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tawcan

A Twilight Weekend

Vancouver, 3 Days

Table of contents:

Guide Description 2

My List 3

Vancouver Snapshot 7

Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: For over a year, Vancouver has been home to the Twilight cast and it's been causing quite a stir in the city. Filming locations have been kept heavily under wraps, making it hard for fans to catch a glimpse of the stars (but making it easier for filming to be done). Here's a list of a few places that the cast have been spotted while they have been in Vancouver.

My List

contact:

tel: 1 604 331 1000 / 1 800 325 3535

fax: 1 604 331 1001

<http://www.sheratonwallcentre.com/>

location:

1088 Burrard St
Vancouver BC V6Z2R9

1 Sheraton Wall Centre

DESCRIPTION: The tallest -- and with 736 rooms the largest -- hotel in the city, the Wall Centre is hard to miss. The hotel occupies a curved spire of black glass and a second, earlier tower with a fountain-filled urban garden in between. It may remind you of a futuristic office park, a feeling that's unfortunately reinforced in the rooms, which have floor-to-ceiling polarized glass windows that look out onto great views but can't be opened, so it feels like you're always wearing sunglasses. This is upscale Sheraton at its best (or worst, if you hate huge hotels), and because of its size it caters to tour groups. Rooms have a clean, contemporary look with blond-wood furnishings and nice bathrooms. Guests have the use of a huge health club with an indoor pool and an ayurvedic wellness spa. © Frommer's

MY NOTE: Robert Pattinson has been seen on numerous occasions walking in and out of the Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre during the filming of Twilight.



contact:

tel: 604 681 2739

fax: 604 685 9057

<http://www.markjamesgroup.com/>

location:

1111 Mainland Street
Vancouver BC V6B 2T9

hours:

11:30a-midnight Th-Sa,
11:30a-11p Su-W

2 Yaletown Brewing Co.

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Go on a Sunday for the pizza and beer specials!

DESCRIPTION: Yaletown Brewing Co. is nestled in Yaletown, one of Vancouver's most sought after neighborhoods. There are many high end restaurants in the area, but Yaletown Brewing Co. appeals to all wallet sizes. The restaurant on one side provides diners with an optimal place to have a family dinner. The children in your party will certainly find something that will meet their satisfaction. The pub on the other side is always a bustling place on any given night. They serve everything from pizza, pasta, salads and burgers, so no palate will be left out. They also brew their own beer on the premises. The Red Truck Ale is quite delicious and pairs well with the BBQ Chicken Pizza. Start with dinner and spend the rest of the evening playing pool or sitting by the large fireplace in the pub. © NileGuide

MY NOTE: When Twilight first came to town, Rob Pattinson was seen having a pint and being gracious to his fans here.



Photo courtesy of Yaletown Brewing Company

contact:

tel: +1 604 602 0835

<http://www.glowbalgrill.com/>

location:

1079 Mainland Street
Vancouver BC V6B 5P9

hours:

3 Glowbal Grill

DESCRIPTION: This bustling new dining place is acclaimed to be one of the best in town with Chef Sean Riley creating wonders at his workplace. The decor and cuisine are trendy and innovative, the ambience is lively and the service impeccable. Good menu options include the Tequila Rubbed Lamb, Tiger Prawns and the all-time favorite Ginger Chicken. This grill also has an ongoing global food fiesta, which presents



Photo courtesy of Glowbal Grill

Mo to Su from 11:30 AM to 12:00 AM

delicacies from different corners of the world. A good time to trot down is October, & Swiss dishes will be up on the menu. © wcities.com

MY NOTE: Rob Pattinson celebrated his 23rd birthday here. Glowbal has a stellar menu that's fit for a celeb.

contact:

tel: +1 877 451 1777
http://www.vancouversightseeing.com/

location:

3945 Myrtle Street
Vancouver BC

4 Capilano Suspension Bridge

DESCRIPTION: Test your bravery as you cling to the rope that holds the wobbly bridge, made from wooden planks, together. Once you get over the initial fear, you will be blown away by the view of the Capilano River that is 70 meters below you. The bridge is about 136 meters long and is a basic suspension bridge that draws many visitors on a daily basis to its North Vancouver location. The original bridge was built by a Scottish civil engineer named George Grant Mackay in 1888 and was replaced after his death by a wire cable bridge in 1903. The bridge has since gone through many changes, upgrades and reinforcements since that time and is very sturdy. © NileGuide

MY NOTE: Many photo shoots were carried out in this area and it's really no surprise because the foliage is rich, lush and better than any studio's forest.



contact:

tel: +1 604 669 8132
fax: +1 604 669 0181
http://www.robsonstreet.ca/

location:

Robson Street
Vancouver BC V6E 1B5

hours:

Shops are usually open 9a-9p daily; restaurants and bars later

5 Robson Street

DESCRIPTION: This was where the original German community in Vancouver shopped. Robsonstrasse, as it was formerly known, was lined with delis, bakeries and restaurants. Today, it's one of the city's most fashionable shopping streets: Alfred Sung, Salvatore Ferragamo, Chanel, Rodier Paris and Stephane de Raucourt are just some of the big names in this urban shopping destination. Options for grabbing a bite abound. Find everything from Schnitzel to Sushi along this bustling thoroughfare. It is also cruising central in the summertime, with cars and sidewalks filled with people enjoying the warm summer air. © wcities.com

MY NOTE: When not filming and the cast of Twilight needs to take a shopping break, they have been known to stroll down Robson Street and grab a coffee.



contact:

tel: +1 604 683 2000 (Tourist Information Center)
fax: +1 604 682 6839

location:

Mainland Street
Vancouver BC V6B 2T9

6 Yaletown

DESCRIPTION: Yaletown has transformed itself drastically since the World's Fair in 1986. Once an industrial warehouse area, Yaletown is now a favorite haunt to those who like the finer things in life. Vancouver is called "Hollywood North" and it is not uncommon to see a movie being filmed on various streets around town. When celebrities are in town, Yaletown is where they like to hang out. Sit on one of the many patios and keep your eyes peeled for movie stars. Or, step into one of the charming boutiques where you will find the latest fashions in clothing, shoes and accessories. Some of the city's finest boutique hotels have made their way into Yaletown where guests are pampered, spoiled and treated like kings and queens. Boutique hotel not in your budget? Don't worry; join the locals that go into the hotel lounges for a drink and to be a part of the action. © wcities.com



MY NOTE: On a almost weekly basis, many of the Twilight cast members are seen shopping and walking around Yaletown and on occasion, grabbing a bite at one of the many restaurants.

contact:

tel: 1 604 682 5511
fax: 1 604 682 5513
<http://www.vancouver.suttonplace.com/>

location:

845 Burrard St
Vancouver BC V6Z2K6

7 Sutton Place Hotel

DESCRIPTION: Don't let the bland, corporate-looking exterior fool you: This hotel has won many awards, and is one of only two AAA five-diamond hotels in Canada. Once you enter the lobby, elegantly decorated with marble, fresh flowers, chandeliers, and French-leaning European furnishings, it's pure luxury, comparable to the Four Seasons. The rooms here don't skimp on size or comfort, and are tastefully decorated in a traditional European style. The one- or two-bedroom junior suites have a small parlor; in larger suites, French doors separate the bedroom from the large sitting area. The European-style health club and spa has a big heated pool and sun deck. **Facilities:** Restaurant; lounge (w/bistro fare); bakery-cafe; indoor pool; health club; full-service spa; Jacuzzi; sauna; complimentary bikes; children's program; concierge; business center; 24-hr. room service; laundry service; same-day dry-cleaning service; nonsmoking rooms © Frommer's



MY NOTE: The Sutton Place Hotel is ripe with Hollywood types. Have a drink in the lounge, you never know who you may see.

contact:

tel: 604.684.1844
<http://www.boneta.ca/>

location:

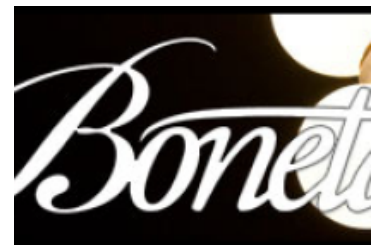
1 W Cordova St
Vancouver BC V6B

8 Boneta

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Though the menu does not always have vegan and vegetarian options, they are more than willing to accommodate these requests.

DESCRIPTION: Situated in Gastown, Boneta oozes hip sophistication with its stylish décor and allures savvy palates with their food and drink menu. Many restaurants



From Boneta's website

overwhelm diners with an extensive menu that makes it hard to focus, not Boneta. Their menu provides patrons with just enough options so that everyone will be pleased, but doesn't leave hungry mouths at a loss when it comes time to order. Their menu items are listed by Cold, Hot, Sweets & Cheeses and is unlike most paper menus as they project theirs in large font onto the walls. Environmentally friendly, I think so! Though the menu may not always have vegetarian and vegan options, they are more than happy to cater to those needs. Boneta prides itself with using fresh and seasonal ingredients, which means that the menu is constantly changing and diners will never be bored. Not only is the food at Boneta something to write home about, but they have one of the best cocktail lists in Vancouver. The Mr. Samuels is a definite thirst quencher. Boneta has a stellar atmosphere that creates a perfect platter to serve you something delicious and satiate your thirst.

© NileGuide

MY NOTE: Most of the cast from Twilight came to Boneta to celebrate the movie coming to a close. They were wined and dined by Boneta and left the restaurant, only to be greeted by eager fans waiting outside.

contact:
tel: 604-689-2832

location:
300 Water Street
Vancouver BC V6B

9 Water St Cafe

DESCRIPTION: The Water Street Café is a charming restaurant in Gastown, across the cobbled streets from the Steam Clock. With two levels, a small bar and crisp white table linens, the Water Street Café sets the perfect mood for a date night or dinner with friends and family. Whether you're looking for a cool and crisp salad, a roasted vegetable panini or a hearty bowl of pasta, you're bound to find something that will tickle your tastebuds on the menu. The Water Street Café has an extensive wine, beer and drink list, which makes pairing with your food a breeze. They have been in business since 1988, which speaks volumes for any restaurant in a thriving city where new restaurants pop up on a daily basis. If you are looking for superb service, a classic atmosphere and a dependable menu, the Water Street Café is the perfect spot for you at lunch or dinner.

© NileGuide

MY NOTE: Rob Pattinson and Kristen Stewart grabbed a bite to eat at the Water Street Café before they hit up the Kings of Leon concert.



From the Water St Cafe's website

Vancouver Snapshot

Local Info

Vancouver is Canada's third largest city and the only major city that's surrounded by ocean, mountains, sand and farmland. It's unique landscape makes it appealing to travelers with varying interests; whether you're into hiking, sailing, skiing, snowboarding, shopping or swimming, Vancouver has something that will keep everyone entertained. The cultures that embody Vancouver are as diverse as its landscape and can be seen in the many different businesses and neighborhoods around the city.

Downtown

Downtown Vancouver is home to the Business, Shopping and Nightlife Districts. Although a major city, Vancouver is spread over a relatively small area, which makes getting around the city a breeze. Downtown you can find Robson Street, Vancouver's most famous shopping district. Just off of Robson, you will find high-end boutiques, luxurious hotels and divine restaurants.

Head North of Robson Street and you will find yourself heavily immersed in Vancouver's Business and Financial District. Tall skyscrapers tower the streets and locals dressed in power suits charge down the sidewalks. Mixed amongst the concrete and glass you will find many cafés and perfect spots to stop and have lunch at. Canada Place is on the edge of the Business District, perched on the water and looks out over the water onto North and West Vancouver. Canada Place is home to many conventions and events that attract visitors from far and wide. Nestled at the back of Canada Place is the IMAX Theatre, where the movie list is constantly changing. Canada Place is also the anchor point to many cruise ships and during the summer it's a busy hub as the ships come and go.

The West End

West of Robson Street is Vancouver's West End. The West End is a colorful neighborhood that's rich in diversity and full of delightful cafés, restaurants and shops. The pink bus stops and Gay Pride flags give this neighborhood charm and a warm welcome to all visitors that stroll through. Davie Street is home to the West End's busy shopping and lively nightlife district. Stroll all the way down

Davie Street and you will find yourself face-to-face with the ocean. English Bay is popular amongst locals for its great view, perfect picnic backdrop and sensational sunsets. Stanley Park, Vancouver's own rainforest surrounded by city, is a short walk, bike or bus ride from the West End. The Seawall runs around the city and provides an easy path to get from English Bay to Stanley Park.

Gastown

Gastown is just a hop, skip and a jump away from Vancouver's Business District and is the oldest neighborhood in the city. During the summer, when Vancouver's tourism is at its peak, Gastown is buzzing with visitors. There are plenty of art galleries, shops, restaurants and interesting historical facts that draw tourists to this area of town. In the heart of Gastown there is a tribute to Gassy Jack, Vancouver's first settler, and it draws visitors to stand around and gaze at his statue. Gastown is famous for its vocal Gastown Steam Clock and it's not uncommon to see a crowd huddled around the musical timepiece on any given day of the year. Wander down the red cobbled streets, fitted with trendy boutiques and art shops, and admire some of Vancouver's oldest architecture and Victorian street lamps.

Chinatown

A short walk away from Gastown, and you will find yourself being welcomed by the Vancouver Chinatown Millennium Gate upon entering Chinatown. Vancouver's Chinatown is the second largest in North America, second only to San Francisco's. Rich with culture and many different shops, you will feel as though you have traveled outside of Canada while you wander the foreign streets. While in Chinatown, make sure to stop in at Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden and The Chinese Cultural Centre. Traditional Chinese culture has been transported into Vancouver via these attractions. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden is ripe with customary Chinese architecture and botany. Chinatown is a great spot to grab some dim sum and pick up a souvenir to take back home.

Yaletown

Southeast of Robson Street is Yaletown, one of Vancouver's newest and trendiest neighborhoods. Known historically for being the city's warehouse district, it took a turn for change during Expo'86 and has since become a place filled with unique shops, new condos and luxurious restaurants. Perched on the edges of the Seawall, Vancouver's Nightlife District on Granville Street and Robson Street, Yaletown is a central hub to many of Vancouver's neighborhoods. Yaletown is a great place to spend the afternoon shopping and dining on one of the many patios that are scattered in the area.

False Creek

Across from Yaletown is False Creek, which is a quiet residential area along the water and it's also home of the Olympic Village and Science World. Twelve blocks up from the water and you will find yourself on Broadway Street, which is a bustling street that stretches from East Vancouver to Kitsilano. There are many buses that go along Broadway, which makes it an ideal route to get from one side of the city to another.

South Granville

South Granville is smack in the middle of False Creek and Kitsilano. Granville Street extends itself from Downtown all the way out to Richmond, a suburb of Vancouver. South Granville has many great stores, restaurants, antique shops and art galleries. Take a wander down to Granville Island and you will be at one of Vancouver's best attractions that stirs both locals and visitors together. Public transportation makes it a breeze to quickly get from Downtown Vancouver to South Granville or Granville Island.

Kitsilano

Just past the South Granville area you will find yourself in Kitsilano. "Kits", as locals refer to it, is home to Vancouver's most popular beaches and depending on how secluded you want to be, there's a beach to suit whatever your preference may be. Kits Beach is usually packed with both young and old people that spend the day playing volleyball, swimming, sun tanning and picnicking. Further into Kitsilano there are some less busy beaches; Jericho and Spanish Banks are fantastic spots

Vancouver Snapshot continued

where you won't feel overwhelmed by crowds. Wreck Beach is well known amongst liberal sunbathers and clothing is optional at this beach. With two main shopping streets, West Broadway and 4th Avenue, you will be spoiled for choice when it comes to stores, restaurants and spas. 4th Avenue is just a short walk from the beach, which makes it both convenient and easy to access.

North Vancouver & West Vancouver

Locals usually give directions that indicate North, South, West and East and an easy way to figure out where North is, is to look for the mountains. North of Downtown Vancouver is North Vancouver and West Vancouver, or as locals call them, "North Van" and "West Van". North and West Van are both lovely residential and commercial areas. Taking a trip up the mountain to go hiking or skiing is a breeze when you're on this side of town. Cypress Mountain and Grouse Mountain are a short drive away, and a very scenic one at that. Some of the best hikes and biking trails are in North Vancouver. Capilano Suspension Bridge and Lynn Canyon are both popular choices amongst locals and tourists when they want to get their heart rate up and enjoy some fresh air. Lonsdale Quay is like North Van's Granville Island. It's a busy market filled with many different counters that range from fresh fish, creamy cheeses and tasty baked treats. If you're going to Whistler, you can take the Sea-to-Sky Highway from West Vancouver up to Whistler.

East Vancouver

East Vancouver is one of the city's older neighborhoods that is quickly gaining popularity amongst young families and attracting all types of crowds with their hip stores and diverse variation of restaurants and bars. Commercial Street is always hopping with people because there's something for everyone there. Vancouver's own "Little Italy" is on Commercial and there are plenty of stores and cafés to get a fix for something your Italian Mamma would make you. The PNE has been around in East Van for years and still has its original roller coaster. There are a number of new and old rides that create an exhilarating afternoon for kids, or the kid in you.

© NileGuide

History

This young city was once a wild, densely forested and mountainous coastal area inhabited only by First Nations people and wildlife. Many events have combined to transform the once wild setting into the thriving cultural and business center it is today. Yet the city retains its natural beauty, now set around a diverse urban core. And to think it all began with a couple of explorers who recognized the bountiful resources and spectacular potential of the area.

When British explorer Captain James Cook first arrived here in 1778, the natives in Nootka Sound mistook the captain and his raggedy crew for a boatful of strange, transformed salmon. It's no wonder, really; the First Nations had lived undisturbed for thousands of years. The region's temperate climate, coastal location and excellent food supply made it an ideal place for natives to subsist comfortably for most of the year. Many, including the Musqueam, Kwakwaka'wakw and Squamish lived and thrived along the shorelines of Burrard Inlet. But then the white European settlers came and claimed the land as their own, altering years of relatively peaceful living.

The city's transformation began with explorers seeking the Northwest Passage, a sea route through northern America. In 1791, Spanish explorer Jose Maria Narvaez came through the waters but decided not to go ashore. In June of the following year, two more explorers showed up. England's Captain George Vancouver led his ship, the sloop H.M.S. Discovery, into Burrard Inlet and later went on to chart the area's waters. He exchanged information with Spanish explorer Dionisio Alcalá Galiano, who showed Captain Vancouver maps he had already made of the area.

Though the British controlled the area, it wasn't until 1808 that they sent Simon Fraser to set up trading posts in the region. The fur trade, which was followed by gold rush mania, would forever alter the region.

Settlers thrived on fish, lumber, fur and farming. In 1858, gold was discovered on the Fraser River and, within weeks, nearly 30,000 Americans had flocked to the area in search of bounty. Fearing a takeover by the Americans, the British declared the mainland a British colony, thereby keeping the prosperity under its control. In 1859,

New Westminster (once called Sapperton because British sappers were stationed there) was incorporated and declared the capital of the province.

Meanwhile, a talkative gentleman named John Deighton pulled his canoe into Burrard Inlet and decided to capitalize on the area's industry. The village he founded was eventually named Gastown after him, the name derived from his loquacious nickname: "Gassy Jack." Deighton opened up a successful saloon, serving hundreds of thirsty mill workers and prospectors in the budding town. Gastown began to fill up with small shops and services. Deighton was more than just a notorious saloon owner, though. Some historians say he was the founding father of Vancouver because he had faith in its potential before anyone else did.

As the population grew, people moved outward to settle in areas now known as Burnaby and Delta. The first newspaper went to the presses in 1861, and the first hospital was built the following year. In 1865, the first telegraph lines reached here, and the first message to travel along its wires announced the assassination of U.S. President Abraham Lincoln. Other urban staples appeared including a rudimentary postal system and a stagecoach line for transportation. Extensive logging soon cleared the area.

Canada was confederated in 1867, and the sweeping effects of this change were felt almost immediately in Vancouver. One of the pivotal moments in the history of the city was the extension of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1884. The railroad now reached clear across the country and brought thousands of people to the area to do business and settle. Rapid development began, and the population grew from 400 to 13,000 in four years.

In 1886, the city of Vancouver—population 1,000—was officially incorporated. Two months later, the Great Fire of 1886, driven by strong winds, destroyed virtually the entire downtown area in just 20 minutes. That same day, after the smoke had cleared, with just half-a-dozen buildings left standing, the citizens of Vancouver began to rebuild. Buildings erected that year still stand today. One of the most significant changes brought by the fire was the transformation of the town's military reserve into the now famous Stanley Park,

Vancouver Snapshot continued

the city's oasis. The opening of the Panama Canal, which facilitated travel, imports and exports to and from Europe, spurred growth of the city's port, located in one of the world's finest natural, year-round harbors.

By 1928, the Lower Mainland's population had reached more than 150,000. Many memorable mayors governed the growing city; these included Gerry McGreer. McGreer was an enthusiastic politician who came into office in the 1930s with election guns blazing. He promised to eradicate gambling, white slavery, corruption and other issues important to the city's wealthy residents. He promised the impossible, but he did succeed in building the Art Deco Vancouver City Hall in 1936.

Like everywhere else, the Great Depression took a toll on the city. Some growth, however, did occur in the 1930s, including the creation of the Vancouver Art Gallery and opening of a steel plant in Burnaby.

World War Two pulled the city out of its economic lull: shipyards, factories, parts exporting and real estate boomed. Human rights also got a positive injection when East Indian and Chinese-Canadian citizens finally got the provincial vote in 1947. Japanese-Canadians and First Nations people, however, had to wait until 1949 for the same right.

The 1950s was an era of rapid growth and prosperity, including the extensive development of suburban Vancouver. The population rose to 800,000 by 1961. The 1960s saw many additions to the city's physical and cultural portfolio: the B.C. Lions won the Canadian Football League's Grey Cup, the Vancouver Canucks debuted in the National Hockey League, and Simon Fraser University, the Second Narrows Bridge, 401 Freeway, and the world-class Whistler Ski Resort were built.

This young cosmopolitan city has a brief but exciting history. Many weird and wonderful events have shaped its urban personality, from the local raiding of the biggest LSD factory in the world to our newfound reputation as "Hollywood North." The city has become the third largest in the country, with an international reputation as one of the best places in the world to live and visit.

©

Hotel Insights

Most accommodation in Vancouver was designed with the discerning visitor in mind. There is a variety of lodgings available, from economical to the luxurious, from modern to historical, and from quiet beachside locations to those at the bustling city core. If cost is of no real concern, downtown has many world-class luxury and business hotels. There are also more modest but comfortable hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts situated throughout the city that offer inexpensive and moderately priced rooms.

Downtown

Major shops, services, restaurants and attractions are located in the heart of downtown, so it's no surprise that larger hotel chains and landmark hotels call it home. Among them is the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver, where Queen Elizabeth billets when visiting the coast. It is one of the city's oldest and most striking landmarks, and its green copper chateau-style roof towers above the city skyline. Across the street is the Grand Old Lady of Georgia Street, the Crowne Plaza Hotel Georgia. The 12-storey heritage building has occupied the corner of Howe and West Georgia streets since 1927.

Business travelers will find staying at the Hyatt Regency and the Four Seasons convenient. Along with modern amenities and superior rooms, both have business facilities and are located beside shopping centres.

For water and mountain views, there are two world-famous choices, both situated at Canada Place. They are the Fairmont Waterfront, voted the country's top business hotel, and the world-famous Pan Pacific, luxuriously appointed. And if it is more refinement you're looking for, the Sutton Place Hotel is the place to be. With lavish accommodations styled after European homes, it's one of most elegant hotels in the city. Newer additions to the downtown hotel set include the Sheraton Wall Centre, Westin Grand Vancouver, and Lord Stanley Suites on the Park.

Budget conscious travelers who wish to stay downtown have a choice of many establishments with affordable rates. The Kingston is said to be the best low-cost hotel in town. In the heart of the theatre and club scene are the Barclay, Parkhill

and Days Inn Vancouver Downtown. For the most inexpensive lodging downtown, there are two international youth hostels. The Jolly Taxpayer Hotel is also a popular choice among budget travelers.

West End

This densely populated area is still downtown, but located west of Burrard Street in the direction of Stanley Park, stretching between English Bay and Coal Harbour. It offers apartment-style accommodations and homey bed and breakfasts steps from the beach, Stanley Park and other attractions. The West End is teeming with diverse restaurants, bars, lounges, nightclubs and shops.

The Pacific Palisades Robson Street location can't be beat, especially when you're in town to shop. But if it's a room with views of Stanley Park and the North Shore mountains that you're after, the Westin Bayshore and new Meridian at 910 Beach are ideal choices. Also within short walking distance of the park is the elegant Buchan Hotel.

One of the most notable hotels on this side of town, however, is the eight story Sylvia Hotel with its ivy-covered brick walls. It's the first high-rise to be built in the West End and the first to operate a cocktail bar in Vancouver.

False Creek and West Side

This uptown area across the water from downtown has many inexpensive hotels that offer value and well-kept rooms. Only a short walk from the city core, you can enjoy the relative serenity of the area while still remaining close to the action. The Granville Island Hotel, for instance, is nestled on the market and restaurant-sprinkled island, with water views and great rooms. Other hotels in the vicinity are the Holiday Inn, Ramada, and Plaza 500 Hotel.

The West Side, especially Kitsilano, has many world-class bed and breakfasts close to beaches that stretch for miles into Point Grey. Kitsilano in particular is laid-back, comfortable and filled with shops, theatres and restaurants. Some special B&Bs in the area are Johnson Heritage House B&B, Maple Beach B&B, and the Walnut House B&B.

North Shore

Vancouver Snapshot continued

Once you cross Burrard Inlet via the Lions Gate Bridge or SeaBus from Vancouver, you reach the green splendor of the North Shore. It's near Grouse Mountain, Cypress and Mount Seymour ski areas, Capilano Suspension Bridge, Lonsdale Quay and many notable boutiques in North and West Vancouver.

At the foot of the North Shore mountains, you will find motels like the Ramada Vancouver-Northshore and Canyon Court Motel. Some bed and breakfasts set in forested areas include A Lynn Canyon House Bed & Breakfast and the Capilano Canyon Guest House. Other options are the panoramic city views and unique shopping possibilities of the Lonsdale Quay Hotel, located right beside the Lonsdale Quay Market.

Richmond/Airport

If you wish to stay near the airport or simply want to visit the city of Richmond, there are several accommodation choices. The Fairmont Vancouver Airport Hotel is nearest to the airport, located just steps away from the main terminal. If you want to experience the different things Richmond has to offer, however, stop at the Radisson President Hotel. It is close to a popular Chinese supermarket, adjacent to a Buddhist Temple and minutes from shopping centres. Other places to stay include Sandman Hotel Vancouver Airport, and Holiday Inn Airport.

©

Restaurants Insights

Whether diners crave glamorous, elegant, warm or unadorned, Vancouver offers thousands of choices for memorable cuisine. Many of the city's establishments are internationally renowned and combine superb cuisine with extraordinary atmosphere.

Food-loving urbanites flock to bistros, dining rooms and cafes that range from home-style grub in perpetually busy diners to gourmet masterpieces in refined restaurants. Visitors can savour exotic Malaysian fare at lunch and Russian by nightfall, or choose from dozens of other ethnic cuisines. There are so many good restaurants in this city that it is difficult to narrow any list down to a few, but here are some noteworthy highlights.

Downtown

Joe Fortes Seafood & Chop House is a local favourite and a great place to go for beer and fresh smoked oysters. Other downtown highlights include Chartwell Restaurant, Diva at the Met, Le Gavroche, CinCin Ristorante and Piccolo Mondo.

West End

This beachside neighbourhood is known as one of the largest gay and lesbian communities in the country. The dining selection here is superb: busy Stepho's Souvlaki Greek Taverna has traditional Hellenic treats and the award-winning Raincity Grill, has elegant decor that is upstaged only by its West Coast flavours. Another award-winner, Sami's, has its second location here (the other is in Kitsilano), serving up Indian-inspired original creations. The popular Cafe de Paris celebrates Gallic cuisine here, too.

Yaletown

This is a good place to start your exploration of the city's culinary creativity. Many of the city's hottest eateries brighten this film and fashion centre. The Italian romance of Villa del Lupo and La Terrazza will soften even the most Scrooge-like of connoisseurs. If you prefer your meals more laid-back and inexpensive, Subeez and the Yaletown Brewing Co. are trendy hangouts with good food, eager-to-be-seen crowds, and in some cases, pouty and aloof wait-staff. The Southern-style barbecue creations at Dix BBQ & Brewery are also popular.

Gastown

This charming historic area has an eclectic selection of eateries. For hot and spicy dishes to warm up with on cool days, the Jewel of India Restaurant will satisfy. For a relaxed atmosphere and interesting experience, try the internationally-known Blunt Bros. Cafe. The Irish Heather is a relative newcomer to the area, and packs them in almost every night.

Chinatown

From Dim Sum to fine dining, Vancouver's Chinatown offers Asian delicacies and treats. Some of the most popular venues include the busy and noisy Pink Pearl Seafood Restaurant and the Floata Seafood Restaurant, for authentic Hong Kong-style creations hot and fresh from

the wok. Hon's Wun-Tun House is a good choice as well.

Granville Island

This once-industrial island was transformed in the 1970s into what it is today: a city oasis with a famous public market, heavenly bakeries and cafes and fresh-food restaurants. Seafood lovers will revel in Bridges' three-level restaurant, wine bar and bistro. Other choices include the Creek Restaurant and the Arts Club Backstage Lounge.

Kitsilano

This casual and health-conscious neighbourhood has some of the top restaurants in town. Weekend line-ups shouldn't daunt you from trying out the kitschy, faux-greasy spoon humour of Sophie's Cosmic Cafe, whose breakfasts are rumoured to be the best in town. The Naam is a landmark, open 24 hours and offering a selection of organic and vegan health food. Top of the heap is Lumiere, with its fine French cuisine infused with a West Coast sensibility and the freshest of ingredients. Other critic's darlings: Sami's Indo-American Bistro's fresh and creative Indian-style; Pastis' French cuisine taken to new heights; and the raved-about Vij's Indian fusion creations. For young and casual hangouts, try the bar-like atmosphere of Nevermind.

Point Grey

This somewhat sleepy and upscale section of the city offers many dining choices. Try the Celtic hospitality of Dentry's Irish Grill for a good time and meal. If you want something more intimate, the Brock House Restaurant provides an elegant setting for special dinners, and Cafe Madeleine has live music, readings and artwork. True Confections is the place to go afterwards for rich desserts.

East Vancouver

There is plenty to sample all over vibrant East Vancouver, from Main Street's Little India to Victoria Drive's Portuguese neighbourhood to Commercial Drive's Little Italy. Try the savoury Indian fare at Nirvana and All India Sweets, both on Main Street. Farther east on Commercial Drive, there is so much to choose from that it may take a week of dining just to get an idea of its offerings. Places like Federico's Ristorante & Supper Club offer traditional

Vancouver Snapshot continued

Italian meals, while newer places like the Cuba-inspired Havana and the literary Bukowski's offer hip alternatives with live entertainment. Fet's has a 1950s diner feel, while Cafe Deux Soleils serves creative vegetarian meals. Further west on Main Street, young and artistic hangouts like the Locus and the Grind & Gallery Coffee Bar are changing the shape of city dining.

South Vancouver

Restaurants are fewer and farther between in this suburban uptown area, but there are gems worth the quick drive from downtown. The elegant Seasons Hill Top Bistro in Queen Elizabeth Park offers fine dining. ©

Nightlife Insights

Vancouver offers everything from fine arts, cinema, literary readings, theatre and many spectator sports. The arts and entertainment weekly the Georgia Straight, and the Thursday and Friday editions of the Vancouver Sun and Province provide extensive listings of the city's events and venues.

Music

Bryan Adams, Sarah McLachlan, k.d. lang, Bif Naked, 54-40 and Diana Krall. These are just some of the big-name artists who began their music careers here. They have made it so big that you rarely see them perform locally anymore. When they do, you will find them at large venues like B.C. Place, General Motors Place, the Vogue, Orpheum Theatre or Queen Elizabeth Theatre.

Vancouver's music scene is diverse. The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts at the University of British Columbia and the Orpheum Theatre, home of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, are great venues for classical music performances. For jazz, blues and fusion, the best bets are the Cellar Restaurant & Jazz Club, Rossini's, the Roxy, Blue Note Jazz Bistro, Starfish Room and the Yale.

For punk, indie and other aural alternatives, smaller venues like the Commodore Ballroom and the Railway Club are probably your best bets to catch local and international talent in intimate settings. Of course, nothing's more intimate than an in-store performance at Red Cat Records.

For electronica, house and slyly spinning DJs, Sonar, the Sugar Refinery and Nevermind are some of the places to go.

Cinemas

Several first-run movie theatres are within a few blocks of each other downtown. Across the bridge, the newer Fifth Avenue Cinemas show popular art and alternative films to grateful West Side crowds. For independent, art, foreign and experimental films, check out the diverse listings at the Ridge, and the Pacific Cinematheque.

Vancouver also has two large-screen theatres: the Alcan Omnimax Theatre at Science World and the CN IMAX at Canada Place.

Mega-screen movie theatres have been popping up over the last few years, and there are more than a few in and around the city, like Cinemark Tinseltown.

Theatres

From classic Broadway hits to innovative productions, rich and varied theatrical activity has always been a part of the city's entertainment scene. The 2,929-seat Queen Elizabeth Theatre is the city's largest. It's perfect for seeing touring musicals, international opera and modern dance. Next door to the QE is the more intimate Vancouver Playhouse, a 668-seat auditorium that stages plays, concerts, chamber music and modern dance.

Other theatre and concert venues include the Arts Club Theatre, the refurbished Stanley Theatre, Orpheum, Firehall Arts Centre, Presentation House Gallery and the Vancouver East Cultural Centre.

Comedy

For seriously funny stuff, try Yuk Yuk's. It has theatre-style seating, a full-dinner menu and stand-up comics from the city and around the world. The Arts Club Theatre on Granville Island is another venue for interactive fun. It's home to the Theatre Sports "improv" group.

Sports

Vancouver offers a medley of sports events. From September to May, the NHL's Vancouver Canucks plays the coolest game on earth in General Motors Place.

June kicks off the pre-season games of the Canadian Football League. You can catch

the B.C. Lions in action from July to late October at B.C. Place.

Festivals

Some acclaimed international festivals that provide year-round fun and entertainment include the Vancouver International Film Festival, Vancouver Fringe Festival, Vancouver International Children's Festival, International Jazz Festival, Comedy Festival, Folk Music Festival, and New Music Festival. They occur all over the city and offer locals and visitors a chance to mingle.

©

Things to Do Insights

Vancouver is a city of adventure. Tours, whether professionally-guided or a personal adventure, give visitors the chance to take advantage of the city's vitality and experience the area's natural beauty. The biggest problem is deciding how you're going to take in all there is to see.

Tour One: Vancouver On Foot

For a glance into the city's past, try the free Historic Walking Tours of Gastown. Set in the city's birthplace, the daily tour highlights the area's many attractions and shopping, restaurants and bars. Visit the Steam Clock, shop at The Landing, and get a picture taken with the statue of the area's founder, Gassy Jack. You'll stroll through streets named Blood Alley and Gaoler's Mews, the city's first jail cell.

There is much to discover by walking through the streets of Vancouver. The Architectural Institute of B.C. (AIBC) provides a variety of tours in the summer months. The free tours show Vancouver's history through the city's architecture. Visit highlights like Canada Place, Robson Square, Cathedral Place, and Strathcona.

You can stroll through Burnaby Village Museum, saunter through the exhibits in the Canadian Craft Museum, enjoy a sample of micro-brewed beer in the Granville Island Brewery, and learn about West Coast First Nations culture at the Museum of Anthropology.

Another guided walking tour follows the history of the Chinese-Canadian community in Chinatown. Many tour companies offer tours that take you through one of North America's largest Chinatowns. You'll see Dr.

Vancouver Snapshot continued

Sun Yat Sen Classical Chinese Gardens, the Chinese Cultural Centre Museum and the bustling street markets.

If you would rather explore Vancouver at your own pace, then pay a visit to the Vancouver Tourist Information Centres. One of the city's best features is its close proximity to natural wonders. For guided hikes through some of its closest attractions, such as Lighthouse Park, Horseshoe Bay and Bowen Island, check out Rockwood Adventures. They have an extensive selection of walking tours.

Tour Two: Nature

For bus tours, there are several companies in the city, including Gray Lines and Pacific Coach Lines. If you're looking for a smaller mini-van tour, then try Cityscape or Blue Mountain Tours. Many offer multilingual, narrated tours that can be customized.

With the fresh air and views, it's easy to get caught up in the city's healthy vibe. Velocity Cycle Tours takes you on guided cycle tours of the city and surrounding area. You'll spend time in and around Granville Island, Vanier Park and Grouse Mountain.

There are also several options for those looking for unusual excursions. At Stanley Park, Horse Drawn Tours take passengers on an old-world wagon ride through the 1000-acre park. For something less equestrian, the Vancouver Trolley Company takes passengers on a turn-of-the-century trolley ride to view the city's sites along various avenues and thoroughfares. You can see the city at your own pace, getting on or off at any of the 16 stops to visit attractions.

For a minivan customized tour, try Captain Billy's Magical Tours. Or see the city in style with Fridge's Early Motion Tours, who not only personalize their excursions, but do it all in a 1930s Ford Model A. To learn more about West Coast First Nations, several tour companies, including West Coast City and Nature Sightseeing and Detours Excursions B.C. have special day trips that highlight the heritage, history, art, and importance of B.C.'s native cultures.

For an extravagant and romantic tour, B.C. Rail's Pacific Starlight Dinner Train runs from spring to autumn. A restored dining car provides gourmet cuisine and views as it glides through North Vancouver, Howe Sound, and Porteau Cove. Another opulent B.C. Rail excursion offers a combination

voyage. Take the luxury steam locomotive Royal Hudson Steam Train to Squamish, passing along the coastline past West Vancouver and Horseshoe Bay. Once at Squamish, cruise home to Vancouver on the Harbour Cruises "Britannia."

Often referred to as the "Hollywood of the North," Vancouver is the third largest film and TV shooting centre in North America, after L.A. and New York. The popular "X-Files" was shot here for years. Hence the idolatrous X-Tours, which, among other special experiences, offers limousine tours of spots where X-scenes and memorable film moments took place.

Tour Three: By Water

Touring Vancouver by water can be adventurous and is one of the best ways to see the area. Although the more daring can charter their own boats at places like Cooper Boating, companies like Harbour Cruises offer guided sightseeing cruises that let passengers view the city from Burrard Inlet, Howe Sound, Vancouver's harbour and English Bay.

B.C. Ferries can take you to the city's surrounding islands for great day trips, and the convenient SeaBus enables you to travel quickly to and from the downtown waterfront and the North Shore. Starline Boating Tours offer seasonal trips throughout the area. You can take a tour of the historic fishing village of Steveston, hop aboard the sea lion cruises in the spring, marvel on a killer whale watching expedition or relax on the Pitt Lake cruise.

There are also several wilderness sightseeing tours that use Vancouver as a launching point. Paddlewheeler River Adventures and LotusLand Tours provide water excursions that offer insight into the spectacular scenery and history of British Columbia.

Tour Four: By Air

Vancouver by air is a spectacle that every visitor should experience. There are a number of reliable air tour providers in the region. Although more extravagant than a ground-bound tour, air charters offer unforgettable bird's-eye views. Harbour Air has a fleet of seaplanes that provide quick city tours, as well as outings into secluded wilderness areas.

Vancouver Helicopter Tours also offers panoramic air trips over the city and

surrounding mountains and valleys. They have a nighttime flight, the Grouse Heli-Picnic, where you can fly up to Grouse Mountain and dine while overlooking the city.

©

Travel Tips

Getting There

By Air

Situated nine miles south of downtown, the Vancouver International Airport (YVR) (+1 604 276 6500/ <http://www.yvr.ca>) ushers in more than 15 million passengers a year. Amenities include numerous restaurants and shops, a spa, dry cleaners, a kid's play area and even a dentist. The following major airlines all touchdown upon its runways:

Aero Mexico (+1 800 237 6639/ <http://www.aeromexico.com>) Air Canada (+1 800 776 3000/ <http://www.aircanada.ca>) Air China (+1 800 227 5118/ <http://www.china-airlines.com>) Air New Zealand (+1 800 663 5494/ <http://www.airnz.com>) Alaskan Airlines (+1 800 252 7522/ <http://www.alaskaair.com>) Aloha Airlines (+1 800 367 5250/ <http://www.alohaairlines.com>) American Airline (+1 800 433 7300/ <http://www.aa.com>) British Airways (+1 800 247 9297/ <http://www.british-airways.com>) Continental (+1 800 525 0280/ <http://www.continental.com>) Delta (+1 800 221 1212/ <http://www.delta.com>) El Al (+1 800 223 6700/ <http://www.elal.co.il>) Japan Airlines (+1 800 525 3663/ <http://www.japanair.com>) Korean Air (+1 800 438 5000/ <http://www.koreanair.com>) Lufthansa (+1 800 645 3880/ <http://www.lufthansa.com>) Northwest (+1 800 225 2525/ <http://www.nwa.com>) Qantas (+1 604 279 6611/ <http://www.qantas.com>) Scandinavian Airlines (+1 800 221 2350/ <http://www.scandinavian.net>) Singapore Airlines (+1 800 742 3333/ <http://www.singaporeair.com>) United (+1 800 241 6522/ <http://www.ual.com>) US Airways (+1 800 428 4322/ <http://www.usairways.com>) Zoom Airlines (+1 866 359 9666/ <http://www.flyzoom.ca>)

Helijet International provides service between Vancouver and Victoria. They also offer charter services from their Vancouver Airport base. (+1 604 273 4688/ <http://helijet.com/>)

Vancouver Snapshot continued

The Vancouver Airporter Service(+1 800 668 3141) stands as the most popular form of ground transportation into downtown. Buses exit every 15 minutes from 6:30a-9:15p, and every 30 minutes from 9:15p-midnight. It services all major downtown hotels. One-way tickets cost around USD12.

More than 400 metered taxis service the airport. Rides into downtown take 25 minutes and average USD25. They can be found outside of the domestic and international terminals and operate around the clock. Some of the more noted cab companies include:

Black Top& Checker Cabs Ltd(+1 604 731 1111) Bonny's Taxi(+1 604 435 6655) Yellow Cab Company(+1 604 681 1111)

Rental Car Companies

Alamo(+1 800 327 9633/ <http://www.alamo.com>) Avis(+1 800 831 2847/ <http://www.avis.com>) Budget(+1 800 527 0700/ <http://www.budget.com>) Hertz(+1 800 654 3131/ <http://www.hertz.com>) National(+1 800 227 7368/ <http://www.nationalcar.com>) Thrifty(+1 800 367 2277/ <http://www.thrifty.com>)

Another attractive ground transportation option is Zipcar, which operates in certain cities in Canada and the U.S. This new breed of rental car allows you to rent on an hourly basis rather than a daily basis. Be sure to register online before your trip. Zipcar(+1 866 404 7227/ <http://www.zipcar.com>)

By Train

Via Rail(+1 888 842 7245/ <http://www.viarail.ca>) chugs into Pacific Central Station at 1150 Station Street three times a week. It services the eastern half of Canada starting in Toronto. Its scenic wander through the Canadian Rockies makes it extremely popular with tourists. Amtrak(+1 800 872 7245/ <http://www.amtrak.com>) also huffs into Pacific Central Station, but from the south, beginning in Eugene, Oregon. BC Rail(+1 604 631 3500/ <http://www.bcrail.com>) operates from northern Vancouver's train station at 1311 West First Street. It services northern British Columbia and includes stops in Whistler, Lillooet, and Squamish.

By Bus

Pacific Central Station also serves as Vancouver's main bus station. Greyhound(+1 800 661 8747/ <http://www.greyhound.ca>) arrives from all points north, south, east and west. Pacific Coach Lines(+1 800 661 1725/ <http://www.pacificcoach.com>) confines its routes to the surrounding Vancouver area with daily service from Victoria, on Vancouver Island, every two hours.

By Boat

The port of Vancouver, managed by the Vancouver Port Authority(+1 604 665 9000/ <http://www.portvancouver.com>), ushers in more than one million cruise ship passengers a year through the Canada Place and Ballantyne Terminals. Waiting taxis are easy to find upon disembarking.

By Car

Highway 1, or better known as the Trans-Canada Highway, winds east out of the Canadian Rockies. Interstate 5 from the United States turns into Highway 99 at the border and snakes into Vancouver from the south and north. A drive from Seattle takes about three hours. Calgary, to the east, with good weather takes 11.5 hours.

Getting Around

By Train

TransLink, The Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority(+1 604 953 3333/ <http://www.translink.bc.ca>), eases the need for a car. SkyTrain features 27 miles of tracks that service the area in an east/west direction. Both lines, the Expo and the Millennium, offer stops that are serviced every five minutes. This represents the fastest way for maneuvering through downtown. One-way fares are USD2.

In August 2009, the Canada Line opened up 16 new stations in Vancouver and Richmond. The 19 km of track has nine stations in Vancouver, four in Richmond and also goes directly to Vancouver's International Airport, YVR.

www.canadaline.ca/

By Bus

Translink buses maze through downtown and the surrounding suburbs. Transfers are interchangeable with SkyTrain and the SeaBus. One-way fares cost USD2 and USD4 for rides to the suburbs.

By Ferry

SeaBus, another TransLink subsidiary, provides passenger-only ferry service across the Burrard Inlet. The 15-minute ride links downtown Vancouver with the North Shore and costs USD2. Bikes are allowed on board.

BC Ferries(+1 888 223 3779/ <http://www.bcferrries.com>) connects Vancouver with 46 surrounding ports via 25 routes. Its boats service Vancouver Island, the Sunshine Coast, the Southern and Northern Gulf Islands, and the Saanich Inlet. One-way passenger fares are USD6.15 and cars are charged USD23.

By Taxi

Taxis can be found at all hotels and are rather easy to hail in downtown. Some of the more prominent companies include:

Black Top& Checker Cabs(+1 604 731 1111) Bonny's Taxi(+1 604 435 6655) Royal City Taxi(+1 604 521 6666) Vancouver Taxi(+1 604 255 5111) Yellow Cab Company(+1 604 681 1111)

Even though no major highways slice through downtown it is still fairly easy to negotiate and rewards drivers with ample parking. However, take every measure to avoid driving during morning(7a-9a) and afternoon(3p-6p) rush hours. Especially avoid the North Shore Bridges, the Massey Tunnel, and Highway 1 through Coquitlam and Surrey.

By Bike

Vancouver enjoys legendary status for being extremely bike friendly. It features 19 bikeways, including scenic passages along the seawall and through Stanley Park. Routes are designated with green signs every other block. Keep in mind that helmets are mandatory. Spokes Bike Rentals(+1 604 688 5141/ <http://www.vancouverbikerental.com>) and Bayshore Bicycle& Rollerblade Skate Rentals(+1 604 688 2453/ <http://www.bayshorerentals.ca>) provide convenient rental service for downtown riders.

Downtown is conveniently compact, making it conducive for walking.

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Vancouver Snapshot continued

Fun Facts

Top 12 Interesting Facts About Vancouver
1. We're a very multicultural city; 35% of Vancouver's population are foreign born.

2. Vancouver is very walkable and 1 in 5 people walk to work. That's on par with New York City!
3. When you come to Vancouver, you may be surprised by how many high rise condo buildings there are and that's because our city is 65% residential.
4. The Lions Gate Bridge connects downtown Vancouver to the North and West shore and it was built by the Guinness family.

5. The Guinness family were quite busy and when they weren't building bridges, they were starting the development of British Properties. It's located in West Vancouver and today it's one of the most expensive and chic neighbourhood to live in.
6. Victoria and Vancouver have the most mild in climate in Canada.
7. In North America, Vancouver has the second largest Chinatown.
8. Because we're right on the ocean, Vancouver has the second largest Port in North America. You can be sure that no matter what the day is, you will always see large cargo ships sitting in English Bay.

9. Drivers may not think this is a fun fact, but there are no freeways that run through downtown Vancouver. And, there likely will never be one.
10. It's said that Jimi Hendrix spent time in Vancouver's Strathcona neighborhood because he grandparents lived there.

11. Here's a random fact, around 1910 our city was paved with wooden bricks.
12. Greenpeace, one of the world's most well known environmental groups, was started in Vancouver.

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Weather

Statistics
Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec
Temperature C Average High 57 10 14 18 21 23 23 18 14 9 5
Average Mean 4 6 8 12 15 18 20 20 16 12 8 4
Average Low 4 5 7 10 13 16 17 17 14 10 7 4
Temperature F Average High 41 44 50 58 65 69 74 74 65 58 48 41
Average Mean 36 39 43 49 55 60 64 64 57 50 42 37
Average Low 32 34 36 40 46 51 54 55 50 43 37 33
Rainy Days 16 14 13 9 7 5 4 5 8 14 20 19
Rain Fall (cm) 13.2 11.6 10.5 7.4 9.6 1.7 4.5 7.3 6.1 38.1 64.4 11.5 16.7 16.1
Rain Fall (in) 5.2 4.6 4.2 3.0 2.3 0.2 4.1 8.1 4.1 5.2 5.4 5.6 6.6 4

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