

# Vancouver



Take on the peninsula  
14th green at spectacular  
Furry Creek

Knickerbocker glory or close encounters of the furred kind – it's all in a day's play in Vancouver

**F**rom the moment I first saw Vancouver nearly 20 years ago, I was smitten. There's just something about its coastal location, flanked by rivers and mountains. It's the gateway to the Great Outdoors if you want wilderness or adventure while the long summers engender an active outdoors lifestyle. It's a walkable city, too. There's great shopping, fascinating museums, beautiful parks, funky districts, superb restaurants and a pulsating nightlife. And it's hosting the 2010 Winter Olympics. If you're into sport, it's your kind of town.

Vancouver has golf courses in spades, a number of them playable all year.

Westwood Plateau Golf Club architect Michael Hurdzan says he sets out to "create a wow effect" whenever he designs a course. It certainly delivers handsomely on that score, giving breathtaking views of fir-covered mountainsides from every hole. At 1,300ft up, it also offers a glorious panorama of Lower Vancouver from several holes, while Washington State's Mt Baker stands tall on the horizon from some tee boxes.

The wow factor begins on arrival. Knicker-

bocker-clad staff greet you and give pointers on playing the 6,770-yard course. GPS on each cart gives more tips and yardages. But they didn't throw the baby out with the bathwater, thankfully still giving out detailed yardage books before you tee off.

The course has wide fairways but some tricky hazards. Dense woodland is also an ever-present threat. The signature par-3 12th has a gully in front of the green and a sheer granite wall behind. Overclubbing is not recommended. Westwood is a 45-minute drive north-east of Vancouver. But high-fliers can take a seven=>



minute helicopter transfer to the course from Vancouver's harbour heliport instead, through Fairmont Waterfront Hotel-based golf concierge company The 19th Hole. Helijet's Heli-va-View package includes a night at the Fairmont Waterfront, helicopter flights to and from Westwood, golf for two and a picnic lunch, from C\$1,899 (US\$1,540).

Furry Creek, straddling the Sea to Sky Highway north of Vancouver and overlooking the Howe Sound fjord, is regarded as British Columbia's most scenic course and was where the movie *Happy Gilmore* was filmed. It measures just 6,025 yards, but grabs you by the short and furries from the very first tee – dropping 165ft to a fairway with the fjord and glacier-topped mountains as a backdrop.

Its signature hole, the par-3 14th, dares you to drive over a beach littered with bleached driftwood logs to a green jutting into Howe Sound where passing speedboats provide the gallery. The best view is from the 11th, one of the tiered holes stacked up the steep mountainside above it.

Then there's the furry local inhabitants. On a return visit, a ranger told me a bear was loitering by the 11th. Sadly it didn't make an appearance for me, but I did spot an upturned cart in a nearby stream. Perhaps its driver had a furred encounter of a too-close kind.

This is the eagle territory, too. Furry Creek is just down the coast from Brackendale, acknowledged as the bald eagle capital of the world. They congregate in winter when courses in this mountainous coastal area are closed. But golfers can combine a round with spotting other wildlife, on a Sea to Tee Safari. Sewell's Marina takes golfers from Horseshoe Bay to Furry Creek on a rigid-hull inflatable boat, zipping around to take in islands, lighthouses, seals and seabirds.

Of other Vancouver courses, Morgan Creek, home of the Professional Golfers Association of British Columbia, is 30 minutes south of the city. Once a family homestead, it still has a rustic feel with ranch-style fencing.

Northview, an hour south-east, sprawls over

Mountain vistas at Westwood Plateau

## WHERE TO PLAY

### Westwood Plateau Golf & Country Club

6,770 yards, par 72  
C\$99-C\$159 (approx £47-£75)

Contact: 00-1-604-552-0777

westwoodplateaugolf.com

High tees and high service standards make this course a cut above

### Northview Golf & Country Club

Canal Course: 7,101 yards, par 72;  
Ridge Course: 6,900 yards, par 72  
Canal C\$65-C\$75 (approx £31-£36); Ridge C\$85-C\$95 (approx £40-£45)

Contact: 00-1-604-576-4653

northviewgolf.com

Twin, manicured Arnold Palmer creations set among wildlife havens

### Furry Creek Golf & Country Club

6,025 yards, par 72  
C\$89-C\$109 (approx £42-£52)

Contact: 00-1-604-896-2224

golfbc.com

Golf was never more spectacular

### Morgan Creek

6,954 yards, par 72  
C\$85 (approx £40)

Contact: 00-1-604-531-4653

morgancreekgolf.com

Rustic, challenging layout with subtle water and environmental hazards.

## WHERE TO STAY

### Fairmont Waterfront

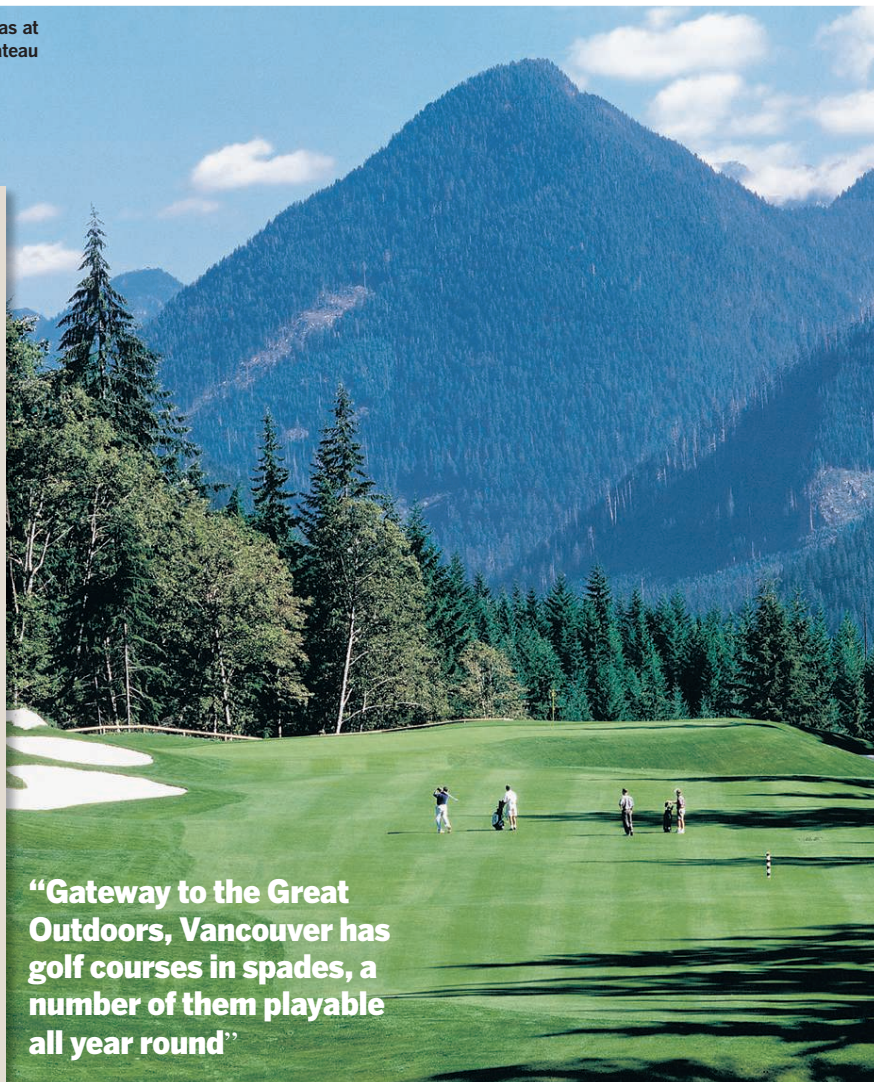
Contact: 00-1-604-691-1991

fairmont.com/waterfront

### Sutton Place

Contact: 00-1-604-682-5511

vancouver.suttonplace.com



**“Gateway to the Great Outdoors, Vancouver has golf courses in spades, a number of them playable all year round”**

Wildlife havens aplenty at Northview, home to two Arnold Palmer layouts



PETER ELLEGARD



420 acres and features two Arnold Palmer courses – the Ridge and the Canal. The Canal is the longer of the two, at 7,101 yards, and part of it is a wildlife habitat which is home to bald eagles and coyotes. Exotic gardens by some holes underline the area's mild climate.

Peace Gardens lies right on the 49th Parallel, separating Canada from the US. It is named for the Peace Arch monument which marks the border and its tree-bedecked fairways have welcomed golfers since 1928.

Across the Fraser lie Meadow Gardens and Swan-e-set Bay, where 900 acres envelop two Lee Trevino courses – one reserved for members and guests – and an imposing chateau-style clubhouse and spa. Meadow Gardens, a 7,041-yard Les Furber design, is rated among Canada's best. The signature par-5 18th is a series of three islands linked by stone bridges.

Vancouver has so much to offer you'll be able to golf, sail and ski all in the same day – and still leave time to hit the downtown restaurants and clubs by night.

If you have the stamina.

## Vancouver Facts

### GETTING THERE

**British Airways** (ba.com; 0870-850-9-850) and **Air Canada** (aircanada.com, 0871-220-1111) fly daily to Vancouver from London Heathrow. **Zoom** (flyzoom.com; 0870-240-0055), **Globespan** (globespan.com; 08700-566-606) and **Canadian Affair** (canadian-affair.com; 0207-616-9184) offer regular summer flights from London Gatwick, Manchester and Glasgow.

### KEY ATTRACTIONS

- **Stanley Park** – Vancouver's scenic park, within walking distance of the city with biking and walking trails, totem poles and Vancouver Aquarium.
- **Capilano Suspension Bridge** – swaying pedestrian bridge high above a canyon giving bird's-eye view of West Coast rainforest.
- **Grouse Mountain** – lumberjack show, observatory and nature trails atop a mountain overlooking Vancouver and just 15 minutes away. Visit the Refuge for Endangered Wildlife to see the orphaned grizzly bear cubs and their new neighbours, a pack of four grey wolves.
- **Hell's Gate Airtram** – a cable car over wild white water rushing through Fraser Canyon, two and a half hours east of Vancouver.

### FAMILY ACTIVITIES

- **Vancouver Aquarium** will delight young and old alike with its 60,000 marine creatures including beluga whales, sharks, sea lions and otters.
- Visit **Storyum** in the historical



PETER ELLEGARD

### Look out for the stylish caddies at Westwood Plateau

district of **Gastown**, experience a walk through time on this 60 minute underground tour and witness the history and stories of British Columbia come to life on seven spectacular stages.

- Giant screens, interactive hands-on displays and scientific wonders await at **Science World**. Take the Skytrain monorail five minutes from downtown.
- The kids can pan for gold, take an underground mine train and be dwarfed by a 235-tonne truck at the **BC Museum of Mining** in Britannia Beach, on the Sea to Sky Highway.

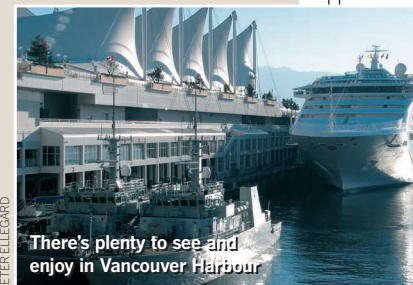
### GENERAL INFO

**Time difference:** GMT -8  
**Tourist Information:** tourismvancouver.com, www.hellobc.co.uk  
**Tel:** 00-1-604-683-2000; 0906-871-5000 (60p per minute)  
**Climate:** Warmed by Pacific

currents, Vancouver has a mild climate with temperatures ranging from 5°C in January to 23°C in July and August. Golf is year-round on courses around the city although winters are wet.

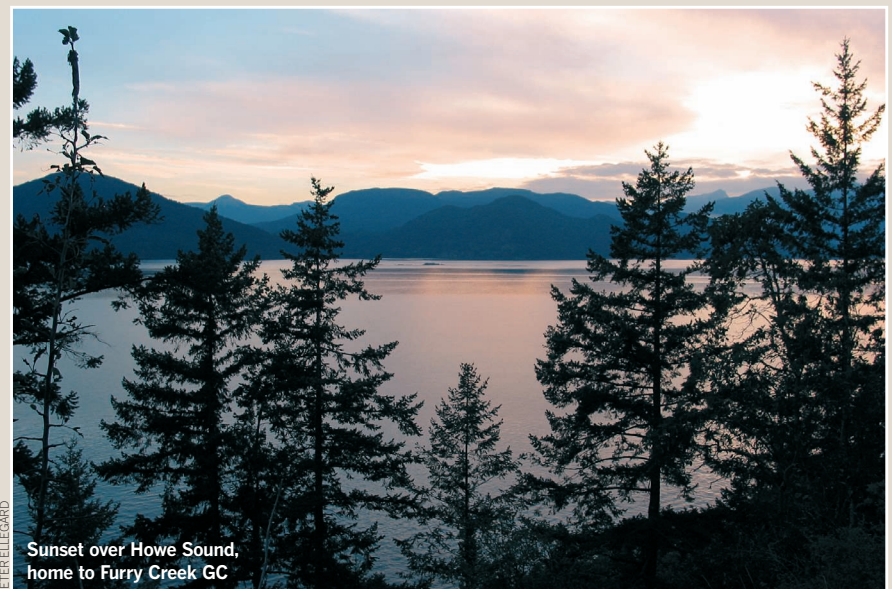
### VANCOUVER FACTS

- Vancouver's Gastown district was named after a talkative saloon owner nicknamed **Gassy Jack** who opened a bar on Burrard Inlet in 1867 for local forestry workers.
- British naval captain **George Vancouver** arrived in 1792 but only spent one day there after discovering the Spanish had already claimed it. Spanish Banks beach is where he met his rivals and several streets bear Spanish names – but not the city.
- The discovery of gold on the banks of the Fraser River brought 25,000 prospectors in 1858.
- Vancouver has North America's third-largest **Chinatown** after San Francisco and New York.
- The city's highest point is **Little Mountain**, a 500ft granite outcrop and the setting for 130-acre Queen Elizabeth Park. There are great views of Vancouver and the North Shore mountains.



PETER ELLEGARD

There's plenty to see and enjoy in Vancouver Harbour



PETER ELLEGARD

Sunset over Howe Sound, home to Furry Creek GC