

## A Stroll through Victoria



Approximately 2 Hours



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Enjoyed it?



4.4 out of 5

Value



4.3 out of 5

9 out of 11(82%)reviewers would recommend this product to a friend.

[Read all 11 reviews](#)

|

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Few cities are more spectacularly suited to a **walking tour** than Victoria. Whether your passion is for the outdoors, history, beautiful scenery or horticulture, there is something here for you. Start out right from the cruise ship terminal and walk with your guide on a journey of discovery through one of the oldest residential neighborhoods in Western Canada. The streets are lined with period houses and you will hear captivating stories of the people and events that shaped this charming town. The crown jewel is beautiful **Beacon Hill Park**, complete with manicured flower beds, towering trees (keep an eye out for nesting eagles and herons), and perhaps the occasional ghost or restless spirit.

Reaching **Downtown Victoria**, you will encounter a vibrant city with an English Old Town atmosphere.

Your guide will introduce to you two very famous buildings -- the magnificent Legislature Building, and the world-famous Empress Hotel. A great deal of history surrounds both these famous landmarks, and some of the stories are right out of the 'truth is stranger than fiction' department.

Your tour ends on the lawn of the Empress Hotel. Guests who wish to stay in town to shop or explore independently are welcome to do so, but must make their own way back to the ship.

Notes:

The walk is about two hours -- wear sturdy walking shoes; bring bottled water. Restroom facilities en route are very limited. Bring your sense of humor to best enjoy this lively and entertaining outing.

### Butchart & Butterfly Gardens



Approximately 4 Hours



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Enjoyed it?



3.2 out of 5

Value



2.9 out of 5

9 out of 17(53%) reviewers would recommend this product to a friend.

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|

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For garden-lovers and green thumbs, a visit to Victoria is incomplete without a trip to the beautiful and impressive Butchart Gardens and the Victoria Butterfly Garden. Enjoy the city sights as your coach makes its way out to the rural surroundings of both of these beautiful facilities.

**Butchart Gardens** is a 55-acre wonderland of flowers, rare trees, winding paths and cascading fountains. Explore the many themed gardens within Butchart -- the Italian Garden, the Sunken Garden, the Rose Garden and the Japanese Garden.

Travel the short distance to the **Victoria Butterfly Garden**. In this lush tropical world you'll experience thousands of exotic butterflies flying freely in an enormous, 12,000-square-foot enclosure. You'll also see flamingos and dozens of other tropical birds, as well as koi carp

swimming in the stream and pond. The gardens features 200 species of orchids and thousands of tropical plants including the *Foods of the World* and **Carnivorous Plant** displays.

### Butchart Gardens & Short City Drive (Daytime Calls)



Approximately 3½ Hours



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Enjoyed it?



3.9 out of 5

Value



3.7 out of 5

**11** out of **13**(85%) reviewers would recommend this product to a friend.

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|

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This tour offers the very best of Victoria, combining the city's unique highlights with a visit to the world-famous Butchart Gardens. On a **panoramic drive** you'll take in Chinatown and the Gates of Harmonious Interest, along with the Old Town and scenic Marine Drive.

At beautiful **Butchart Gardens**, see how the Butchart family has transformed a barren rock quarry into what is now one of the world's best-known horticultural attractions, covering more than 55 acres. The gardens are a lush paradise of flowers, rare trees and winding paths and were created more than 100 years ago. Enjoy the cascading fountains and footbridges connecting the many themed gardens, including the beautiful Sunken Garden, the Japanese Garden and the Rose Garden. A map will help you on your **self-guided tour**.

Notes:

This tour operates during daytime calls to Victoria only

## Enchanting Butchart Gardens (Evening Calls)



Approximately 3½ Hours



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Enjoyed it?

3.5 out of 5

Value

3.1 out of 5

16 out of 27(59%)reviewers would recommend this product to a friend.

[Read all 27 reviews](#)

|

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The **Butchart Gardens by night** offers an entirely different perspective from daytime visits. By the time you arrive at the gardens, the riotous color of broad daylight will have given way to **low light and cooler temperatures**, so the focus of an evening visit becomes the extraordinary floral scent of the blossoms and subtle lighting. One of the largest underground wiring installations in North America helps this wonderland of flowers, rare trees and lighted, winding paths to take on an enchanted aspect. The magnificent Ross Fountain, the centerpiece of these lush gardens, dances with creative lighting effects.

Enjoy cascading fountains, footbridges, music and outdoor entertainment while you learn how a barren rock quarry metamorphosed into a world-renowned horticultural attraction.

On select Saturday evenings in July and August you may be treated to the Butchart Gardens fireworks display, choreographed to music.

Notes:

It is important to note that during May and September, daylight is very limited and this tour is operated predominately in low light. The drive to the gardens is approximately one hour each way. You will have 60 to 90 minutes at Butchart Gardens. Tour operates only during evening calls in Victoria.

## Exclusive Empress, West Coast Meal & City Highlights



Approximately 3 Hours



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Reward your appetite for delicious food and fascinating history with a memorable dinner at the elegant **Fairmont Empress Hotel**. A stunning reminder of a bygone era, the Empress has hosted kings and queens, emperors and entourages, and a veritable who's-who of Hollywood celebrities.

A brief **panoramic drive** past some of Victoria's iconic landmarks delivers you to the majestic hotel, where a guide in Edwardian costume greets you in the same manner in which celebrities and heads of state have been greeted for more than a century. With formalities completed, you will enter a sumptuously appointed lounge to enjoy a three-course, West-Coast-inspired meal, topped off with a maple crème brûlée dessert.

The sumptuous, wood-paneled lounge sets the scene for fascinating tales of the Empress' ghosts, guests, and Francis Rattenbury -- the architect behind the hotel and the nearby Parliament building. It is also your starting point for a walk through the hotel that will reveal the details discussed during your meal.

Complete your epicurean journey by re-boarding the coach and returning to the ship.

## Grand City Drive & Empress High Tea



Approximately 2½ Hours



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Enjoyed it?



4 out of 5

Value



3.3 out of 5

**10** out of **12**(83%)reviewers would recommend this product to a friend.

[Read all 12 reviews](#)

|

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This elegant excursion takes in the finest of Victoria's English traditions.

Travel through the exclusive Uplands and Oak Bay **residential areas** with their lovely manicured private gardens. Enjoy stunning views along **Marine Drive** with Mt Baker and the Gulf Islands as a backdrop.

You will stop high atop Mt Tolmie for vistas of Victoria and its surrounding sea and mountain panoramas. Discover the landmark **Empress Hotel**, where the rich and famous, as well as genuine royalty, have enjoyed the Victoria tradition of **High Tea at the Empress**. Pastries, Devonshire cream, jellies and other fare combine with the Empress Hotel's own private blend of tea to recreate the atmosphere of a bygone era. Seated in the **Tea Lobby**, you will discover the fine dining ambience that embodies all that is Victoria.

During evening calls, the Empress High Tea is available exclusively through Holland America Line.

Notes:

Gluten-free options are available upon request.

## Off the Beaten Path: BC Aviation Museum & Cider Tasting



Approximately 3¾ Hours



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Up, up and away on this journey through Canadian aviation history, an apple orchard and a cider house.

Begin with a relaxing 45-minute coach ride to the **BC Aviation Museum**, which brings alive British Columbia's impressive aviation history. Wander through the Memorial Room and Main Hangar with your guide, and marvel at the collection's rare aircraft, flying machines, artifacts, and Air Force memorabilia. Visit the busy restoration hangar, where skilled volunteers restore many of the museum's exhibits, and don't miss the extensive collection of aviation art.

Re-board your coach for a short ride to the charming **Sea Cider Farm & Cider House**. Renowned for its exceptional organic cider, Sea Cider offers guests a memorable West Coast experience. Tour the facility, learning how apple juice travels from the orchard to your glass, and step into the spacious tasting room to sample a flight of ciders.

Head back to the pier a little more knowledgeable about two elements of BC industry.

## Orca Whale Watching by Day



Approximately 3 Hours



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Enjoyed it?



3 out of 5

Value



2.8 out of 5

2 out of 6(33%)reviewers would recommend this product to a friend.

[Read all 6 reviews](#)

|

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Tour Victoria's **Inner Harbour** and surrounding coastline in an enclosed, **high-speed boat**; then head for open water to observe the abundant local wildlife. Although sightings can't be guaranteed, this excursion boast a 90% success rate of seeing seals, sea lions, porpoises and numerous species of sea birds, as well as the killer (orca) whales that make their home in these waters.

The high-speed expedition catamaran is the best platform for viewing whales and offers comfort second-to-none. Experienced on-board naturalists use hydrophones so you can hear the whales communicate in their natural environment.

See the unique habitat that is also a haven for a myriad of bird life combined with the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest.

Notes:

Infants up to and including the day prior to their second birthday can be considered a lap child and should be added to the parent's weight they will be sitting on and are at no cost. If you are traveling with an infant, please notify the shore excursions staff once on board the ship.



## Orca Whale Watching by Evening



Approximately 3 Hours



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Enjoyed it?



2.3 out of 5

Value



2.3 out of 5

1 out of 3(33%)reviewers would recommend this product to a friend.

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|

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Evening is often feeding time for the more than 80 resident killer (**orca**) **whales** living in these waters.

Head for open water to observe the abundant local wildlife. Although sightings can't be guaranteed, this excursion boast a 90% success rate of seeing seals, sea lions, porpoises and numerous species of sea birds, as well as the orca whales that make their home in these waters.

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## Parliament Lunch & City Highlights (Daytime Calls)



Approximately 3 Hours



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Experience history in the making with a leisurely lunch in the Legislative Dining Room at Victoria's iconic Legislature Building.

A brief **sightseeing tour** of **Victoria** takes in many of the city's stunning landmarks, including the Mile Zero marker, which designates the start of the nearly 5,000-mile-long Trans-Canada Highway.

Pass Clover Point Park and genteel Oak Bay Village, whose architectural gems include Tudor-style homes and tea shops.

Stop in the stately downtown area, where the dazzling **Legislature Building** overlooks the banks of the Inner Harbor. Step inside to visit this amazing edifice, completed in 1897 in honor of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. The building boasts 350 rooms on four levels. Acclaimed as Victoria's most iconic symbol, the building's dramatic façade represents extravagant Neo-Baroque, Renaissance and Romanesque Revival architecture. The roof is adorned with 33 verdigris domes and a gold-covered statue of British explorer George Vancouver, holding the Union Jack.

Follow your guide to the classically appointed **Legislative Dining Room** for a delicious **lunch**, followed by dessert. You'll understand why it is often called the Marble Palace. It is a lavish structure -- a magnificent tile floor graces the lower rotunda, lovely stained glass windows and gilt cornices embellish the hallways.

Visit the **gift shop** and purchase a special memento, or wander through the peaceful **gardens** bedecked with colorful flowers and water ponds.

Guests who wish to stay in town to shop or explore independently are welcome to do so, but must return to the ship on their own.

Notes:

All guests must show government-issued photo ID before the tour.

## Secret Garden & Teahouse



Approximately 2 Hours



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Enjoyed it?



5 out of 5

Value



5 out of 5

**2** out of **2** (100%) reviewers would recommend this product to a friend.

[Read all 2 reviews](#)

|

[Write a review](#)

Don't miss this Holland America Line visit to **Abkhazi Garden**, which is closed to the general public. Prince and Princess Abkhazi began creating their masterpiece in 1946, and your guide will tell you about the love story behind the garden and who tends the plants nowadays, and why. The garden is quite hidden from the street, with only hints of what exists beyond the hornbeam hedge -- an exquisite heritage home and garden offering a tranquil experience for the avid gardener or garden-lover.

Upon entering, the invited guest finds a stunning wealth of plants that embrace this natural landscape that is unique to Victoria -- dramatic glaciated rocky slopes, magnificent native Garry oaks and gorgeous vistas. The garden itself is designed to make the most of these remarkable features and it is the Abkhazis' response to their landscape that qualifies it as a stunning example of West Coast landscape design. The garden flows around the rock, taking advantage of deeper pockets of soil for conifers, Japanese maples and rhododendrons that have grown to an impressive maturity over the last 50 years. Carpets of naturalized bulbs, choice alpiners and woodland companions provide interest throughout the year to the discerning arborist, but it is the overall design that leaves the greatest impression. Abkhazi Gardens is listed as one of the Top 100 small gardens in the world.

After your walk through the garden with your guide, relax in the Tea House for a **cup of tea and a freshly baked scone**.

Notes:

A donation on your behalf will be made to the Friends of Abkhazi, who volunteer in the garden and help the Land Conservatory, which protects fast-disappearing natural areas, heritage sites and agricultural lands for future generations. Minimum age is 8 years.

### Victoria by Horse-Drawn Trolley



Approximately 1 Hour



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Enjoyed it?



3.7 out of 5

Value



3.1 out of 5

5 out of 7(71%) reviewers would recommend this product to a friend.

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|

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Experience Victoria at the pace of yesteryear.

This **horse-drawn trolley** ride is drawn by two magnificent draught horses dressed in fine harness, and the passenger area is covered to provide protection in the unlikely event of a summer shower. There are blankets to keep you warm in the cool evening breeze.

Heads out from the pier and along the **Victoria waterfront**; then, travel through the historic **James Bay residential neighborhood**.

Wind your way back along the harbor with stunning views of the thousands of lights trimming the Legislature Building.

## Victoria Highlights



Approximately 2 Hours



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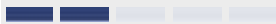


Enjoyed it?



2.1 out of 5

Value



1.9 out of 5

3 out of 15(20%)reviewers would recommend this product to a friend.

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**Victoria** is one of the most picturesque cities in North America -- it exudes old-world charm and a distinctively British flair. This tour will show you its heart and soul, and why so many visitors from around the world come each year to the City of Gardens.

From the Cruise Terminal on Ogden Point, you'll head into the **upscale residential neighborhoods**, complete with manicured lawns, abundant flowers of all shapes and sizes, and million-dollar coastal views of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Olympic Mountains.

Watch for the highlights of Victoria, including glimpses of Craigdarroch Castle, historic China Town, and city and island views.

Finish up at the **Inner Harbour** -- the centerpiece of Victoria. Here you'll find the Royal British Columbia Museum, numerous street performers, craft vendors, food stalls, the British Columbia Legislature Building, and the world-famous Fairmont Empress Hotel.

Guests who wish to stay in town to shop or explore independently are welcome to do so, but must make their own way back to the ship.

## Victoria Highlights & Craigdarroch Castle



Approximately 2½ Hours



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Enjoyed it?



3.1 out of 5

Value



2.9 out of 5

5 out of 12(42%)reviewers would recommend this product to a friend.

[Read all 12 reviews](#)

|

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Discover Victoria's rich history on a tour of this charming Provincial Capital.

Set out from the pier and head straight to the heart of Victoria -- the **Inner Harbour** area. This is where you'll find the British Columbia Parliament Buildings, the famous Empress Hotel, the Royal British Columbia Museum, and the lighter side of life with street performers and food vendors galore.

Continue to **Craigdarroch Castle** -- the only remaining vestige of the grand estate belonging to industrialist Robert Dunsmuir. Most of this four-story masterpiece has been fully restored to its original condition, after having been used as both a hospital and a college in the 1900s. Explore Craigdarroch on a **self-guided tour**, and pianists are welcome to **play the castle's piano**. Don't miss the castle **gift shop**.

Back on the motor coach, head into the upscale residential neighborhoods, where the perfectly manicured lawns and abundant flowers explain Victoria's City of Gardens nickname, and beautiful coastal and mountain views capture the essence of western Canada.

Notes:

There is a 100-yard uphill walk from the coach to the castle. The castle itself is not wheelchair accessible and has five floors and four flights of stairs within it.

## Wine Tasting at the Bateman Gallery



Approximately 3 Hours



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Start with a **panoramic drive** through Victoria, taking in many stunning landmarks. See the Mile Zero marker at the start of the nearly 5,000-mile-long Trans-Canada Highway and journey past Beacon Hill Park, where a 160-foot-tall totem stands.

View the oldest Chinatown in Canada and pass the stately Empress Hotel and Legislature Building.

Leave the coach at the historic **Steamship Terminal** in Victoria's Inner Harbor, where Canadian immigrants used to disembark from oceanliners after long trans-continental voyages. Head to the second-floor gallery for a treat that is both tasty and visual. Take in the gorgeous views of the Inner Harbour as you enjoy **sampling award-winning wines from Unsworth Vineyards**. This is your opportunity to learn how the traditional meets the artisanal in the process of winemaking at Unsworth. This is a family-owned and -operated winery committed to handcrafting wines of distinction. Savor white, red and dessert wine tastings and browse in the gallery.

**The works of master painter Robert Bateman** are on display here -- the gallery houses a collection of 160 pieces of the West Coast artist's work, which encompasses a range of subjects. Robert Bateman is a renowned naturalist, whom the Audubon Society has recognized as one of the 20th century's 'heroes of conservation'. Bateman has traveled extensively, is spokesman for many environmental and preservation issues, and uses his art to raise millions of dollars for the causes important to him. One of Canada's best-known and most celebrated artists, he has received numerous honors and awards, including Officer of the Order of Canada and twelve honorary doctorates. Bateman has three schools named after him and has been the subject of many films and books.

Admire the artist's work, using the gallery's interactive features to listen to the sounds of the birds some of his paintings and become lost in the exquisite detail of his masterpieces.

Leaving the gallery, you'll have one hour of **free time** to explore **downtown Victoria** -- a lively and invigorating city by day or by night.

As you head back to the ship, you are sure to feel enriched and inspired by the art, and more knowledgeable about the fine wines of British Columbia.

Notes:

Minimum age to sample wines is 19 years. Bring photo ID. A shuttle back to the ship will be provided immediately after the gallery experience for anyone who does not want the hour of free time downtown.