

Gastown & Chinatown

GASTOWN | CHINATOWN

Neighborhood Top Five

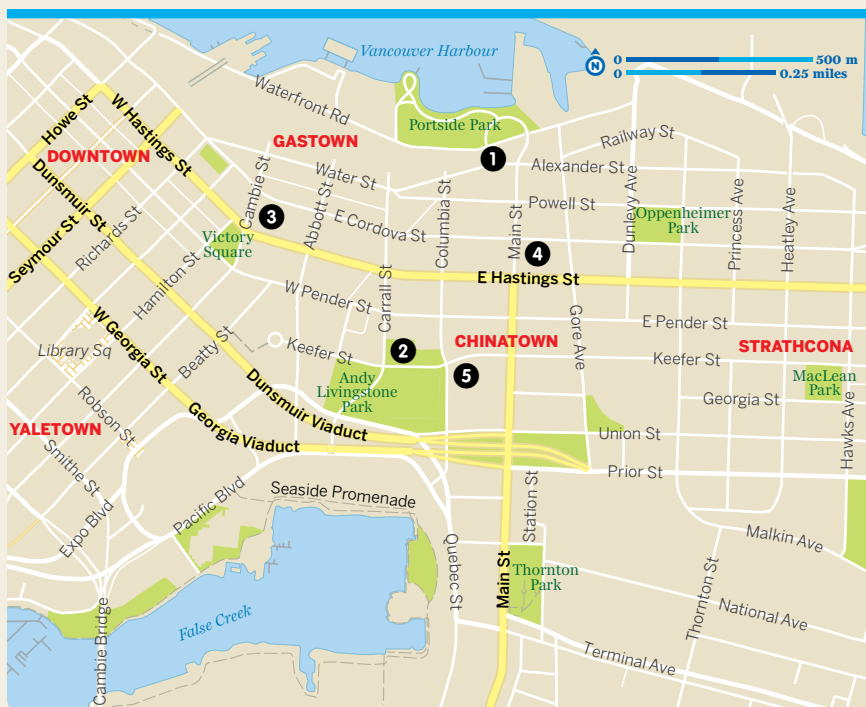
1 Tucking into top British Columbia (BC) craft beers at the **Alibi Room** (p89), preferably while rubbing shoulders with the locals at one of the long, candlelit tables.

2 Sinking into a state of calm at the **Dr Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden** (p83).

3 Stuffing your face with Vancouver's best sandwiches at **Meat & Bread** (p84).

4 Taking the eye-opening summertime Sins of the City walking tour at the **Vancouver Police Museum** (p82).

5 Diving into the sights, sounds and aromas of the bustling **Chinatown Night Market** (p84).



For more detail of this area see Map p272 and p273 →

Explore Gastown & Chinatown

Radiating from the ‘Gassy’ Jack statue in brick-paved Maple Tree Sq, the main thoroughfares of compact Gastown are Powell, Water, Carrall and Alexander Sts. You’ll find plenty of shops and restaurants on Water, while Carrall is home to a more recent wave of hip bars, stores and coffee shops. Wandering south on this street, you’ll enter the heart of the Downtown Eastside, where many of the neighborhood’s poorest residents reside. Hastings St runs across Carrall and is the area’s main drag, serviced by several bus routes. A block further south brings you to Chinatown, denoted by its flare-roofed buildings and dragon-topped street lamps. The entire Gastown and Chinatown district is easily explored on foot and makes for a fascinating afternoon of urban wandering. Couple this with an end-of-day drink or dinner in some of the city’s best bars and restaurants. In summer, come back for the weekend Chinatown Night Market on Keefer St, between Columbia and Main Sts.

Local Life

- ➔ **Bars** Avoid downtown’s Granville Strip drunks on a bar crawl of Gastown’s top watering holes. You’ll find hipster locals as well as more BC craft beer than you can shake a merry stick at.
- ➔ **Shops** Chinatown is teeming with traditional grocery stores, where looking is just as much fun as buying. You’ll find interesting items such as lizards spayed on a stick. For a different scene, peruse the cool indie boutiques of Gastown.
- ➔ **History** Vancouver’s best heritage buildings line this area, from tile-topped apothecaries to handsome century-old stone edifices repurposed as bars and restaurants.

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Train** SkyTrain’s Waterfront Station is at the western edge of Gastown, near the start of Water St. Stadium-Chinatown Station is on the edge of Chinatown and a 10-minute stroll south of Gastown.
- ➔ **Bus** Bus 14 heads northwards from downtown’s Granville St along Hastings, which makes it handy for both Gastown and Chinatown. Buses 3, 4, 7 and 8 also service the area.
- ➔ **Car** There is metered parking throughout Gastown and Chinatown, with some nonmetered parking east of Main St.

Lonely Planet’s Top Tip

Gastown and Chinatown are part of the Downtown Eastside, which some locals will tell you is a dangerous area. These are generally locals who haven’t been here. The neighborhood certainly has many social challenges and a high proportion of residents with addiction or mental-health issues. You’re far more likely, however, to be asked for ‘spare change’ while in the city center, and muggings in Downtown Eastside are exceptionally rare. Stay street smart and avoid back alleys and side streets (especially at night).

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Bao Bei (p89)
- ➔ L’Abbattoir (p87)
- ➔ Rainier Provisions (p84)
- ➔ Campagnolo (p89)
- ➔ Meat & Bread (p84)

For reviews, see p84 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Alibi Room (p89)
- ➔ Diamond (p91)
- ➔ Keefer Bar (p93)
- ➔ Brickhouse (p93)
- ➔ Guilt & Co (p91)

For reviews, see p89 ➔

Best Places to Shop

- ➔ Erin Templeton (p95)
- ➔ John Fluevog Shoes (p95)
- ➔ Orling & Wu (p96)
- ➔ Deluxe Junk (p96)
- ➔ Solder & Sons (p96)

For reviews, see p95 ➔