Fife Wheat in the bakery's on-site millhouse. A dedicated locovore, he planted 30 acres of wheat nearby and, although the yield was small, uses it to bake organic, handcrafted 4.92-km (3-mi) loaves on Saturdays. The bakery itself is something of a gathering spot and, on a recent visit here, a group had come together to plan the 2nd annual Cowichan Bay Spot Prawn Festival coming up in May 2010. Taking part in the planning were local fisherman Gregg Beste and his wife Anne of the Better Fishing Company. They're set to open a seafood shop in Cowichan Bay that will feature fresh crab and prawns coming straight off their boat and into their display case.



Since encouragement of local food and artisan products was one of the areas for Cittaslow assessment, it's easy to see why Cowichan Bay scored a high 93 percent. Jernigan offers cooking classes, culinary retreats and Cowichan farm tours at her 53-acre Fairburn Farm, while continuing to beat the drum of slow food agritourism in Cowichan. Her partners at Fairburn Farm, Darrel and Anthea Archer, operate the Cowichan Water Buffalo Dairy, the only water buffalo dairy in Canada.



While Hilary's Cheese Shop & Deli carries many specialty cheeses and foods from around the world, it's Abbott's own artisan cheeses that are the big draws on local dining tables and restaurants, from creamy chèvre to pungent Cowichan Blues and washed rind cheeses made with Cherry Point Vineyard's aged blackberry Solera dessert wines.

Cowichan Bay scored particularly well in Cittaslow's environmental assessment as well. Abbott says the town is always looking to lessen its footprint. Right now, he advises, there's more emphasis on recycling. That's good news for another community-minded venture powered by human innovation. Cowichan Recyclists provides year-round recycling pick-up for local businesses – on bicycles.

For more, visit:

Cittaslow Cowichan, www.slowcowichan.com

Hilary's Artisan Cheese, www.hilarycheese.com

True Grain Bread, www.truegrain.ca

Fairburn Farm Culinary Retreat and Guesthouse, www.fairburnfarm.bc.ca

Affinity Guesthouse, www.affinityguesthouse.ca

Cowichan Bay, www.cowichanbay.com

Cowichan Valley Regional District, www.cvrld.bc.ca

Slow Food Canada, www.slowfood.ca

Cowichan Recyclists, www.cowichanrecyclists.com

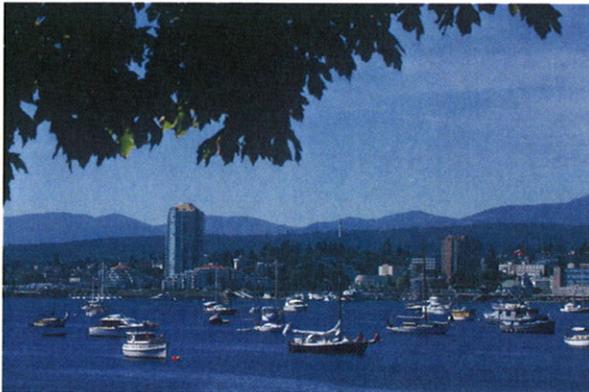
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Approximately 860 words



Amazing Nanaimo: From a Coal Mining Town to a Cultural Capital of the World

Nanaimo, British Columbia is the picturesque seaside hub of [Vancouver Island](#), the island regularly ranked by readers of *Condé Nast Traveler* in the top two of North America's best. With iconic Mount Benson as its backdrop, [Nanaimo](#) is built on a headland extending into the Strait of Georgia, giving it one of the longest, most postcard-pretty shorelines in Canada. This dynamic city has a casual small town vibe at its core, but has grown into a sophisticated centre of arts, culture and education. Home to [Vancouver Island University](#) (VIU), Nanaimo also opened the doors on the [Vancouver Island Conference Centre](#) (VICC) in 2008, the same year the "Harbour City" was named a [Cultural Capital of Canada](#).



A bustling, working harbour is Nanaimo's true heart where you can catch floatplanes to Vancouver, fish for crab off a downtown pier, dine al fresco and stroll downtown art galleries, boutiques and cafes just minutes away. From the harbour, catch a 10-minute passenger ferry to [Newcastle Island Marine Provincial Park](#), where First Nations people offer cultural interpretive tours, or to the [Dinghy Dock](#) on Protection Island, Canada's only floating pub. Nanaimo is just 20 minutes by floatplane from Vancouver and a 1.5-hour drive from BC's capital city of Victoria, yet the Harbour City's unrushed Island style seems world's away. Newly modern Nanaimo is the perfect gateway to the exciting mix of attractions, culture, events and outdoor beauty that have made [Vancouver Island](#) deservedly famous the world over.

Nicknames: Harbour City, Hub City, [Bathtub Racing Capital of the World](#)

Population: [78,690](#) (Source: Statistics Canada)

Weather: Ranked number one in Canada for most clear skies in summer and second only to Victoria for the mildest winters in the country (Source: [Environment Canada/Weather Winners](#))

Economic Drivers: Once a city built on the riches of coal mining, Nanaimo later made its fortune as a forestry town. The city's [economy](#) has since become widely diversified with a thriving job market based in retail and wholesale trade, business and finance, port operations (container and cruise ships), tourism, technology, transportation, government services, and health and education.

Hometown Celebrities: Nanaimo is the birthplace of several famous Canadians including jazz musician Diana Krall, singer Allison Crowe, blues artist David Gogo, actors Jodelle Ferland (*Twilight Eclipse*) and Justin Chatwin (*War of the Worlds*).

Claims to Fame:

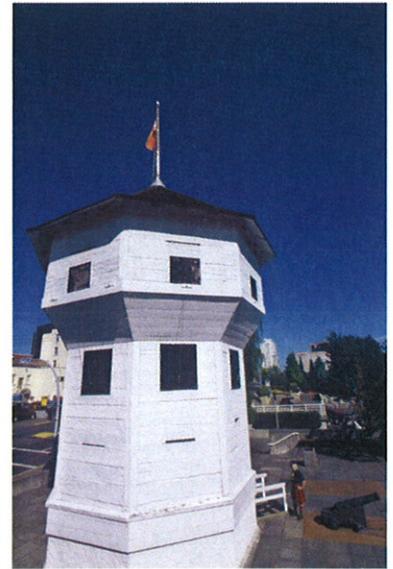
- New \$22-million [cruise ship terminal](#) slated to open in late 2010 in Nanaimo's inner harbour
- A revitalized downtown core that includes the new VICC in the [Port of Nanaimo Centre](#)
- The 4 km (2.5 mi) Harbourfront Walkway from the [Nanaimo Boat Basin](#) to Departure Bay
- Rated among the [best temperate water diving in the world](#)
- North America's first dedicated bungy jumping bridge at [WildPlay Element Parks](#)
- World's first international [bathtub race](#) launched in 1967
- [Woodgrove Centre](#), Vancouver Island's largest shopping centre
- [Nanaimo Bars](#), a chocolate-coconut-custard confection thought to have been inspired by a Nanaimo housewife's recipe in a 1952 Woman's Auxiliary to the Nanaimo Hospital cookbook



Best Beaches: Swy-a-lana Lagoon (a man-made tidal lagoon), Departure Bay, Piper's Lagoon, Neck Point Park, Kanaka Bay on Newcastle Island, Westwood Lake, Long Lake and Brannen Lake

Major Attractions:

- [The Bastion](#), North America's last free-standing original Hudson's Bay Company fort
- Monkido [tree-to-tree arial adventure courses](#) at Wildplay Element Parks
- Hiking, mountain biking and [guided natural history tours](#) at Mount Benson
- [Sailing](#) or kayaking around Newcastle Island Marine Provincial Park
- [Scuba diving](#) among three sunken ships in local waters
- [Snorkelling with harbour seals](#) at Snake Island bird sanctuary
- Downtown ferry access to three Gulf islands: [Newcastle](#), [Protection](#) and [Gabriola](#)
- More than [200 parks and green spaces](#) including downtown's Maffeo Sutton Park, Bowen Park, Buttertubs Marsh Bird Sanctuary and Colliery Dam Park
- A restored \$3 million [E.J. Hughes mural](#) on display at the Port of Nanaimo Centre
- At least 19 golf courses within an hour of [Nanaimo](#), plus [disc golf](#) and [pitch 'n putt](#)



Arts & Culture:

Downtown has three distinctive boutique [shopping districts](#) all within walking distance of the seaplane terminal in Nanaimo Harbour: the Waterfront District along the Harbourfront Walkway, the [Arts District](#) in the downtown core and the third district, the [Old City Quarter](#) up the hill. Within the Arts District, you'll find six fine art galleries, including a portion of one of the largest collections of contemporary Northwest Coast First Nations art in North America, as well as the waterfront [Port Theatre](#) offering up to 250 concerts and performances a year. Downtown's new Port of Nanaimo Centre (PNC) is also home of the [Nanaimo Museum](#), where you can tour the Snuneymuxw First Nations exhibit and the Sports Hall of Fame, showcasing the accomplishments of Nanaimo's former athletes and Olympians .

Festivals & Events:

- [Nanaimo Marine Festival](#) and World Championship Bathtub Race
- [Nanaimo Dragon Boat Festival](#) in Maffeo Sutton Park
- [Summertime Blues!](#) festival downtown in Diana Krall Plaza
- [Vancouver Island Exhibition \(VIE\)](#) with a carnival and concert stage
- [Annual Maple Sugar Festival](#) at the VIE grounds
- Starting leg of the biyearly [Van Isle 360 International Yacht Race](#)

Transportation Links:

- Two [BC Ferries](#) terminals in Nanaimo link Vancouver Island to mainland BC. There is a one hour and 35 minute crossing between Horseshoe Bay in West Vancouver and Nanaimo's Departure Bay and a two-hour crossing between Duke Point, 15 minutes south of Nanaimo and Tsawwassen, 30 minutes south of Vancouver.
- Nanaimo is served by three floatplane operations including [West Coast Air](#), [Seair Seaplanes](#) and [Harbour Air](#), which is the largest all-seaplane fleet in the world, now entering its second year as a carbon neutral regional airline.
- You can fly harbour-to-harbour via floatplane in 20 minutes between downtown Nanaimo and Vancouver. There is also 20-minute floatplane service between Nanaimo Harbour and the [South Terminal](#) in Richmond with free shuttles to Vancouver International Airport (YVR).
- In the summer months, [Kenmore Air](#) offers regular flights between Nanaimo and Seattle.
- The [Nanaimo Airport \(YCD\)](#) connects to international flights at YVR and is currently being improved to accommodate passenger growth, by adding a 488 m (1,600 ft) runway extension, 732 m (2,400 ft) taxi extension, and new high-intensity light and landing systems.
- Via Rail Canada operates one 225-km (140-mi) roundtrip each day on the [Malahat](#), from Courtenay to Victoria, with stops in Nanaimo and other communities along the east coast of Vancouver Island.

NANAIMO

THE HARBOUR CITY

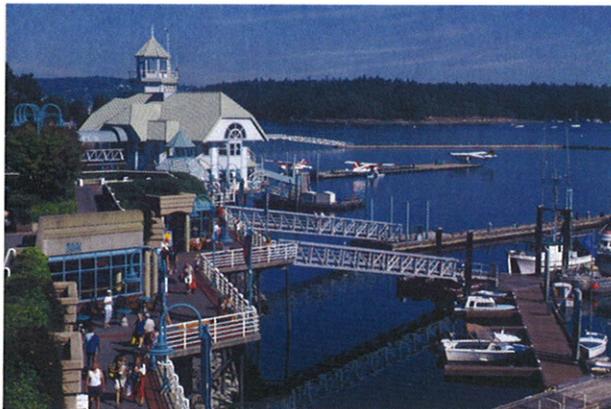
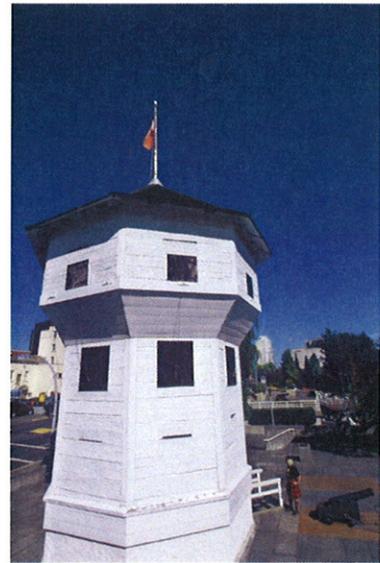


Nanaimo History in Brief

For thousands of years, Nanaimo was home to the peaceful Snuneymuxw First Nations people, who built their longhouses from Departure Bay to Nanaimo River. They first encountered white people when the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) sent a reconnaissance team in 1824. In 1850, a rich strike of coal was discovered in Nanaimo when a Snuneymuxw chief, later nicknamed Coal Tyee, led Hudson's Bay Company officials to discover the Douglas Vein, three sources of coveted quality coal at Nanaimo Harbour, Newcastle Island and Commercial Inlet. By 1852, the HBC began mining coal in Nanaimo, then known as Colvilletown after former HBC governor Andrew Colville.

The octagonal, three-storey HBC Bastion, was built between 1853 and 1854 for company employees to use as an office and a store. It later served briefly as the town jailhouse and its defense arsenal of guns were occasionally fired to discourage fighting between First Nations tribes. It still stands today as Nanaimo's oldest building, celebrating a 150-year anniversary in 2003. The Bastion's ceremonial cannons are still fired each day at noon during the summer months when visitors can explore the museum's three-floors of artifacts.

Nanaimo was incorporated in 1874 and its prime location as an Island transportation hub, with rail, ferry and port connections, secured its economic future. New immigrants from Europe and Asia, looking for work in the mines, followed the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) to Nanaimo. Nanaimo's once thriving Chinatown burnt to the ground in a dramatic fire in 1960 and has never been rebuilt. From 1920 to 1970, mining was gradually replaced by forestry as the dominant economic driver for the region.



In 1974, the old "Corporation" of the City of Nanaimo amalgamated with several outlying communities and became the new City of Nanaimo. Over the next three decades, the Nanaimo waterfront underwent an incredible transformation under the guidance of the Nanaimo Harbour Commission, now the Nanaimo Port Authority, providing residents and tourists access to the city's scenic waterfront and building new plazas, parks and walkways. Nanaimo's renaissance is continuing today with the ongoing revitalization of the city's downtown core focused around the new Port of Nanaimo Centre.

(Sources: *A Place in Time, Nanaimo Chronicles* by Jan Peterson [Nanaimo Museum, 2008]; www.hbc.com/hbcheritage/history/places/forts/article.asp; www.mala.ca/history/nanaimo/chinese.htm)

Images courtesy of Tourism Vancouver Island/ ChrisCheadle.com



Destination Nanaimo Story-starters

Reach Way Up at Wild Play Elements Park

Can your kids reach up to 1.8 metres (5'11") high? Do they weigh 43 kg (95 lbs)? If so, they're good to go on the adult Monkido Full Course at [Wild Play Elements Park](#) in Nanaimo. But be aware that this is not a course for the faint of heart or those afraid of heights – and that goes for adults too. This challenging tree-to-tree aerial adventure course is a high-flying, adrenalin-rushing experience way high into a towering forest of Douglas firs. For kids who are first-timers, the Monkido Kids' Course is the ideal starting ground. It offers plenty of challenges and fun, while building their confidence and literally teaching them the ropes. For \$19.99 per child, they'll enjoy a training session and two go-rounds on a swinging network of nets, tunnels, bridges, floating logs and ziplines all suspended from the trees. Plus at Wild Play, you can bungy jump over a river canyon, take a G-force defying ride on the King Swing or a scenic glide on the Canyon Zip. Open year-round for group reservations and on weekends during the winter. www.wildplay.com

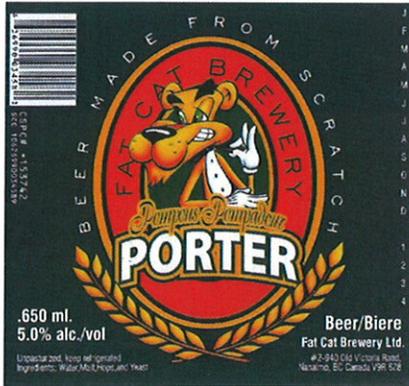
Nanaimo's Downtown Heritage Walks are Wheelchair Accessible

In downtown Nanaimo, there's a famous bust of Ki-et-sa-kun, the Snuneymuxw First Nations chief who first revealed to Hudson's Bay Company executives where rich veins of coal could be found in Nanaimo. Giving up the coal had broken a traditional taboo of his own people, but the HBC brass, pleased with the chief, gave him the nickname Coal Tye. His bronze bust, by Dorothea Kennedy, is just one of the intriguing stops on Nanaimo's downtown Heritage Walk. Paula Sandland, a second generation Nanaimoite, has been operating [Tracks Outdoor Adventures](#) for the past 10 years and is in her 5th year of guiding Heritage Walks between spring and fall. There's a lot of history to cover; Nanaimo is BC's third oldest city. Sandland explains that Tracks caters to, "All ages, all interests and all mobility levels. Our walks are wheelchair accessible and we'll customize them to accommodate different topics of interest." Tracks Outdoor Adventures also organizes guided hikes for a minimum of four people to Ammonite Falls on Mount Benson, to the Horne Lake Caves and to Cowichan Valley vineyards and wineries. www.tracksoutdooradventures.com

Is that a Hula Dancer in Your Tea Cup?

When the reader peers into your cup and predicts a foreign vacation, you have to wonder what you're not seeing – that she is – in the dark, wet mystery of the tea leaves. But that's all part of the fun having your tea leaves read over lunch at [Calico Cat Tea House](#), located in a quaint 1910 character home on the Island Highway, just south of Nanaimo. Lunch here is an elegant, hospitable affair with soups, sandwiches, crepes and home-style desserts on the menu. The lunch crowd is primarily women and some bring pen and paper, even tape recorders, to help them recall every detail of their 10, 20 or 30 minute readings. In Nanaimo's Old City Quarter, you'll find a trove of "metaphysical treasures" at [Lobelia's Lair](#) also offering future glimpses and self-discovery through 30 and 60 minute tarot card readings. www.calicocatteahouse.com and www.lobeliaslair.com

Tour Nanaimo's Fat Cat Brewery: Beer Made from Scratch



Low key is definitely the management style at Nanaimo's [Fat Cat Brewery](#). Rob is the brewer, no last name needed. For the past 10-plus years he's been making four different styles of microbrewed beer without additives, using fine filtration instead of pasteurization to maintain nutrients in the beer, and to give the products clarity and shelf life. Fat Cat's brews even make it onto the official Vegan list. Products include a honey ale, Indian pale ale, a Porter, and a black & tan. Right now you can buy Fat Cat's seasonal beer dubbed "barley wine ale" because of its higher alcohol content. Ask for the "cat on tap" at several Nanaimo pubs and restaurants, including the [Crow & Gate Pub](#) and the [10th Street Tavern](#). If you call two days in advance, Rob will be pleased to host you on a tour. Another local microbrewery,

[Longwood Brew Pub & Restaurant](#) at the city's north end, uses up to 40 different recipes for its diverse list of beers, lagers, pilsners, wheat ale and bitter. [Primary Brew House](#) tours and tastings are held Saturdays at 3 pm; reservations needed. www.fatcatbrewery.com and www.longwoodbrewpub.com

Diving World Follows Jacques Cousteau Lead to Nanaimo

When the late great oceanographer Jacques Cousteau called the waters around BC, Vancouver Island and Nanaimo among the best temperate water diving in the world, he shone a giant spotlight on the local diving community. Their response was to take a spectacular natural marine environment and add an artificial element: three scuttled ships to be exact. The *RivTow Lion*, a deep sea rescue tug, the *Saskatchewan*, a 366' navy destroyer escort, and the 442' *Cape Breton*, a retired WWII Canadian supply ship, were all sunk in local waters. All are now rich underwater colonies of marine life where scuba enthusiasts come to see Giant Pacific Octopus, wolf eels, six-gilled sharks, multi-coloured anemones, seals and sea lions. The *Cape Breton* is now ranked among the world's largest artificial upright reefs, while Nanaimo's [Buccaneer Inn](#) claims title as "Vancouver Island's #1 Dive Hotel." www.divingbc.com



Sports Fishers can Catch 'em and Can 'em in Nanaimo

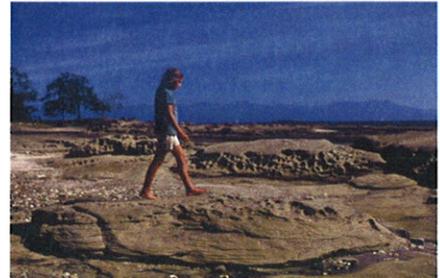
Sports fishers flock to Nanaimo and other hot spots on Vancouver Island for record-breaking catches of fresh Pacific salmon and seafood. And for more than 40 years, [St. Jean's Cannery](#) in Nanaimo has been using an old family recipe for natural wood smoking and curing of salmon to preserve local and visiting fishermen's fresh catches of the day. You can choose to have your fresh fish fileted or steaked ready to eat right away. Or have it canned, smoked and canned, or vacuum packed and frozen, then shipped anywhere in the world. St. Jean's gourmet catalogue of its own local products includes line-caught West Coast Albacore Tuna packed without water or oil, local oysters also packed minus oil, and canned Chanterelle mushrooms. www.stjeans.com



Images courtesy of Fat Cat Brewery, St. Jean's Cannery, Tourism Vancouver Island/John Rawlings



Plan an Ideal Eco-friendly Day Trip to Nanaimo



- Catch a carbon-neutral flight from Vancouver's seaplane terminal to Nanaimo via Harbour Air, the world's largest all-seaplane airline. www.harbour-air.com
- Enjoy potential sightings of local marine life from dolphins to killer whales. www.vanaqua.org/.../pacific-white-sided-dolphin.html;
www.whale-images.com/resident-killer-whales-photos.htm
- Savour Gulf Island views from the plane or take a ferry from Nanaimo Harbour to Gabriola Island, Protection Island or Newcastle Island Marine Provincial Park.
www.gabriolaisland.org; www.dinghydockpub.com; www.newcastleisland.ca
- Burn nothing but calories walking to Nanaimo's three downtown shopping districts: the Waterfront District, Arts District and the Old City Quarter, all a short stroll from the seaplane terminal.
www.tourismnanaimo.com/visitors/shopping.php
- Visit the historic Bastion museum; three floors are open to the public during the summer months.
www.nanaimomuseum.ca/bastionpage.htm
- Tour six downtown art galleries and the new Nanaimo Museum in the Port of Nanaimo Centre (PNC); don't miss the restored E.J. Hughes mural at the PNC.
www.tourismnanaimo.com/visitors/arts-and-culture.php;
www.gallery223.ca/gallery.php; www.hillsnativeart.com;
www.nanaimomuseum.ca
- Enjoy lunch at any of Nanaimo's bistros, cafes, restaurants, pubs and delis.
www.tourismnanaimo.com/visitors/dining.php; www.mcleansfoods.com
- Stop for an after-lunch energy-boost at Pure Oxygen Bar & Spa, 2nd floor of the Coast Bastion Inn, Nanaimo's Canada Select four-star downtown property. www.pureoxygenbarspa.ca;
www.coasthotels.com/hotels/canada/bc/nanaimo/coast_bastion.html
- Take the Harbourfront Walkway to Maffeo Sutton Park – home of the Nanaimo Marine Festival and World Championship Bathtub Races – past public art and a unique man-made tidal lagoon. www.bathtubbing.com

For more information on day trip building blocks, arts, culture and attractions in Nanaimo, visit www.tourismnanaimo.com.



Fly on a Carbon Neutral High to Seaside Nanaimo



By Kathy Eccles

What's not to like about a complimentary cappuccino, pastry and newspaper while settling back in comfy leather seats in a waterfront waiting room. Preparing to board a Harbour Air flight from Vancouver harbour to downtown Nanaimo, a colourful mix of travellers are happily entertaining themselves. A dad in floral board shorts watches his young son play games at the Internet kiosk. Several men and women in business attire pore over *The Globe and Mail* or text energetically on their BlackBerrys. A couple of German-speaking tourists appear excited, fingering their boarding passes and chatting non stop.

The flight is full as 14, plus pilot, climb aboard a Turbine Single Otter seaplane for the 20 minute flight across the Strait of Georgia. The young boy gets a chance to sit up front as co-pilot and turns around to grin at his pleased-as-punch dad. The plane soars over Stanley Park, the Lion's Gate Bridge, sailboats and the massive hulks of anchored freighters before hitting the sparkling open waters of the Strait, where Harbour Air's pilots will occasionally point out spectacular splashing killer whales down below.

As Nanaimo nears, the sprawling waterfront estates on Gabriola Island come into view. The descent begins over the lighthouse at Protection Island in Nanaimo harbour, home to the Dinghy Dock floating pub. Sailboats and power yachts are moored at Newcastle Island Marine Provincial Park. The landing in front of the green-roofed seaplane terminal is smooth as silk. A picturesque downtown hugs the shoreline with the blue shadow of Mount Benson rising up behind like a painted backdrop. It's easy to see why Nanaimo's nickname is the "Harbour City."

As a bonus, all this high-flying pleasure and gorgeous scenery comes guilt-free. Your carbon-footprint from this floatplane flight is zilch. Nanaimo-based Harbour Air, known as the largest all-seaplane airline in the world, is celebrating two carbon neutral years of operation. Under the airline's environmental program, the company measures its carbon output and offsets it by funding efficient and fuel-switching projects in BC. So far, 16,000 metric tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions have gone to clean technology projects, verified by third parties as being "real, additional, permanent and socially beneficial."

Burn nothing but calories on a walking tour of downtown Nanaimo

With the effects of the flight off your conscience, next, take an eco-friendly walk to explore the three vibrant shopping districts in the downtown core. Along the Waterfront District, you can shop for marine souvenirs, West Coast crafts and Tilley hats. Then stroll past the Bastion in Pioneer Plaza, the black and white octagonal fort built in 1853 by the Hudson's Bay Company that once served briefly as a jailhouse. It's the only original HBC fort still standing in North America today. In the summer, you can tour three floors of artifacts that commemorate Nanaimo's early coal-mining history and hear the ceremonial firing of the museum's cannons each day at noon.

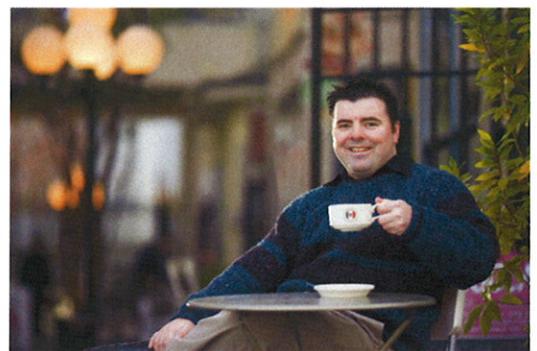
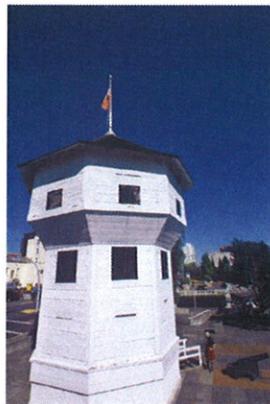
Continue from the Bastion to the Arts District focused around Commercial Street. Here you can visit six art galleries, colourful boutiques, coffee shops, burger emporiums and a true French bistro. At Gallery 223, wander upstairs to chat with the artists in residence and watch them paint. At the Nanaimo location of Hill's Indian Crafts, which carries the largest collection of Northwest Coast First Nations art in North America, you'll find original hand-knitted Cowichan sweaters.

The sophisticated Vancouver Island Conference Centre opened downtown in Nanaimo in 2008 along with the new Nanaimo Museum, both are now part of the Port of Nanaimo Centre (PNC). In the PNC's Piper's Lagoon Lobby, see the historic 1938 mural by beloved Vancouver Island artist E.J. Hughes, which was recovered from an old city hotel. Meticulously restored, it's now valued at a whopping \$3 million-plus.

Walk up from downtown to the Old City Quarter district where you can shoe shop, visit a day spa, stop for lattes or have your tarot cards read. If you're hungry, dine-in or take-out on delectable terrines, pâtés and 100 varieties of cheese at McLean's Specialty Foods. After, restore your energy with a rejuvenating oxygen/ozone spa bath therapy session at Pure Oxygen Spa & Bar on the second floor of the elegant downtown Coast Bastion Inn, Nanaimo's exclusive Canada Select four-star property.

Then feeling fresh, take a short stroll to Swy-a-Lana Lagoon, a rare man-made tidal lagoon, in Maffeo Sutton Park. Continue to the park's newly revamped Spirit Square, where crowds at the Olympic Torch Relay celebrations stood on 350,000 new stone pavers that follow the curve of the park's original shoreline. The park is just one of the scenic stops along the 4-km (2.5 mi) Harbourfront Walkway that starts at the Nanaimo Boat Basin and goes all the way to Departure Bay.

On your walk, you'll pass by a bronze statue of former Nanaimo Mayor, the late Frank Ney, forever enshrined in the pirate costume that made him famous when he launched the world's first bathtub races here in 1967. Just past the Frank Ney statue, you can catch the locals at a favourite pastime, fishing for crab off the public pier in the park. It's time to head back to the seaplane terminal for the flight home. A perfect day in Nanaimo, flawed only by being all too brief.



- end -



Vancouver Island North

Vancouver Island North: *Escape Into Nature*



Vancouver Island North is a region of natural and cultural wealth. It's where some of the world's greatest predators – cougars, wolves, bears and killer whales – maintain ecological balance in pristine waters and vast rainforests. It's where First Nations people and their culture still thrive after 8,000 years. You can see traditional big houses and the world's tallest totem poles here, watch native carvers at work and weave a cedar bracelet at a First Nations cultural gallery. It's where intrepid European settlers first began arriving in the 1800s, building fishing villages, clearing farmland and seeking to fulfil utopian dreams.

The spectacular [North Island](#) area, under the jurisdiction of the [Regional District of Mount Waddington](#), covers the northern third of Vancouver Island and large tracts of the adjacent mainland, where several remote luxury wilderness resorts can be reached by boat and floatplane. Eco-adventure in Vancouver Island's wild North is like nowhere else in the world. You can kayak in waters abundant with sea life, including orcas and humpback whales, take a [grizzly bear viewing](#) expedition to the Great Bear Rainforest, fish for record-breaking salmon, ski the Island's deepest powder and hike the new North Coast Trail. Friendly communities – including Port Hardy, Port McNeill, Port Alice, Alert Bay and Telegraph Cove – offer cafes and bistros, shopping, museums and art galleries, and accommodation from waterfront hotels and cozy B&Bs to the latest in eco-lodging.

Designation: Forest Capital of British Columbia 2010

Population: Approximately [12,000](#). Largest communities: [Port Hardy](#) (3,800), [Port McNeill](#) (2,600) and Cormorant Island, including [Alert Bay](#) (1,300).

Weather: Vancouver Island North has a temperate coastal climate with a lush spring season that comes as early as the end of February and mild, dry summers with average temperatures in the 17°C (63°F) range. Fall is crisp and cool, still ideal for outdoor activities, while winters are wet, but moderate, with seasonal temperature averaging 4°C (39°F).

Economic Drivers: Fishing, logging and mining have been the traditional mainstays of the Vancouver Island North economy. The region is among Canada's largest timber producers and is home to one of only a few specialty cellulose mills in North America. Other major industries include commercial fishing, aquaculture and tourism.

Claims to Fame:

- Old-growth Sitka spruce and 115 km (71 mi) of remote oceanfront at [Cape Scott Provincial Park](#)
- The new [North Coast Trail](#), a 43.1 km (26.5 mi) addition to the 17 km (10.5 mi) Cape Scott Trail
- Boat-access only [Broughton Archipelago Marine Provincial Park](#), BC's largest marine park
- The whale sanctuary of [Robson Bight \(Michael Bigg\) Ecological Reserve](#) in the Johnstone Strait
- About 200 [northern resident orcas](#) famous for rubbing their bellies on the smooth pebble beaches
- Scenic gateway to the Haida Gwaii and Prince Rupert on the [BC Ferries](#) Inside Passage Route
- [Mount Cain](#) ski resort, the best powder skiing on Vancouver Island
- Elaborately carved totem poles, including the world's tallest, in [Alert Bay](#)
- [U'mista](#) in Alert Bay, Canada's longest running First Nations museum and cultural centre
- The world's largest burl, up to 30 tons and 350 years old, in downtown [Port McNeill](#)
- Finnish history brought to life in [Sointula](#), home of BC's oldest Co-op grocery store
- Canada's last remaining stronghold of [Roosevelt elk](#), the world's largest species of elk

Best Beaches: The 30 km (18.5 mi) of tranquil sand beaches in Cape Scott Provincial Park, including: San Josef Bay, Nels Bight, Experiment Bight and Guise Bay. Other Vancouver Island North beaches: Storey's Beach (Port Hardy), Raft Cove (access via Holberg), and Mitchell Bay and Bere Point (Malcolm Island).

Major Attractions:

- Black [bears](#) eating sweet grass along "bear alley," the highway leading into Port Hardy
- The [Copper Maker Gallery](#), totems and big house on the Fort Rupert Reserve
- Marine wildlife in [Cormorant Channel](#) and [Broughton Archipelago](#) Marine Provincial Parks
- Record-breaking salmon fishing from April to September and halibut from April to October
- The skeleton of a giant fin whale at the Telegraph Cove [Whale Interpretive Centre](#)
- [Grizzly bear viewing](#) trips to the floating [Great Bear Lodge](#) in the Great Bear Rainforest
- [Ronning's Garden](#), a 1910 exotic wilderness garden near Holberg, complete with Monkey Trees
- The 6 m (20 ft) tall jawbone of a [blue whale](#), the largest ever found, in Coal Harbour
- Sink holes, canyons, limestone arches and wild caves at [Little Huson Regional Park Caves](#)
- The magnificent beaches, islets and carved seas stacks at [San Josef Bay](#)
- Cold-water scuba diving in the Browning Pass near [God's Pocket Marine Provincial Park](#)
- Surfing at [Raft Cove Provincial Park](#), with board [rentals and lessons](#) available in Port Hardy
- "Heli-ventures" and freshwater salmon and trout heli-fishing at luxury fly-in [Nimmo Bay Resort](#)

Arts & Culture:

First Nations art, culture and history flourish in the region. Alert Bay on Cormorant Island is home of the outstanding [Potlatch Collection](#) at U'mista Cultural Centre and of [Culture Shock](#), an interactive gallery and winner of a 2009 Aboriginal Tourism of BC (ATBC) award for its unique hands-on cultural experiences. At the Copper Maker Gallery on the Fort Rupert Reserve, First Nations carver [Calvin Hunt](#) has gained international fame. Port McNeill's [Just Art Gallery](#) specializes in fine Native American works by talented local First Nations artists.

The [Sointula Museum](#) on Malcolm Island documents the early life of the idealistic Finns who settled here in the 19th century looking for a new socialist order. In Port Hardy, visitors can browse the [West Coast Community Craft Shop](#), an expressive showcase for West Coast artisans. The [Port Hardy Museum & Archives](#) is a wonderful place to relive the colourful history of the early North Island settlers, including pioneering Danes who built dairy farms at rugged Cape Scott. The Port McNeill Heritage Museum, in a log house, pays tribute to the history of the local forestry industry.

Festivals & Events:

- [Alert Bay Seafest](#) in July
- [Filomi Days](#), each July in Port Hardy
- [Orca Fest](#), every August in Port McNeill
- [Coast to Coast Foot Roast](#) from Holberg in August
- Winterfest, held each November in Sointula

Transportation Links:

- [Port Hardy](#) is the last, most northerly stop along Vancouver Island's main highway, Highway 19. Vancouver Island North communities along the way include Sayward, Woss, Telegraph Cove and Port McNeill. Port Hardy is a 502 km drive from Victoria that takes approximately 6.5 hours, and is about five hours from Nanaimo and approximately 2.5 hours from Campbell River.
- [BC Ferries](#) routes from Port McNeill connect to Alert Bay on Cormorant Island (45 minutes) and to Sointula on Malcolm Island (25 minutes).
- The popular BC Ferries "circle tour" links Port Hardy to the highly remote and photogenic coastal villages of Bella Bella, Shearwater, Klemtu, Ocean Falls and Bella Coola on the [Discovery Coast Passage](#) route. The [Inside Passage](#) route is the equivalent of a spectacular 15-hour ocean cruise from Port Hardy to Prince Rupert.
- Pacific Coastal Airlines provides regularly scheduled flights between [Port Hardy Airport](#) (YZT) and [Vancouver International Airport](#) (YVR).
- Seaplane service is available between the communities of Port Hardy, Port McNeill and Alert Bay.
- Port McNeill Airport serves small private aircraft and West Coast Helicopters, the "supplier of choice" for [Nimmo Bay Resort](#).





Vancouver Island North Communities & Top Wilderness Gateway Destinations

Alert Bay: Located on Cormorant Island, a scenic 45-minute [BC Ferries](#) ride from Port McNeill, the colourful fishing village of Alert Bay is known as the “Home of the Killer Whale.” Disembark and walk to see thousands of years of First Nations history still clearly visible throughout this community from the elaborate totem poles – including the 53 m (173 ft) world’s tallest totem carved in two parts by six First Nations artists – to the world famous Potlatch Collections at the [U’mista Cultural Centre](#). Visitors are welcome to share in the living culture of the ‘Namgis people at the award-winning, interactive [Culture Shock Gallery](#). Alert Bay is also a gateway to kayak tours, whale-watching, grizzly bear viewing and fishing in Knight Inlet, Kingcome Inlet and the Broughton Archipelago. Other attractions include the quaint Christ Church dating back to 1879, the Alert Bay Library-Museum with 6,500 First Nations historic photographs, and incredible bird watching along the boardwalks and trails at the Alert Bay Ecological Park (also known as Gator Gardens). www.alertbay.ca; www.hellobc.com/en-CA/RegionsCities/AlertBay.htm



Coal Harbour: Located just 20 minutes from Port Hardy, this former mining town, military base and whaling station is now a Vancouver Island marine hub providing access to the fertile fishing grounds of Quatsino Sound. A 6 m (20 ft) jawbone of a blue whale, the largest found in the world, is on display in Coal Harbour and a reminder of the city’s history as Canada’s last whaling station. Today, Coal Harbour is a launch point for fishing charters, boaters, kayakers and campers heading into the scenic coastal waters and old-growth forests of Vancouver Island North wilderness areas like [Quatsino Provincial Park](#). Quatsino First Nations operate a Marina that has serviced moorage, public washrooms, showers and a Laundromat. The Whale’s Reach, a small community store, is also open. www.coalharbour.cc

Holberg: The tiny village of Holberg sits on the shores of Holberg Inlet near Quatsino Narrows, 50 km (31 mi) along a gravel logging road from Port Hardy. Danish settlers were first in the area, starting out as farmers and then turning to coal mining. Later the village became a floating camp for forestry workers in the area. Completely land-based today, Holberg is the last village for backpackers about to tackle the [Cape Scott Trail](#) and the new [North Coast Trail](#). An attraction near Holberg is one of its most famous; [Ronning’s Garden](#),



an exotic three-acre collection of bamboos, rhododendrons and Japanese maples, (including two of North America’s largest Monkey Puzzle Trees), was carved out of the rainforest in 1910 by original owner Bernt Ronning. The garden is maintained today by friendly Holberg locals Ron and Julia Moe, who charge no admission, but do welcome contributions to the donation box outside. Stop to see the [Shoe Tree](#) outside Holberg, at the eastern end of Kains Lake, where some say exhausted hikers discard their worn shoes after returning from rugged Cape Scott.

Port Alice: The pretty logging and mill town of Port Alice is built on a mountainside affording excellent views of Neroutsos Inlet from every vantage point. It's been the home since 1917 of the longest running mill in BC. The town's boat launch offers full facilities for kayakers, fishing charters and sightseers to then head off for the islets of Quatsino Sound or [Lawn Point Provincial Park](#), with its spectacular views of nearby [Brooks Peninsula](#). There's excellent hiking in the area and, for cavers, ancient Quatsino karst and limestone formations like Devil's Bath, Eternal Foundation and Vanishing River. Golfers will enjoy the beautiful scenery at the nine-hole Port Alice Golf & Country Club. Port Alice has its own orchid hybrid officially listed with the Royal Horticultural Society in London, England. www.portalice.ca

Port Hardy: Ripe with opportunities for outdoor adventure, Port Hardy is a town that offers it all: kayaking, marine activities, First Nations culture, numerous West Coast artists and phenomenal, abundant wildlife. Black bears are a common sight along the highway as they feast on sweet grass in the summer months. In spring, summer and fall, grizzly bear viewing tours depart by boat or floatplane from Port Hardy to mainland regions of the Great Bear Rainforest and whale-watching tours to explore the Johnstone Strait marine bio-reserves. Land shuttle service leaves from Port Hardy to the trailhead of [Cape Scott Provincial Park](#), with access to the North Coast Trail, beginning at the San Josef Bay parking lot. Park access can also be gained by water taxi from Port Hardy, which will bring visitors to the Shushartie Bay trailhead of the North Coast Trail. You can also rent equipment here to scuba dive at [God's Pocket Provincial Park](#) or to [surf at Raft Cove](#). Picnic at nearby Storey's Beach and spot bald eagles along the [Quatse River Trail](#). Stroll the town to see colourful murals painted on downtown buildings and to snap pictures of the local chainsaw art at Carrot Park in Hardy Bay. Visit the [Port Hardy Museum & Archives](#) to see 8,000 year old native artifacts and a recreation of a Danish settler's cottage. BC Ferries links Port Hardy to Prince Rupert on the [Inside Passage](#) route and to Bella Coola on the [Discovery Coast Passage](#) route. www.porthardy.travel/; <http://www.ph-chamber.bc.ca/Visitors.html>; www.porthardy.ca/; www.hellobc.com/en-CA/RegionsCities/PortHardy.htm



Port McNeill: The scenic coastal community of Port McNeill proudly co-exists with the rich natural resources of the land and sea. This affinity with nature has made Port McNeill an excellent centre for adventure tourism of every kind. Salt and fresh water fishing and charters, hiking the town's Broughton Loop trail, whale watching tours, air tours via seaplane or helicopter, kayaking and biking are all accessible from the centre of town. The full service recreational and commercial harbour facility is within walking distance to all necessities for boaters. It's also the popular tourism gateway to the Broughton Archipelago and site of the [BC Ferries terminal](#) to Alert Bay and Sointula. Visit the [Just Art Gallery](#) for authentic Native American artworks carved in red cedar, yellow cedar and alder by local First Nations artists, and [Henschel Fine Arts](#) for gorgeous watercolours of local scenes by Gordon Henschel. www.town.portmcneill.bc.ca; www.portmcneill.net; www.hellobc.com/en-CA/RegionsCities/PortMcNeill.htm

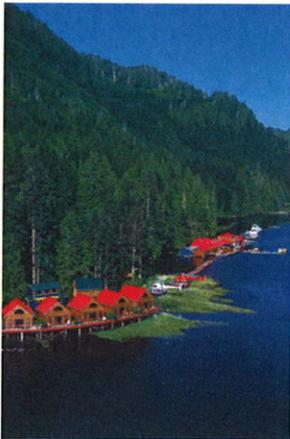
Telegraph Cove: A multicoloured cluster of buildings and homes clings to the rocky shores around this marina and eco-tourism launch point that began as a one-room telegraph station in 1912. Telegraph Cove is situated in a sheltered inlet at the northern end of the Johnstone Strait, across from the Broughton Archipelago and near the famous orca rubbing beaches of the Robson Bight Ecological Reserve. Walk the waterfront boardwalk past the resort – whose historic buildings were once a lumber mill and salmon saltery – to the [Whale Interpretive Centre](#) to see the skeletons of orcas, dolphins, sea lions and a fin whale, the world's second largest animal species. Arrange guided sea kayaking, whale-watching excursions and grizzly bear viewing tours through [North Island Kayaks](#), [Stubbs Island Whale Watching](#) and [Tide Rip Grizzly Tours](#). www.hellobc.com/en-CA/RegionsCities/TelegraphCove.htm



Sointula: This laid-back community of 800 on Malcolm Island is accessible by a 25-minute [BC Ferries](#) ride from Port McNeill. Sointula (pronounced Soyn-too-la) means “Place of Harmony” in Finnish, appropriate since this is where a group of Vancouver Island coal-mining Finns attempted to start a utopian socialist community where all property was communal. While their dreams did not come to fruition as planned, their descendents remain in the area today and the 100-year old Sointula Co-op grocery store, BC’s oldest, remains the social hub of island life. You can still see the settlers’ old homes, saunas and boatsheds along the waterfront. Other reasons to visit here include camping at Bere Point, hiking through stunning rainforest on the Beautiful Bay Trail, exploring the site of an early 1900s homestead on the Mateoja Heritage Trail and visiting Sointula Museum to explore the local Finnish history. www.sointulainfo.ca



Wilderness Lodges: Along with covering the northern third of Vancouver Island, the Regional District of Mount Waddington also includes large portions of the adjacent mainland wilderness areas. Much of this land is within the Great Bear Rainforest and offers several remote wilderness adventure resorts. You can learn to kayak on a fully catered holiday at Broughton Archipelago Paddler’s Inn in Simoom Sound. Pierre’s at Echo Bay Lodge & Marina is a



rustic, family owned and operated resort that is accessible only by plane or boat. Sullivan Bay BC Marine Resort is a popular destination for boaters and wildlife enthusiasts, as well as the location of a colourful village of private floating homes. Another popular stop during the summer cruising season, Jennis Bay Extreme Expeditions offers stable moorage and activities from geo-cache treasure hunts to cold water diving, along with a gift shop and guest cabin. For guests of eco-friendly Nimmo Bay Resort in McKenzie Sound, helicopters are the means of transport on wilderness adventures from sustainable catch-and-release fishing to heli-hiking, glacier-trekking and heli-rafting. Great Bear Nature Tours transports guests by seaplane from Port Hardy to their floating lodge in the Great Bear Rainforest. There are two guided grizzly bear viewing tours a day conducted by a wildlife biologist, as well as natural history presentations, capped by gourmet food and wine served amid spectacular wilderness scenery. www.paddlersinn.ca; www.pierresbay.com; www.sullivanbay.com; www.jennisbay.com; www.nimmobay.com; www.greatbeartours.com

Winter Harbour: A sheltered haven for sailing ships in the 1800s, the historic fishing village of Winter Harbour is closer to Japan and China than any other North American settlement. Known for professional guided saltwater fishing charters for salmon and halibut in Quatsino Sound, Winter Harbour is also a stop on the biennial [Van Isle 360 International Yacht Race](#). It offers the only stationary fuelling facility on Quatsino Sound and safe year-round anchorage for pleasure craft and West Coast commercial fishing boats. From the village, visitors can walk to sand beaches along a seaside boardwalk, observing sea otters, bald eagles and other intertidal wildlife along the way. [Cape Scott Provincial Park](#) and [Raft Cove](#) are both nearby. Beachcombing is a popular pastime close by on the white sand of Grant Bay and at rugged Hecht Beach, an ideal spot for winter storm-watching. www.winterharbour.ca

Woss: Woss sits at the heart of the Nimpkish Valley. This small, friendly logging community of about 400 people is 129 km (80 mi) from Campbell River. It is home to the only current railroad logging operation in Canada; with over 122 kilometres (76 miles) of track, it is the largest logging railroad in North America. Steam Locomotive 113, built in 1920 for rail logging, resides locally and is a historic treasure that honours the past of this community. Boating, wilderness camping, mountaineering and hiking are popular at [Woss Lake Provincial Park](#), prime habitat for Canada’s most endangered species, the Vancouver Island marmot. Lakes, glaciers and Roosevelt elk are part of the spectacular scenery at [Schoen Lake Provincial Park](#), one of the Island’s most beautiful parks. Only minutes from the turn off to [Mount Cain](#) ski hill, Woss is the perfect place for skiers and boarders to stop to refuel, have a meal or spend the night on their North Island ski trip.

Images courtesy Tourism Vancouver Island - Boomer Jerritt, ChrisCheadle.com



Vancouver Island North

Vancouver Island North 2010 Story-starters

Glitz-free skiing at Mount Cain is all about the powder

You won't find glitz or glamour at Mount Cain, but you will find this casual Vancouver Island North ski resort is free of line-ups and crowds, and steeped in Vancouver Island's best powder. Since Mount Cain is open weekends only, untouched powder accumulates all week long. Plus the only attitudes you'll encounter here are friendly ones. Spokesperson Naim Bossi says the resort's biggest claim to fame is that it's staffed by enthusiastic locals, "We try to get across that uniqueness. This is a volunteer-run community. It's not exclusive. It's a real community – welcoming, warm and friendly." He explains the local "shovel crew" is particularly popular with Mount Cain regulars – many who've been coming back for 30 years – because the crew takes the time to help people onto the T-bars. He says "Sharon from Port McNeill" runs the cafe and does a wonderful job serving lunches and dinners that taste home-made. The latest addition to the resort is the cozy new Group Hostel Building, which has doubled the capacity for overnight visitors. Bossi is particularly proud of Mount Cain's "unmatched surrounding terrain and incredible views."



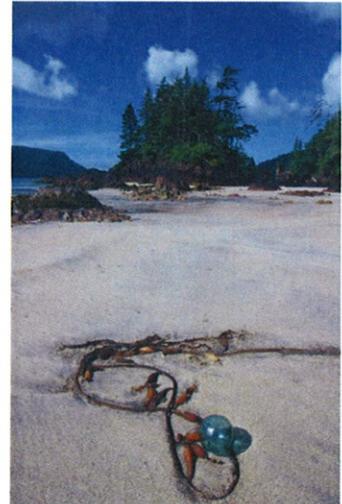
www.mountcain.com

Take at least one fine day to hula in Sointula

Cheryl Jorgenson at the Port McNeill Visitor Centre compares that wonderful laid-back "island feeling" visitors experience in Sointula as somewhat similar to the tropics. It's the sense that time has stopped and urban distractions are held at bay. Jorgenson is kept busy year-round helping visitors plan one-day or multi-day trips to area hot spots, including those catching the 25-minute BC Ferries ride from Port McNeill to Sointula on Malcolm Island. Sointula Museum staffer Heidi Soltau is well-versed in the history of the local Finnish community that gave the village its name, meaning "Place of Harmony." She can tell you all about the utopian ideals that shaped the community, the fishing economy that endures today, the 100 year-old Co-op grocery store (BC's oldest) that remains the community's social hub, and will let you know about cultural plays and poetry readings documented in the museum's well-stocked Finnish library that goes back to the early 1900s. Gorgeous beaches and scenery are the other attractions here. Visit Pultenay Point Trail & Lighthouse, Mateoja Heritage Trail, Bere Point Regional Park and the well-named Beautiful Bay Trail. www.sointulainfo.ca

Do you know the way to “San Jo” Bay?

Dave Trebett’s North Island Daytrippers, a local hiking company, offers guided hikes to remote west coast beaches like Grant Bay, Raft Cove, Hecht Beach and San Josef Bay. The popular day trip to San Josef Bay includes optional stops at the Cedar Shoe Tree and at exotic Ronning’s Garden near Holberg. The hike from the trailhead to “San Jo” is 2.5 km (1.5 mi) and is about a 45 minute walk through old-growth and second-growth forest over portions of “corduroy trail” – early settlers’ split logs laid over ground like railway ties. Trebett says visitors are always amazed. “It seems like just a walk through the forest and then it opens to beautiful white sand beaches. It’s pretty impressive.” A headland between First and Second beaches reveals volcanic rock carved into twisted sea stacks topped with trees. “They’re probably the most photographed rocks on the Island,” says Trebett. There are 12-m (40-ft) sea caves, too, and lots of wildlife, like fish-diving ospreys, eagles and otters. Trebett gives hikers the option to hit Holberg’s favourite watering hole after the hike – the Scarlett Ibis pub is ideal for a cold brew and fish and chips. www.islanddaytrippers.com



SOS means “Stewards of Sustainability” at luxury Nimmo Bay Resort

Sport fishing at Nimmo Bay Resort comes with a catch – catch and release that is, with a policy of fly fishing and spin fishing using single barbless hooks. It’s just one of the statements of stewardship (SOS again) that owner Craig Murray has built his success on as a founding member of the BC Sustainable Tourism Collective. Murray, who calls the remote high-end lodge

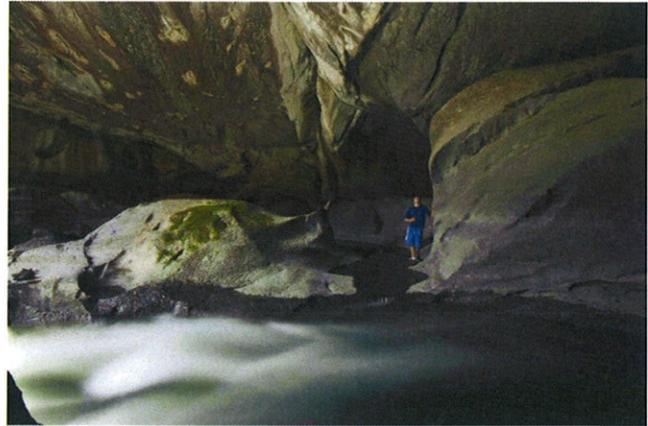


“a helicopter wilderness adventure resort” emphasizes that in conjunction with fishing, the lodge also arranges heli-hiking, rafting, kayaking, beachcombing and glacier-trekking. They’ll even fly guests by helicopter to Vancouver Island North marinas to meet up with local whale-watching excursions. Grizzly bear viewing is a bonus portion of any stay at the lodge, with its location at the head of McKenzie Sound in the Great Bear Rainforest. The other benefits are three

professional chefs who prepare fresh local gourmet, heart healthy food – emphasis on sustainable seafood. Prime season is mid-June to the end of October, with January to May and August to October steelhead fishing dates. www.nimmobay.com; www.sustainablebc.ca

Quatsino karst offers a caver's paradise outside Port Alice

Port Alice is the quintessential Vancouver Island North community, serving as a gateway to extraordinary outdoor recreation and adventure. Along with canoeing, fishing and hiking in Neroutsos Inlet, and at nearby Alice and Victoria lakes, visitors can discover the sport of caving (formerly known as spelunking) among the extraordinary karst formations in the surrounding area. Most of the 1000-plus karst formations and cave systems on Vancouver Island are found in the Quatsino Formation limestone deposits.



Best to ask for directions, a map and hiking conditions from the Port Alice Visitor's Centre before setting off, as this journey requires a trip down the backroads – and along occasionally slippery paths. The pay-off is a chance to explore ancient limestone formations like Devil's Bath, a dramatic sink hole fed by an underground stream and the Eternal Fountain, where a thundering waterfall marks the opening of a cave and mysterious twisting tunnels.

www.portalice.ca; www.quatsinosound.com; www.cancaver.ca/bc/viceg

Winter Harbour tourism operators see beyond summer

When former forestry engineer Phil Wainwright and his wife Pat, a school teacher, recently retired in Winter Harbour, they were able to focus on building their business, Cape Scott - Winter Harbour Cottages. The Wainwright's cozy wood-frame waterfront cottages are the ideal home base for trips to Cape Scott hiking trails, Raft Cove surfing beaches and fishing or kayaking trips in Quatsino Sound. Winter Harbour's year-round safe anchorage and stationary fuelling facility attracts pleasure boaters and fishing charters, while families visit to simply unwind, play on the local beaches, and take in the spectacular scenery and wildlife. People here co-exist peacefully with bears, sea otters, eagles, seals, dolphins and whales, and visitors marvel at their proximity. While the community bulks up to about 400 residents in the summer, catering to tourists in the high season, the Wainwrights encourage visitors to take advantage of the quieter shoulder seasons in spring and fall. And since Winter Harbour is accessible year-round by boat, floatplane and a well-travelled gravel road from Port Hardy, it has potential as a winter destination as well. Wind-swept Hecht Beach is an ideally remote and romantic spot for winter storm-watching. www.winterharbourcottages.com; www.winterharbour.ca



Vancouver Island North

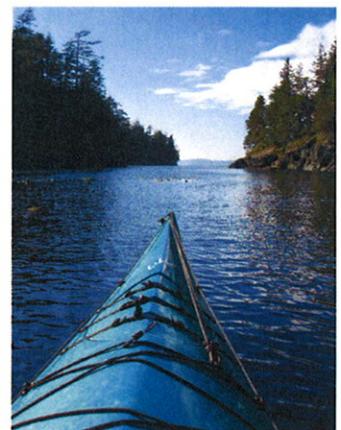
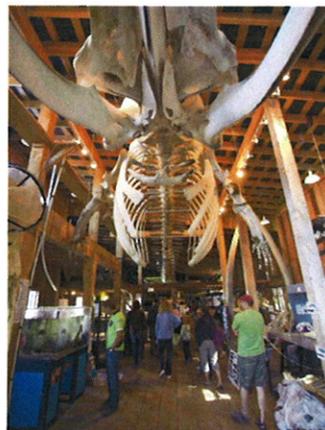
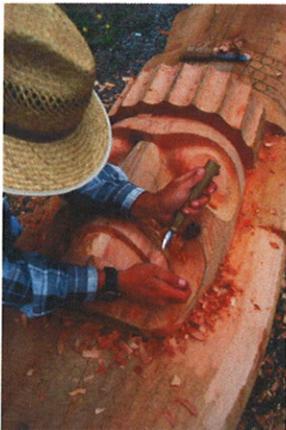
Seek adventure in Vancouver Island's wild North

By Kathy Eccles

On Highway 19 heading north to Cape Scott Provincial Park, at Vancouver Island's northern tip, it's astounding to see the jagged peaks of the Vancouver Island Mountain Ranges. The mountains are a sub-range of the Insular Mountains that extend to the Haida Gwaii and their dominating presence makes this drive north feel like nowhere else on the Island.

The spike-topped cedars lining the road look like dark giant toothpicks – in silhouette, they appear to have survived a forest fire. But it was the devastating winds of Hurricane Freda in 1962 that took out huge tracts of old-growth forest in the area. Much of what is seen now along the highway is second growth.

Fortunately for adventure-seekers, Vancouver Island North remains one of the world's best examples of pristine temperate rainforest. Canada's biggest coniferous trees – Sitka spruce, yellow cedar, hemlock, pine and Douglas fir – have thrived for centuries and are now ancient old-growth behemoths. Wildlife is just as abundant, with forests and intertidal zones rife with black bears, wolves, cougars, bald eagles, sea otters and Canada's largest population of Roosevelt elk with males weighing up to 450 kg (1,000 lbs).



Adventure from undersea to mountaintop

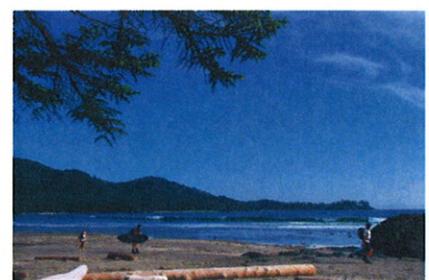
Just outside Port Hardy – home to 3,800 of the region's entire population of 12,000 – it's clear that the boundaries between wilderness and civilization are blurred. In the warmer months, there are so many black bears feasting on sweet grass along the highway that locals call the road "bear alley."

Most visitors have come here for the outdoor adventure experiences – and boy, do they have their pick.

When the late Jacques Cousteau named the waters of BC and Vancouver Island among the best temperate water diving destinations in the world – scuba divers took note. Hunt Rock, Five Fathom Rock and the 230-foot sheer descent of the Browning Wall are known as extraordinary cold-water dive sites. Shore divers favour the sheltered waters of God’s Pocket Marine Provincial Park.

The white sand beaches at Raft Cove Provincial Park are rapidly gaining fame as a top Vancouver Island surf spot. While the facilities at Raft Cove are minimal, in Port Hardy, surfers can book lessons, rent boards and arrange surf excursions. And Port Hardy is only one of the adventure gateway communities of the North. Port McNeill, Port Alice, Telegraph Cove and Winter Harbour all earn bragging rights as departure points for saltwater fishing charters, guided multi-day kayak trips, whale-watching excursions, grizzly bear viewing expeditions and exploratory hikes to the wild caves and sink holes of the famous Quatsino Formation limestone deposits.

But with the recent completion of the new North Coast Trail, a 43.1 km addition to the Cape Scott Trail, hikers are flocking to the Port Hardy area to add another challenge to their life’s list of outdoor experiences. Shuttles take hikers to and from Port Hardy to various Cape Scott trailheads from May through September.



Hardy hikers head for northern trails and beaches

Dave Trebett, owner of North Island Daytrippers and a member of the North Coast Trail Society, is one of six who took part in the inaugural hike of the North Coast Trail extension. It took them five days. “We’ve met people who’ve done it in three,” he says, but he doesn’t recommend it. “Take five or six days and really get to see and enjoy everything.” It’s a challenging hike of 14.2 km along the Cape Scott Trail to Nissan Bight, then another one kilometer along the beach to connect to the head of the North Coast Trail.

Trebett notes there are camping facilities along the way, including raised tent platforms, pit toilets and clear creek drinking water. Hikers can also choose to extend their journey with a seven-km hike from sandy Nels Bight to the picturesque Cape Scott Lightstation, at the far northwestern tip of the Island.

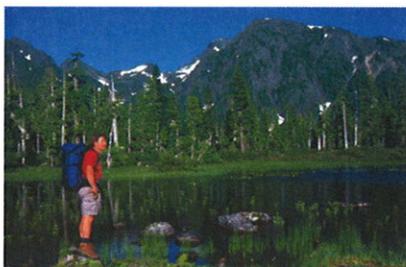
As for wildlife, expect to see deer, elk, Canada geese, black bears and otters. Trebett advises that although hikers may not see shy cougars or wolves, they're probably watching. "I always hike with a walking stick," he adds.

There are more than 30 km of nearly uninhabited sand beaches in Cape Scott Provincial Park. At Hansen Lagoon, a few scant remnants remain of a deserted village where a group of homesteading Danes built cottages and dairy farms in the 1890s. They departed in the 1930s after WW1; since then, the moist climate of the rainforest has eroded the old homes. Hikers can still see interpretive signs, though, that tell their history.

San Josef Bay is one of Cape Scott's most phenomenal beaches and Trebett leads regular day hikes to popular "San Jo," picking up guests from their hotels and B&Bs in Port Hardy and Port McNeill. The trip includes optional stops at Ronning's Garden outside Holberg and at the Scarlett Ibis pub for a whistle-whetter after the day's hike. At San Josef Bay, visitors can explore mysterious sea caves 12 m (40 ft) deep and marvel at the spiraling, tree-topped sea stacks that Trebett says are "probably the most photographed rocks on the Island."

Trebett also takes visitors to popular beaches on the west coast, like Grant Bay and Brooks Peninsula. He sees potential for the north as an all-season destination. His next gamut is to begin offering winter storm-watching hikes to rugged, wild and wind-swept Hecht Beach.

There's more winter potential, too, in a side-trip to Mount Cain ski resort, west of the village of Woss. It's only open on weekends, so is known for its weekday snow accumulations of deep powder that many call Vancouver Island's best. Add to that no line-ups, 18 trails and a local staff of friendly, pretention-free volunteers and Mount Cain is just another reason to get adventurous and head north on Vancouver Island.



-end-

970 words

[80-word sidebar:]

For more on Vancouver Island North adventure operators, visit:

Tourism Port Hardy, www.porthardy.travel

Port Hardy Chamber of Commerce, www.ph-chamber.bc.ca

Port McNeill & District Chamber of Commerce, www.portmcneill.net

Telegraph Cove Resort, www.telegraphcoveresort.com

Village of Port Alice, www.portalice.ca

North Island Daytrippers, www.islanddaytrippers.com

Mount Cain ski resort, www.mountcain.com

Cape Scott North Coast Trail Shuttle, www.northcoasttrailshuttle.com

The Outpost at Winter Harbour, www.winterharbour.ca

God's Pocket Marine Provincial Park, www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/gods_pocket

Raft Cove Provincial Park, www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/raftcove.html

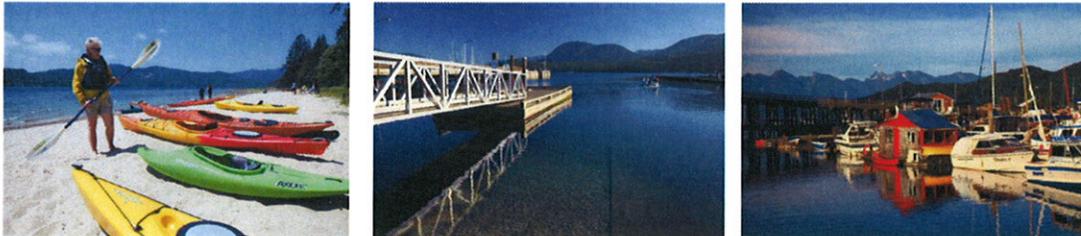
Cape Scott Provincial Park, www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/cape_scott

Brooks Peninsula Provincial Park, www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/brooks.html

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The Sunshine Coast *Start a Beautiful Relationship*



The Sunshine Coast, in southwest British Columbia, extends 177 km (110 mi) along the Strait of Georgia from Howe Sound to Desolation Sound. In this west coast geography of deep sea inlets, coastal bays and inter-connected lakes, First Nations people navigated their canoes along fresh and saltwater highways, Prohibition-era rum smugglers hid out in secret coves and the 19th century Union Steamships ferried passengers, goods and mail along the Sunshine Coast until 1959. The region's myriad waterways, Coastal Mountains and old-growth forests draw visitors from around the world to ride whitewater tidal rapids, dive amid a sunken mermaid and WWII ships, climb sheer granite cliffs and hike some of the longest, most varied and scenic trails in Canada.

Accessible by BC Ferries service at its north and south ends, the Sunshine Coast is part of the BC mainland, but has all the laid-back charm of an island, far removed from the urban rush. Attracted by the natural beauty and unrushed lifestyle, a high per capita population of artists make their homes on the Sunshine Coast. Divided into two regions, the Upper Sunshine Coast's communities in the north range from Powell River and Lund to Saltery Bay, including Texada and Savary islands. Lower Sunshine Coast villages extend from Earl's Cove to Port Mellon in the south, and include Gibsons, Sechelt and Pender Harbour. Sunshine Coast communities put out the welcome mat for guests at everything from cozy B&Bs to lakefront cottages to chic oceanfront resorts with fine dining rooms and high-end luxury spas.

Population: Sunshine Coast region: 29,551. (Source: [BC Stats](#), 2009). Largest communities: Powell River (12,957), Sechelt (8,454), Gibsons (4,182). (Source: [BC Stats](#) Municipal Census Populations, 2006)

Weather: The Sunshine Coast, along with Vancouver, eastern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, is located in the [Georgia Basin](#) within the protected rainshadow of Vancouver Island. This means more sunshine, less precipitation and mild year-round weather, from an average maximum winter low of about 6°C (43°F) to summer highs of 22°C (72°F). Winters on the Sunshine Coast are mild enough that it's possible to snowshoe on the Knuckleheads or Dakota Ridge in the morning and golf that afternoon.

Economic Drivers: Forestry has been one of the region's historic [economic mainstays](#), with tourism and the cultural arts gaining ground as emerging sectors, along with fishing, aquaculture, retail and high tech. Mining is significant as well, with the largest open pit sand and gravel mine operating outside of Sechelt. [Howe Sound Pulp and Paper](#) in Port Mellon, producers of wood-fibre based paper for the past century, is BC's longest running pulp and paper mill.

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Local Celebrities: Powell River hometown hockey player [Brad Bombardir](#) played for the Stanley Cup-winning New Jersey Devils. Musician Colin James, singer Terry Jacks and Oprah Winfrey have all reportedly enjoyed [Powell River](#) getaways, while famously private [Joni Mitchell](#) divides her time between Los Angeles and a home on the Sunshine Coast. [Molly's Reach](#) cafe in Gibsons is famous the world over as the setting for the iconic CBC-TV series [The Beachcombers](#) (1972 to 1990). The movie [The Last Mimzy](#) (2007) was partially filmed in Roberts Creek. Gibsons was the location for the 1993 Stephen King movie *Needful Things* and for the movie *Desolation Sound* (2005).

Claims to Fame:

- The Town of [Gibsons](#), named Most Livable Community in the World (under 20,000) in 2009.
- Home to the highest per capita population of [artists](#), artisans and crafters in Canada.
- [Inland Lake Provincial Park's](#) award-winning 13 km (8 mi) wheelchair accessible lakeside trail.
- The spectacular 180 km (112 mi) [Sunshine Coast Trail](#) offering access points all along the way.
- The colourful, creative community of [Roberts Creek](#) known as the Gumboot Capital of the World.
- The Powell River [Hulks](#), 10 WWII concrete ships forming the world's longest floating breakwater.
- Up to 30 km/hr (19 mi/hr) tidal rapids in [Skookamchuck Narrows](#), a world whitewater wonder.
- Mile 0 in [Lund](#) of the 15,202 km (9,446 mi) Pacific Coastal Highway 101 ending in Quellon, Chile.
- Canada's first sunken statue, the 3-m (10-ft) tall bronze Emerald Princess, in [Mermaid Cove](#).
- Magical [Chatterbox Falls](#), one of 60 waterfalls in the beautiful anchorage of Princess Louisa Inlet.
- The [Powell Forest Canoe Route](#), eight lakes and five portages through 20 forest recreational sites.
- *National Geographic*-endorsed, full-fledged dive centre, [Suncoast Diving](#), in Sechelt.
- World famous fjords, wildlife and recreation in the boaters' paradise of [Desolation Sound](#).
- The [Patricia Theatre](#) in Powell River, Canada's oldest continuously operating movie theatre.

Best Beaches: Donkersley Beach, Willingdon Beach and Palm Beach in Powell River, Haywire Bay, Saltery Bay Provincial Park, Sechelt's Davis Bay, Sechelt seawall, Shelter Point Park Beach on Texada Island and tropical-feeling white sand South Beach on Savary Island. North and South Thormanby Islands (surrounded by beautiful white sand), Welcome Beach in Halfmoon Bay, and Bonniebrook and Secret Beaches in Gibsons.

Major Attractions:

- Heritage Walks through the [Powell River Townsite](#), named a National Historic District in 1995.
- Wetland tours, exhibits and workshops at the [Iris Griffith Interpretive Centre](#) near Ruby Lake.
- Luxury spa getaways at [Painted Boat Resort & Marina](#) and [Rockwater Secret Cove Resort](#).
- Championship play at [Myrtle Point Golf Club](#) and the [Sunshine Coast Golf and Country Club](#).
- Hiking around waterfalls and boardwalks on the [Duck Lake](#) trail circuit.
- [Mountain biking](#) on the Bunster Hills Trail and the Lyon Lake Loop.
- [Guided kayak adventures](#) to Mitlenatch Island to birdwatch and see coastal cactus in bloom.
- Diving amid a sunken WWII destroyer escort in [Sechelt Inlets Marine Provincial Park](#).
- Phenomenal rock climbing on sheer rock cliffs up to 600 m (1,969 ft) in the [Eldred Valley](#).
- Spring snowshoeing in the back bowls of the [Knuckleheads](#) and [Dakota Ridge](#).
- The Sechelt First Nations "[Talking Trees Walking Tour](#)" through Porpoise Bay Provincial Park.
- All-weather boating from the safe anchorage point at [Smuggler Cove Marine Provincial Park](#).

Arts & Culture:

The diverse, densely populated Sunshine Coast artistic community proudly displays its "creative naturally" philosophy, flying purple banners throughout the region to mark studios and galleries that participate in the free, year-round [Purple Banner](#) art tour. The region is the birthplace of Canada's longest running summer writers' festival, the [Sunshine Coast Festival of the Written Arts](#) that attracts Canada's literary luminaries to Sechelt each summer, while the annual [Gibsons Landing Fibre Arts Festival](#) is in its 11th year celebrating fibre art crafts. The [Sunshine Coast Festival of the Performing Arts](#) is an annual celebration of

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choral, classical, folk music and dance. Summer through fall, Sunshine Coast communities come alive with music during the [Pender Harbour Jazz Festival](#), the [Gibsons Landing Jazz Festival](#), the [Annual School of Celtic Music](#) in Roberts Creek, and the [Bonfire Music Festival](#) in Pender Harbour. The rich First Nations culture of the Sunshine Coast is on display through cedar basketry, carved masks and prehistoric stone sculptures at the [House of Chiefs Museum](#) in Sechelt. At the two-floor [Sunshine Coast Museum & Archives](#) in Gibsons Landing, visitors can explore the model of a Coast Salish village and the romantic 19th century history of Union Steamships. Also, every weekend, a variety of wonderful local and off-Coast musicians perform in many pubs, restaurants and coffee shops.

In 2004, Powell River was named a Cultural Capital of Canada. This Upper Sunshine Coast community marks its proud status with an annual array of cultural events, including the [Powell River Artists' Studio Tour](#), the [Powell River Film Festival](#), classical concerts by the [Symphony Orchestra Academy of the Pacific](#), and [ballet, chamber choir](#) and opera performances at the 400-seat [Max Cameron Theatre](#). The extraordinary [International Choral Kathaumixw](#) is a five-day choral festival with up to 40 world choirs competing each year in Powell River. Fittingly, Kathaumixw (pronounced Ka-thou-mew) is a Coast Salish phrase meaning "a gathering together of different people." The two-day Art in the Park event at Willingdon Beach in August mixes sunshine and sand with art, music and a grand poetry slam.

Festivals & Events:

- [Dakota Ridge Snowfest](#) in February
- [Annual Oyster Festival](#), April in Powell River
- [April Tools Wooden Boat Challenge](#) in Pender Harbour
- [Shellfish Festival](#), May in Lund
- [Texada Annual Fly](#), July at Gillies Bay Airport
- Savary Island Triathlon, July
- [Sea Cavalcade](#), July in Gibsons
- [Powell River Sea Fair](#), July
- [Howe Sound Outrigger Race](#), July in Gibsons
- [Sechelt Arts Festival](#), July
- Creek Daze, August in Roberts Creek
- [Festival of the Rolling Arts](#), August in Sechelt
- The Blackberry Festival, August in Powell River
- Davis Bay Sandcastle Competition, August in Sechelt
- [Hackett Park Craft Fair](#), August in Sechelt
- Gibson's Landing Salmon Festival, September
- Halfmoon Bay Country Fair, October

For a complete list of Sunshine Coast festivals and events, go to www.sunshinecoastcanada.com/visit/events.php

Transportation Links:

- The southern entry point for the Sunshine Coast is a 40-minute sail aboard BC Ferries to [Langdale](#) from the Horsehoe Bay ferry terminal in West Vancouver.
- A BC Ferries terminal in [Comox](#) operates daily 1 hour and 20 minute sailings from Vancouver Island to Powell River at the Sunshine Coast's northern end.
- The upper and lower regions of the Sunshine Coast are connected by a 50-minute ferry ride from [Earl's Cove](#) to Saltery Bay, 25 minutes from Powell River.
- BC Ferries packages the [Captivating Coastal Circle Tour](#), a four-day tour of the Sunshine Coast from top to bottom, with attractive discounts on ferry fares.
- [Malaspina Coach Lines](#) offers bus service from Vancouver International Airport (YVR) and downtown Vancouver to Gibsons on the Lower Sunshine Coast all the way north to Powell River.

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- Pacific Coastal Airlines provides regular flights from YVR's South Terminal to the Powell River Airport (YPW).
- West Coast Air offers scheduled floatplane service and charters between Sechelt and Vancouver Regional Airport, Victoria and Nanaimo.
- Tofino Air operates scheduled floatplane service and charters between Sechelt and Vancouver Regional Airport and Vancouver Island, including Victoria.
- KD Air flies from Vancouver to Gillies Bay on Texada Island and offers popular charters to Gibsons and Sechelt.
- Highway 101, the Pacific Coastal Highway, links the upper and lower communities of the Sunshine Coast.
- Texada Island is accessible in 30-minutes via BC Ferries service daily from Powell River's Westview ferry terminal to Blubber Bay.
- Savary Island, just minutes from Lund, Gambier and Keats islands close to Gibsons, and the Thormany Islands off Halfmoon Bay are all accessible by water taxi.

For more information on getting to the Sunshine Coast, visit www.sunshinecoastcanada.com/sunshine-coast/transportation.php.

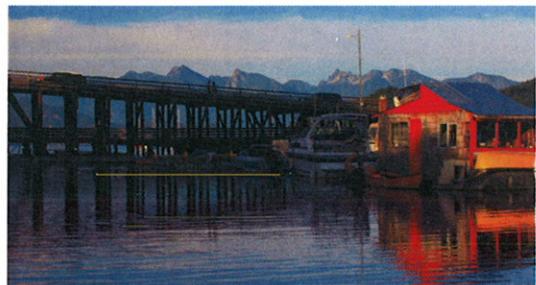


The Sunshine Coast Top Towns & Destinations

LOWER SUNSHINE COAST

The Lower Sunshine Coast is a 40-minute ferry ride from the [BC Ferries](#) terminal at Horseshoe Bay in West Vancouver to the Langdale terminal just outside the town of Gibsons.

Gibsons: Talk about accolades. In 2009, at the United Nations-backed International Livable Communities (LivCom) Awards, Gibsons was named the most livable community in the world, (population under 20,000), cited for social and environmental leadership. Made up of Upper Gibsons, the retail and residential core, and the quaint village of Gibsons Landing, the town is built on a hill overlooking the panorama of Gibsons Marina, alive with fish boats, yachts and visitors to the scenic cedar pier and gazebo. Look for the “flower lady’s” floating home and the carved cedar salmon at the entrance to the marina offices. Gibsons past claim to fame was Molly’s Reach, the former studio set, now a popular cafe, where the CBC-TV series *The Beachcombers* was shot from 1972 to 1990. Today, visitors can browse the funky shops and boutiques of Molly’s Lane, dine on fresh-caught seafood in local bistros and explore early First Nations, pioneer and maritime history at the Sunshine Coast Museum & Archives. Visit Winegarden Waterfront Park for the weekend market, hike to the viewpoint at the top of Soames Hill or stroll Ocean Beach Esplanade for 180-degree ocean views. Passenger ferries depart from Gibsons to idyllic Gambier and Keats islands. Take a short drive north from Gibsons to Port Mellon, home of the oldest operating pulp and paper mill in BC. www.gibsons.ca; www.hellobc.com/en-CA/RegionsCities/Gibsons.htm



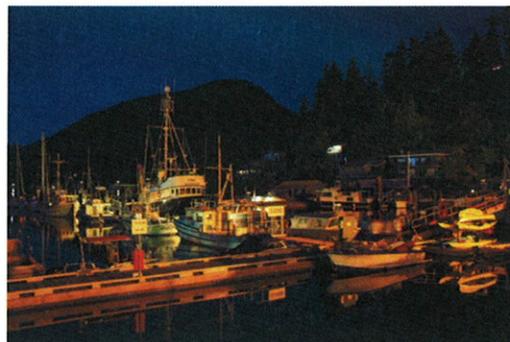
Roberts Creek: Colourful only begins to describe this eclectic artistic community that proudly calls itself Gumboot Nation or the Gumboot Capital of the World, after many of the local resident’s favourite footwear. Hippie culture is alive and well here three generations after an influx of 1960s Vietnam War draft dodgers permanently settled in Roberts Creek. The heart of community life is the cedar-sided village square, home of a world-renowned woodworking school, art galleries, gift shops and the organic, fair trade Gumboot Cafe. Next door, the Gumboot Restaurant adheres to the fresh local tenets of the 100-Mile diet, supplied by small organic farms in the area. The Creek Daze celebration in August puts this creative community on full display during the annual Higgledy Piggledy Parade. At the Roberts Creek Pier, around 200 volunteers each year paint an eye-catching three-metre (10-foot) Mayan calendar. In summer, local gardeners put out bouquets of fresh-cut flowers, along with money drop-boxes, relying on the honour system. Picnics, beachcombing and wildlife viewing are popular pastimes along the cobblestone beaches at Roberts Creek Provincial Park, while Cliff Gilker Park is a relaxing place to hike amid a waterfall and babbling creek in a red cedar forest. In nearby Wilson Creek, visitors will find the entrance to Dakota Ridge Winter Recreation Area, popular for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. www.robertscreek.com

Sechelt: The cultural capital of the Sunshine Coast, Sechelt sits on a narrow two-kilometre (1.25-mile) sandbar between the Straight of Georgia and Sechelt inlet, earning its Shishalh First Nations name meaning “land between two waters.” At the House of Chiefs Museum, visitors can learn about local Sechelt First Nations history through photographs, masks, prehistoric stone carvings and the largest collection of documented native basketry on the West

Coast – a currency once used to trade with Union Steamships in the late 1800s. The museum also houses the Raven's Cry Theatre, featuring First Nations plays, concerts, movies and storytelling. The Sunshine Coast Arts Centre hosts art exhibits, literary readings and craft fairs. Visitors can walk along the town's pier and seawall, then a short jaunt to the historic Rockwood Lodge, host of the annual Sunshine Coast Festival of the Written Arts, Canada's longest running literary festival. There's camping, swimming and kayaking at Porpoise Bay Provincial Park, while divers head to Kunechin Point to explore the shallow-water wreck of the HMCS Chaudiere, one of the the top four dive sites on the Pacific Coast. Nearby Davis Bay is the ideal spot to grab an order of fish and chips then settle down on an oceanfront bench to people-watch along the esplanade. Davis Bay hosts a popular annual Sandcastle Competition, welcoming sand sculpture artists and spectators from around the world. www.secheltvisitorinfocentre.com; www.secheltchamber.bc.ca; www.hellobc.com/en-CA/SightsActivitiesEvents/Sechelt.htm

Halfmoon Bay: This small seaside village, 16 km (10 mi) north of Sechelt, is accessed from Redrooffs Road through Sargeant Bay before the road curves back around Secret Cove and Wood Bay to Highway 101. The Halfmoon Bay General Store, built in 1938, is a local ice cream spot and gathering place in front of the government wharf. Local artists and crafters display their works in two village galleries. In July, the Halfmoon Bay Country Fair features a children's parade and fishing derby, outdoor performance stages and craft booths. Hiking on the local Redrooffs Trail leads to forested walkways marked with interpretive signposts highlighting natural and historical points of interest. Rentals are available in Halfmoon Bay for canoeing and kayaking in Sargeant Bay Provincial Park, also popular for hiking, fishing and windsurfing. Locals love to spin tales about the history of Smuggler's Cove Provincial Marine Park where rum smuggling was said to be rampant during the days of Prohibition. Smuggler's Cove offers protected all-weather anchorage for boaters, as well as scuba diving, walk-in wilderness camping and a wetland habitat for resident beavers. Rockwater Secret Cove Resort, voted by CNN.com Travel as #2 on the list of " 10 Dazzling Hideaways By The Sea, " is a destination in itself, renowned for luxury tenthouse suites, fine dining and an outdoor spa in the midst of an oceanfront rainforest. www.bigpacific.com/halfmoonbay

Pender Harbour: Nicknamed the "Venice of the North" for its maze of local waterways, Pender Harbour encompasses the communities of Madeira Park, Garden Bay and Irvines Landing. All share the common coastline known as Pender Harbour where guest cottages, resorts and B&Bs can be found clustered around lakes, inlets and lagoons. Madeira Park is Pender Harbour's commercial centre with everything from a post office to a grocery store, clothing boutiques and a book store, as well as outdoor carvings and murals by local artists. Madeira Park's newest destination hot spot is the high-end Painted Boat Resort & Marina offering deluxe suites and fine dining, as well as multiple treatment rooms, a sauna cave and glacial rain shower at its elegant spa. Garden Bay is the site of the Sunshine Coast's original (now defunct) hospital, an offshore station of the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club and the Garden Bay Hotel and Marina, (a popular pub, but there are no rooms). Historic Irvines Landing was once a bustling steamship port and is still a popular fishing marina and boat launch. Just north of Pender Harbour, Ruby Lake is home to the Ruby Lake Resort and Rainforest Spa, as well as the Iris Griffith Field Studies and Interpretive Centre, offering guided nature hikes, wetland trails, birdwatching and educational programs. Ruby Lake Lagoon is famous for its thriving wildlife, including painted turtles, Roosevelt elk, beavers, otters and bears. The annual Pender Harbour Jazz Festival showcases international jazz artists on the third weekend each September.



www.penderharbour.org

Egmont: Located at the edge of the Skookumchuck Narrows, just east of the BC Ferries terminal at Earl's Cove, Egmont offers a public boat launch, water taxis, family restaurant, pub and the Bathgate General Store, built in 1948. Accommodations at the Egmont's Backeddy Marina Resort range from a campground to ocean view cabins and an inn. A prime charter boat base, Egmont is also a departure point for cruises up the Jervis Inlet to serenely beautiful Princess Louisa Marine Provincial Park, home to the thundering 40 m (120 ft) Chatterbox Falls, and where the granite walls of a glacier-carved gorge are marked with ancient pictographs. The luxury West Coast Wilderness Lodge specializes in zodiac cruises to Princess Louisa Inlet and in west coast fine dining. At Skookumchuck Narrows Provincial

Park, one of BC's most spectacular outdoor shows performs twice daily when up to 200 billion gallons of water flows into the narrows connecting Sechelt and Jervis inlets, creating wildly turbulent tidal rapids and whirlpools. The rapids at high tide can rise up to 2 m (6.6 ft), running at speeds of more than 30 km/hr (19 mi/hr), drawing extreme kayakers and whitewater adventure seekers from around the world.

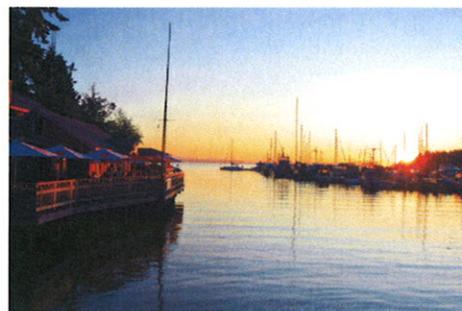
www.sunshinecoastcanada.com

UPPER SUNSHINE COAST

The Upper Sunshine Coast is connected to the lower coast by a 50-minute ferry ride at [Earl's Cove](#) to Saltery Bay, a 20-minute drive along Highway 101 to Powell River. The BC Ferries terminal in downtown Powell River sails daily to [Comox](#) on Vancouver Island. In addition, BC Ferries offers discount package fares on the [Captivating Coastal Circle Tour](#), a four-day tour of the Sunshine Coast from top to bottom.

Powell River: The city of Powell River, the Sunshine Coast's largest community, is known for its well-preserved historic Townsite, a planned community built by the local mill between 1910 and 1930 and now a National Historic District of Canada. Today, Powell River is equally famous as a gateway to the marine parks of Desolation Sound and as a mecca for outdoor adventure enthusiasts seeking world class hiking, kayaking, rock climbing, fishing and scuba diving. The local Knuckleheads are a prime powder destination for tobogganing, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. In 2004, Powell River was named a Cultural Capital of Canada, laying claim to the title through its annual artists' studio tour, international choral competition, symphony orchestra and film festival. In Westview, the city's retail core, visitors can browse gift shops and art galleries, and dine at multicultural eateries with fresh local fare. The Powell Model Community Project for persons with disabilities publishes a guide to the city's wheelchair accessible accommodations, facilities and walkways. Much of the town is built sloping down to the sea and brilliant, almost nightly, sunsets from Palm Beach and Willingdon Beach silhouette the Hulks, 10 concrete WWII ships forming the world's largest floating breakwater. Other attractions include the Townsite Heritage Walk, Powell River Historical Museum, Powell River Forestry Museum, Myrtle Point Golf Club, , the Sunshine Coast Trail, the Blackberry Festival, and the Powell Forest Canoe Route. www.powellriver.ca; www.discoverpowellriver.com

Lund: A gateway to Desolation Sound marine recreation, this picturesque fishing village is connected by a waterfront boardwalk winding from the SunLund By-The-Sea campgrounds to the Historic Lund Hotel, offering craft shops and a harbourfront cafe (famous for its cinnamon buns) along the way. Circa 1905, the Lund Hotel is the heart of the village with a popular pub, dining room, art gallery and well-stocked grocery store carrying everything from beach toys to fresh deli sandwiches. From the Lund Marina, visitors can catch the water taxi to Savary Island, book a bare boat charter to the Copeland Islands or arrange an educational kayak tour of the wildlife sanctuary at Mitlenatch



Island, summer home to coastal cactus and the winter playground of hundreds of Stellar sea lions. Visitors can sail aboard an 18 m (58 ft) catamaran on dinner and eco-cultural cruises to Desolation Sound, May through September. To celebrate the area's rich abundance of fish and seafood – including cultured clams, oysters, scallops and mussels from the nearby Okeover Inlet aquaculture industry – Lund holds an annual Shellfish Festival in May. The annual one-day Lund Daze in August is a long-time popular family event. In 2009, local organizers raised funds to erect a Mile 0 marker commemorating Lund's status as the northernmost terminus for Highway 101 that runs 15,202 km (9,446 mi) to the southern tip of Chile. www.lundbc.ca

Texada Island: BC's largest Gulf Island at 50 km (31 mi) long, with only 1,100 full-time residents, is a pristine, exciting choice for the adventurous traveller. The island is rich in history, from evidence of ancient First Nations middens to its early discovery by Spanish explorers to local mining of iron, copper and gold in the 1800s and the limestone quarries, still active today. Heritage buffs can tour two museums operated by the Texada Heritage Society in Blubber Bay or in Van Anda on the island's east side. Getting to Texada is easy with 10 ferries per day from Powell

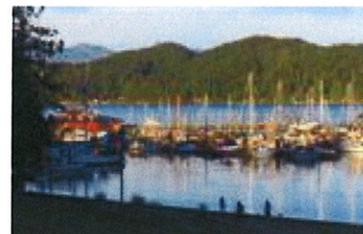
River's Westview ferry terminal to Blubber Bay in just 30 minutes. KD Air provides four scheduled flights per day from Vancouver to the Gillies Bay Airport, which has a 914 m (3,000 ft) paved runway ensuring smooth landings. Recreation abounds here with excellent hiking and mountain biking trails, over 250 species for avid bird-watchers and a 9-hole golf course. Water recreation includes kayaking from Shingle Beach to historic Jedediah Island Marine Park, skimboarding and swimming at Shelter Point Park Campground beach, and exploring the newly protected karst caves near Davies Bay. For scuba divers, according to a *Sport Dive Magazine* writer, Texada is "dripping with life," boasting warm, high-visibility waters where divers can search for Texada's famous sponge clouds. Marble Bay provides good anchorage and the Texada Boat Club offers dockside moorage with water, power and reasonable rates for transient boaters. Texada, billed as the undiscovered "Jewel of the Pacific" has many outdoor events throughout the summer months. www.texada.org

Savary Island: Aerial maps of this warm-water holiday destination reveal its ring of gleaming white sand beaches, earning Savary Island subtropical comparisons. This small 7.5 km (4.7 mi) long and less than 1.0 km (0.6 mi) wide island is described by the Savary Island Land Trust (SILT) as "essentially a migrating sandbar" with a range of highly sensitive ecosystems from sand cliffs to dune meadows and ancient forested dunes. While this is the most heavily subdivided land in Canada, mostly made up of private holiday homes, the island has no power and no public campsites or washrooms. Overnight visitors are welcomed, however, at several cottage rentals, B&Bs and a private campsite. Daytrippers can be dropped off and picked up at the public wharf, with many visitors arriving by water taxi or aboard chartered boats from Lund Marina. The best way to get around is to cycle from beach-to-beach. Prime stops include South Beach, Duck Bay, Sutherland Beach and the Malaspina Promenade. www.silts.ca

Sliammon: The Coast Salish village of Sliammon, just north of Powell River, has a vibrant culture and history in the region dating back more than 2,000 years. Visitors to the reserve can enjoy free interpretive hikes with a First Nations guide. Local sights include the Sliammon Sacred Heart Church, a historic Catholic church that burned down in the 1900s and has since been rebuilt, and the majestic carved totem pole on Beach Road. The Sliammon Salmon Hatchery is open to the public, offering free tours of the hatchery and the unique fluvarium, an underwater salmon-viewing gallery. Visitors are welcome to stay and picnic on the scenic grounds of the hatchery. Sliammon Beach offers gorgeous views of Harwood and Texada island to the south. www.sliammonfirstnation.com

Desolation Sound: Captain George Vancouver sailed here in 1792 and finding the area too remote for his tastes, named it Desolation Sound. Today, its pristine isolation is a major attraction. One of BC's finest saltwater cruising areas, said to rival the best in the world, Desolation Sound lures legions of pleasure boaters and paddlers with its warm waters, photogenic wildlife and sheer-sided waterways of Scandinavian-like fjords that at low tide reveal thick walls of purple starfish. Desolation Sound Marine Provincial Park's 60 km (37 mi) of coastline and crystal-clean, nutrient-rich waters are prime habitat for intertidal marine life, as well as for seals, sea lions, porpoises, dolphins, eagles, shorebirds – and occasional migrating whales. Grace Harbour, Prideaux Haven and Tenedo's Bay are the three main destination anchorages among the many sheltered bays and inlets. Popular activities include scuba diving, saltwater and freshwater fishing, and walk-in wilderness camping. Water taxis, guided kayak tours, cruises and boat charters can be arranged from Lund and Okeover Inlet. www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/desolation.html; www.lundbc.ca

For more on Sunshine Coast towns, communities, provincial parks and attractions, visit www.sunshinecoastcanada.com and www.discoverpowellriver.com



Images provided by Vancouver, Coast & Mountains – Graham Osborne, Bob Young



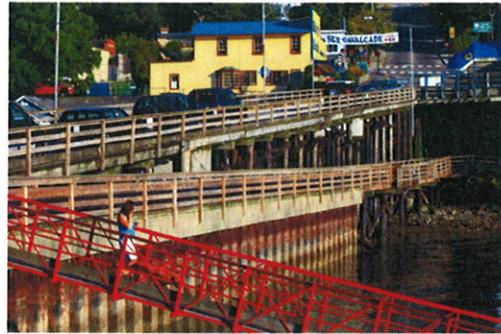
Sunshine Coast Story-starters

www.sunshinecoastcanada.com

www.discoverpowellriver.com

Sunshine Coast 2010 milestones: from 100 years to number one

Powell River writer Barbara Ann Lambert's new 360-page book, *Powell River 100*, chronicles the one-century mark of this Sunshine Coast city's historic Townsite. In 1910, the Powell River Paper Company created a desirable model community for its employees, from tree-lined streets of Craftsman style homes to a golf course, tennis courts, bowling greens and a movie theatre; (the Patricia Theatre, which first opened in 1913, remains Canada's oldest continuously operating movie theatre). In 1995, the historic Townsite became one of the few designated National Historic Districts in Canada. Lambert's book can be purchased at the Powell River Historical Museum. Visitors can explore more of Powell River's colourful history at the Powell River Forestry Museum and on guided or self-guided tours of



the nearly 400 heritage buildings near the mill. On the Lower Sunshine Coast, Gibsons celebrates a first-year milestone. This quaint fishing village of 4,000 – with its panoramic ocean views, fresh air, working harbour, funky boutiques and fun festivals – was named Most Livable Community in the World (population under 20,000) at the 2009 LivCom Awards. www.powellrivertownsite.com; www.powellrivermuseum.ca; www.prforestrymuseum.org; www.discoverpowellriver.com; www.gibsons.ca

Sunshine Coast powderhounds head for the Knuckleheads and Dakota Ridge

With a pair of streamlined snowshoes, (available to rent or buy in Powell River), a set of ski poles and a well-packed backpack full of essentials, Nordic sports enthusiasts have all they



need to explore the uncrowded backwoods and deep powder of Powell River's Knuckleheads Mountain Range. Dedicated volunteers from the Knuckleheads Winter Recreation Association (KWRA) have winterized two warming huts – the E branch and A branch cabins – open for overnight stays for snowshoers, cross-country skiers and toboganners, free of charge. E branch

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cabin is a former ski club shack, now equipped with a pellet stove for heat, a propane cook stove, gas lantern, bedding and an outhouse. On the Lower Sunshine Coast, Dakota Ridge Winter Recreation area is accessible on four-wheel drive forest service roads. Visitors can also arrange shuttle service through Alpha Adventures in Wilson Creek. The reward at the top: stunning views of the Coast Mountains and Vancouver Island, 12 km (7.5 mi) of groomed cross-country ski trails and 8 km (5 mi) of snowshoe trails winding through old-growth forests and wide-open subalpine vistas. www.discoverpowellriver.com; www.dakotaridge.ca; www.outdooradventurestore.ca

Luxury meets wilderness adventure at Sunshine Coast resorts

A five-minute boat ride from Lund Marina, Sevilla Island Resort sits atop a rocky outcrop offering gorgeous views of Finn Bay, Lund and Savary Island from the sky-high windows in its vaulted great room. Guests are treated to group dining on fresh local salmon, prawns, crabs and oysters whipped up by the resort's friendly, culinary-trained proprietors. Sevilla Island Resort's menu of customized eco-adventures ranges from scuba diving in the warm, waters of



Desolation Sound to cycling alongside the white sand beaches of Savary Island. The West Coast Wilderness Lodge in Egmont ferries guests by zodiac to the waterfalls of Princess Louisa Inlet by day, treating them to candlelit west coast fine dining by night. Painted Boat Resort & Marina is the Sunshine Coast's newest luxury destination, featuring two-bedroom waterfront suites, fine dining, on-site kayak rentals and the tranquil Spa at Painted Boat with eight treatment rooms. Rockwater Secret Cove Resort blends unique treetop tenthouses and oceanside cabins seamlessly into the surrounding bluffs and rainforest. Sailing, kayaking, adventure tours, golf and seasonal outdoor massages can all be packaged along with a stay at this award-winning destination resort. www.sevillaislandresort.ca; www.wcwl.com; www.paintedboat.com; www.rockwatersecretcoveresort.com

PRPAWS sparks interest in the Sunshine Coast Trail



PRPAWS, a group of enthusiastic volunteers, built the Sunshine Coast Trail (SCT) over the last 18 years. They are now in the process of adding eight shelters and two huts along the 180 km (112 mi) trail carved out of the wilderness from Desolation Sound Marine Park in the north to Saltery Bay ferry terminal in the south. The SCT leads to old-growth Yellow

APPENDIX V.

Cedar forests, epic views on Tin Hat Mountain and the 13-km (8 mi) wheelchair accessible loop around Inland Lake. Hikers can jump on or off the trail at a variety of access points, breaking up the typical 8 to 10-day hike into shorter chunks. En route, there are two B&Bs, walk-in campsites and the Shinglemill Pub & Bistro on Powell Lake. The Duck Lake trail circuit built by the BOMB Squad, a group of retirees, has its own set of attractions for both hikers and mountain bikers – including well-marked bridges and boardwalks leading to Kelly Falls, David Lam Falls and 12 m (40 ft) cascading Eagle Falls.

www.sunshinecoast-trail.com;

www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/duck_lake.html;

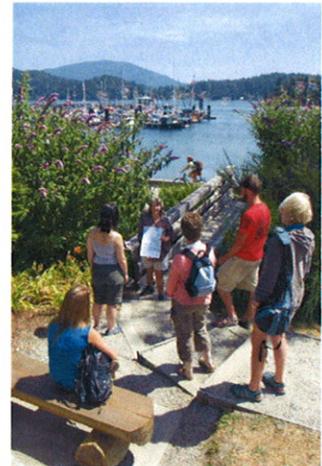
www.bigpacific.com/whattodo/soameshill.html;

www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/mt_elphin.html;

www.bigpacific.com/whattodo/trianglelaketrail.html

The flying Purple Banner means artists at work on the Sunshine Coast

The Sunshine Coast is known for having one of the most densely populated communities of artists in Canada. To meet them in person, pick up a copy of the 2009/10 *Purple Banner Studio & Gallery Guide* from Visitor Information Centres and participating Sunshine Coast galleries. The flying purple banner marks a location where an artist is at work. The guide showcases more than 60 home studios and galleries of artists and artisans from Langdale in the south to Powell River, Lund and Savary Island in the north. In many cases, visitors are welcome to drop in, but the guide also includes a telephone icon indicating which artists prefer a call-ahead appointment. As well, the annual Powell River Studio Tour of Artists introduces visitors to two dozen artists from Saltery Bay to Lund. A map and brochure is available at local stores or can be downloaded online. The Gibsons Public Art Gallery features several annual juried exhibitions of local oil paintings, photography and pottery. In Sechelt, the Sunshine Coast Arts Centre features a public art gallery, literary readings, concerts and art courses.



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www.suncoastarts.com; www.powellriverartists.com; www.gibsonspublicartgallery.ca;
www.suncoastarts.com/profiles/scartscouncil/index.html

Mermaids and sunken ships: diving hot spots on the Sunshine Coast

Late oceanographer Jacques Cousteau is widely quoted as saying that the temperate diving waters of BC and Vancouver Island are third in the world only after Australia's Great Barrier Reef and the Red Sea. According to local scuba diver Ann Snow, owner of SunLund By-the-Sea campgrounds in Lund, Cousteau was actually diving in Desolation Sound when he made his famous remarks. With visibility in some areas up to 24 m (80 ft), the Sunshine Coast's

APPENDIX V.

prime diving spots offer bonuses from shallow-water shipwrecks to underwater caves. The Emerald Princess, a 2.5 m (8 ft) bronze mermaid statue resides in 18 m (59 ft) of water in Saltery Bay Provincial Park. Diving author Betty Pratt-Johnson named the Skookumchuck (Sechelt) Rapids in Egmont the best dive in BC. Near Pender Harbour, an 85-m (280-ft) vertical drop wall at Fearney Bluffs is alive with giant cloud sponges, starfish, corals and octopi. In 1992, the Artificial Reef Society of BC sunk the HMCS Chaudiere, a 112 m (366 ft) destroyer escort ship, at Kunechin Point in the Sechelt Inlet. It's now the most popular dive on the Sunshine Coast.

www.bigpacific.com/whattodo/diving.html

Images courtesy of: Vancouver, Coast & Mountains – Graham Osborne, Bob Young
Tourism Powell River - Kelly Funk and Emma Levez Larocque.



Outdoor adventure thrills lure the world to the Sunshine Coast

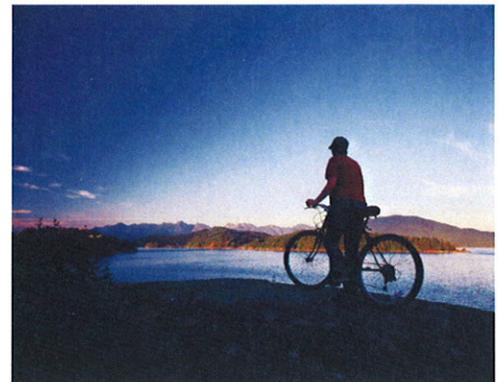
By Kathy Eccles

German is a commonly spoken second language among Sunshine Coast tourism operators. Europeans, it seems, were among the first to discover what the rest of the world is quickly discovering; that outdoor adventure on the Sunshine Coast is wildly thrilling, varied – from recreational to extreme – and naturally spectacular.

Powell River's trails of "rolling thunder" inspired local mountain bikers and organizers of the 2010 BC Bike Race to choose this Upper Sunshine Coast city as the stage-three location of this year's event, while Lower Sunshine Coast communities will also welcome an anticipated 1,000 cyclists and their supporters during stages four and five of the race. From June 27 to July 3, more than 400 top-tier mountain bike stage racers will ride from Vancouver to Vancouver Island to Comox across to Powell River and down the Sunshine Coast to Whistler.

Wayne Brewer, a representative of Powell River's cycling community, said of the city's selection as a base camp for the BC Bike Race, "The Powell River area has an amazing set of trails... These are people who travel to South Africa, to Australia, and around the world, racing. The evidence is when people come and race and see an event, they come back."

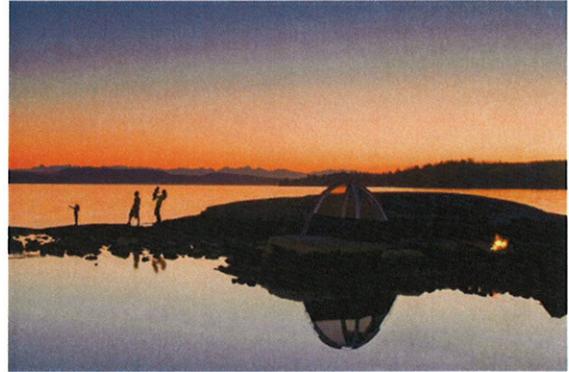
That's definitely the case in BC Bike Race base camps three and four, too, including the mountain bikers' paradise of Porpoise Bay Provincial Park outside Sechelt and at the rat race course in Roberts Creek, home to the annual Rat Race Mountain Bike Competition.



Once a blue collar town, best known for its historic Townsite planned by the local mill, Powell River today is equally known as a mecca for outdoor adventure enthusiasts. Tourism Powell River Executive Director Darren Robinson, a recent transplant to the region himself, is awed by the local outdoor recreation scene. "People come to tackle rock climbing in the Eldred Valley, 60 minutes from Powell River. Or they'll portage between eight lakes on the Powell River Canoe Route. It rivals the Bowron Lakes in BC's Wells Gray area."

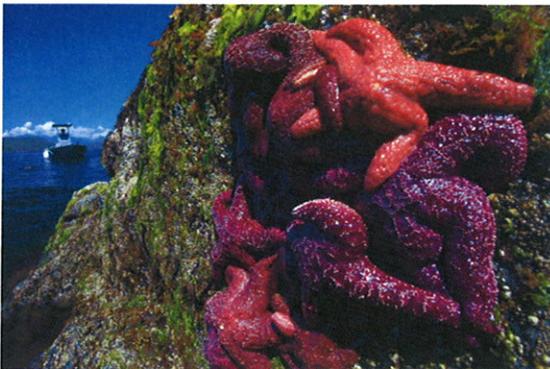
The Eldred Valley also incites comparisons, notably to rock climbing at Squamish in BC and Yosemite in the U.S. Experienced climbers will find a range of granite pitches, slabs and cracks to test their skills on routes with tongue-in-cheek names like Schizophrenia III, Delusional Reality and Psychopath.

There are hundreds of kilometres of old logging roads in the Powell River area for hiking and biking. Right downtown, cyclists can ride through a beachside rainforest on Willingdon Beach Trail, with the added bonus of incredible ocean views and near nightly sunsets. The rainforest on the popular Duck Lake trail circuit is so lush, Robinson says it feels tropical. For those who don't mind a little spray, a system of boardwalks puts hikers and cyclists right in front of the many thundering waterfalls on the trail.



Hiking along the Sunshine Coast Trail (SCT) is an 8 to 10-day adventure extending 180 km (112 mi) alongside creeks, waterfalls, and ocean and lake shores through old-growth forests to mountain summits. The SCT runs from Sarah Point in Desolation Sound Marine Park in the north to the Saltery Bay ferry terminal in the south. The trail offers a number of access points along the entire route so the hike can be tackled in short sections. Rest stops include B&Bs, walk-in campsites, shelters, a log cabin and the Shinglemill Pub & Bistro on Powell Lake.

Other excellent hiking terrain with extraordinary panoramic views can be found at Mount Daniel in Pender Harbour and at Tetrahedron Provincial Park, northeast of Sechelt at the headwaters of Chapman and Gray creeks. Elevations in the park range from 900 to 1,800 m (2,950 to 5,900 ft) and backcountry hiking and cross-country skiing here includes use of four rustic cabins maintained by the Tetrahedron Outdoor Club.



The tiny village of Lund, north of Powell River at the gateway to Desolation Sound, is a well-oiled hub of marine eco-tourism with local operators working together to create unique wilderness adventure packages. *The Swan Spirit*, an 18 m (58 ft) catamaran sails to Desolation Sound on dinner eco-cultural cruises. Water taxis ferry passengers, in just 12 minutes, to beachfront hiking and cycling around the environmentally sensitive white sand dunes of Savary Island. A five-minute boat ride from Lund Marina, Sevilla Island Resort

treats guests from Europe, the US and other parts of Canada to luxury accommodations and chartered excursions from scuba diving, geocaching and bird-watching on Mitlenatch Island to wildlife tours of the Ragged Islands archipelago. Guests at SunLund By-The-Sea campgrounds enjoy affordable accommodations packaged with boat tours, rainforest hikes and educational natural history trips to Desolation Sound led by Terracentric Coastal Adventures.

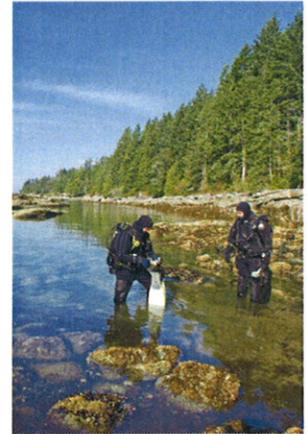
In a region criss-crossed and bisected with inlets, rivers and chains of lakes, canoeing and kayaking are popular activities. Paddling in the tranquil Hotham Sound from the launch point of Egmont leads to a spectacular reward. Freil Falls, or Harmony Falls, one of Canada's tallest waterfalls, cascades 427 m (1,400 ft) down from Friel Lake above. The nearby paddlers' paradise of the Harmony Islands is a popular place to set up camp; the surrounding beauty is one draw – the island's bear-free status is another. Other hot spots for paddlers include the Sunshine Coast's many spectacular marine parks like Thormanby Island, Buccaneer Bay and Plumper Cove.



From serene paddling to extreme kayak adventure, Egmont is the location of the famous Skookumchuck Narrows – a whitewater wonder of the world. Kayaking or surfing the tidal whitecaps and whirlpools at high tide is only for the experienced paddler able to face off against up to 200 billion gallons of water surging through the narrows between Sechelt and Jervis inlets. The tidal force whips the rapids up to 2 m (6.6 ft) in height moving at a swift 17 knots per hour.

Hiking on the Skookumchuck Trail offers one of the best vantage points for watching the marvel of the rapids.

In the area of the rapids, the Sechelt Inlet offers some of the best cold-water dive sites in the world. Topping the list is the scuttled WWII Royal Canadian Navy escort destroyer, the 112 m (366 ft) HMCS Chaudiere. Sunk by the Artificial Reef Society of BC in 1992, it's now a colourful marine ecosystem of Orange Plumous Anemones, White Tube Worms and Ling Cod. Lost anchors, strange rock formations and flourishing sea life makes Pirate Rock one of the area's most dramatic dives. The most popular shore dive is at Mermaid Cove, where Canada's first underwater statue rests serenely; the Emerald Princess is a 2.5 m (8 ft) sunken bronze mermaid. While visibility in local waters is generally high at 15 to 24 m (50 to 80 ft), due to a lack of algae bloom, underwater diving in the winter offers extraordinary viewing distances up to 46 m (150 feet).



Winter sport of the Nordic kind can be found on the snowshoe, toboggan and cross-country ski trails of the Knuckleheads, an uncrowded recreation area of pure powder just outside Powell River. For those with a good set of winter tires and a four-wheel drive vehicle, well-maintained forest service roads off Highway 101 in Sechelt lead to the Dakota Ridge Winter Recreation Area, a popular daytrip and weekend getaway for cross-country skiers and snowshoers coming from the Lower Mainland just 40 minutes away via the Horseshoe Bay-Langdale ferry crossing. Alpha Adventures in

Wilson Creek offers transportation to Dakota Ridge as well as equipment rentals. Stunning views at the top extend across the Strait of Georgia to Vancouver Island. Dakota Ridge offers 12 km (7.5 mi) of groomed cross-country ski trails, a network of snowshoe trails and a welcome warming hut with a fireplace.

For more information on Sunshine Coast outdoor adventure, visit www.discoverpowellriver.com or www.sunshinecoastcanada.com.

Approximately 1,300 words

Images courtesy of: Vancouver, Coast & Mountains – Graham Osborne, Bob Young; Tourism Powell River - Kelly Funk; Darren Robinson Photography

Appendix Y.

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Ambrosia	Ansolita	Kitsilano Magazine	kitsmag@yahoo.ca
Saia	Bianca	Mojotrotters	http://mojotrotters.com/
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Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast Media Attendees

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Chan	Vivian	ShermansFoodAdventures.com	
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Appendix Z.

<i>Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast Sponsor & Participant Attendees</i>			
BC Ferries	Cotton	Sarah	BC Ferries
Black Ball Ferry	Eisenhauer	Bill	Black Ball Ferry Line
Black Rock Resort	Pruden	Dale	Black Rock Ocean Front Resort
Campbell River	Brunt	Leanne	Rivercorp, Campbell River Economic Dev.
Campbell River	Davis	Teresa	Tourism Campbell River & Region
Campbell River	Miller	Joan	Van Isle North Film Commission
Chef	Nakano	Ken	Island Chef's Collaborative
Chef	Bowes	David	Laughing Oyster
Chef	St. Pierre	Ronald	North Vancouver Island Chefs Assoc.
Chef	Lumely	Stafford	Smitty's Oyster House
Chemainus	Lieffert	Michelle	Chemainus BIA
Coast Community Builders	Sparling	Lance	The Coast Community Builders Assoc.
Comox	Watson	John	Comox Valley Economic Development
Comox	Watson	Jennifer	Comox Valley Economic Development
Comox	Mulvaney	Carolyn	Comox Valley Economic Development
Comox	Cruse	Janey	Invest Comox Valley
Comox	Sharpe	Don	Mount Washington Alpine Resort
Comox	Nicholson	Sarah	Tourism Mount Washington
Cowichan	Lachman	Kathy	Cowichan Region Ec Dev.
Cowichan	Millar	Geoff	Cowichan Region Ec Dev.
Cowichan	Barrie	Don	Tourism Cowichan
Cowichan	Mills	Judy	Tourism Cowichan
Ecosummer Expeditions	Schwaiger	Daniella	Ecosummer Expeditions
Galiano Inn	Nordin	Conny	Galiano Oceanfront Inn & Spa
Go2	Keis	Arlene	Go2
Golf VI	Ingle	Rich	Golf Vancouver Island
Nanaimo	Hutchinson	Marilyn	City of Nanaimo
Nanaimo	Manhas	Amrit	City of Nanaimo
Nanaimo	Ruttan	John	City of Nanaimo
Nanaimo	Ferrero	Guillermo	City of Nanaimo
Nanaimo	Hostetter	Corry	Destination Nanaimo
Nanaimo	Murphy	Elizabeth	Vancouver Island Conference Centre
Oceanside	Hodges	Paul	Fairwinds Golf & Country Club
Oceanside	Sepos	Blain	Oceanside Tourism Association
Oceanside	Plotnikoff	Luba	Oceanside Tourism Association
Oceanside	Richardson	Natasha	The Beach Club Resort
Oceanside	Houtby Ferguson	Jenn	Tigh Na Mara Seaside Spa Resort
Port Alberni	Hunter	Kevin	Alberni Valley Heritage Network
Port Alberni	Paulson	Ron	Alberni Valley Tourism
Port Alberni	Verdicchio	Maria	Alberni Valley Tourism
Port Alberni	McRae	Ken	Port Alberni
BC Shellfish	Hamilton	Sandra	BC Shellfish Growers Assc.
BC Shellfish	Wright	Mathew	BC Shellfish Growers Association
BC Shellfish	Broadley	Tom	BC Shellfish Growers Association
BC Shellfish	Stevenson	Roberta	BC Shellfish Growers Association
BC Shellfish	Hardy	Richard	Pentlatch Seafood, Komo Gway Oysters

Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast Sponsor & Participant Attendees

Sooke Harbour House	Philip	Frederique	Sooke Harbour House
Sunshine Coast	Allan	Warren	Acting Mayor, District of Sechelt
Sunshine Coast	McLaughlan	Dianne	District of Sechelt
Sunshine Coast	Duggan	Patsy	Sunshine Coast Tourism
Sunshine Coast	McNaughton	Chris	Sunshine Coast Tourism
Sunshine Coast	Ridgway	Kevan	Sunshine Coast Tourism
Sunshine Coast	Robben	Celia	Sunshine Coast Tourism
Sunshine Coast	Spears	Judy	Sunshine Coast Tourism
Tofino	Fraser	Donna	Councillor, Tofino
Tofino	Peters	Stephen	Pacific Sands Beach Resort
Tofino	McDiarmid	Charles	The Wickaninnish Inn
Tofino	Fraser	Councillor John	Tofino BC
Tofino	Kay	Lynda	Tourism Tofino
Tofino	Lingenfelter	Sharon	Tourism Tofino
TVI	Fast	Chuck	Tourism Vancouver Island
TVI	Hutchinson	Tamara	Tourism Vancouver Island
TVI	Petryk	Dave	Tourism Vancouver Island
TVI	Bonell	Karen	Tourism Vancouver Island
Victoria	George	Kristine	Tourism Victoria
Victoria	Lenk	Holly	Tourism Victoria
Victoria	McGillivray	Heather	Tourism Victoria
Victoria	Ray	Cathy	Tourism Victoria
Wildplay	Sing	Marilyn	Wildplay Element Parks
WIVA	Docherty	Janet	Wine Islands Vintner Association
WIVA	Pipes	Rick	Wine Islands Vintner Association
WIVA	Johnson	Wendy	Wine Islands Vintner Association
WIVA	Johnson	Andy	Wine Islands Vintner Association
WIVA	Philips	Matt	Wine Islands Vintner Association
WIVA	Vandermolen	Susan	Wine Islands Vintner Association
WIVA	Vandermolen	Jeff	Wine Islands Vintner Association

Appendix AA.

Taste of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast URL List of Media Coverage of Event

<http://www.coastreporter.net/article/20100219/SECHELT0604/302199994/-1/sechelt/tourism-event-wins-gold-medals>

<http://www.coastreporter.net/apps/pbcs.dll/tngallery?Site=GW&Date=20100217&Category=sechelt&ArtNo=217009998&Ref=PH>

<http://www.youcook.ca/blog/2010/02/taste-of-vancouver-island/>

<http://www.youcook.ca/blog/tag/taste/>

<http://scoreinc.ca/a-taste-of-vancouver-island-and-the-sunshine-coast>

<http://gratineeblog.com/2010/02/a-taste-of-vancouver-island-with-celebrity-chef-bob-blumer/>

<http://suzanneahearne.com/2010/02/12/tastes-of-vancouver-island-and-sunshine-coast/>

<http://www.prpeak.com/articles/2010/02/17/community/doc4b7b4ae3cd688104521452.txt>

<http://www.bbsunshinecoast.com/news/article/295/BC-Showcase-Taste-of-Vancouver-Island-and-Sunshine-Coast/>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sponsored/travel/britishcolumbia/>