

Victoria, British Columbia

The challenge in British Columbia is not figuring out what to do, but how to do it all. Set between the Pacific Ocean in the west and the magnificent Rocky Mountains in the east, British Columbia is Canada's westernmost province. Blessed with breathtaking landscapes, BC is home to a geographical diversity that lends itself to a vast array of activities and adventures. There are mountains to climb, rivers to run, beaches to comb, forests to hike, parks to stroll and warm summer lakes to laze about on. The province generally enjoys a temperate climate but where there are mountains, there is snow. Renowned for the steep and the deep of its world-class ski terrain, BC is bustling with energy and opportunity as it prepares for the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. Always a gold medal destination for savvy travelers, BC offers not just outdoor adventure but cosmopolitan culture, world class exhibitions, uptown shopping and fabulous dining. From sophisticated cities to breathtaking scenery, there is something for everyone in BC.

Interested in learning more about BC before you visit? What to wear? What to expect? Where to go? We've put together lots of information to help you get the most out of your vacation to our province.

British Columbia Fast Facts:

- **Capital city:** Victoria on Vancouver Island
- **Population:** 4.1 million (Concentrated in Vancouver, population 2.1 million, and Victoria, population 345,000)
- Canada's third most populated province (after Ontario and Quebec)
- **History:** Entered Canadian confederation in 1871
- **Total Area:** 944,735 sq km (364,764 sq mi)
- **Highest Point:** Fair-weather Mountain, 4,663 m (15,299 ft)
- **Lowest Point:** Pacific Ocean, sea level
- **Longest River:** Fraser River, 1,368 km (850 mi)
- **Largest Lake:** Williston Lake (reservoir), 1,761 sq km (680 sq mi)
- **Largest Island:** Vancouver Island, 32,137 sq km (12,408 sq mi)
- **Provincial Flower:** Pacific dogwood
- **Provincial Tree:** Western red cedar



Victoria Bug Zoo

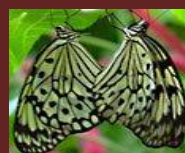
One of the most popular attractions in downtown Victoria is the Victoria Bug Zoo. Here, visitors can see giant walking-sticks and glow-in-the-dark mating ritual of alien-eyed praying mantids. Watch ants hard at work at Canada's largest ant farm. Knowledgeable "bug guides" will answer your questions and help you safely handle some of the creepy crawlies.



Victoria is crawling with bugs! See scorpions. Learn about the macabre mating ritual of alien-eyed praying mantids. Watch ants hard at work at Canada's largest ant farm. Knowledgeable "bug guides" will answer your questions and help you safely handle some of the creepy crawlies.

Victoria Butterfly Gardens

The moist, fragrant air of Victoria Butterfly Gardens is alive with the vivid color of butterflies, about 2,000 viewed at all stages of their life cycle: from caterpillar through to chrysalis to fully-formed, winged beauty.



Gardens is alive with bird calls and shot at any given time. Butterflies can be viewed at all stages of their life cycle: from caterpillar through to chrysalis to fully-formed, winged beauty.