

VANCOUVER

B.C.

A city defined by its sea-to-mountain setting has an eye-popping economy as well

BY HALEY SHAPLEY

Vancouver, Canada's largest West Coast outpost, is a hub of economic activity. Given that Van City recently was named the third most livable city in the world by *The Economist* — no U.S. locations made the top 25, by the way — it makes sense that many smart people would choose to live and work in this coastal seaport metropolis.

Many industries are represented in Vancouver. Some of the key sectors include digital entertainment, education, film and television production, information and communications technology, life sciences, mining, and sustainability-related businesses.

Heading north to Canada on business? Here's what you need to know about B.C.'s biggest city.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Even though Vancouver is a mere 140 miles away, remember that you are heading into another country — that means bringing your passport or enhanced driver's license, budgeting time for clearing Customs, and planning for how you'll communicate once you're across the border.

"Call your cellphone company ahead of time and purchase a temporary data plan so you don't get hammered on roaming charges when you're up there," recommends Lance Aasness, executive vice president at Hinds-Bock, a Bothell company that specializes in automation for the food production industry. "That'll save you a lot of money."

PLANES, TRAINS, AND AUTOMOBILES

The drive to Vancouver takes about three hours, while the flight is less than an hour. You can also take the Amtrak Cascades, which leaves from Seattle's King Street Station twice a day, once in the morning

and once in the evening (you can also hop on along the way in Edmonds or Everett). A budget-friendly option is the Wi-Fi-equipped **BoltBus**, which departs Seattle's International District multiple times each day. The price fluctuates but is generally between \$10 and \$30 one way.



THE POWER LUNCH

For impeccable service and food befitting the elegant atmosphere, take a midday meal break at **Hawksworth Restaurant**, where the list of awards won is longer than the menu. That doesn't mean the menu is any slouch, of course — there are plenty of delicious options, from the winter fingerling potato salad with compressed apples to the parmesan-crusted chicken served with artichoke ravioli to the classic Hawksworth beef burger. In Yaletown, Minami combines Japanese and West Coast cuisine into innovative offerings like a sockeye salmon carpaccio and the Red Wave roll (crab and avocado wrapped in red tuna). For private dining, the Blue Wave Room seats up to 14 and features a 55-inch LCD television and wireless Internet access.



GET SOME SLEEP

Vancouver doesn't lack nice places to stay. Aasness' favorite is downtown's Pan Pacific Hotel Vancouver. "It's got tremendous views of the harbor and it's within close walking distance to good restaurants," he says. It's also next to the Vancouver Convention Centre if business takes you there. Other hotels are embracing technology to help guests. The Fairmont Pacific Rim has an iPad in each room loaded with software that lets you arrange airport transportation, make restaurant reservations, and research information about local attractions with the swipe of a finger. Over in Yaletown, the trendy boutique **Opus Hotel Vancouver** added Samsung Galaxy S3 phones to certain room categories, which you can take with you out and about (the phones are preloaded with useful numbers and apps).



TEAM BONDING

For a group activity that's a lot more fun than gathering around a boardroom table, try taking a tour. Bond over small bites on the well-loved **Vancouver Food Tour**, or brush up on your photography skills with Vancouver Photowalks, a two-for-one deal where you get to explore a neighborhood and capture shots that will be the envy of your Facebook friends. Or become a cub reporter uncovering corruption on Forbidden Vancouver's Prohibition City tour — you'll ignite a little friendly competition to see who's the best gumshoe, and you'll learn some little-known facts, entertainingly delivered.



GONNA MAKE YOU SWEAT

TripAdvisor readers have named 1,000-acre **Stanley Park** the world's best park, beating out the likes of NYC's Central Park and Barcelona's Parc Güell. Exploring via the Seawall is an easy way to take in the beauty of the city and get in some exercise. The path is divided into areas for walkers/joggers and inline skaters/cyclists. If you'd like to pedal, pick up a bike at Spokes Bicycle Rentals and head out.

ITINERARY

STANLEY PARK

West End

vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture

SPOKES BICYCLE RENTALS

1798 Georgia St. W.

spokesbicyclerentals.com

Welcome to
VANCOUVER
B.C.

Comwall Avenue

FAIRMONT PACIFIC RIM

1038 Canada Place

fairmont.com/pacific-rim-vancouver

PAN PACIFIC HOTEL

999 Canada Place #300

panpacificvancouver.com

VANCOUVER FOOD TOUR

318 Homer St.

vancouverfoodtour.com

FORBIDDEN VANCOUVER

510 W. Hastings St.

forbiddenvancouver.ca

HAWKSWORTH RESTAURANT

801 W. Georgia St.

hawksworthrestaurant.com

OPUS HOTEL

322 Davie St.

vancouver.opushotel.com

MINAMI

1118 Mainland St.

minamirestaurant.com

VANCOUVER PHOTO WALKS

221 Union St.

vancouverphotowalks.ca

Haley Shapley has written for *Fodor's Travel*, AAA's *Journey* magazines, bankrate.com, and dozens of other regional and national publications. Follow her on Twitter: [@girlaboutworld](https://twitter.com/girlaboutworld).