

What to do in Three Days in Victoria

Victoria's a small city that's got it all: historic architecture, oceanside charm, nightlife, great dining, shopping the warmest weather in Canada, fresh air, and beautiful natural surroundings. There's something for everyone regardless of your interests, but here are some highlights to get you started. For more ideas about what to do in Victoria, go online to our very own tourism guide:

www.oceanislandvictoriaguide.com, or ask our friendly staff for suggestions.

Day 1 - Whale Watching and Downtown Fun:

Start off the morning by booking with Ocean Island for discounted whale watching and spend a couple hours spotting Orcas, Humpbacks, Grey Whales, and other marine life. Then partake in brunch, a Victoria institution, at one of the many brunch restaurants and spend the rest of the day wandering around the downtown. Start at the inner harbour, take in all the buskers and wander around the legislative buildings. Then, stroll down Government Street, through Bastion Square to get a cappuccino on Paradiso's patio. When you've had your fill of coffee and breathtaking ocean views, head over to Lower Johnson and Market Square for some boutique shopping, then a visit to fan tan alley in Chinatown (and if you're lucky the Sunday Market). Top off your evening by renting a kayak and doing a sunset paddle through the gorge. Then, it's off to dinner and drinks on the Canoe Club patio, or consult Ocean Island's **Dining FAQ** for some other great dining options.

Day 2 - The Museum or Butchart Gardens:

Victoria has a lot of touristy sites that can be a lot of fun, but two you won't regret are the Royal British Columbia Museum and Butchart Gardens.

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Spend the day at one of North America's top ten museums meandering through world class exhibits. Be sure to see the showstopper First Nations exhibit before checking out the totem poles at Thunderbird Park next door and seeing one of the many informational IMAX shows available. If you're not into museums, the internationally acclaimed Butchart Gardens is just out of town and easily reachable by public transit on the #75 or #76 buses. The perfectly manicured gardens cover fifty acres and host over half a million visitors every year. If you're here during July and August enjoy Butchart's weekend fireworks shows or end your night by picking up Ocean Island's **Nightlife FAQ** before hitting some of the best pubs and clubs in Canada.

Day 3 - Nature hikes or a walk in the Park:

Vancouver Island is known for its nature, and the areas around Victoria are no exception. Several parks are easily accessible and some are even reachable by public transit. Head out to Mt. Doug park (bus #28), hike (or drive) up to the top and view the Victoria cityscape - or even better head just out of town to Goldstream park (bus #50 then transfer to bus #58). Goldstream has a gorgeous river and waterfall, picnic grounds, lots of hiking trails, and old mining shafts and tressels to explore. To find out more about Mt. Doug and Goldstream, or for more information about other nature activities see our **FAQ rack in the lobby**.

If mountains aren't your thing, head over to James Bay for an ice cream cone from the Beacon Hill Drive-in and a stroll through Beacon Hill Park to see the gardens and the baby goats at the petting zoo. Then, cross the street over to Dallas Rd, and walk along the water to the break wall. Follow that up with a short walk to Fisherman's wharf where you can eat the city's best fish and chips, see the float houses, and if you're lucky, some sea otters. Finish the night off by treating yourself to a drink at the Bengal lounge in the Empress Hotel overlooking the inner harbour.

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