

ELLE DECOR

THE A-LIST
THE DESIGNERS
WE LOVE
RIGHT NOW

BRIGHT
thinking

ROOMS THAT LIFT YOUR SPIRITS

THE ULTIMATE SUMMER GIFT GUIDE

01152



JUNE 2011
USA \$5.99
ELLEDECOR.COM

A bird's-eye view of
downtown Vancouver

Vancouver

This seaside city is a stroller's delight, with dramatic architecture, outstanding cuisine, and diverse cultural riches, all in a stunning natural setting

By Claire Dederer

The light—gray and northern and surprisingly abundant—pours between tall, slender towers that look so new they might not even be built yet. The buildings cluster in elegant forests along the water's edge; at their feet sit the vibrant, brick-lined neighborhoods of Gastown, Yaletown, and the West End. To walk through Vancouver—and make no mistake,

this is one of the great walking cities of North America—is to travel continuously between old and new.

The old isn't terribly old in Vancouver: The city's history, at any rate its European history, is fairly brief. The Spanish came first; the English didn't show up until the late 18th century. During the next hundred years, trappers, >



ESSENTIAL VANCOUVER

The area code is 604, unless otherwise noted.

Explore the shore. Vancouver is best seen via its waterfront, with gob-smacking views of sea, sky, and mountains. Walk along the False Creek shoreline near Yaletown and take in the parade of public art; trace the outline of the magnificent green thumb that is Stanley Park; then follow the water's edge at laid-back Kitsilano. At sunset in

summertime, the urban beaches bordering English Bay are bustling with crowds of people hanging out, taking part in the best spectacle the city has to offer.

Have a snack attack. Vancouver is in the grip of *izakaya*-mania. These Japanese bars serve a variety of Asian small plates, from grilled snacks to sushi to udon noodles. There's no better way to spend an evening than sampling across the city. **See Chinatown by night.** Vancouver has one of the most vibrant Chinatowns

on the West Coast. In the daytime, shoppers looking for deals push their way through tourists. But the neighborhood's emerging nightlife scene gives it an edgy, youthful appeal after dark.

Set sail. The most charming way to traverse Vancouver is by boat. Little passenger ferries glide along False Creek, taking you from one side of town to the other (689-5858; theaquabus.com).

Go island hopping. In the late 1970s, the industrial wasteland of Granville Island became a success story of urban renewal when it was transformed into a shopping destination. Boutiques, restaurants, and buskers give the marketplace a vital (and hectic) feel.

WHAT TO SEE

Catriona Jeffries Gallery, 274 E. 1st Ave., 736-1554; catrionajeffries.com; The artist's choice for where to find international postconceptual work.

Contemporary Art Gallery, 555 Nelson St., 681-2700; contemporaryartgallery.ca; A challenging, ambitious, elegant art space funded by the government? This is one of the reasons you might wish you were a Canadian citizen. Every show is smartly curated, presenting even difficult work in an accessible way.

Museum of Anthropology, 6393 NW Marine Dr., 822-5087; moa.ubc.ca; A mind-bogglingly beautiful collection of First Nations art of the Northwest coast, housed in a masterpiece by Vancouver's most important contemporary architect, Arthur Erickson. High above the water on the University of British Columbia campus, the museum offers one of the most breathtaking views in the city.

Vancouver Art Gallery, 750 Hornby St., 662-4700; vanartgallery.bc.ca; This centrally located museum features work by important local artists, including beloved post-Impressionist icon Emily Carr.

WHERE TO STAY

The Fairmont Hotel Vancouver, 900 W. Georgia St., 684-3131; fairmont.com/hotelvancouver; The grande dame of Vancouver hotels is wearing her age beautifully.

The Keefer, 133 Keefer St., 688-1983; thekeefers.com; Three ultrachic suites and a luxurious penthouse complete with rooftop pool. Film folks use the hotel as a home away from L.A.; you can stay for a night or two as well.

Loden Hotel, 1177 Melville St., 669-5060; theloden.com; A beautifully designed boutique hotel that won't break the bank. The rooms manage to riff on '40s glamour while maintaining a sleek, contemporary look.

Pan Pacific, 999 Canada Pl., Ste. #300, 662-8111; panpacific.com; Located on a pier overlooking the harbor, this high rise has views of the coastal mountains and the city skyline.

Shangri-La Hotel, 1128 W. Georgia St., 689-1120; shangri-la.com; Top-of-the-line luxury with a cool, Asian twist. Claim

to fame: The Dalai Lama stayed here on his last visit to Vancouver.

WHERE TO EAT

Bao Bei Chinese Brasserie, 163 Keefer St., 688-0876; bao-bei.ca; This chic spot serves modern versions of classic Chinese dishes.

Hapa Izakaya, 1479 Robson St. and other locations, 689-4272; hapaizakaya.com; A stylish, crowded Japanese tapas place in the heart of the Robson Street shopping district.

Maenam, 1938 W. 4th Ave., 730-5579; maenam.ca; This sleek Thai bistro is packed and sceney, but in a fun way.

Motomachi Shokudo, 740 Denman St., 609-0310; Great ramen in a rustic-yet-cool environment. People in Vancouver love to argue about who serves the best ramen; this sweet cafe is giving the old-timers a run for their money.

Refuel, 1944 W. 4th Ave., 288-7905; refuelrestaurant.com; A hip reinterpretation of the classic diner. It's hard to resist artisanal charcuterie in a cleverly designed midcentury-modern room.

Rodney's Oyster House, 1228 Hamilton St., 609-0080; rohvan.com; A casual Yaletown hangout where the seafood is prepared simply but perfectly.

Vij's, 1480 W. 11th Ave., 736-6664; vjsrestaurant.ca; One of the city's best restaurants, Vij's has served exquisite Indian cuisine for almost two decades.

The subtly seasoned food, the casually festive vibe, and the warm service make you feel like you're at the most cosmopolitan dinner party imaginable.

Zakkushi, 823 Denman St. and other locations, 685-1136; zakkushi.com; Meat on the charcoal grill, punk rock on the stereo, and lots of smiling faces. A great stop for a late-night snack.

WHERE TO SHOP

Gravitypop, 2205 W. 4th Ave., 731-7673; gravitypop.com; Shoe heaven for men and women in Kitsilano. Camper, Fluevog, Fiorentini + Baker, and Giraudon are all served in a cheerfully decadent atmosphere.

Lark, 2315 Main St., 879-5275; lark.me; Heritage brands, selvage denim, and hipster staples in a cool shop-front.

Misch, 2960 Granville St., 731-1017; misch.ca; Emerging designers showcased in a serene South Granville space.

Old Faithful Shop, 320 W. Cordova St., 778-327-9376; oldfaithfulshop.com; A stunning Gastown emporium with a vintage, found-object feel; displays and furniture alike are made from cunningly repurposed salvaged wood.

Orling & Wu, 28 Water St., 568-6718; oringandwu.com; This Gastown interior design store has a charming European sensibility.

Provide, 529 Beatty St., 632-0095; providehome.com; Home accessories and gifts in a bright, high-ceilinged space, with pared-down tableware by Heath Ceramics, sculptural vases and bowls by Rina Menardi, and jazzy pillows by Judy Ross.