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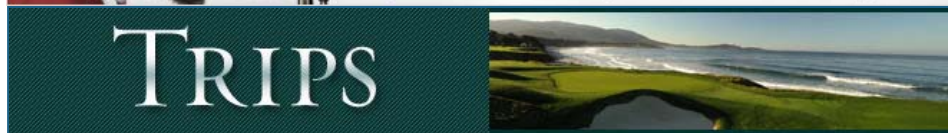
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September 09, 2009

Vancouver Island Golf Trail Guide

Posted at 4:56 PM by [Ryan Reiterman](#) | Categories: [Canada](#), [Vancouver Island](#)

Europeans were first drawn to Vancouver Island for fur trading in the late 1700's, but today Canada's second most populous island boasts many more attractions.

Whether it's watching a pod of killer whales in the wild, sipping pinot noir from a local winery or reeling in a salmon, you won't spend too much time in your hotel room once you're on the island.

And the golf isn't bad, either.

From Victoria in the south to Campbell River in the north, the Vancouver Island Golf Trail stretches 155 miles along the east coast. In between are 11 courses that offer a great mix of challenging golf and spectacular scenery. Here are five of the courses to check out along the trail.

VICTORIA

Bear Mountain

Victoria, BC

7,212 yards

\$59-\$149

1-888-533-BEAR (2327)

bearmountain.ca

This mountain resort, only a few minutes from bustling downtown Victoria, now offers two Nicklaus Design gems.

The Valley course, which opened in May, is considered the "friendlier" of the two courses, with wider fairways and larger greens. But as with any Nicklaus course, there are plenty of challenges awaiting anyone with swing troubles.



The Mountain course is on such a nice piece of property that Jack and his son Steve designed 19 holes. The 141-yard, par-3 19th is located on the side of a cliff off of the 14th hole with unobstructed views of Victoria below. It can be used to settle any bets in the event of a tie, or can be played for pure fun.

Other fun par 3s include the 11th, only a wedge for most players, but an island green,

Olympic View Golf Club

Victoria, BC

6,562 yards

\$20-\$80

1-800-446-5322

golfbc.com

If bomb and gouge isn't your style, head over to Olympic View. The course isn't a brute from the tips, but tree-lined fairways, sharp doglegs and several ponds put the emphasis on strategy over strength. You'll want to channel your inner Ben Hogan, not John Daly, to have success.

The 335-yard, par-4 12th only requires about a 200-yard shot from the tee to find the garden spot, but the second shot requires at least an extra club to carry the water and a bunker protecting an uphill green.

If your game needs a tune-up, head over to Olympic View's GBC Golf Academy. The large practice facility includes a driving range, short-game areas, private or group lessons, a junior clinic and women-only programs.

Where to Stay

Hotel Grand Pacific

800-663-7550

hotelgrandpacific.com

Where to Eat

[Spinnakers Gastro Brewpub](#) sports a healthy menu of eclectic appetizers, brewpub classics, pasta, brick-oven pizzas and seafood. Local products are used in nearly all of the meals, but the artisan beers are the stars of the menu. Brewed on the premises, there is even an ale named after Roy Chapman Andrews, the man who inspired the *Indiana Jones* movies. Check out the video below to see how the beer is made.

COURTENAY

Crown Isle

Courtenay, BC

\$35-\$90

1-888-338-8439

crownisle.com/

The jewel of Courtenay (pronounced court-nee) is Crown Isle. The fairly open course is worth playing just for the ninth hole, a 412-yard, dogleg-right par-4. Find the fairway and you'll have one of the finest second shots imaginable -- an uphill shot with large trees and the Beaufort mountains in the background.

You'll want to stay in the fairway since numerous bunkers dot almost every hole on the course, and large trees aren't in short supply. The 368-yard, par-4 17th forces you to choose sides with three large pines and a bunker in the middle of the fairway.

Where to Stay

Crown Isle Resort & Golf Community

888-338-8439

crownisle.com

Where to Eat

Two restaurants offer excellent environments to end any round. The Timber Room -- with large patio tables, a fireplace and plenty of hearty items on the menu -- is best enjoyed outside.

The Silverado Steak House is housed in a glass conservatory to allow guests to enjoy the views no matter where they're sitting. A healthy portion of Alberta beef and a glass of local wine is hard to beat. After dinner, stroll down to the cognac & cigar room and marvel at the small classic car museum.

CAMPBELL RIVER

Storey Creek Golf Club

Campbell River, BC

6,699 yards

\$30.50-\$69

1-866-923-3674

storeycreek.bc.ca

Known as "a course in nature," Storey Creek also provides a course in shot-making. With water on the right and trees on the left, the par-5 12th tests every shot in the bag, plus the space between your ears. And don't mind the deer, eagles, bears and cougars that are seen around the course -- they know you're just playing through.

Where to Stay

Painter's Lodge

800-663-7090

painterslodge.com

Where to Eat

Take a water taxi across the river to have dinner at April Point Resort & Spa on Quadra Island. The spacious restaurant and sushi bar have everything a seafood lover could

want. The salmon doesn't get much fresher since the area is known as the salmon fishing capital of the world.

Three Reasons to Go Back

1. Downtown Victoria Art Galleries: All 18 galleries are within walking distance to most hotels and feature tribal art, sculpture, photography and more.

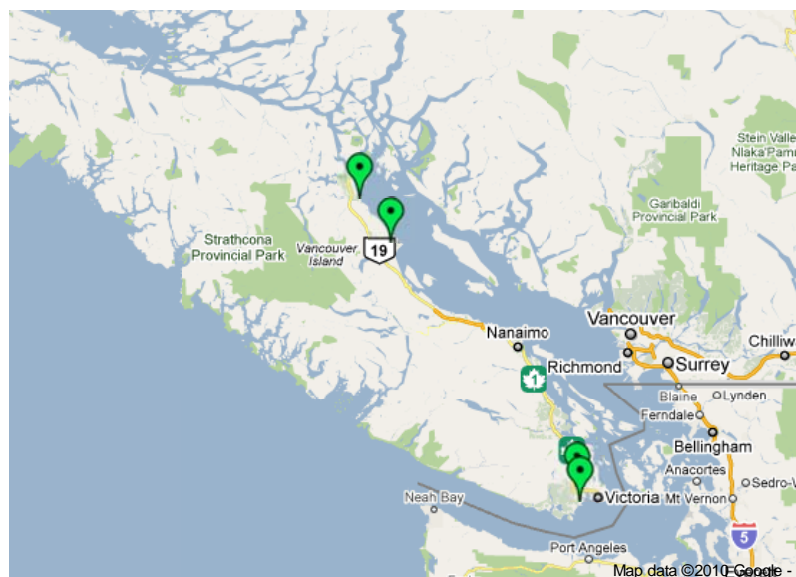
2. Bears! You can find [guided tours](#) in various parts of the island to see black bears. In the fall, tours on the mainland coast bring you close to grizzly bears feasting on spawning salmon.

3. Victoria's Ale Trail: Beer has been around Victoria since the 1840's, and now you can take a self-guided tour through several micro-breweries and sample many of the area's top beers.

Photo Gallery: Vancouver Island Golf Trail

For more information visit golfvancouverisland.ca

(Photo: No. 14 at Bear Mountain)



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