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A Whole New canada



ALTHOUGH WHISTLER'S STELLAR SKI RESORTS REGULARLY TOP OUR GOLD LIST of the world's best places to stay, and Vancouver has been readers' favorite city in the Americas for three years running, Canada rarely receives its full due. U.S. travelers in search of the unexpected seldom look to their neighbor to the north. But our reporters, eyes wide open, discovered a country bristling with urban energy, a new pride in native cultures and cuisines—and a serious sense of humor (something in the water seems to breed comedians). Even its undeniably great outdoors exceeded our slopes-and-big-skies expectations, with pampering retreats and a world-class wine region. Sometimes, it's those closest to you that catch you most off guard.

Klara Glowczewska

KLARA GLOWCZEWSKA Editor in Chief

Vancouver

B6 • Inside Edition: Mastering red-hot Hollywood North—plus three happening hoods, a divine wine region, and where the stars go to get away.

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cover Photograph of Ontario College of Art and Design by Richard Johnson

REPORTED BY Craig Archibald (The Regina Monologue), Geraldine Campbell (Vancouver Seawall, Street Life), Susan Catto (Quebec City), Dana Dickey (A Cowgirl's Guide), Jessica Flint (Edmonton), Paul French (Ottawa; New Kid in the Sky), Nathalie Jordi (Montreal Three Days of Meals; The Big Cheese; Don't Tell Charlotte; To Market, to Market; A Poutine for All Tastes), Nandita Khanna (Heli-High), Natalie MacLean (Sunset and Vine), Louisa McCormack (Halifax), Bianca Anita Posterli (Polar Express; The "Eh" List), David Sax (Touring Queen West; Sweet Sounds of a City), Mark Schatzker (24 Hours in Toronto; The Prince of Hockey), Melissa Steele (Winnipeg), Matt Tener (Heli-High), and Tracy Young (Claims to Fame).





vancouver

The city's seawall cum pedestrian path winds past some of Vancouver's greatest hits—here, a step-by-step guide. We also explore three of the most happening hoods before getting out of town—checking into a trio of luxury lodges and tasting our way through a rising wine region



Full Circle

Construction has begun on the Carrall Street Greenway, which when finished, in the summer of 2008, will allow bikers and joggers to complete a 12-mile loop around downtown Vancouver and Stanley Park. The greenway will pass through Gastown and Chinatown (see map, page B8).



Left: Aerial photograph by Smart McCall. Top, from left: FOTOSRECH/ISTOCKPHOTO; Olympic.org; and Comstock/Royalty Free. Right: Rendering courtesy Shangri-La

Along the city's coast runs a seawall for walkers and bikers. Here is a guide to the sections that gird Stanley Park and downtown Vancouver.

- 1. Canada Place** houses a cruise ship terminal, a convention center, and the Pan Pacific hotel, which boasts a heated outdoor pool and a full spa (662-8111*; panpacific.com; doubles, \$275-\$525). Across Burrard Inlet are North Vancouver and Grouse Mountain. Get a closer look from viewfinders on the promenade (3 minutes, \$2).
- Rooms at the **Fairmont Waterfront** have floor-to-ceiling windows and stunning views of the harbor or skyline (691-1991; fairmont.com; doubles, \$335-\$555).
- The **Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre** is undergoing a \$535 million expansion that will triple its space by the end of 2008 (vccp.bc.ca).
- The maps at the **Vancouver Tourist Information Centre** are detailed and free (200 Burrard St.; 682-2222).
- Floatplanes from Vancouver Island land and boats fill up at gas station islands in the harbor.
- The **Nike Runner's Lounge** has local running maps, a bag check, and post-run massages (510 Nicola St.; 778-786-7463).
- Coal Harbour is dotted with waterfront restaurants: **Cardero's**, for oysters and a beer (1583 Coal Harbour Quay; 669-7666; entrées, \$8-\$25); the upstairs patio of the 5,000-square-foot **Lift**, for contemporary West Coast cuisine by an outdoor fireplace (333 Menchion Mews; 689-5438; entrées, \$19-\$28); and the newest, **Bravo Bistro**, for Moroccan-influenced fare (550 Denman St.; 688-3714; entrées, \$15-\$35).
- Cyclists wanting to ride the Stanley Park seawall enter here (bikes must go counterclockwise). Pick up a map at the Stanley Park Information Booth, to the left. The **Vancouver Rowing Club**, the city's oldest athletic club, is to the right.
- Sit on a bench and gaze at the five sails of Canada Place and the Harbour Centre Tower. Behind you, seven **totem poles** honor the region's First Nations heritage. The nearby **Brockton Visitors Centre** has a gift shop with First Nations souvenirs.
- The **Nine O'Clock Gun**, originally fired to signal the end of the day's salmon fishing, was brought to Vancouver in 1894. The cannon's 9 P.M. explosion is now a local tradition.
- The life-size **Girl in Wetsuit**, by Hungarian sculptor Elek Imredy, appears to float on the water at high tide.
- A slight detour uphill leads to the **Prospect Point Cafe**, which can overcharge for its soups, sandwiches, and nachos because the panoramic

view of the Lion's Gate Bridge is priceless (669-2737; entrées, \$8-\$25).

- According to legend, the Salish warrior Skals was immortalized for his selflessness as the basalt **Siwash Rock**.
- Spot seals and bald eagles from **Third Beach**.
- The fish-and-chips at the upscale **Sequoia Grill at the Teahouse**—battered salmon and cod, spicy *frites*, mushy peas, tartar sauce, and ketchup—comes on waxed paper that looks like newspaper (Stanley Park Dr.; 669-3281; entrées, \$15-\$33).
- The slides at the heated **Second Beach Pool** are suitable for toddlers (257-8371).
- Dennis Oppenheim's **Engagement**—two rings in glass, steel, and aluminum, weighing 3,500 pounds—was part of the city's recent Sculpture Biennale.
- In an exceptional location steps from the seawall, the **Sylvia Hotel**, a converted 1912 apartment building, has 120 no-frills rooms (681-9321; sylviahotel.com; doubles, \$95-\$142).
- Leave the seawall to sample organic dishes such as a chickpea and fig *tagine* with kale, yogurt, and parsley oil at **Raincity Grill**. There's a take-out counter in summer (1193 Denman St.; 685-7337; entrées, \$10-\$17).
- The beach is marked by a 20-foot *inukshuk*, an Inuit symbol traditionally used as a navigational aid. This one, sculpted by Inuit artist Alvin Kanak, is in granite.
- The mammoth steel installation **217.5 Arcs x 13**, by Bernar Venet, weighs more than six tons.
- Watch the barges ply False Creek while sampling contemporary regional dishes on the patio of **Fiddlehead Joe's** (1012 Beach Ave.; 688-1969; entrées, \$8-\$13).
- Granville Island**, home to the city's Public Market, is in False Creek (see page B8).
- David Lam Park** is named for the first Canadian of Chinese origin to be made lieutenant governor of British Columbia, in 1988.
- Just off the seawall, **Reckless Bike** rents all types of two-wheelers (110 Davie St.; 648-2600; from \$6 per hour).
- Where Davie Street meets the seawall, catch the **Aquabus** ferry to Granville Island (689-5858; aquabus.bc.ca; one way, \$3).
- The domed **BC Place Stadium**, behind the Plaza of the Nations, will host the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2010 Winter Olympics (bcplacestadium.com). Across the water, the globe at **Science World** is one of the city's distinctive landmarks (scienceworld.bc.ca).

* The area code for Vancouver is 604.

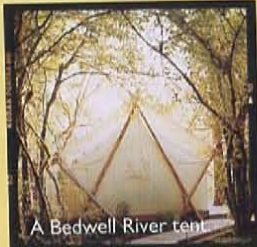
Future Forecast Shangri-La's first North American property is set to debut here in the summer of 2008. The 60-story glass tower, which will be Vancouver's tallest, will combine ultraluxe residential condos and hotel rooms with ground-floor retail and public spaces. As it gears up for the 2010 Winter Olympics, the city is masterminding improvements and new construction, including the 600,000-square-foot Olympic Village on the downtown waterfront. Eco-friendly Canada Line, an extensive mass transit line linking downtown Vancouver, the airport, and the suburbs, will debut in late 2009 and will dramatically decrease congestion.



The "Eh" List

Just a short flight from Vancouver are luxury lodges amid spectacular scenery

Where do the stars go when they need a quick escape from the film and TV sweatshops of Vancouver? If they're smart, they hop a flight to Tofino, on Vancouver Island, and hide out at the **Clayoquot Wilderness Resort**. Never has getting out of Dodge felt more luxurious. When tucked into a bed under a down duvet in a safari-style tent at the resort's Bedwell River Outpost, the body yields to the creature comforts while appreciating the creature cries in the wilderness just beyond (250-726-8235; wildretreat.com; three-day packages from \$2,405). Floatplane is the only way to get to the seasonal, superdeluxe 17-room **King Pacific Lodge**, set along a harbor farther north on the British Columbia coast. Before chilling next to the fireplace, work up some heat heli-hiking, kayaking, and fly-fishing (604-987-5452; king-pacificlodge.com; three-night packages from \$3,877). Pressed for time? Near Ganges Harbour, where the floatplanes land on Salt Spring Island, **Hastings House** is just a stone's throw from Vancouver. After soaking up the country house charm, retire to a skylit tub (250-537-2362; hastingshouse.com; doubles, \$253-\$688).



A Bedwell River tent.



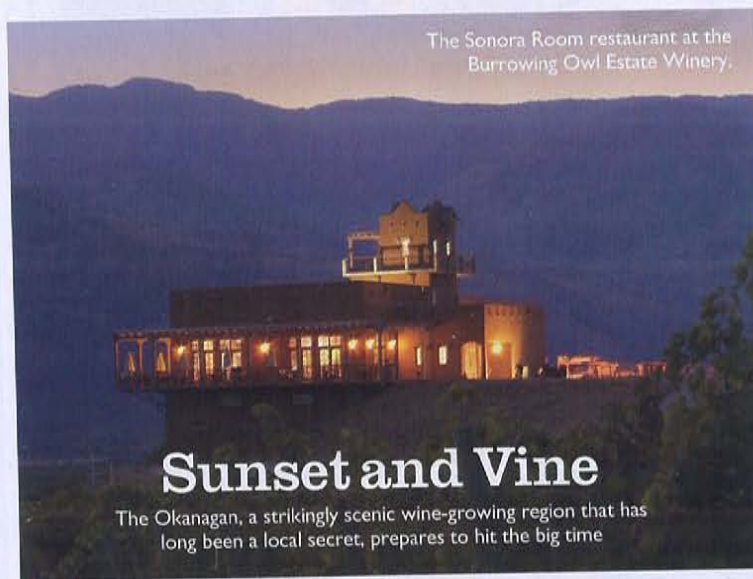
Landing strip.



Grilled salmon.



Transport, Clayoquot style.



The Sonora Room restaurant at the Burrowing Owl Estate Winery.

Sunset and Vine

The Okanagan, a strikingly scenic wine-growing region that has long been a local secret, prepares to hit the big time

Five hours east of Vancouver, the Okanagan Valley is a 120-mile-long microclimate of silvery lakes cupped by a corridor of mountains. Ideal for viticulture, the Okanagan is Canada's second-largest wine region (after the Niagara Peninsula). About 85 percent of its wine is sold within British Columbia—but the secret is out.

The Sip The region's 133 wineries, most of which offer tastings, range from family-owned labors of love to slick commercial enterprises. The gold standard is the **Mission Hill Family Estate Winery**, a palatial property with an outdoor amphitheater, a 12-story bell tower—and Oculus, the area's best Bordeaux-like blend (800-957-9911; missionhillwinery.com). The **Summerhill Estate Winery** ages its organic sparkling wines in a four-story replica of the Great Pyramid at Giza built from white Egyptian limestone (250-764-8000; summerhill.bc.ca). One mile from the U.S. border, **Nk'Mip Cellars** is said to be the first Aborigine-owned winery in North America. The **Osoyoos Indian Band** works with a Canadian conglomerate to produce fine chardonnays, pinot noirs, and merlots (250-495-2985; nkmipcellars.com).

The Table Many top vineyards have first-rate restaurants. The hottest stand-alone

Room offers spectacular sunset views across the Burrowing Owl Estate's plateau, not to mention black-truffle-scented breast of duck matched with the vineyard's fine merlot (877-498-0620; entrées, \$22-\$33).

The Bed The 78-suite **Manteo Resort**, on Lake Okanagan in Kelowna, has a noteworthy restaurant and a small marina (250-860-1031; manteo.com; doubles, \$197-\$215). Near Nk'Mip Cellars, the newer **Spirit Ridge Vineyard Resort and Spa** has 94 adobe villas and suites with maple furniture and terra-cotta tile (250-495-5445; spiritridge.ca; doubles, \$176-\$254).

The Bottle Summerhill Winery Cipes Blanc de Noirs 1999 has deep aromas of toast, nuts, and red fruit (\$30). The medium-bodied Burrowing Owl Sandhill Pinot Blanc VQA 2003 has delicate notes of ripe pears, melons, and peaches, as well as subtle oak (\$14). Mission Hill Oculus VQA 2003, a blend of merlot, cabernet sauvignon, cabernet franc, and petit verdot, is elegant, structured, and memorable: It's Canada's **Château Margaux** (\$49). Nk'Mip Cellars Riesling Icewine 2005 has hints of honey and apricots and a luscious texture (\$35).

The Scoop For intelligence about more than wine, pick up **Discovering the Okanagan**, by Jim Couper (Whitecap Books, \$17).



The cellar at the Burrowing Owl.

CLAIMS to FAME

City of Glass Vancouver has more high-rise condos per capita than any other city in North America (and with great mountain and ocean views as well).

Sweat Equity The city is home to Vancity, Canada's largest credit union (voted Canada's "Best Workplace" in 2005 and 2006), and to Conrad Schmidt, founder of the World Naked Bike Ride and the Work Less Party of British Columbia.

Hollywood North Vancouver, which has five film schools, is the third-largest North American city for film production, after Los Angeles and New York.

Melting Pot More than half of Vancouver's residents have a mother tongue other than English, including Bengali, Cambodian, Chinese, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and more than 60 others.

Vansterdam Even though marijuana is illegal, the city receives a near-perfect score (no pun intended) from webehigh.com for its hospitality to pot smokers.

Bonus Q Which of the following television shows were not shot in Vancouver?

The L Word, The X-Files, House, M.D., 21 Jump Street, Smallville, and The Chris Isaak Show.

▲: All were shot in Vancouver.