

VANCOUVER

ENCOUNTER

JOHN LEE

Vancouver Encounter

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Colour-Coding & Maps

Colour-coding is used for symbols on maps and in the text that they relate to (eg all eating venues on the maps and in the text are given a green knife and fork symbol). Each neighborhood also gets its own colour, and this is used down the edge of the page and throughout that neighborhood section.

Shaded yellow areas on the maps denote 'areas of interest' – for their historical significance, their attractive architecture or their great bars and restaurants. We encourage you to head to these areas and just start exploring!

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JOHN LEE

Born in the near-London English city of St Albans, John decamped to Canada at the first opportunity after getting his undergrad degree to study an MA at the University of Victoria, British Columbia. Soon realizing his thesis on William Morris wasn't going to launch him along an obvious career path, he headed to Tokyo to teach English as a second language before jumping on the Trans-Siberian Railway for a long think. After two days, he was struck by the novel idea of becoming a travel writer and eventually launched a determined, if not exactly lucrative, full-time freelance writing career. Ten years later, now living in downtown Vancouver, he's still doing it. John's travels have taken him from Seoul to Reykjavík and deepest Texas (not on the same trip) and his stories – many of which seem to involve beer – have appeared in more than 150 publications around the world. Check his latest epic at www.johnleewriter.com.



JOHN'S THANKS

Thanks to Jennye at Lonely Planet for inviting me to work on this project, arguably the most enjoyable LP book I've ever written. I'd also be remiss if I didn't thank my friends and family on the West Coast for allowing me to not-so-subtly pick their brains for ideas.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Christopher Herwig was born and raised in Surrey BC. After graduating with a photography diploma, he spent several years traveling and photographing throughout Africa, Asia, Europe, Australia and Central America. In between trips he worked in commercial photo studios in London, Stockholm and Vancouver. After doing freelance work in Kazakhstan and Monrovia, Christopher is currently on a home break in Vancouver. His work can be seen at www.herwigphoto.com.

Cover photograph Boats moored at Jericho Beach marina, Vancouver, Photolibrary/Radius Images. **Internal photographs** p43, p72, p96 by John Lee; p16, p26, p27 Gunter Marx/Alamy; p23 Jason Kwan/Alamy; p132 Photo Bliss/Alamy; p148 Interface Images - Human Interest/Alamy. All other photographs by Lonely Planet Images, and by Christopher Herwig except p18 Richard Cummins; p20 Ray Laskowitz; p24 Doug McKinlay; p123 Glenn van der Knijff; p4, p10, p19, p44, p69, p79, p81, p86, p103, p120, p151 Lawrence Worcester.

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A photogenic totem pole at Brockton Point (p58) in Stanley Park welcomes the visitor

CONTENTS

THE AUTHOR	03	> PARKS & GARDENS	144
THIS IS VANCOUVER	07	> WATERFRONT WALKS	146
HIGHLIGHTS	08	> GAY VANCOUVER	148
VANCOUVER CALENDAR	23	> GREEN VANCOUVER	150
ITINERARIES	29	BACKGROUND	151
NEIGHBORHOODS	34	DIRECTORY	159
> DOWNTOWN, WEST END & YALETOWN	38	INDEX	169
> STANLEY PARK	56		
> GASTOWN & CHINATOWN	64		
> SOUTH MAIN (SOMA)	76		
> COMMERCIAL DRIVE	84		
> GRANVILLE ISLAND	92		
> FAIRVIEW & SOUTH GRANVILLE	100		
> KITSILANO	108		
> UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (UBC)	116		
2010 OLYMPIC & PARALYMPICW INTER GAMES	123		
SNAPSHOTS	128		
> ACCOMMODATIONS	130		
> FESTIVALS	132		
> FOOD	134		
> BARS & PUBS	136		
> SHOPS & MARKETS	138		
> LIVE MUSIC	140		
> MUSEUMS & GALLERIES	142		

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THIS IS VANCOUVER

You can always spot first-time Vancouver visitors. They're the ones suddenly rooted to the spot after glimpsing a gleaming snowcapped crag perfectly framed between a pair of shiny downtown towers. It's a signature city view that even locals rarely take for granted.

It's also a reminder that jaw-dropping nature is the main lure of this verdant metropolis. Stroll to the tip of Canada Place for the full effect: you'll find broccoli-green Stanley Park winking on your left; the shimmering waters of Burrard Inlet rippled by plunging floatplanes ahead; and that looming wall of jagged mountains framing the panoramic skyline.

But while this grand backdrop supplies stirring visuals for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games – the city's biggest-ever sporting fiesta – there's much more to Vancouver than good looks. And even if you miss the five rings rolling in, it's worth poking beneath this dazzling exterior to find out what really makes the place tick.

You'll find an easily explorable city divided into bite-sized neighborhoods, each with a different personality. Downtown is the mainstream hub of shops and crowds; Gastown is the cobbled historic home of great bars; Chinatown is the kaleidoscope of exotic stores and eateries; Kitsilano is the laid-back, beachside stretch of clapboard heritage homes; Commercial Drive is the boho enclave of counter-culture cool; SoMa is the capital of trendy hipsterism; and the West End is the out-and-proud 'gayborhood.'

As you wander around these urban haunts, British Columbia's natural treasures will be continually calling to you. So join the locals and go with the outdoorsy flow. You'll never forget kayaking at sunset on the glassy waters off Jericho Beach, doing sigh-triggering cycling treks around Stanley Park's picture-perfect seawall, and the time you made your bid for Olympic skiing glory on those alluring edge-of-the-city slopes.

Top left 'Killer Whale' sculpture by Bill Reid at the front entrance to the Vancouver Aquarium (p60) **Top right** If he can do it, you can; crossing Capilano Suspension Bridge (p53), spanning the Capilano Canyon **Bottom** The Museum of Vancouver (p111), at night