

ARTS CULTURE & HISTORY

Three Day Sample Itinerary

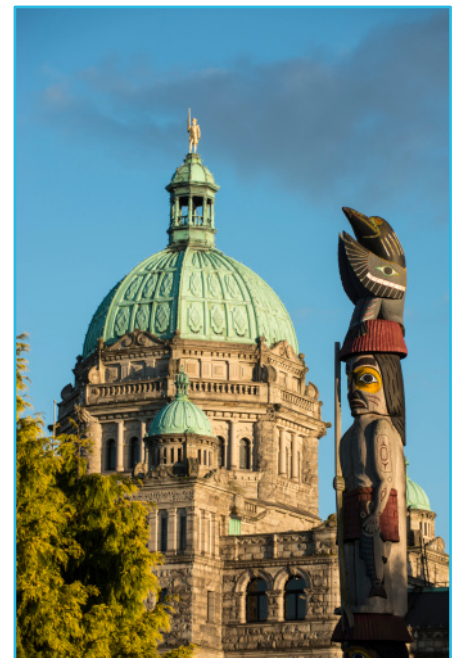
Victoria, the oldest city in the Pacific Northwest, has a rich and fascinating history. Explore our past and celebrate our rich culture through a variety of galleries, museums, heritage sites, and cultural events. Victoria and Vancouver Island boast a year-round schedule of entertainment bursting with talent!

Day One

Start your day at the must-see **Royal BC Museum** and experience the Natural and Human History of British Columbia and its First Peoples through unique displays and galleries. Highly realistic and inviting displays such as the Ice Age, Old Town and Coastal Forest dioramas provide visitors with a sense of having truly experienced the authentic settings. The museum is also host to periodic exhibits of international renown. www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca



Following your museum visit, walk across the street to the **Parliament Buildings** where the elected representatives called Members of the Legislative Assembly or MLAs meet to shape the future of the province by debating and passing the laws that govern British Columbia. This 12.5 acre property has served as a site of government in British Columbia since 1864. The original structures on this site, known as the Birdcages, were built to house the elected assembly for the Colony of Vancouver Island. They continued to be used by the Legislative Assembly after British Columbia became a Province of Canada in 1871. Construction of the current Parliament Buildings started in 1893 and they were officially opened on February 10, 1898. The architect, Francis Rattenbury, was just 25 years old when he won the competition to design the new buildings. Free guided tours are provided throughout the year. While visiting the Parliament Buildings, you may be interested in observing debates in the Chamber when the House is sitting. Entry to the galleries is normally without reservation; however, seats are often full during Question Period (shortly after 1:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday), so plan to arrive early. www.leg.bc.ca



Continue walking on Belleville Street to the **Bateman Foundation Gallery of Nature**, which displays the largest exhibit of original works by the world's greatest wildlife artist. Robert Bateman, a living legend, strides the world of art and nature. This exhibition unleashes the full scope of his work from the largest original painting to the smallest drawing. Crossing the years and continents, visitors will explore the life of this iconic artist from his childhood to his latest masterpiece. This collection of over 160 works is the largest ever assembled for public view. A total of ten galleries cover different aspects of Bateman's work, and two of these galleries are of special interest to youth and children. The Family Gallery includes a hands-on nature play area for children under 10, and the Kathryn Iredale Gallery focuses on Bateman's work about birds. Here,



children of all ages can explore the collection kinaesthetically by orchestrating multiple bird calls through a multi-channel sound system and sensors on the paintings. <https://batemanfoundation.org/>

Day Two

Be sure to make a trip to **Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse**, a National Historic Site located just a 20 minute drive from downtown Victoria. It is a coast artillery fort built in the late 1890s to defend Victoria and the Esquimalt Naval Base. The Fort includes three gun batteries, underground magazines, command posts, guardhouses, barracks and searchlight emplacements.

Signs, audio and video stations, and friendly, knowledgeable staff tell the stories of this national historic site. Families often bring a picnic lunch and stay for a half a day. While the kids investigate the lighthouse, parents can enjoy the spectacular sea and mountain views. www.fortroddhill.com

After your picnic, make sure to visit **Hatley Park**, one of Canada's largest and most diverse National Historic Sites. At the centre is a magnificent castle built in 1908 by former British Columbia Premier and coal baron, James Dunsmuir. Authentic and beautifully preserved, this 565 acre Edwardian estate is nestled on the southern tip of Vancouver Island, just 25 minutes from downtown Victoria. Echoes from the past link you to present day adventure as you enjoy daily tours of Hatley Castle, visit the museum and gift shop or stroll through the Japanese, Italian and Rose Gardens. The intimate setting and gracious hospitality is ideal for weddings, afternoon tea, meetings, retreats, conference, corporate team building, motion picture films, or special events. www.hatleypark.ca

Day Three

Since 1951 the **Art Gallery of Greater Victoria** has been located just 10 minutes from downtown Victoria in a beautiful park-like setting. The Gallery is housed in a combination of contemporary exhibition spaces and the remarkable 1889 Spencer mansion. It is the largest public art gallery on Vancouver Island and one of the most significant in Canada with its important collection of visual and decorative arts. In addition to historical and contemporary art, the Gallery has an outstanding collection of art from Asia including one of the only authentic Shinto shrines outside of Japan showcased in an Asian Garden. www.aggv.ca

Next, wonder along Fort Street, to **Craigdarroch Castle**. You can also take a city tour with CVS Tours, or hop on hop off bus tour with Gray Line Sightseeing to the Castle, an 1890's mansion with exquisite stained-glass windows, woodwork and period antiques. Built by wealthy coal baron, Robert Dunsmuir, Craigdarroch Castle is a stunning example of the finest architecture, materials and craftsmanship available in the Victorian era. See the spectacular oak staircase and climb 87 steps to the Tower for the best views in Victoria. www.craigdarrochcastle.com www.cvstours.com www.sightseeingvictoria.com



On your way back downtown along Fort Street, don't miss a stop at **Wentworth Villa Architectural Heritage Museum**. Originally the home of Captain Henry Bailey Ella and his family, Wentworth is now a museum focusing on Victoria's residential heritage. The rooms on the first floor of the Villa are exhibition spaces that feature other heritage homes from the region built sometime between the late 19th century and the interwar years of the 20th century. The upper level rooms feature artefacts of the Villa on display. These include an array of items ranging from dinnerware and tombstones to layers of wallpaper uncovered during restoration. These rooms provide a space to see what went on during restoration of Wentworth Villa and gain insight into heritage home preservation.

www.wentworthvilla.com

Make sure to visit the birthplace and childhood home of Emily Carr, one of Canada's most famous artists and authors, located in historic James Bay. Built in 1863, **Carr House** is just minutes away from the Inner Harbour. It has been restored to accurately depict the Victorian household and lifestyle of the Carr family. Emily's childhood home features a people's Gallery which alternately features works by local artists and original works by Emily Carr.

www.emilycarr.com



Contact Us

For more information on this and other itinerary suggestions, contact the Travel Trade team at Destination Greater Victoria.

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