

October 1, 2016

Canada's haunted capital gets dressed up for October

Month-long Halloween campaign features swarms of bats in alleyways, trees that look back at you, urban black cats, a witch and so much more

VICTORIA, B.C. – Expect October to be another strong month for tourism in Greater Victoria as the region comes alive with Halloween spirit, thanks to investments in citywide décor designed to surprise and delight visitors and locals alike. The campaign reflects a collaborative partnership between Destination Marketing Fee hoteliers, Tourism Victoria, the Downtown Victoria Business Association, the City of Victoria, The Bay Centre and Market Square.

Spooky additions adding to the ambiance of the city include:

- A swarm of bats in Trounce Alley
- A bat cyclone (a family-friendly installation featuring Halloween bats flying in circles) in Centennial Square
- Six city benches that will be affixed with bat wings to transform sitters into bats — perfect for capturing a photo souvenir
- Trees on Government Street lit up in orange and green, some with luminescent eyes bringing them to life
- The Bay Centre becoming The Bat Centre at the Fort Street entrance, complete with bat cyclone and a smoking gothic-style fountain
- Market Square transforming into Market Scare, with special additions to the wrought-iron gates and many surprises throughout the property
- Black cats perched around the downtown core, and a witch flying over the clock tower at city hall.

“We had a fantastic summer season,” says Paul Nursey, President and CEO of Tourism Victoria. “As part of Tourism Victoria’s strategy, we are working hard to drive visitation in the off-season to ensure a healthy amount of business in the destination year-round. Initiatives like these and the one we do around romance in February really contribute to creating an economic impact for local businesses.”

The campaign, which runs until October 31, will also include digital advertising in Seattle and Vancouver, including 15 second spots on Global Television in Vancouver and print advertising in the *Seattle Times*. Picking up on our successful spring campaign, *Beyond Words*, the Halloween edition aims to disrupt visitors with tag lines such as “Freak Out at the Fang-Tastic Thrillerism of Victoria, B.C.”

“Victoria has been cementing its reputation as Canada’s Haunted Capital by investing in Halloween-themed marketing during the month of October for three years now,” says Trina Mousseau, Chief Marketing Officer at Tourism Victoria. “Our destination offers an authentic and fun Halloween experience that makes us the perfect getaway to get your spook on, and the world is taking notice. Victoria’s special Halloween experience has been featured in the *New York Times*, *Vancouver Sun*, *Calgary Herald*, BuzzFeed and several other outlets over the last few years. It is another tourism driver for us.”



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"It's great to see the Halloween spirit alive and well in Victoria," says Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps. "I'm pleased to see this playfulness happening here in our 'Haunted Capital' and hope that residents and visitors alike are delighted by the spooky surprises they encounter in our downtown."

"The DVBA is very excited to be part of this spooktacular event downtown," says Kerri Milton, Executive Director of the Downtown Victoria Business Association. "This kind of partnership and collaboration helps to create excitement throughout the city and vibrancy to our city streets. The DVBA is also proud to add their Pumpkin Pursuit for all the downtown merchants to this exciting season."

"The Bay Centre is pleased to partner with Tourism Victoria, delivering a program that showcases experiential marketing at its best," says Darlene Hollstein, General Manager of The Bay Centre. "This year's installation creates a value-added experience for locals and out of town guests visiting The Bay Centre, offering unexpected and unplanned forms of activities that reinforce the vibrancy of downtown Victoria."

For more information, visit TourismVictoria.com/Halloween.

ABOUT TOURISM VICTORIA: Tourism Victoria (Greater Victoria Visitors and Convention Bureau) is the official not-for-profit destination marketing organization working in partnership with more than 900 members in Greater Victoria.

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