

- [sneak peeks](#)
- [mini trends](#)
- [city guides](#)
- [product guides](#)
- [podcasts](#)
- [DIY](#)
- [before & after](#)
- [categories](#)
- [new: recipes!](#)
- [new: videos!](#)



January 12th, 2010
vancouver guide

- [about](#)
- [contact](#)
- [press](#)
- [advertising](#)
- [editorial calendar](#)

enter your email

subscribe

powered by [FeedBlitz](#)

archives



Today's first city guide is dedicated to an area i've been *dying* to explore: [January vancouver, bc](#). vancouver native [erin gibbs](#) will be walking us through great [February](#) places to visit, shop, eat and stay so i hope you'll enjoy her guide as much as i [March](#) did. i plan on printing this sucker out for a trip out west this summer. vancouver [April](#) here we come! thanks again to [erin](#) for sharing her local expertise with us. *[image [May](#) above via [nasa](#)]*
[June](#)
[July](#) [CLICK HERE](#) for the full vancouver guide after the jump!
[2009](#)
[2008](#) **Vancouver BC City Guide**
[2007](#)
[2006](#) When I first moved to Vancouver 13 years ago, I was used [2005](#) to a dry climate where it actually snowed in the winter and I didn't have to carry [2004](#) an umbrella at all times. Now I know better, can see through the drizzle and am [truly](#) in love with Vancouver.

Forgot the perpetual rain, the Gortex and Robson Street. Vancouver is alive with independent, exciting and creative individuals bringing businesses, food, art and events to life to create the diverse and eclectic culture of the city.

Vancouver's thriving fashion design scene is supported by amazing shops in Gastown and along Main Street. Indie bands and artists have venues and galleries in which to show their work.

Foodies can find quality, local, organic, fresh-from-the-farm meals anywhere in the city or if sushi is more your style, we have lots of that, too. From Point Grey to Commercial Drive, food is everything in Vancouver and a great way to explore the city.

We love our homes as demonstrated by the home design shops found in every neighbourhood; from mid-century modern to girly glam, we love to decorate our places. All this and the great outdoors – lush greenery, great cycling and walking paths, fresh ocean air and views of the North Shore mountains – is what makes Vancouver a great town.

Some Vancouverites spend almost all of their time in their own neighbourhood, working, living and socializing within a few block radius – and I'm one of them! So, I've organized this guide by neighbourhood to reflect the strengths and distinct qualities found in each area of Vancouver.

Welcome to Vancouver!

DOWNTOWN / YALETOWN

Metropolitan Home / MET Home

[subscribe to the rss feed](#)
[follow d*s on twitter](#)

GROUPON

Vancouver's Deal of the Day

50-90%
off the Very Best of Your City's Dining and Events

One Ridiculously Huge Coupon Each Day

[GET TODAY'S DEAL](#)

www.Groupon.com/Vancouver
Ads by Google

cerulean

art★star
gallery & boutique
www.artstarphilly.com

vintage & antique decor
botanoclic
curated by M. Yoshida

Design the perfect blog ad.

[GET STARTED](#)

217 West Hastings Street

Met Home offers classic mid-century furniture and home accessories in the heritage Dominion building at Hastings and Cambie. Small, but nice collection of items.

[The Cross Design](#)

Feminine, glam, shabby chic and more, this is a delightfully girly store for furniture, lighting and home accessories.

[Bravura Interiors](#)

Bravura Interiors features Italian-made contemporary furniture as well as modern classics like the Eames lounge, Le Corbusier chair and more.

[Chintz and Company](#)

Chintz and Company has stores in BC and Alberta, with a full complement of home decor items that lean to traditional and feminine looks. A great place to explore.

Dressew

337 West Hastings Street

Don't let the surly employees turn you off. Dressew offers an amazing selection of fabric for fashion and home, as well as notions, sewing and upholstery supplies. Check the roll ends on the lower floor for great deals.

[W2](#)

Located in Vancouver's notorious and slightly sketchy Downtown Eastside, W2 is a community art and media space providing diverse resources for creatives and area residents. Letterpress workshops, exhibits, events and talks are a highlight for design and art-minded folks.

[La Taqueria](#)

This busy nook was an instant hit when it opened late last year. It's worth the wait to try these delicious hand-made tacos with fillings such as braised local pork cheeks or rajas con crema (poblano peppers, corn, cream and cheese). Many meat and veggie options.

[Café Artigianno](#)

With several locations downtown, this local chain known for their champion baristas and excellent coffee. A great alternative to the ubiquitous Starbucks.

[Japadog](#)

Downtown workers patiently wait in line at these hot dog carts to get their hands on a Japadog. Japanese garnishes such as teriyaki sauce, seaweed, plum sauce and bonito flakes top their dogs. A storefront space will be open on Robson Street in early 2010.

[The Templeton](#)

Flash back to the 50s at The Templeton, complete with vintage juke box, vinyl booth seats, and chrome-edged everything. Diner food is on the menu, with gourmet burgers, ooey-goey mac & cheese and the best milkshakes.

[Guu](#)

Guu has several locations downtown so there are no excuses for missing out. All locations serve pub-style Japanese food in tapas portions. Friendly and excited service.

[Nuba](#)

Nuba is lavishly decorated with Middle Eastern design accents which making the perfect setting for the extraordinary Lebanese food. Be sure to try Najib's Special, a citrusy cauliflower dish. Second location at 1206 Seymour at Davie Street.

[Moda](#)

A boutique-style hotel in a heritage building with modern design. Rooms are decorated with quality furniture and bedding. Right downtown with a wine bar



Vancouver Coupons
1 ridiculously huge coupon a day. Like doing Vancouver at 90% off!
www.coupon.com/vancouver



and restaurant. Moda is pet-friendly.

[Opus Hotel](#)

Situated in Yaletown, the Opus hotel offers excellent boutique accommodation with great design. Rooms are decorated in different colour schemes depending on room type– check the website for details. Also pet friendly.

[L'Hermitage Hotel](#)

Elegantly decorated rooms or suites (with kitchens) at excellent prices; many rooms have fireplaces and/or balconies as well. Weekly rentals and special packages are available.

[Stanley Park](#)

Vancouver's Jewel is a must-see. Stanley Park is a unique place in an urban setting – over 1000 acres of green space right in the city. Rent a bike and brave the crowds on the Seawall, stroll along the paths through the West Coast forest, laze on Third Beach or stop by a concession stand and chow down on some fish and chips.

GASTOWN / CROSTOWN /CHINATOWN

[Inform Interiors](#)

Inform Interiors is where you will find all things design and architecture in a gallery-like setting. Think Herman Miller, Knoll and B&B Italia. So Euro!

[Koolhaus](#)

Just down the street from Inform is Koolhaus, home to contemporary furniture and accessories. Clean lines and minimal colour are themes here.

[Provide](#)

Oh-so-stylish Provide provides a range of drool-worthy items from Heath Ceramics, Johnathan Adler, Alessi and Niche Modern. Airy and light store that's arranged just so.

[Ming Wo](#)

Ming Wo is a great cookware shop in Chinatown. Diverse selection of western and asian kitchenware including bamboo steam baskets, mortar and pestles, and Le Creuset products. Second Vancouver location on West 4th Avenue in Kitsilano.

[Dream](#)

Dream features an appealing spread of work by local and indie fashion designers, plus jewelry in a great space. They are all about local style and fostering Vancouver's fashion design scene.

[Gentile Alouette](#)

A fairly recent addition to Gastown, Eliza Lau's excellent shop features wearable art by local clothing and jewelry designers in an inviting setting, replete with a fireplace.

[The Block](#)

The Block is a super hip clothing boutique carrying men's and women's clothing and accessories from international and local designers. Lines include Vancouver's Lily + Jae, and Mono Clothing. An added plus – the store is gorgeous.

[Alibi Room](#)

This modern tavern serves beer from near and far (as well as wine and spirits) and a menu featuring local, sustainable, free range and organic ingredients. Nice decor with wood slab tables and benches, high ceilings and warm lighting.

[alt Tasting Room](#)

Located in Gastown's Blood Alley, Salt Tasting Room is just what it's name implies – all things salty and delicious. Diners select from a rotating list of cured meats and cheeses to create their own tasting plate. Other menu options are available, plus a great choice of wine, beer and sherry.

MAIN STREET / MT. PLEASANT / FRASER STREET

[The Fabulous Find](#)

A wonderful, tiny shop with loads of mid-century furniture, lighting and accessories. Stacked to the ceiling, you could outfit your whole place with items from this shop.

[By Design Modern](#)

By Design Modern is another crowded shop, but it's worth winding your way through the mid-Century modern furniture to find that piece you've been looking for. Lots to choose from with a great selection of teak and rosewood pieces.

Baker's Dozen

3520 Main St

Although many of the antique stores have disappeared from Main Street, Vancouverites still have A Baker's Dozen to rely on for antiques, tin toys, old globes, and endless ephemera. Great place to pick up gifts and to enjoy their imaginative window displays.

[Vancouver Special](#)

The design store, featuring furniture, home accessories, and books about design and architecture. Vancouver's own, Molo <http://www.molodesign.com> is carried here as well as ceramics by local Gailan Ngan (<http://www.gailanngan.com/>). Local art and photography can be found hanging on Vancouver Special's walls.

[Portobello West](#)

Held on the last Sunday of every month, Portobello West is where you can get your hands on locally made and designed fashion, jewelry, accessories, art and more. Think sophisticated craft sale and get ready to spend the day there.

[Urban Source](#)

I don't think I have ever left this store empty-handed. Urban Source holds an ever-changing mix of crafting, stationery and art supplies. Fill a grab bag with bulk items at a flat rate, or pick up individual doo-dads from the rest of the store. You'll find anything from reflective iron-on material and leather off-cuts, to beautiful papers and envelopes.

[Rokko's Fabrics](#)

Found in Vancouver's Little India, Rokko's is home to a dazzling array of colourful silks, saris and fabric basics like cotton and wool. Pick up a yard or two for a skirt or pillow cover project.

[Regional Assembly of Text](#)

One of my favourite stores in Vancouver. Brandy and Rebecca have created a delight for lovers of paper, stationery and, of course, type! The shop itself is whimsically decorated with stacks of metal drawers and cabinets, vintage display cases and rickety type-writers. Products include greeting cards, stationery sets, t-shirts, pillows, notebooks and more. Visit the lowercase gallery to check out work by local artists and catch up on some zine reading.

[Mr Lee's General Store & Haberdashery](#)

Finally, a store for the fellas. And the ladies love it, too. Mr. Lee's General Store caters to the gentleman who wants to look right; find safety razors, shaving kits, suspenders, Beckel Canvas Bags, notebooks and all things gentlemanly in this heritage room.

[Front and Co](#)

With two stores side-by-side, Front and Co. offers up a range of home, baby and giftware in their smaller shop. The larger store holds a wide array of consignment, vintage, sample and new clothing for men and women. Accessories, too. Their window displays alone are worth the visit.

[Twigg and Hottie](#)

Twigg and Hottie is an uber-hip clothing and accessory boutique featuring local and Canadian designers. Vancouver's Garnish Wood Jewelry's veneer wood cuffs are to die for and Olie's cozy hand-knit scarves, cowls and more are made from BC wool – how much more local can you get?

[Eugene Choo](#)

Eugene Choo features an edited selection of clothing, accessories and giftware for men and women. Though not inexpensive, items like suede moccasins, white spats and wooly coats are hard to resist. This store features local, Canadian and international designers.

[Solly's Bagels](#)

After years of searching for the best cinnamon buns in the city, I've decided that Solly's makes them. Plus delicious fare such as chicken soup, rugelach and bagels with cream cheese and lox. Located on 28th at Main Street and also on Cambie and in Kitsilano.

[Burgoo](#)

Comfort food with international influences served in a cozy setting. Burgoo is the perfect remedy to a drizzly Vancouver day. Second Vancouver location in Point Grey.

[Budgies Burritos](#)

Serving up big ol' veggie burritos in a crazy, kitschy setting. Think cheesy landscape paintings, velvet puppy portraits in gold frames, and an eclectic mix of knick-knacks that all somehow work together in this take-out or eat-in nook.

Congee Noodle House

141 E Broadway

The decor and ambiance leave something to be desired, but the Congee (thick, creamy rice soup with variety of toppings) is just the thing for fighting off those damp Vancouver nights.

[Ping's Cafe](#)

Ping's minimal but stunning decor highlight by beautiful lighting. And the food is good too – Japanese tapas that is super-tasty and best shared with friends.

[Zipang](#)

Tasty, fresh and charmingly plated sushi in mid-century modern design setting. Try the Spicy cactus roll.

[Campagnolo](#)

Beautifully designed room serving rustic Italian meals featuring local, organic and fresh-made ingredients, including the best tuna I've ever had. Extensive wine list and excellent service. For large groups, try a family-style menu that allows everyone to have a taste of a variety of dishes.

[Les Faux Bourgeois Bistro](#)

Classic, delicious and affordable French cuisine in a great room decorated with penny tiles, a gleaming bar, and moody lighting. Les Faux Bourgeois has an impressive wine list that includes several local options. The vegetarian options are limited, but very worthwhile.

[The Biltmore Cabaret](#)

One of the few small venues left for up-and-coming bands. Lot's of great shows and cheap, too. Check out what is going on in Vancouver's indie music and improv scene, plus lots of bands from afar.

COMMERCIAL DRIVE / CLARK

[Blue Terra](#)

Walk into Blue Terra and be transported to Bali and Indonesia. If you gravitate to a more worldly design aesthetic, this is your place, offering furniture, dreamy silk textiles, mood-making lighting and giftware.

Attic Treasures

944 Commercial Drive

vGet your retro on at Attic Treasures where you'll find a mix of vintage, kitsch and mid-century modern treasures. Merchandise spans the 40s to the 80s — Danish modern sofas, colourful pyrex bowl sets and kooky wall-hangings.

[Dream Designs](#)

A beautiful eco-focused shop catering to all things sleep and relaxation related. Find organic sheets and towels, hemp yoga equipment, and lovely bath and bed accessories.

[Gourmet Warehouse](#)

Prepare to spend at least an hour or two here, browsing through the stellar selection of kitchenware, hard-to-find ingredients and cookbooks. This is another place I've never left empty-handed.

[Spank Clothing](#)

Spank serves up a well-selected array of fashion with a focus on unique style. A well-rounded range of accessories – Matt & Nat bags and wallets, locally-made scarves, and a nicely stocked jewelry case – make the perfect outfit yours.

Additional locations downtown on Granville Street and in Kitsilano on 4th ave, as well as Spank Shoes on Commercial Drive and on 4th Ave.

[Farmer's Markets](#)

Vancouver has a very busy farmer's market society that runs markets in several locations throughout the city during the warmer months and twice a month throughout winter. Not just great, fresh, local food, you'll find gorgeous soaps, fresh baked goods, jewelry and preserves, too. Check their website for specific dates and locations throughout the city.

[Bandidas Taqueria](#)

I know meat-lovers who can't wait for their next visit to this vegetarian restaurant for the roasted pineapple and black bean tacos or a slice of the Mexican flan. From hosting an in-house community library to picking-up supplies on a cargo-bike, owners Jackie and Aiyana are committed to building community through great food. Brunch and the margaritas are highly recommended.

La Grotta del Formagio

1791 Commercial Dr

Commercial Drive's Italian heritage shines through at La Grotta. Pick up everything you need for an Italian feast, or better yet, pop in at lunch for one of their unforgettable paninis.

Continental Coffee

1806 Commercial Dr

Commercial Drive is rife with great coffee shops. Continental coffee does it right with possibly the best espresso in town. Organic and Fair-trade coffees are available, too. Here you'll find a great mix of older Italians, young professionals on their way to work, members of Vespa clubs and everyone in between.

[Casa Gelato](#)

This outrageously over-the-top ice cream emporium with 218 flavours to choose from is usually packed with locals and tourists alike. Find the usual flavour suspects, like vanilla, plus crazy taste sensations such as durian, sesame or avocado. Buy your ice cream token at the till and then peruse the shop until you find the flavour you want. Or, splurge on a tub of the stuff.

WESTSIDE: KITSILANO / POINT GREY / FAIRVIEW

[Fullhouse Consignment](#)

Fullhouse's range of contemporary and vintage mid-century furniture, including new eco-friendly customizable sofas, satisfies the mid-century lover. New home accents, such as bedding, cushions and vases round out the vintage look in the spacious store.

[Industrial Revolution](#)

Industrial Revolution has been around for some time, providing modern and clean-lined furniture and accessories on the West-side. Here you'll find big-ticket items on which to base the look of a whole room, or the right accent piece to bring it together.

Paboom

2209 West Fourth Ave.

Paboom offers charming home accessories that don't break the bank, including functional kitchen wares and whimsical accents. This is a great alternative to accessorizing your place with items from Ikea.

[Walrus](#)

Items for you, your home and for gift-giving. Walrus features well-known international classics as well as work by local designers. Just a beautiful store.

[Gravity Pope](#)

One word: shoes!

[Epicurian Caffe Bistro](#)

The Epicurian Caffe used to be one of my favourite haunts as a student at art school, when I was constantly caffeinated on their cappuccinos. The charming cafe serves light Italian fare for breakfast and lunch, plus great coffee and excellent Cornetti.

[The Naam](#)

A Kitsilano institution since the 70s that has remained strong even though the hippies have moved on. The Naam is open 24 hours a day serving up their legendary sesame fries with house-made miso gravy and more. Hardwood floors, creaky doors and a vine-covered trellis on the patio make the west-coast, hippy-dippy experience complete.

[Coco et Olive](#)

Quietly quaint cafe with fresh daily eats such as Roasted Red Pepper and Chevre Tart, as well as a few grocery items, such as tapenades, crackers and more. Very French, mais oui?

Transylvania Bread

3474 W Broadway

Located next to Coco et Olive, Transylvania Bread bakes up enormous loaves of hearty bread in an authentic wood-fired oven. Look for their distinct wood-sided storefront and handmade sign.

[Granville Island](#)

Once old industrial land, Granville Island is now a popular place for locals and tourists that is home to a mix of restaurants, gift shops, galleries and arts spaces all worth a visit. Here are three of my favourite places:

Lee's Donuts

1689 Johnston Street in the Public Market

One of the few spots left in Vancouver to get a proper donut. This is a no-frills kind of place; order the tried-but-true home cut donut.

[Paper Ya](#)

For the paper-lovers, Paper Ya sells a delightful variety of Japanese and other papers, plus book-making supplies, stationery, gifts and gorgeous wrapping papers.

[Maiwa Handprints](#)

Unique to Canada, Maiwa works with international co-operatives to ensure fair and just conditions that highlight their amazing textiles and indigenous traditions. Find home decor items with an ethnic bent such as pillow covers and bedspreads, or hit up their supply store across the street for block printing supplies, fabrics and inspiring textile books.

[Granville Island Hotel](#)

A unique hotel with no two rooms the same. Simple, tasteful decor in a location close to downtown, the west-side, Main Street and of course, it's right on Granville Island. Pet friendly.

[Nitobe Memorial Garden](#)

Step into calm at the Nitobe Memorial Garden on the University of British Columbia's campus. The garden is authentic and traditional in design, and exudes harmony and beauty through placement of stones, trees and waterways. A visit in the spring during the blooming of the cherry trees is magical.

[West Side Beaches](#)

Vancouver almost has too many beaches! From Burrard Street all the way to the University of BC (UBC), you will find your perfect beach. There's Kits Beach where hard-bodies and tanned ladies show off, Jericho Beach where folks get sporty and families frolic, and all the way out at UBC, there's Wreck Beach where duds are optional.

[city, guides](#)