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# IFR

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**Publisher/Editor** Garth Eichel  
**Art Director** Jacalin Jefferson  
**Account Manager** Garth Eichel

#### CONTRIBUTORS

Garth Eichel  
Sue Kernaghan  
Danielle Pope

For information on display  
advertising opportunities,  
contact Garth Eichel at:  
garth@archipelagomedia.com

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**archipelago**

MEDIA LTD

1248 Woodway Road  
Victoria BC V9A 6Y6  
Tel 250.380.3961  
Fax 250.380.3962  
www.archipelagomedia.com

Please send comments  
and suggestions to  
Garth Eichel, Publisher:  
garth@archipelagomedia.com

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*Dance is an evocative way to explore how one's body moves. R J Muna photo courtesy of Dance Victoria.*

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*The spirit bear, also known as the Kermode bear, was adopted by the province of B.C. as the provincial mammal in 2006. Cael Cook photo*

**On the cover:** British Columbia is home to approximately 90 per cent of all cougars in Canada.  
*iStock Photo*

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# A Brighter Horizon For Men

**RESEARCH** is shedding new light on how and when to treat prostate cancer.

Like an improvement in Doppler radar, we are on course to become much more precise forecasters of the disease. Thanks to the discovery of new biomarkers (biological markers), the horizon of hope is brighter than ever for men.

Like being granted access into prostate cancer's cockpit, researchers have identified a host of very specific clues in the body that provide us with deep insight into how aggressive prostate cancer is, and when it will spread. Consequently, these biomarkers are showing early promise in changing the landscape of prostate cancer management. Although a great deal of work remains to verify each biomarker and develop diagnostic tests for clinical use, we are closing in on a time when we will be able to diagnose and treat each case of prostate cancer with unprecedented accuracy.

Keen on getting these exciting discoveries from the lab into the clinic, Prostate Cancer Canada (PCC) is investing in cutting edge research projects that will verify three of the most promising biomarkers and then develop diagnostic tests for their clinical application.

As the leading national foundation dedicated to the elimination of the disease, a major focus of PCC's mandate is to fund and oversee the vanguard in prostate cancer research. Since 2010, for example, PCC has invested over \$11 million to support researchers at the University of British Columbia's Vancouver Prostate Centre.

Our current radar system for detecting prostate cancer is the Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) test, a simple blood test that looks for suspicious activity directly related to the prostate. This is our best tool for finding prostate cancer early, especially when a baseline PSA reading is established at age 40, with follow-up tests based on a man's complete risk profile.

When tumors with a low risk of progressing are discovered through PSA tests, "active surveillance" — a method pioneered in Canada — can be introduced to watch the cancer closely rather than defaulting to invasive treatment. Treatment is then given if there are any worrying signs. As a result, more men are living longer, and fewer are being over-treated.



*Rocco Rossi, President & CEO, Prostate Cancer Canada.*

Even with the added watchfulness of "active surveillance", PSA testing is not a diagnostic tool that can accurately distinguish between aggressive and non-aggressive cases. Unfortunately, this gap in our ability to accurately diagnose prostate cancer keeps the possibility of unnecessarily treating men with non-aggressive cases of prostate cancer alive. When overtreatment does occur, men are left with avoidable, sometimes even irreversible side effects.

With the addition of improved diagnostic tests based on biomarkers, however, overtreatment will soon become a thing of the past. Each man will be treated in accordance with their own, unique case. If aggressive, the appropriate treatment will be chosen to get rid of it before it spreads. If non-threatening, overtreatment can be avoided with "active surveillance". When this science takes off, prostate cancer will find doing the same harder than ever. 🦋

*Prostate Cancer Canada is a proud partner of Helijet, and wishes to thank them for their gigantic support in generating prostate cancer awareness.*



# Fast. Friendly. Efficient.

Helijet has been whisking passengers across the Strait of Georgia and the Strait of Juan de Fuca since 1986; connecting Victoria, British Columbia's capital city, with Vancouver, Canada's third-largest city. The routes are served by Helijet's fleet of fast and powerful 12-passenger Sikorsky S-76 helicopters. With a choice of over 125 scheduled 35-minute flights a week, Helijet customers enjoy friendly personalized service, fast and convenient check-ins with no long line-ups or baggage hassles. Passengers sit back, relax and enjoy the spectacular mountains, rugged shorelines, and countless islands and inlets that make British Columbia's south coast and Vancouver Island so unique.

Helijet operates day or night, clear or cloudy weather. Instrument Flight Rules allows Helijet to fly safely in weather conditions or rough seas that frequently disrupt ferry schedules and ground floatplanes in this part of the world.

Helijet operates from three well-appointed passenger terminals:

- **Vancouver Harbour Heliport:** adjacent to the famous sails of Canada Place, North America's busiest west coast cruise ship terminal, the SeaBus terminal, and walking distance from Vancouver's bustling downtown core and business district.
- **Vancouver International Airport Heliport:** Helijet's passenger terminal, main offices, and hangars are located at Vancouver International Airport (YVR), one of the world's major gateway airports.
- **Victoria Harbour Heliport:** next to the Ogden Point cruise ship facility; the heliport is a free shuttle ride or a short stroll from downtown Victoria.

As the company has grown over the years, Helijet's initial commitment to providing superior customer service, safety, and quality has never wavered.



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## NEW & NOTABLE

BY SUE KERNAGHAN



### SHELTER FROM THE STORM

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videos attest, if you need a brolly while cycling, snowboarding, skydiving, riding a motorbike, or hanging out in a wind tunnel. Five styles and multiple colours will keep you stylish and composed on even the most blustery days. [senz.com](http://senz.com)



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### A POST-MODERN PEEPHOLE

There are locks, and then there are smart locks. Part of a growing trend toward digitally enabled homes, the Goji Smart Lock is a deadbolt with a camera. It'll snap a photo of anyone at your door and fire that off to your smartphone so you know who's calling, whether you're home or not. One handy feature: no more waiting in for the cable guy. You can email authorized visitors a temporary digital key. When you get home, your phone, a fob, or even an old fashioned key will open the door for you. [gojiaccess.com](http://gojiaccess.com)







### ONE OF A KIND

All gems are not created equal. De Beers' Forevermark diamonds, chosen for their quality and ethical sourcing, represent less than one per cent of the world's diamonds.

Even rarer? Pink diamonds. Found almost exclusively in a remote part of Western Australia, these rose-hued gems are thought to get their unusual colour from a twist in their crystal matrix.

Right now there are exactly two Forevermark pink diamonds in existence. One was recently sold; the other resides at Idar, a Victoria jeweler.

Idar is one of just 35 jewelers in Canada carrying Forevermark diamonds. Along with, of course, handcrafted settings in gold, silver and platinum, and many traditionally coloured stones. [Idar.com](http://Idar.com)

### A SMARTER WATER BOTTLE

Since water bottles are essential gear for everything from yoga classes to marathons, isn't it time they started pulling their weight? Contigo's Kangaroo Water Bottle does just that. With a hidden pocket, just big enough for your gym card, bank card and key, this 24 ounce (700 ml) bottle is BPA-free, leak-proof, and so much more elegant than stashing your car key in your gym socks. [gocontigo.com](http://gocontigo.com)



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## NEW & NOTABLE

BY SUE KERNAGHAN



### COME CLEAN

A five-ounce washing machine? Sure. Using the proven technology of Grandma's washboard, Australian patent attorney and adventurer Ashley Newland has created the Scrubba, a packable, eco-friendly, electricity-free way to get your clothes clean, whether you're hiking, camping, boating, or just avoiding laundry charges. Basically a dry bag lined with scrubbing nodules, this little gizmo provides a machine-quality wash in minutes with just three or four litres of water, a dash of soap, and a spot of elbow grease. A share of the profits are funnelled into clean water projects in the developing world, so you can feel good about coming clean. [scrubba.com](http://scrubba.com)

### MACGYVERS REJOICE

Do you ever wish your pocket-knife could be as customizable as, well, everything else in life? Enter the Switch Pocket Knife. It comes with twelve attachments that can be put together any way you like. Load it with screwdrivers and pliers for quick repair jobs, remove the blades to create a TSA-friendly tool for travel, or take the whole lot on your next outdoor survival mission. It ships with two blades, four screwdrivers, a saw, a file, pliers, scissors, tweezers, a flashlight and a bottle opener, but, inexplicably, no corkscrew. [quirky.com](http://quirky.com)



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### FREEWHEELING IN THE CAPITAL

It's springtime, the time of year when Victoria blooms with blossoms and bikes. The best way to see this cycle-friendly town is, of course, on two wheels. Tours with the Pedaler, a locally-run bike tour outfit, take in the capital's car-free trails, historic sites, and offbeat neighbourhoods, along with snack stops that reveal the city's booming foodie culture — think coffee roasters, tea tastings, craft breweries, artisanal pizza, and handmade ice cream. A longer trip takes in the wine, cider and gin makers of the Saanich Peninsula. Tours run daily, March to October; independent rides and rentals are options too. [thepedaler.ca](http://thepedaler.ca)



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Learjet 31A



## HELIJET CREW

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DANIELLE POPE

# Flying on Puppy Power

Helijet payload controller Christie Slawson pairs her love of flying with animal advocacy work



*Christie Slawson is proud of the animal rescue and advocacy work she does with pit bulls like Willow. Ken Miner photo*

**WHEN PEOPLE MEET** Christie Slawson the first thing they notice isn't usually Slawson at all — it's her dogs, Annabell, Willow and Homer. To be sure, a pack of pit bulls do draw attention.

Slawson is one of Helijet's payload controllers, but outside of work she's a long-time dog lover and owner who has paired her professional career with years of animal rescue and advocacy work.

Since coming to the Island in 2007, Slawson has been part of the Helijet family, working as a Passenger Services Agent, Flight Attendant, and most recently as payload controller. As she puts it, she's the one on the ground who makes sure everyone gets off the ground.

When Slawson isn't taking care of Helijet's customers she's taking care of canines. Working with Broken Promises Animal Rescue and HugABull Advocacy and Rescue Society, she has fostered and trained pit bulls, lead therapy dogs through senior homes and youth correctional facilities, performed animal educational training in schools, and has worked with numerous families considering pet adoption.

"These dogs have taught me what it means to be resilient. They let go of their past, they don't hold a grudge and they go on to be the most loving, affectionate animals I have ever known," says Slawson.



"I love working with people and educating them about a breed that is so often misunderstood."

While the two might not seem aligned, Slawson says her work with Helijet has greatly influenced her personal passion for animals.

"In this industry, you learn a great deal about how to stay calm under pressure. If you start to panic, everything goes sideways, and it doesn't help any one," she says. "Dogs pick up on your emotions, too. They feel it, so you have to be mindful. It's great training on both sides."

Slawson has always had a love for flying. She started taking unaccompanied flights as young as eight years old, and it was her father, who often flew on Helijet for business, who suggested she consider working for the company.

As payload controller Slawson takes care of everything from seat and fare allocations to flight times, weather reports, mechanical issues and coordination through flight delays. She says she enjoys working in aviation so much that she's gone on to study for her fixed-wing pilot's licence.

Slawson isn't the only one in the office who enjoys a little airtime. Her dog Willow is a familiar face around Helijet headquarters. As a trained therapy dog, the five-year-old pit



Above: Homer is a happy canine when he's in the cockpit. Kimberly Rose photo

bull makes occasional visits just for fun, and always leaves an impression.

"Willow is the one who turns everyone around, and it's great to watch," says Slawson. "When people see her — especially if Annabell and Homer are with us — people back up, and some even cross the street. But those who stay see she's just a big lapdog. She's a love. Pretty soon, they can't get enough of her." 🐾



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# 5 Inspiring Animals of B.C.

Seven special land, air and sea dwellers give the province heart and hope

**THERE'S SOMETHING** about the flora and fauna of a region that tells the story of a place long before we grow our own memories. There's an ancestral connection to the creatures that forge streams, cut the air and tread the forest pathways of a land.

British Columbia offers some of the world's richest wildlife, and seven particular animals stand out as provincial symbols to its history and sustainability. From the emblematic salmon and provincially recognized spirit bear, to the magnificent killer whale, bald eagle and cougar, these are the inspirational heartbeats of B.C.

BY DANIELLE POPE



CAEL COOK PHOTO

## SPIRIT BEAR

People of the Kitasoo/Xai'xais First Nation on B.C.'s central coast tell a legend of Goo-wee (Raven) making one in every 10 black bears white to remind people of the time when the world was covered in ice, so they would be grateful for the land's bounty today. The Kitasoo/Xai'xais named these white bears *Moskgm'ol*, attributing preternatural powers and symbolism to the rare animal.

The white ursus is better known in B.C. as the spirit bear, or Kermode bear, named after researcher Francis Kermode, former director of the Royal B.C. Museum in Victoria. Such is its significance, the spirit bear was named the provincial mammal of B.C. and added to the list of B.C.'s official symbols in April 2006.

These rare bears are not albino; their eyes contain pigment. They are actually common black bears with an unusual genetic trait that turns their fur white. This recessive gene occurs in just 10 per cent of black bears in B.C.'s central and north coast region — the Great Bear Rainforest. Spirit bears are expert fishers as their colour helps them blend into river rapids.

The Kitasoo/Xai'xais First Nation created Spirit Bear Lodge in Klemtu as a way to attract tourism and understanding for this sacred, protected species.

"The people here have lived with these animals for millennia, and they revere the spirit bear in their dances and stories," says Tim McGrady, general manager. "Sightings of *Moskgm'ol* are very symbolic."





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## PACIFIC SALMON

There is a moment in a Pacific salmon's life when it stops everything it's doing in the ocean, turns around, and heads home to the freshwater stream it was born in.

Scientists still don't fully understand this phenomenon — whether it's due to environmental cues, smell, instinct, temperature gradients — but, with peculiar accuracy, two to nine years after hatching all Pacific salmon species return to spawn in freshwater, usually in the exact rivers and streams

where they were born. This cycle is so important to the natural, cultural and economic foundation of B.C. that in February 2013 Pacific salmon were added to the list of B.C.'s official symbols as a provincial emblem.

Salmon fishing has supported First Nations throughout B.C. for millennia, and commercial fishing was a pillar of the provincial economy through much of the 19th and 20th Century.

Revered as a creature with persistence and determination, Pacific salmon can migrate more than 3,000 kilometres inland, covering up to 50 km per day, evading predators and overcoming obstacles at every turn.

B.C.'s seven Pacific salmon species — Chinook, coho, sockeye, pink, chum, steelhead and cutthroat trout — play a larger role in the environment than just feeding carnivores. Scientific research reveals that riparian forests depend greatly on the nitrogen and nutrients of salmon remains deposited by predators, such as bears, wolves and eagles.

"Pacific salmon are the biggest part of the food chain on the B.C. coast," says Shawn Nagurny, director of marketing for Shearwater Resort & Marina on Denny Island. "People take salmon for granted, but it's an amazing animal. Everything relies on it."

## Question. Where Have all the Salmon Gone?

In the last twenty years Coho and Chinook have declined to about one-tenth of peak levels in the Strait of Georgia. Because salmon are an indicator species, understanding challenges to their survival will help us understand challenges to other species like orcas. The Salish Sea Marine Survival Project is a five-year saltwater program to research and restore Coho, Chinook, and the entire marine ecosystem in the Strait.

Join this initiative by texting **SALMON** to **45678** and making a \$10 tax-deductible donation. Help us bring these salmon home. [psf.ca](http://psf.ca)



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## KILLER WHALE

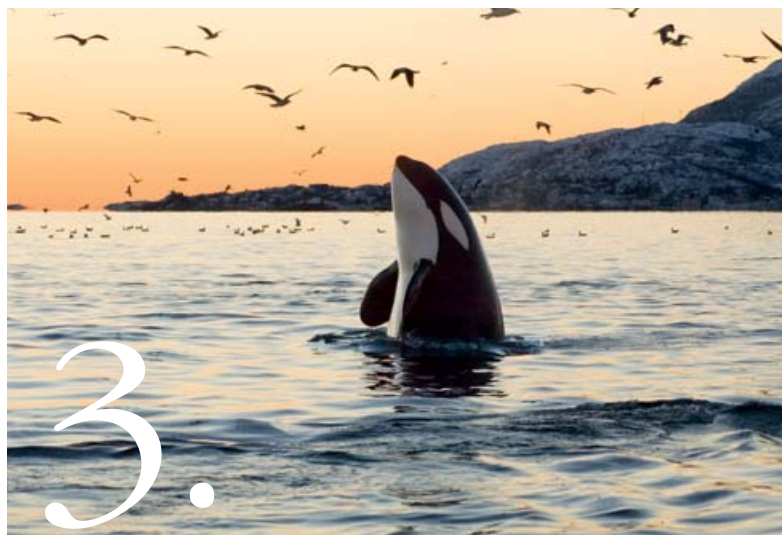
West Coast Resorts' sales manager Brian Alexander saw his first killer whale 35 years ago on a salmon fishing trip. He recalls how the orca came over and rubbed its dorsal fin against the side of the boat he was in. The experience left him awe-struck:

"It was majestic. It's hard to describe the euphoria of seeing an animal that size swimming around your boat and underneath." He adds, "I have a lot of respect for these whales."

Their numbers are a perennial concern, but most recent reports indicate nearly 300 resident killer whales inhabit the B.C. coastline, with the best chances of sighting them being between the months of April and November. These black-and-white dolphins — yes, dolphins — survive off schools of Pacific salmon.

B.C.'s resident pods communicate in four distinct clan dialects, some with up to 17 distinct calls. While males can reach 10,000 kilograms and can live for 55 years, females can reach 7,500 kilograms and live to 80.

Two other types of killer whale — transient and off-shore — are also found along the B.C. coast, but these are different types of orca, and, unlike residents, both are



known to prey on marine mammals, such as seals, sea lions and porpoises.

The "killer" name doesn't engender cozy feelings, but fear towards them is misdirected says Ross Campbell, owner of Mothership Adventures: "Killer whales do not go after humans, and resident whales don't even go after other mammals. You can sometimes see dolphins teasing the resident killer whales." But, he adds, "the dolphins know to avoid transients."

An advertisement for Queen Charlotte Lodge. The main image shows a fishing boat with 'QCL' and 'Gne-O-Tjsee' on its side, with two people fishing. The text 'Where the BIG fish are!' is written in a script font above the 'QCL' logo, which is in a large, red, serif font. Below the logo, 'HAIDA GWAII' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The text 'QUEEN CHARLOTTE LODGE' is in a large, white, serif font, and 'queencharlottelodge.com 800.688.8959' is in a smaller, red, sans-serif font. At the bottom, there are three inset images: a large wooden lodge with a red roof, a whale breaching the water, and a person holding a large fish.



Duane Foerter photo,  
courtesy of Queen  
Charlotte Lodge

## EAGLE

In First Nations' culture the eagle symbolizes grace, power, prestige and wisdom. No surprise, then, that guests staying at Queen Charlotte Lodge are spellbound by the resident eagles that call it home.

"The eagles will literally swoop in, grab a clawful of fish, eat them in flight, then dive back for another bunch," says Duane Foerter, marketing manager at Queen Charlotte Lodge.

"They do this circle for as long as the bait stays up there, sometimes a dozen times. When you see 10 eagles all doing this it's quite remarkable."

More than a bird of majesty, Canada's largest raptor is a practical survivor. While most lay two eggs, the larger chick often kills its younger sibling to ensure food supply. An adult's wingspan is more than two metres, and if one wing loses a feather the eagle will drop a feather on the other to maintain balance.

Eagles can see over a distance of three kilometres — hence the expression "eagle eye". Relying on their keen eyesight, eagles perch in distant trees to watch sea activity below. When fish rise to the surface, evading predators beneath them, the eagle is ready above.

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## COUGAR

Vancouver Island has the largest cougar population per capita in North America. Of the estimated 4,000 cougars in Canada, 3,500 live in B.C., and nearly a quarter of those reside on the Island.

"The cougar stands as an icon for all the wild places and landscapes we cherish in B.C.," says Chris Genovali, executive director for Raincoast Conservation.

This cat is likely B.C.'s most revered and feared carnivore. To First Nations, the cougar represents leadership and decisiveness. At 57 kilograms and nearly three metres in length, each cougar controls a territory between 10 and 250 square kilometres. These felines can also run up to 80 km/h.

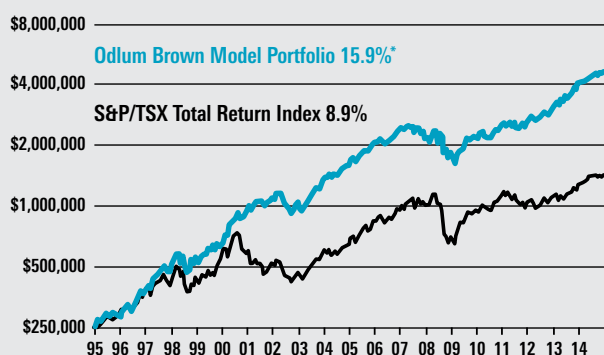


Cougars live mainly in forested mountain areas and prefer to hunt black-tailed deer. The expansion of humans into cougar territory, however, has forced these shy creatures to interact with people.

"These are beautiful, mysterious and fascinating animals," says Genovali. "They have persisted against an unrelenting threat to their threshold in B.C." 🐾

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### Odlum Brown Model Portfolio vs S&P/TSX Total Return Index



\* Compound annual returns are from inception December 15, 1994 to December 31, 2014.

### Compound Annual Returns (Including reinvested dividends, as of December 31, 2014)

	1 YEAR	3 YEAR	5 YEAR	10 YEAR	15 YEAR	20 YEAR	INCEPTION <sup>1</sup>
Odlum Brown Model Portfolio <sup>2</sup>	19.6%	22.9%	16.5%	11.4%	14.3%	15.9%	15.9%
S&P/TSX Total Return Index	10.6%	10.2%	7.5%	7.6%	6.2%	8.8%	8.9%

<sup>1</sup> December 15, 1994. <sup>2</sup> The Model was established by the Research Department in December 1994, with a hypothetical investment of \$250,000. The Model provides a basis with which to measure the quality of our advice and the effectiveness of our disciplined investment strategy. Trades are made using the closing price on the day a change is announced. These are gross figures before fees. Past performance is not indicative of future performance.

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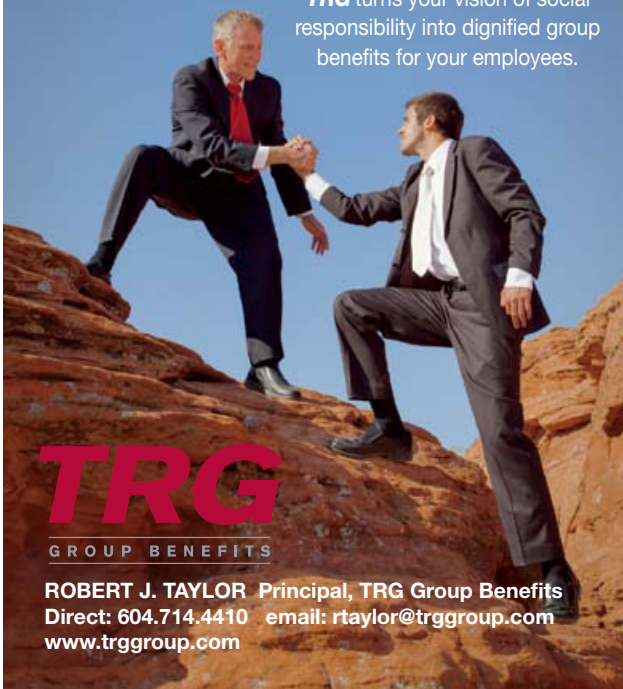
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# Moving Through The Beat

The health benefits of dance highlight the importance of movement

**THERE WAS A TIME** in my life I swore I would never dance again.

At the end of a casual salsa lesson in my teen years, the instructor walked over, patted me on the head in front of everyone and announced, "No banana for you today." I stood there, confused, as the reality washed over me that I wouldn't be moving on with my friends to the next class level. My cheeks flushed as I hurried off to the bathroom, tears in my eyes.

Fast forward more years than I care to admit, and I still feel the lump in my throat when I think of that moment. I'd never considered myself a great dancer, but after that day I stopped trying.

Ten years on I decided to give dancing another shot when I saw a workshop on the benefits of movement. As we started class my old friend embarrassment was right there beside me, but I could see I wasn't the only one who had her as a dance partner. By the end of the class, most of us were in tears. This time, however, it wasn't about getting the moves perfect. It was about getting the moves going. I was finally free to dance.

While dance comes naturally to some more than others, its health benefits are substantial. The art form can channel and provoke emotional response, and its athletic element can condition the body and brain.

Stephen White, executive producer of Dance Victoria, says that with enough training, the human body can flex into shapes and forms that bend the mind. What is more, dancers can evoke joy or sorrow without ever uttering a word. For those watching and performing, emotional movement is part of the show.

"Dance works on a level beyond narrative," says White. "It's more ephemeral. It evokes a feeling or an idea and reaches you on a metaphorical level. I enjoy suspending my need for a story and letting the dance wash over me."



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*Ballet West Artists in The Lottery. Luke Isley  
photo courtesy of Dance Victoria.*

The health benefits of dancing might seem obvious, but there is more to movement than flattening one's tummy. Dance conditioning causes muscles to stretch in a way that both aligns the body and builds strength.

"Dancers often don't have the cardio you would assume," says White. "On stage, they look fantastic, but their muscles are lean and built for flexibility — not for running long distances."

Bernard Sauvé, general manager of Dance Victoria, says

dancing is also exceptional training for the brain.

"Because you are moving all parts of your body at the same time, you develop coordination," says Sauvé. "And, because it's live performance, you learn problem solving and to think fast on your feet."

Whether touring with a company, or taking a community class, dance also improves social connections.

"You work as a team, because putting a show together, or being part of a dance, involves everyone, and everyone must pull together as a family," Sauvé says. "There is a lot camaraderie in dance."

Even at a non-professional level, dance has helped me understand the idea of flow. I've played with movement through the natural rhythm of my own body, and I've learned how to relax my ideas of what I can and can't do. Most importantly, dance has given me an effective way to get "unstuck" — both physically and mentally.

"Even if you are not dancing at a pro level, taking a class gives you a great awareness of space," says Sauvé. "It helps you understand how your own unique body moves, and that's very valuable." 🐘



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# New Take on Tea

Steep in a new experience on either side of the Georgia Strait



*Hotel Grand Pacific photo*

**TEATIME** has been an iconic ritual in Victoria and Vancouver ever since passengers first arrived by steamship. More than a beverage, tea means scones and clotted cream, pastries, tiny cucumber sandwiches and the notion that you can knock off at 4 p.m. to linger over goodies and conversation.

Though the terms “high tea” and “afternoon tea” have become muddled, they are distinct meals. High tea is a hot savoury meal served as an early supper, while afternoon tea involves those crumpets and finger sandwiches, served late in the afternoon when you need a little something to get you through to dinner. A celebratory glass of bubbly turns this into a royal tea.

The following are a few top spots to raise your pinkie to a new experience — or perhaps an old favourite — on both sides of the Georgia Strait.

## The Hotel Grand Pacific’s West Coast Afternoon Tea

If you think afternoon tea is all about white gloves and doilies, check out the stylish spread at Victoria’s Hotel Grand Pacific.

Served daily in the Pacific Restaurant, West Coast Afternoon Tea merges locally sourced fare with Asian flavours to create a thoroughly modern West Coast take on the tradition.

The menu changes with the seasons, but includes treats like mini Dungeness crab cakes, egg salad on smoked salmon bread pudding, sake compressed cucumber on yaki onigiri

(grilled rice balls) and lime and sweet chili edamame. You’ll also find pumpkin spice financiers, vanilla bean scones and lemon raspberry mousse slices, all created by in-house pastry chef, Whitney Lee.

The teas here are curated much as a sommelier curates wine — tea-takers can opt to try one, two or a whole flight of brews. One must-sip option is the Grand Pacific house tea. Created by Silk Roads tea master Daniela Cubelic, this green tea is blended with ginger, lavender, lemon grass and rose hips.

“We were looking for something that spoke of the Island, something that would marry with as many of the food items as possible, and something pleasant to drink on its own,” says James Fry, director of sales and marketing, Hotel Grand Pacific. “After all, food pairing can apply to tea as much as wine.”

The Hotel Grand Pacific takes a number of fun spins on afternoon tea, including The Man Tea — a masculine special for Fathers’ Day featuring a putting green, poker games and whisky-tea cocktails.

The Hotel Grand Pacific’s West Coast Afternoon tea is served daily year-round from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Reservations are required.

## Afternoon Tea at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver

Tea at the Castle is about to become a brand new historic experience as the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver welcomes Notch 8, the highly anticipated restaurant and tearoom coming this spring to the main level. The newly envisioned dining experience is themed around the days of the railway, and the name itself comes from the final gear, or notch, conductors ran in when the train was in perfect harmony.

“We wanted to theme this space around the romance of travel,” says Chef Burslem. “The railway was how this hotel came to be, and everything will be unique in the way we present it, from old suitcases in the decor to the white-glove service. We want to present a new classical experience.”

Be prepared for true afternoon tea with honey yogurt panna cotta, cold-smoked wild salmon sandwiches, creamed asparagus tartlets and chocolate vienetta. Tots can dig in, too, with Bubblegum Tea (yes, it’s gum flavoured), peanut butter and jelly finger sandwiches and chocolate chip cookies.

For a special occasion, add a glass of Moët & Chandon Champagne to the spread.

Tea at the Castle is served from 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays, and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends.



### Tea at the Empress

Victoria's best known afternoon tea, held daily in the tea lobby of the venerable Fairmont Empress Hotel, is sipped by almost 100,000 people every year, including, over the years, Spencer Tracy, Bob Hope and Queen Elizabeth II.

Once you've settled into your wingback chair or chintz settee, the tea tier arrives laden with handmade scones, sandwiches, pastries and tea sweets. Empress Tea, a six-estate blend, is poured into Royal Doulton china and stirred with silver spoons.

Options include the kid-friendly Prince and Princess Tea (think caffeine-free herbal tea with peanut butter and jam finger sandwiches), and a Royal Tea, served with a flight of Salt Spring Island cheeses, a glass of tawny port and honey from the chef's own hives.

### Afternoon Tea at the Fairmont Pacific Rim

The chic Lobby Lounge, set in a sparkling atrium complete with a Fazioli piano, is the setting for the Fairmont Pacific Rim's stylish afternoon tea. The lounge is also home to a raw bar, lending an interesting East-West twist to the tea menu. Loose teas from Vancouver's T Company are served in vintage china, with sandwiches, both classic and sushi-style, plus globe-trotting treats like matcha layer cakes and choco-late ganache jewels. Champagne and tea-infused cocktails top the menu.

Drop by any afternoon between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. Reservations not required.

### High Tea at The Butchart Gardens

Butchart Gardens is the place for a spot of tea any time of year. Their tea is served overlooking the private or Italian garden in the original Butchart family home. Enjoy the English tradition of afternoon tea during warmer weather, or high tea with its hot delicacies during the cooler months. They also offer a vegetarian, gluten-free and child's version, and a special tea for Mother's Day. The savoury tea sandwiches and house-made sweets make a marvellous indulgence. Admission to the gardens is required.

### Afternoon Tea at the Grand Hotel Nanaimo

Mid-islanders take tea, too. A traditional afternoon tea, complete with black-currant scones, Devonshire cream, pastries and finger sandwiches, plus 16 varieties of tea, is served at the Grand Hotel Nanaimo. The tea, available Sunday through Thursday afternoons, is just \$25 per person.

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### TWG Tea at The Urban Tea Merchant

The Urban Tea Merchant has brought high class tea to Vancouver for the past 10 years. This year, the popular spot will become Canada's first TWG Tea store and distributor.

The switch to carrying TWG Tea — the finest luxury tea brand in the world — means the location offers over 800 tea blends, and will carry 300 in store. There's something for everyone. Premium blends start at \$9 for 50 grams, and increase to \$2,228 for 100g of Gold Yin Zhen — made with actual flecks of 24 karat gold. And for even more serious tea connoisseurs there are rare blends selling for upwards of \$5,000 per package.

### Jet Set Tea at the Fairmont Vancouver Airport

Flying out? What better way to pass a few pre-flight hours than lingering over tea at the Fairmont Vancouver Airport Hotel. The hotel, which is part of the Vancouver International Airport terminal building, offers a full Fairmont-style afternoon tea, complete with tiny sandwiches, pastries and house-made scones with strawberries and cream. It's served daily, with seatings from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

### Tea at Xi Shi

The Xi Shi Lounge in the Shangri-La Hotel Vancouver puts an Asian spin on its afternoon tea, with such exotic treats as barbecued duck steam buns and vegetable spring rolls sharing the tea tray with smoked salmon bagels and scones with clotted cream. Set on famous Blue Willow china, this tea is paired perfectly with the elegant ambience of live classical piano on the weekends.

### Two Takes on Tea at VanDusen Botanical Garden

Vancouver's VanDusen Botanical Garden offers not one, but two afternoon tea options. A casual tea, served from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily in Truffles Café, is a relative bargain at \$35 for two and includes sandwiches, pastries and scones served with a dollop of VanDusen's own organic honey. Tea choices include VanDusen's private label black tea or a variety of JJ Bean organic brews.

If you've worked up an appetite exploring the garden's exotic flora or navigating the Elizabethan maze, opt for the *a la carte* high tea at the on-site Shaughnessy Restaurant. Options include a ham, brie and pear panini, rock crab stuffed croissant or seafood chowder, followed by a lemon tart or sticky toffee pudding. ☞



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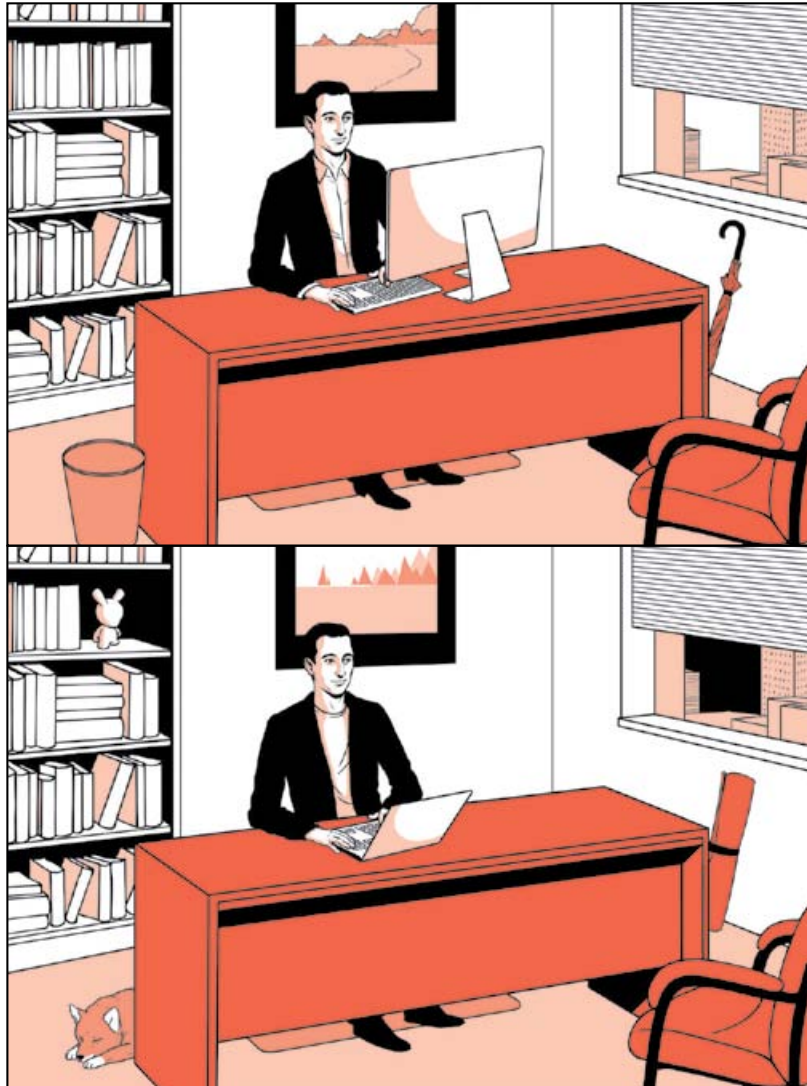


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