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BY ELAYNE SUN, MANAGER, COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING PACIFIC SALMON FOUNDATION



The new FishingBC app connects anglers and scientists.

INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES from B.C.'s recreational fishing community, including Helijet, have long formed an important base of financial support for the Pacific Salmon Foundation. One key reason is that they are deeply invested in the future of salmon. Now, a new initiative — the FishingBC app — will engage anglers in better management of the resource.

Developed through a partnership between the Pacific Salmon Foundation, the Sport Fishing Institute, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), with funds from the Salmon Conservation Stamp, the FishingBC app represents the culmination of earlier efforts by the Sport Fishing Institute and DFO to create digital catch logs for sport fishing guides, and it reflects the evolution from paper to online information sharing.

"The app is free and available in both Apple and Android formats," says Owen Bird, Executive Director, Sport Fishing Institute. "It also features upto-date regulations, a species ID guide and the ability to easily display your B.C. tidal waters sport fishing licence and link it to a catch log."

The app builds on the growing notion of 'citizen science', or empowering citizens to aid in conservation efforts. The hope is the app will collect data from the angling public and guides, which can be sent to DFO for analysis.

Citizen Science at Sea

"We were excited by the idea of collecting catch information from anglers that can be easily shared with scientists," says Dr. Brian Riddell, Foundation CEO. "It will help with management of the resource and will help our efforts to better understand the health of the salmon. Because effective conservation and management starts with good data."

The app is a two-way street, allowing information to flow back and forth between scientists and the sport fishing community.

"The FishingBC app shares information about our fish and fisheries with anglers," said Bird. "It will also help fish scientists better understand the impacts of sport fishing on stocks of salmon, groundfish or anything else a tidal licence holder may harvest."

So far, some 11,000 users have downloaded the FishingBC app, with positive feedback regarding ease of installation and use, as well as the sharing and licence scanning functions.

Funding for Foundation initiatives, such as the new FishingBC app, is derived from various revenue streams, including B.C.'s business community.

"The private sector has a role to play in supporting wild Pacific salmon conservation," says Danny Sitnam, President and CEO, Helijet. "Our organization provides air service to numerous sport fishing lodges on Haida Gwaii and the B.C. Coast, and so it is incumbent on us to get behind the Foundation's conservation efforts with meaningful support." He adds, "It's the right thing to do, and we're proud to do it."

The Pacific Salmon Foundation is a federally incorporated non-profit charitable organization dedicated to the conservation and restoration of wild Pacific salmon and their natural habitats in British Columbia and the Yukon. For more information, please visit psf.ca or follow on Twitter @PSF. ①





Kim Edmonds realized her childhood dream of becoming a helicopter pilot when she joined Helijet. Lonnie Wishart Photography

Kim Edmonds finds personal and professional satisfaction flying B.C.'s rugged North Coast

THE FIRST WHIFF of forest fire smoke in early summer has a profound effect on helicopter pilots. For many, it generates feelings of excitement and anticipation, mixed with a tinge of anxiety. That's because every fire season helicopters are the first — and sometimes last — line of defense for many B.C. communities when fire threatens.

The smell of smoke had a similar effect on Kim Edmonds when she was a little girl. Growing up in Lytton, B.C., during the 1980s, she looked forward to the perennial arrival of fire-fighting helicopters each spring.

"I was a small-town kid and thought helicopters were the most unusual thing I'd ever seen," recalls Edmonds. "Things got exciting when the helicopters showed up!"

Edmonds remembers summers spent working alongside her father in the family's general merchant store. Together they would make regular trips to the fire base in Lytton to resupply crews.

Coastal Contentment

"I loved talking to the pilots," says Edmonds. "They did important and exciting things. I wanted to be a pilot someday, but it seemed like it was a man's world. I believed little girls didn't grow up to fly helicopters."

Edmonds instead became a dental assistant, and eventually settled into married life with her husband, Jim, a Vancouver-based tugboat captain. In 1997, on the occasion of their seventh wedding anniversary, he surprised her with a luxury weekend getaway to the Fairmont Empress Hotel in Victoria, but the highlight for Edmonds was the flight over and back on a Helijet S76.

"It rekindled my fascination with helicopters," declares Edmonds. "I loved everything about it: the sights, the sounds and the sensations — even the smell of jet fuel. It really revved up my engine!"

That experience stayed with Edmonds in the weeks and months that followed. Jim soon noticed his wife was getting restless as a dental assistant and so he asked her what she want to do instead.

"Honey, I want to be a helicopter pilot," she said without hesitation.

"Well, if that's what you want, I suggest you do your homework and start researching the industry," he replied.

"That blew me away," says Edmonds, her voice rising. "I started doing road trips, talking to as many people as I could about pilot training and employment opportunities."

Turns out, little girls *do* grow up to be helicopter pilots: Edmonds began her private pilot training with Delta Helicopters in late 1999, and the following year obtained her commercial licence with Chinook Helicopters in Abbotsford.

As any professional pilot will tell you, getting a licence is easy; getting a job is the hard part. Undaunted,







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Kim Edmonds enjoys the professional challenges and rewards of flying Helijet's Bell206L3 LongRanger on the B.C. Coast.

Edmonds spent the better part of a year applying to just about every helicopter company operating in B.C. and Alberta.

"I banged on Helijet's door three times before they finally gave me a job driving their passenger shuttle van at the Vancouver Harbour Heliport."

Edmonds' persistence paid off: after working as a shuttle driver, she moved into Ramp Services in 2004, and two years later she got her first crack at the controls of a Robinson R22 light helicopter Helijet operated in Calgary doing traffic watch. There she spent the next couple years building experience and flight time, and Jim would fly out to join her on days off.

"It was a great learning curve," says Edmonds. "Helijet gave me a foot in the door, and taught me from the ground up."

Her next big break followed in 2008 when Helijet offered her the opportunity to fly the company's Bell206L3 LongRanger in Vancouver. She spent the next four years operating charter flights out of the downtown Vancouver Harbour Heliport and loved every minute of it.

"The sightseeing tours were the best," exclaims Edmonds. "I had the opportunity to meet people from all over the world, showing them the amazing scenery of Vancouver and the Coast Mountains. It was fantastic!"

Most Helijet pilots eventually transition from single-engine Visual Flight Rules (VFR) flying to multi-engine Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) operations on the Sikorsky S76, but Edmonds was content where she was.

"Helijet encouraged me to get my IFR training and fly the S76, but I was getting all my giggles and kicks flying single-engine VFR," says Edmonds. "I was having way too much fun on the Bell206 LongRanger to give it up."

Things just got better when Helijet acquired a base in Sandspit and another in Prince Rupert in 2013. Edmonds volunteered to go north and was rewarded with a whole new world of operations, flying charters for a range of clients including forestry companies, fishing lodges and Coast Guard light stations, among others.

"The weather in Prince Rupert can be challenging, with lots of rain and low visibility, but I enjoy the nature of the work, and interacting with clients," says Edmonds. "It's a privilege to fly over some of the most stunning scenery in the world."

Edmonds is grateful for the career progression and variety of flying Helijet has provided her over the years. She says she is excited about new and emerging opportunities at the company's Prince Rupert base, and, apparently, it seems she has little interest in flying anywhere else.

"I find all the challenges and rewards I need right here. I don't have to look to another company to find something more interesting and satisfying. The customers and coworkers I deal with every day keep a smile on my face, and it's great to be part of a team that serves the community."

Could anything be missing from her life of contentment on the North Coast?

"Well, it rains a lot in Prince Rupert, which I don't mind, but that means there's not much fire-fighting work. That's one thing I'd still love to do!"

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RBC RACE FOR THE KIDS

JUNE 3: VANCOUVER

The BC Children's Hospital Foundation's signature run, and the largest fun run in Vancouver, has raised more than \$13 million since its inception in 1986 to support childhood cancer research, treatment and pediatric mental health initiatives. Runners and walkers of all ages and abilities can choose either a five- or two-kilometre fun run through Queen Elizabeth Park. bcchf.ca

SUSTAINABLE BRANDS '18

JUNE 4-7: VANCOUVER

This four-day conference features an impressive list of 300-plus international presenters who will offer insights on new business models for the changing economy, where consumers expect transparency, simplicity and meaning from the brands they support.

sustainablebrands.com



David Cooper photo

BARD ON THE BEACH

JUNE 6 - SEPTEMBER 22: VANCOUVER

Macbeth. As You Like It. Timon of Athens. Lysistrata. Some of these plays may sound familiar, while others not so much. But this being Bard on the Beach under magnificent tents on the shores of Vanier Park, you know that each production will be a performance to remember. From Shakespeare's great study of power and corruption in Macbeth, to a contemporary adaptation of Lysistrata, a 411 BC comedy about the first-ever female strike, this year's Bard on the Beach season has summer entertainment and events for everyone. bardonthebeach.org

BC HIGHLAND GAMES AND SCOTTISH FESTIVAL

JUNE 16: COQUITLAM

Caber tossing, a whisky school, piping, dancing, haggis hunting and Irn Bru are just a few of the Scottish delights served up at this 100-plus-year-old event at Percy Perry Stadium in Coquitlam.

bchighlandgames.com

A CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT **BILL CLINTON AND JAMES PATTERSON**

JUNE 29: VANCOUVER

Former President Bill Clinton and bestselling novelist James Patterson will make a book-tour stop in Vancouver this summer to talk about their one-of-akind fictional thriller The President is Missing. Set over the course of three days, the novel promises detailed insights only a president could provide and a level of suspense that only Patterson could deliver. The book is scheduled for release on June 4.

deepoceansky.com

THEATRE UNDER THE STARS

JULY 4 - AUGUST 18: VANCOUVER

Theatre Under the Stars at the Malkin Bowl in Stanley Park has been a Lower Mainland tradition since 1940. This year, Roger and Hammerstein's timeless fairy tale Cinderella will alternate performances with showbiz classic 42nd Street. Grab a picnic, some friends and an extra sweater or two and enjoy the show. tuts.ca

KNOWSHOW

JULY 17-18: VANCOUVER

The Knowshow is a biannual B2B marketplace where lifestyle fashion brands unveil their latest seasonal products and trends to Canadian retailers. Held at the Vancouver Convention Centre, this event is a concentrated showcase of products, style and trends only open to members of the retail industry.

knowshow.ca

ANIME REVOLUTION 2018

AUGUST 3-5: VANCOUVER

Known as AniRevo for short, this event celebrates Japanese pop culture and animation through industry panels, interactive and cultural activities, an exhibitor's hub and a creator's marketplace. Meet anime voice actors and get their autographs after taking a picture together at the AniRevo photobooth.

summer, animerevolution.ca

SIGGRAPH 2018

AUGUST 12-16: VANCOUVER

This five-day conference on computer graphics and interactive techniques will explore the latest innovations in CG, animation, virtual and mixed reality, games, digital art and emerging technologies. Hands-on demos, learning sessions, a computer animation festival, a job fair and more are all on the conference program. **s2018.siggraph.org**

ROCK AMBLESIDE PARK

AUGUST 17-19: WEST VANCOUVER

For three days, an impressive line-up of 11 bands including Loverboy, Trooper, Chilliwack, Little River Band, Doug and the Slugs and others will rock the park during Vancouver's largest classic rock music festival. Go for the day, go for the whole weekend, or upgrade for a rocking VIP experience. **rockamblesidepark.com**

27TH INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS

AUGUST 19-26: VANCOUVER

Considered the oldest and most prestigious meeting for bird scientists throughout the world, the Ornithological Congress has occurred every four years since first being held in Vienna, Austria in 1884. Plenary speakers from around the globe will share up-to-date research findings, as well as conservation accomplishments and concerns.

iocongress2018.com



ROYAL BC MUSEUM PRESENTS EGYPT: THE TIME OF PHAROAHS

ALL SUMMER: VICTORIA

More than 300 priceless original artifacts covering all aspects of ancient life in Egypt are on display at the Royal BC Museum until December 31. For the first time in North America, this stunning exhibition will take you back 4,500 years in time to the emergence of civilization along the shores of the Nile. royalbcmuseum.bc.ca

HOPOXIA BEER FESTIVAL 2018

JUNE 9: VICTORIA

Last year, more than 45 breweries and 1,200 craft beer lovers descended on the backyard of Phillips Brewing & Malting Company (2010 Government Street) for a four-hour tasting party celebrating hoppy beers and ciders crafted in B.C. Tickets include the first two tasters; additional tasters can be purchased during the event. phillipsbeer.com

VICTORIA INDIGENOUS CULTURAL **FESTIVAL**

JUNE 21-23: VICTORIA

Join the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations for three days of music and dance performances on an outdoor stage at the Royal BC Museum. Sample barbecued salmon burgers, fry bread and traditional clam chowder while you watch Indigenous artisans from across the province demonstrate their creative processes.

indigenousbc.com

RIDE DON'T HIDE FOR THE CANADIAN **MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

JUNE 24: VICTORIA & VANCOUVER

Participants from 31 communities across Canada will join this annual bike ride to help put an end to the stigma of mental illness. From seven-kilometre family rides to 100-kilometre extreme rides, participants will walk and cycle to create change.

ridedonthide.com

VICTORIA SYMPHONY SPLASH

AUGUST 5: VICTORIA

Join tens of thousands of people in Victoria's Inner Harbour for the 29th Annual Symphony Splash. From a floating stage moored in the Inner Harbour, the VS orchestra and guests will perform a mix of classical and popular selections before concluding with Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, complete with navy field guns and fireworks. victoriasymphony.ca



Deddeda Stemler photo

SIDNEY DAYS & CANADA DAY

JUNE 29 - JULY 2: SIDNEY

The folks in Sidney know how to do Canada Day in a big way, extending the nation's 151st birthday into a four-day celebration. This year's festivities kick off with Dinner en Rouge on June 29, followed by three days of food, music, ceremonies and fireworks.

sidney.ca

ROCK THE SHORES

JULY 13-15: COLWOOD

Headliner Brian Wilson of Beach Boys fame will bring fun, fun, fun to this year's Rock the Shores music festival at the Westshore Parks and Recreation lower fields in Colwood. After taking a year off, this year's festival promises 25-plus musical performances, craft beverages and a wide variety of food experiences. Children 12 and under are free when registered and accompanied by an adult.

rocktheshores.com

RIDE TO CONQUER CANCER

AUGUST 25-26: VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Having raised more than \$85 million over the past nine years, the Ride to Conquer Cancer is now B.C.'s largest cancer fundraiser. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the ride and whether you choose to ride as part of a team, or as a "virtual rider" sans bike and helmet, all are welcome to Be The Ride.

ride.conquercancer.ca

CLASSIC BOAT FESTIVAL

AUGUST 31 - SEPTEMBER 2: VICTORIA

For more than 40 years, this festival has showcased boats from all over the Pacific Northwest each Labour Day weekend. Tour the docks of the Inner Harbour to view 100-plus classic boats, visit fascinating floating exhibits from the Maritime Museum of BC and cheer on your favourite boats in the races.

mmbc.bc.ca



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NANAIMO DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

JULY 7-8: NANAIMO

Dragon-boat racing has become the signature sport for those who have conquered cancer, and more than 70 teams will take to the water in Nanaimo for this annual event. Funds raised will support early diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer at Nanaimo Regional Hospital. **nanaimodragonboat.com**

CHEMAINUS THEATRE SUMMER SEASON

JUNE 8 - SEPTEMBER 1: CHEMAINUS

Time travel back to the 50's this summer with the Pink Ladies, pep rallies and leather-clad greasers in Chemainus Theatre's presentation of *Grease*. Younger audiences, meanwhile, will enjoy the magical tale of *The Little Prince*, one of the most treasured stories of all time, presented July 14-August 5.

chemainustheatre.ca



Michael Van Der Tol photo

PARKSVILLE BEACH FESTIVAL

JULY 13-AUGUST 19: PARKSVILLE

Master sand sculptors from around the world have 30 hours to create their master-pieces using just sand and water. The event begins with the "pound up" when sculptors build and fill their forms, followed by days of carving and shaping before judging on July 15. Cameras are essential for this exhibition, because once the event is over, the sculptures are gone forever. **parksvillebeachfest.ca**



5K FOAM FEST

JUNE 9: NANAIMO

Envision 22 obstacles over a five-kilometre course covered in 2.5 million cubic feet of foam, and you have the Nanaimo 5K Foam Fest. Participants will skid down the world's largest inflatable waterslide, bounce their way through the Chamber of Foam, slip and slide through the Mud Crawl, and test their balancing abilities on the Lily Pads before coming to a foamy finish to receive their medals.

the5Kfoamfest.com

BC SUMMER GAMES

JULY 19-22: COWICHAN

As many as 2,800 athletes, 540 coaches and 370 officials will put their competitive training to the test at venues throughout the Cowichan Valley for the 2018 BC Summer Games. From baseball to wrestling, sailing races to equestrian events, 18 sports will be represented during this biennial celebration of sport. From Mill Bay and Shawnigan Lake in the south, to Ladysmith in the north, the 2019 BC Summer Games will truly be a regional event. **bcgames.org**

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP BATHTUB RACE WEEKEND

JULY 20-22: NANAIMO

Since its inauguration in 1967, the city of Nanaimo has hosted this annual 58-kilometre ocean race featuring more than 100 racing bathtub boats. Enjoy all that the Bathtub Days Street Fair offers with food vendors, buskers, concerts and more before heading down to watch the race from beaches, bluffs and boats. **bathtubbing.com**

HEART & STROKE 24-HOUR RUGBY MARATHON

AUGUST 4: NANAIMO

The Nanaimo Hornets RFC will hold its first annual 24-hour rugby game to benefit the Heart & Stroke Foundation. Open to men and women 19-plus, this family friendly event includes food and a jersey in the ticket price. **bcrugby.com**







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BY STEPHANIE CUNNINGHAM

THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF

Sport Tourism in B.C.



Bianca Farella of Canada's Senior Women's team on the field against Australia at Westhills Stadium in Langford during the 2018 HSBC World Women's Rugby Sevens Series.

N THE SUMMER of 1994, the city of Victoria welcomed Queen Elizabeth, Prince Edward and worldwide attention as some 3,700 elite athletes from 67 countries gathered to compete in the XV Commonwealth Games.

Sixteen years later it was Vancouver's turn to shine on the world stage as athletes and coaches, support staff and media, diplomats and dignitaries descended on the city to participate in and report on the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games – not to mention the tens of thousands of fans who came just to enjoy the show.

Yes, both events introduced athletes and media to Victoria and Vancouver, but beyond that, they also introduced our province to the significant economic returns that can be reaped through sports tourism as an industry.

In broad terms, sports tourism refers to those visitors who travel to a destination from outside the

region to participate in or watch a sporting event. From regional school tournaments to mega international championships, communities reap vast economic benefits when athletes and sports-related visitors stay in hotels, eat in restaurants, rent facilities and equipment, charter busses, hire caterers, book audio-visual technicians and so much more. The list is long and the revenue is certainly rewarding.

WAKING THE SLEEPING GIANT

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, sports tourism has emerged over the past 20 years as one of the fastest growing sectors in the global travel and tourism industry. What was once thought of as the "sleeping giant of tourism" has now fully awakened with an estimated global value of \$800USD billion, constituting more than 10 per cent of international tourism receipts worldwide.



Chris Wilson photo

In Canada, sports tourism is likewise recognized as the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry with the Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance (CSTA) reporting that domestic and international visitors spend more than \$6.5 billion per year to travel to, participate in and attend sporting events across the nation.

With that kind of revenue in the offing, it's no surprise then that bidding on and hosting sporting events has become somewhat of a competitive sport in its own right as municipalities go head-to-head vying for potentially lucrative international, national and regional hosting opportunities.

And it's not just the large cities that are stepping up to the plate: established in 2000 in conjunction with the Canadian Tourism Commission, the CSTA started with just 18 founding members and has since grown to more than 500 members, including more than 200 municipalities across the nation.



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A CROWDED FIELD

Recognizing the need to consolidate resources and build efficiencies to successfully win bids in such a crowded field, many regions have developed dedicated sports-tourism commissions and partnerships to boost their bidding efforts.

Sport Hosting Vancouver is such a partnership between the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Hotel Destination Association, PavCo, Tourism Vancouver, UBC and the Pacific National Exhibition. From bid assistance and development, to venue selection, volunteer recruitment, accommodation services and bid funding support, this organization aims to unite all the interests that can make for a successful hosting bid. Last year, Sport Hosting Vancouver won the 2016 CSTA Sport Tourism Organization of the Year Award and has played a vital role in winning bids for a variety of events such as the HSBC Canada Sevens World Rugby Series, the 2018 ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final and the 2018 Canadian Tire National Skating Championship.

After an analysis and audit of the Victoria sportstourism framework last year, SportHost Victoria and Tourism Victoria launched a new model for championing sports events in the region through the

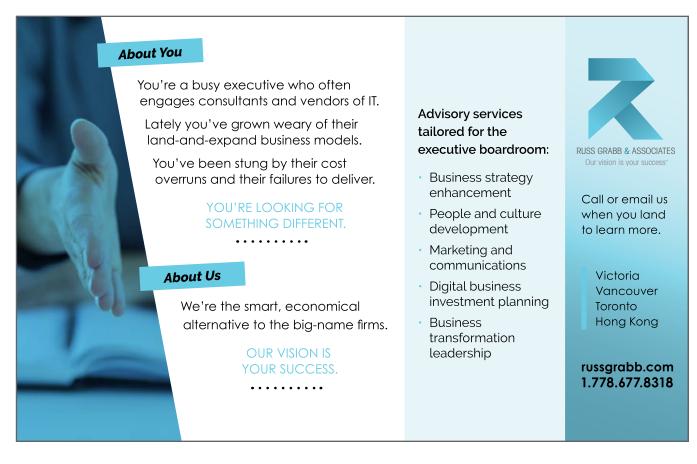
"Sport tourism has become a very competitive marketplace so it's important for us to evolve as the industry evolves."

- Hugh Macdonald

newly established Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission. Keith Wells, a former TV broadcaster and founder of SendtoNews, has been named as the new executive director.

"Sport tourism has become a very competitive marketplace so it's important for us to evolve as the industry evolves," says Hugh MacDonald, the recently retired executive director of SportHost Victoria. "We used to bid against maybe seven or eight cities to host events, now we're bidding against 105 - and that's just within Canada."

As a sports tourism destination, Victoria has certainly proved its mettle. According to Tourism Victoria, the city hosts more than 100 major regional,



provincial, national and international sporting events annually, which pull in upwards of \$117 million in direct spending dollars to the Greater Victoria area every year.

FIELD OF DREAMS

"If you build it, they will come," holds true when it comes to successfully attracting sporting events to any community. Just look at the infrastructure and legacies left in the wake of the 1994 Commonwealth Games and the 2010 Vancouver Olympics.

"The Commonwealth Games made all the difference in the world to sport tourism in Victoria," says MacDonald. "After the Games, we went to Ottawa, knocked on doors of sports associations and we encouraged them to move their national training centres to Victoria. We knew that if they moved their training centres here, they could utilize the infrastructure that was already in place and they would also attract more hosting opportunities. That strategy worked and over the years things evolved and we now have eight national training centres here in Victoria and a huge variety of sporting events."

Rugby Canada was the first to recognize Langford as a prime location for its Centre of Excellence, and



The Goodlife Fitness Victoria Marathon attracts more than 8,000 runners to the city each year during the Thanksgiving weekend. Tourism Victoria photo

since that time Rowing Canada, Swimming Canada, Athletics Canada, Golf Canada, Tennis Canada, Surf Canada, Cycling Canada and Triathalon Canada have all established national training and development centres on the Lower Island. (Rugby Canada, Rowing Canada and Triathalon Canada also have their operations located in the Greater Victoria area as well.)

"Of course, our climate helps, too," says MacDonald, noting that Victoria's mild winters mean athletes can train and compete outdoors year-round. "Triathletes,



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The National Mountain Bike Team trains year-round at the High Performance Training Centre at Bear Mountain, Deddeda Stemler photo

rugby players, cyclists - they can all be outside training in January. Where else can you do that in Canada?"

It's a classic snowball effect: as more athletes have moved to the city to live and train, sport infrastructure investment has likewise steadily increased throughout Greater Victoria. Recently, Rugby Canada broke ground on the building of the \$7.8 million National Training Centre in partnership with the Government of Canada and the City of Langford; the Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence (PISE) opened its \$1.2 million track and facilities; and Ecoasis, the owners of Bear Mountain, launched The Hub, home of the National Mountain Bike Team.

SIZE MATTERS

While Victoria has successfully hosted the HSBC Sevens Series World Women's Rugby Championships and the Canadian Junior Men's and Women's Curling Championships, sometimes the size of the venues on the Island are just too small to accommodate the bigger ticket events. That's where Vancouver comes in to play.

Vancouver is home to Canada's largest multi-purpose sports venue, BC Place Stadium, which seats 54,500. Rogers Arena, meanwhile, has a maximum seating capacity of 20,000, and the Richmond Olympic Oval is home to 13 volleyball courts, 10 basketball courts, three indoor soccer fields and one of the largest fitness and training facilities in the world. In contrast, Victoria's Save-On-Foods Memorial Arena has just 7,000 seats.

But there's room to collaborate when it comes to some of the really big national and international events. Take the upcoming 2019 IIHF World Junior Championships. Beginning on Boxing Day 2018, both Vancouver and Victoria will host the official tournament games, with at least 10 pre-tournament games to be held in other B.C. communities.

"It's not until December, but our facilities are almost sold out," says MacDonald. "Canada will be playing all of their pool games in Vancouver, because they have the seating to fit the crowds. But Russia and the U.S. will be playing their pool games in Victoria. It points out the importance of facilities and capacity," he notes. "It has to make sense financially to host an event in any community."

RUNNING AWAY WITH SUCCESS

Perhaps surprisingly or not, the events that bring the most sports tourists to town are not the big national or even international team championships. Instead, it's the running events that attract both amateur and professional athletes.

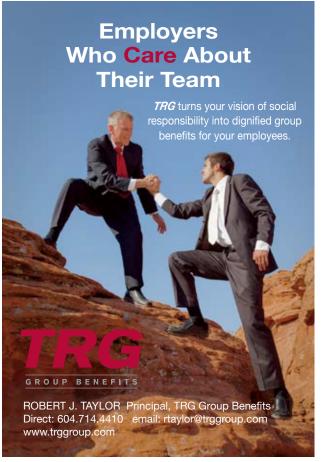
This year's annual BMO Vancouver Marathon broke records before it even began with 17,000 registered runners – the highest attendance since its inception 46 years ago. Runners signed up from 65 countries and organizers prepared for 16,000 visitor hotel stays in the area. The bottom line? An estimated \$55.75 million in revenue.

In Victoria, the Times Colonist 10K in April and the GoodLife Fitness Marathon on the Thanksgiving long weekend bookend the tourist season in the capital city – and that's a good thing. "Facilities and capacity are so important when you're planning events," says MacDonald, "but so is accommodation. We try not to spend too much time going after events in August because hotels are already full during the summer. We would rather benefit the economy by going after events in the shoulder and low season. It's about connecting sport to the community.

FACING FORWARD

While the provincial government declined support for Vancouver's 2026 FIFA World Cup soccer bid, nor would it help fund a Victoria bid for the 2022 Commonwealth Games, there are always other bidding opportunities on the horizon. The Invictus Games, perhaps? Or how about the 2030 Commonwealth Games? Only time will tell. •





Off the Beaten Path Inspiring hikes in southwestern B.C.

STORY BY TRACY SMITH

I took a walk in the woods and came out taller than the trees. - HENRY DAVID THOREAU



HERE'S NOTHING like hiking a quiet trail, breathing in pristine air mixed with the luscious smell of trees, and taking in jaw-dropping mountaintop views. Whether you are looking for a Sunday trek or a challenging multi-day excursion, these hikes in southwestern British Columbia will inspire you to lace up your boots and grab your poles.

PHOTO: His and hers hiking boots air out on the beach after a long day of hiking the West Coast Trail. Garth Eichel photo

STAWAMUS CHIEF HIKE, SQUAMISH

DAY HIKE • 11 KILOMETRES RATING: INTERMEDIATE

Known simply as "The Chief" to locals, Stawamus is one of North America's largest granite monoliths towering 702 metres over Squamish Township, and is a popular destination for rock climbing, bouldering and slacklining. Located just south of Squamish along the Sea to Sky Highway, hikers can choose from three different peaks depending on time availability and desired intensity.



The 11-kilometre trail to all three peaks (Peak One: 3 kilometres, Peak Two: 4 kilometres and Peak Three: 4 kilometres) has an elevation gain of 600 metres, takes about six hours to complete round-trip, and has spectacular views of Howe Sound and the mountains of Garibaldi Provincial Park. Be forewarned that near the summit chains and ladders bolted to the rock offer stability, but the summits have no railings or safety installations.

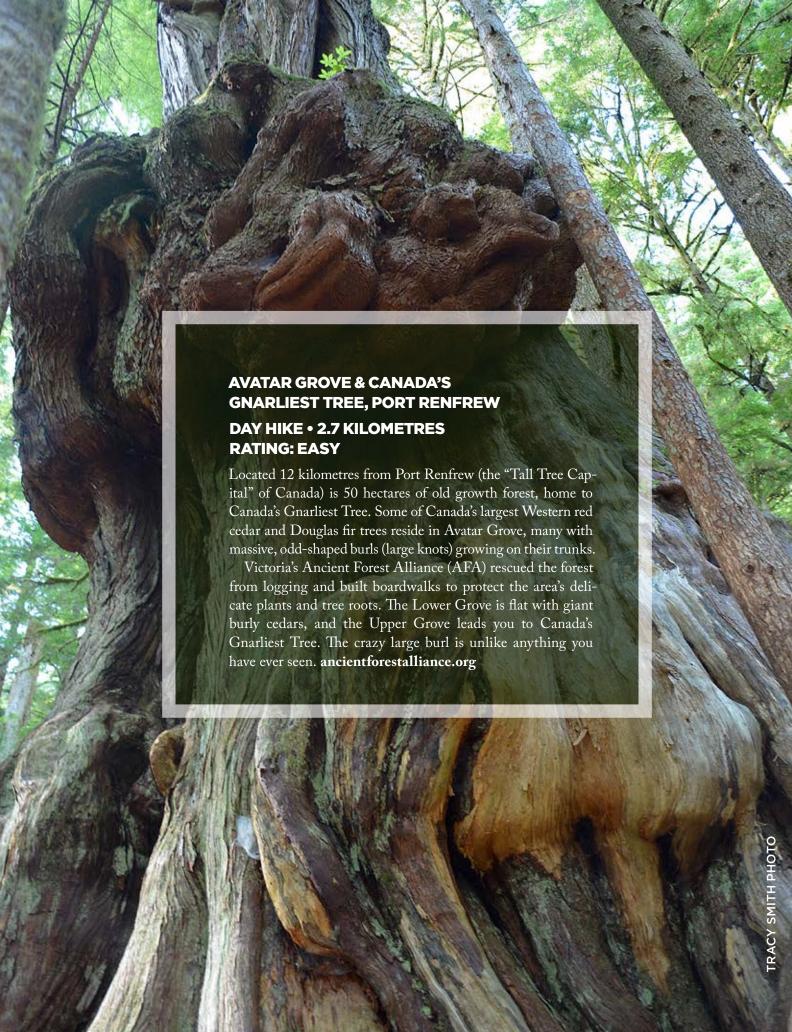
Looking for a shorter hike with quick rewards? From the Shannon Falls parking lot, head left up the gravel path towards the stream. Another 100 metres

up some steps brings you to the main lookout towards Shannon Falls, where water tumbles from 330 metres above. **outdoorvancouver.ca**

PANORAMA RIDGE, WHISTLER

MULTI-DAY HIKE • 30 KILOMETRES RATING: DIFFICULT

Panorama Ridge, 27 kilometres from Whistler Village, is easily one of the most amazing hikes in Garibaldi Provincial Park. The section from Rubble Creek trailhead to Panorama Ridge winds through



deep forests and crosses beautiful streams and flower meadows with several picture-perfect viewpoints along the way. The trail is moderately challenging with a steady climb to 1,520 metres in elevation. Bring layers, as you can be drenched in sweat one minute, and shivering the next as you near the peak. The best time to hike the trail is June through October when the snow has melted and the trail is clear. **10hikes.com**

JOFFRE LAKES, PEMBERTON

DAY HIKE • 10 KILOMETRES RATING: MODERATE

Joffre Lakes has a little bit of everything for an ideal day hike: a nice distance, manageable elevation (400 metres), a waterfall, pristine lakes and gorgeous mountain views. Parts of the trail are through moraine, the rocks and sediment carried down from glaciers, and three glacier-fed turquoise lakes are perfect for rest stops. The last part of trail is technical before arriving at the peak at 1,600 metres with a view of Matier Glacier high above Upper Joffre Lake, and the imposing Mount Cayoosh to the northwest. In warm afternoon sun, you may just hear the thunderous crashing of ice as it glides down the glacier. **joffrelakes.ca**

SUNSHINE COAST TRAIL, POWELL RIVER

MULTI-DAY HIKE • 180 KILOMETRES RATING: MODERATE

The Sunshine Coast Trail is Canada's longest hut-to-hut hiking trail. Fourteen huts dot the trail and are free to use on a first-come, first-serve basis with heated huts at higher elevations. The 180-kilometre backcountry trail stretches from Sarah Point in Desolation Sound to Saltery Bay. For those not ready to tackle the entire trail, there are several access points to explore smaller sections. The trail follows coastal shorelines along creeks and lakes and through old-growth forests to amazing mountaintop views. sunshinecoastcanada.com

NOOTKA TRAIL, NOOTKA ISLAND

MULTI-DAY HIKE • 40 KILOMETRES RATING: DIFFICULT

Spectacular surf breaks. Whale sightings. First Nations artifacts. Nootka Trail on Nootka Island, adjacent to the west side of Vancouver Island, offers this and more in a historically significant setting. Step onto the sands where Captain Cook first discovered British Columbia. Discover remnants of





longhouses and totem poles of the Muchalaht Nation disappearing into the rainforest and the shipwreck of the Greek freighter Treis Lerarchi.

Beginning at Gold River, 90 kilometres west of Campbell River on Highway 28, Air Nootka transports hikers to the Starfish Lagoon trailhead, and the MV Uchuck III boat provides return transportation.

The trail has slippery terrain that shifts with the tides, multiple creek crossings and sparse fresh-water stops. Understanding tide tables is essential and hikers should carry a marine VHF radio or satellite phone, as there is no cell phone service.

Go for a dip in the swimming hole above Calvin Falls at Bajo Beach or climb Maquinna Point for a 270-degree view of the rocky coastline, a perfect vantage point for spotting humpback, grey and orca whales. **trailpeak.com**

DELLA FALLS, MID-VANCOUVER ISLAND

DAY/MULTI-DAY HIKE • 15 KILOMETRES RATING: STRENUOUS

This Strathcona Park hike features one of the highest waterfalls in Canada at 444 metres. Your adventure begins with getting to the trailhead, only accessible by a 33-kilometre trip by boat, kayak, canoe or shuttle service across Grand Central Lake, the second deepest lake in Canada. A 15-kilometre hike takes you to the base of the falls, and another three kilometres leads to an amazing viewpoint on the Love Lake-Mount Septimus Trail. The first 10 kilometres are not for the faint of heart. Creek washouts, landslides, slippery rocks, fallen trees and detours are common, however, the first glimpse of the falls will make you forget all about the trail's challenges. The falls are best in mid-July when glacial run-off is at its peak. valleyoftrails.ca

& SAN JOSEF BAY, NORTHERN VANCOUVER ISLAND

DAY/MULTI-DAY HIKE • 24 KILOMETRES RATING: MODERATE

The rugged, remote Cape Scott Provincial Park, 64 kilometres west of Port Hardy, offers some of the best hiking on Vancouver Island. Hang on to your hat: the trail is only accessible by a long, bumpy logging road. A six-hour day hike leads you to Nels Bight where you can camp and take in the gorgeous

views of Guise Bay, Experiment Bight and the Cape Scott Lighthouse, usually open to visitors and staffed by lighthouse keepers. Weather can be unpredictable and hikers must be equipped for muddy trails.

On the drive home, be sure to veer off for San Josef Bay Trail. The white-sand beach at the end of the trail is one of the most beautiful in the province and is well worth the diversion. This family friendly trail is just 2.5 kilometres, but be sure to allot at least an hour to experience this incredible paradise with striking sea stacks topped with Sitka spruce and sea caves that are accessible only during low tide.

capescottpark.com

WEST COAST TRAIL, MALACHAN/DITIDAHT FIRST NATION

MULTI-DAY HIKE • 75 KILOMETRES RATING: DIFFICULT

Follow in the footsteps of the First People on the West Coast Trail. Open May through September, the 75-kilometre trail between the towns of Bamfield and Port Refrew takes five to seven days to hike. The trail is a challenging journey of treacherous terrain, multiple ladders spanning rocky cliffs and unpredictable weather, but the rewards are many:



Heather Lawson Eichel catches her breath above a remote beach on the West Coast Trail. Garth Eichel photo

secluded waterfalls, pristine lighthouses, vast tidal flats and endless beaches. Hiking permits are required, even for day hikes. Get your reservation well in advance through Parks Canada. Consider booking a Ditidaht First Nation's Comfort Tent at Tsuquadra Point. pc.gc.ca





Vancouver Island is home to several seaside trails that reward hikers with secluded beach campsites. Garth Eichel photo

JUAN DE FUCA MARINE TRAIL, SOUTHERN VANCOUVER ISLAND

DAY/MULTI-DAY HIKE • 47 KILOMETRES RATING: MODERATE TO DIFFICULT

The Juan de Fuca Marine Trail extends from China Beach to Botanical Beach, near Port Renfrew in Juan de Fuca Provincial Park. The trail can be broken up into four 10-kilometre day hikes, or backpacked in its entirety in four to six days.

China Beach to Sombrio Beach is a strenuous 29-kilometre hike that takes in serene Mystic Beach with a waterfall, a suspension bridge and a swing hanging from a cliff. Sombrio Beach to Parkinson Creek is an eight-kilometre moderate trail through regenerated logged areas and old-growth forests along a rugged shoreline. Surfers flock to Sombrio Beach for its world class surfing. Parkinson Creek to Botanical Beach is a 10-kilometre stretch ending at Botanical Beaches where you can peer into spectacular tidal pools with extensive marine flora, multi-coloured starfish, sea urchins, anemones and sea cucumbers. Hikers should have precise tidal information and watch for rogue waves. trailsbc.ca



WILD PACIFIC TRAIL, **UCLUELET**

DAY HIKE • 8.4 KILOMETRES RATING: EASY

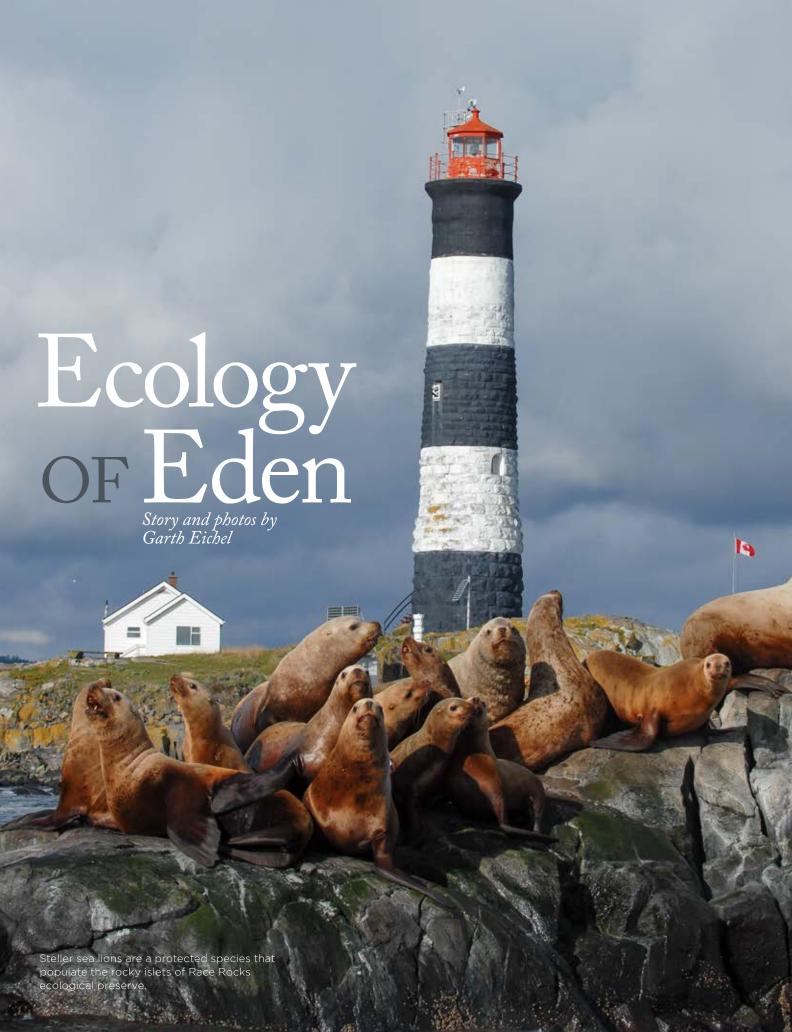
Want to hike on the wild side? TripAdvisor ranks the Wild Pacific Trail as one of the top

outdoor attractions in B.C. and a "world treasure." Within a 10-minute walk from your car, you can enjoy spectacular shoreline panoramas and pounding surf as high as houses. Built on the traditional territory of Yuutu?it?ah First Nation in Pacific Rim National Park, about 300 kilometres northwest of Victoria, the trail skirts the rugged west coast shoreline of Vancouver Island. Lighthouse Loop (2.6 kilometres) to Amphitrite Point Lighthouse is a great starting place with endless ocean views, beach access and amazing weather-beaten trees. Or visit Ancient Cedars Grove to get acquainted with cedars that are over 800 years old. Depending on the time of year, you may even see and hear migrating grey whales along the coast. wildpacifictrail.com





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A red irish lord camouflages itself amid red anemones. Garth Eichel photo

RACE ROCKS ISLETS HOST A DYNAMIC CROSS-SECTION OF MARINE LIFE

F YOU ARE ARRIVING AT, or departing from, the Victoria Harbour Heliport, gaze out the window of the helicopter to the south and follow the coastline of Vancouver Island to its southernmost point. Weather permitting, you can just make out a small island offshore with a hairline tower rising up from it. That is the historic Race Rocks lighthouse on Great Race, the largest of nine small islets collectively known as the Race Rocks ecological preserve — one of the most diverse and fecund marine sanctuaries on earth.

What makes Race Rocks so unique is its underwater topography. The rocky outcrops above the surface are essentially the peaks of an undersea mountain.

As huge volumes of tidal ocean from the Strait of Juan de Fuca pass through, billions of gallons of nutrient-rich seawater are forced to the surface. This in turn supports a whole range of marine animals, from the tiniest phytoplankton to large sea mammals.

Race Rocks has such great biodiversity that it matters significantly to the health and vitality of the local ecosystem as a whole. Such is its importance that the area is protected under the auspices of Lester B. Pearson College, which manages the preserve on behalf of BC Parks. Still, despite the natural resilience of the islets and the tremendous stewardship of the college, Race Rocks is a fragile wonder that requires vigilance and protection if it is to endure.



A large bull Steller sea lion basks in the sun overlooking the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

SWIFT WATERS

Anthropological evidence suggests the ancestral Straits Salish made extensive use of the area around Race Rocks as far back as 1,500 years ago. The abundance of sea life would have been much valued over the centuries, but the islands appear to have held significance for burials as well. A number of stone configurations on Great Race are dated around the late prehistoric period, between AD 500 and 1000. The area still holds particular significance for the Salish, who refer to the area as *XwaYeN* (pronounced shwai'yen), which means "swift water" in the Klallum language.

Race Rocks also holds significant meaning for mariners. As the most southerly part of Canada on the Pacific Coast, ships have to round Race Rocks as they arrive from, or sail out to, the Pacific. The reefs and strong currents make Race Rocks treacherous at the best of times, but at night, or in bad weather, the area can prove deadly. Indeed, Race Rocks has claimed a number of vessels and lives over the years in all types of conditions.

The necessity of a lighthouse to warn navigators was obvious as far back as the mid-19th century. The British Royal Navy began construction in 1860 using massive granite sections that were cut and numbered in Scotland and shipped as ballast. As if to highlight the urgent need to finish work, the 385-ton tall ship Nanette ran aground and sank just three days before the new lighthouse was lit.

The light from the tower improved navigation considerably, and the distinctive black and white stripes were later painted on to improve the tower's visibility

against the shoreline. Two powerful fog horns were installed in 1892. Even so, Race Rocks continued claiming ships and lives. The worst disaster occurred on March 24, 1911, when the ferry Sechelt sank with the loss of her crew and 50 passengers.

With the advent of GPS and modern navigation aids, Race Rocks is no longer the menace it once was, but it still warrants healthy respect and a lot of leeway. Nowadays, sailors attach more sentimental meaning to Race Rocks Lighthouse, which is the first recognizable landmark they see when returning home, or the last as they depart.

LIFE ON THE ROCKS

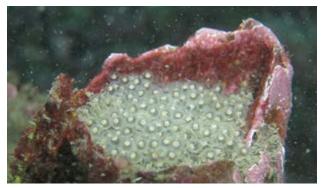
From 1860 to the 1990s the lighthouse on Great Race was illuminated by a succession of keepers. But the trend towards technology was inevitable and on March 1, 1997, the Canadian Coast Guard shed responsibility for maintaining Race Rocks. Lester B. Pearson College now exercises responsibility for managing the ecological preserve, as it was designated in 1980. (Race Rocks is Crown Land of the B.C. government. BC Parks administers the island as a Provincial Ecological Reserve, maintained by the college on a 30-year lease. It was made a candidate Marine Protected Area by the federal government in September 1998.)

Pearson College staff and students regularly visit Race Rocks, monitoring local wildlife and keeping an eye out for poachers and others who might disturb the preserve out of curiosity. In fact, with the exception of Pearson College students, no one is permitted to set foot on any of the nine islets without a permit issued by BC Parks.

As a protected ecosystem, Race Rocks is crucial to the curriculum at Pearson College, where 200 international scholarship students from 88 different countries come for two years of high school studies. Science, marine biology and environmental studies are core components of the academic program, and the Race Rocks ecological preserve is a real-world classroom where students can collect data and study the wide range of species that inhabit the area.

The Preserve is a strong ecosystem that thrives and flourishes in 50-knot winds, but it also requires protection. Because of its nutrient-rich waters, Race Rocks acts like a nursery for all sorts of marine life, including salmon smolts and sea urchin eggs, right up the food chain to Steller sea lions and elephant seals. Accordingly, any disruption can have far-ranging effects on the wider ecosystem as a whole.

For that reason, Pearson College relies on solar panels and a tidal turbine generator to power its facilities on Great Race. Such projects are expensive, though, and the school depends on support from corporate sponsors and government ministries, such as B.C.'s Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, among others.



The cold, fast-moving waters around Race Rocks provide nutrients that support an abundance of marine life. Garth Eichel photo

LOOK, BUT DON'T TOUCH

Access to Race Rocks is strictly controlled, so the best way to experience the Preserve first-hand is through one of the many marine adventure tour operators in Victoria who make regular runs to the islets. These operators are expert at handling their vessels in the challenging narrows, and they are knowledgeable about the various species that inhabit the ecological reserve, particularly the local whale, seal and sea lion populations.

Certainly, an excursion to Race Rocks rewards those who go with a window to a rare and wonderful natural world like none other.





To Your Health!

Balancing the debatable health benefits of booze

T SEEMS HARDLY a week goes by without a media report of some new scientific study telling us what we already know. No other prepositional phrase induces eye rolling quite like "according to a new study...".

For example, sage minds at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health recently published a study that revealed driving while drug-impaired makes people more likely to get into fatal car crashes. Then there is the ground-breaking research published in the Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine that reveals people who sleep better generally look better. And brace yourself for this obvious gem: a study presented at the Acute Care Cardiac Congress revealed that heart attack victims who call an ambulance have a higher survival rate than those who don't.



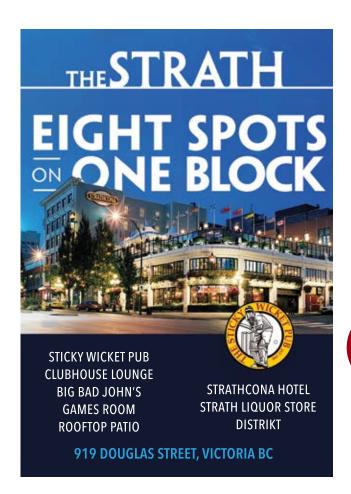
Personally, I prefer scientific studies that support my vices. In 2011 I glommed on to a study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that suggested a low-salt diet could actually be a bad thing. Better still, I discovered a Danish study in 2016 that found slightly overweight people were likely to live longer than skinny people.

Oh, sweet, sweet science.

Research that rewards sinners is nothing new. When the CBS television program 60 Minutes aired a segment in 1991 on the health benefits of red wine, sales of plonk in the U.S. jumped by almost 40 per cent. Red wine is still widely regarded as having a slight edge over beer and spirits because of antioxidant properties imparted by red grape skins and seeds, particularly resveratrol — a compound some









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studies have linked to longer life expectancy and reduced risk of heart disease and diabetes — but there are a multitude of studies that contend regular and moderate consumption of any type of alcohol offers various health benefits. That's because ethanol, the active ingredient in alcohol, affects the body in myriad ways. It directly influences the stomach, brain, heart, gallbladder and liver, and it particularly affects levels of lipids (cholesterol and triglycerides) and insulin in the blood, as well as inflammation and coagulation.

Of course, the health benefits of booze is a divisive subject. Proponents and detractors have argued about whether alcohol is a tonic or a poison since the first fermented beverage was imbibed some 12,000 years ago. Science can help clarify matters to a point, but for every research study that finds benefits, another can be found highlighting peril.

The only thing researchers and health professionals seem to agree on is that any health benefits derived from alcohol consumption are accrued over time through regular and moderate consumption. (The health risks associated with heavy drinking are well known.)

So what does regular and moderate consumption look like? Much depends on body type, genetics and overall health, but a basic rule of thumb is one drink a day for women and two for men — a typical "drink"



meaning a 341mL (12oz.) glass of beer, a 142mL (5oz.) glass of wine, or a 43mL (1.5oz.) serving of distilled spirit. It's important to note that alcoholic drinks can't be banked like Weight Watchers points; abstaining all week and going on a Saturday binge nixes any benefit. But light-to-moderate consumption throughout the week, combined with a healthy diet and regular exercise, appears to provide some worthwhile health benefits.

HEARTS & MINDS

According to a review of more than 100 prospective studies from the Harvard School of Public Health, moderate drinking can help reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke and heart attack in both men and women. The reason for this is attributed to alcohol raising levels of high-density lipoprotein (so-called "good cholesterol"), which is associated with protection against heart disease.

Moderate alcohol consumption has also been linked to better sensitivity to insulin and improvements in factors that influence blood clotting that can block arteries in the heart, neck and brain causing heart attack and stroke.

And while long-term heavy drinking has been shown to contribute to cognitive decline and impairment, those smart enough to drink responsibly seem to benefit from improved brain function. In fact,



several research studies suggest light-to-moderate alcohol consumption enhances blood flow to the brain, reduces inflammation, and clears away toxins to improve overall brain health, and help prevent the onset of dementia.

BEER BELLY BE GONE!

Notwithstanding conventional wisdom about "beer belly", alcohol consumed in moderation can actually help fight fat. In fact, a 2010 study published in The Archives of Internal Medicine found women who had one or two drinks a day were less likely to gain weight than those who abstained. The study indicated the bodies of long-term moderate drinkers somehow adapts to metabolize alcohol differently than people who drink only occasionally. Moreover, women who drink moderate amounts of alcohol tend to eat less, particularly carbohydrates.

IT TAKES GALL

Gallstones are hardened deposits of digestive fluid that can form in the gallbladder, ranging in size from a grain of sand to a golf ball. They can be quite painful, and sometimes surgery is required to remove them.

For those who do drink responsibly and in moderation, there is a growing body of research that suggests the health benefits may outweigh the risks.

Health researchers have known for some time that regular moderate alcohol intake has a protective effect against the formation of gallstones, but a new study by researchers at the University of East Anglia found that daily moderate alcohol intake can actually reduce the risk of developing gallstones by as much as a third.

COLD EFFECTS

Scientists have long debated the effects of alcohol on immune function. On the one hand, research reveals high doses of alcohol consumption can directly suppress a wide range of immune responses, and alcohol



abuse is associated with an increased incidence of a number of infectious diseases. On the other hand, moderate alcohol consumption seems to have a beneficial impact on the immune system compared to alcohol abuse or abstinence.

According to a 2013 study by the University of California's School of Medicine, moderate amounts of polyphenol-rich alcoholic beverages, such as wine and beer, can help bolster the immune system in healthy adults, and improve how the body responds to vaccines and infections.

And here's another plug for red wine: several studies suggest moderate consumption can help reduce the risk of colds by as much as 60 per cent.

LADS & LADIES

News flash: alcohol provokes sexual desire, but diminishes performance.

This is widely attributed to the role alcohol plays in reducing inhibition, while increasing erectile dysfunction. But lads should be encouraged to learn that researchers at the University of Western Australia have discovered men who drink a moderate amount of alcohol experience on average 25 to 30 per cent fewer erectile problems than non-drinkers.

There's good news for ladies, too. According to the *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, antioxidant-rich wine triggers nitric oxide production in the blood, which relaxes artery walls and increases blood flow to the loins, which can generate feelings of sexual excitement.

BUZZ KILL

Science has a way of continually finding new studies to debunk previous ones. Indeed, many of the research studies cited in this article have been criticized by skeptics as biased, poorly designed, inconsistent and inconclusive.

Are the health benefits of booze overstated?

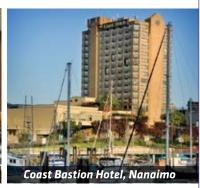
Certainly, a proper diet and regular exercise will do much more for a person's health than knocking back a glass or two every night. Moreover, the debatable benefits of moderate alcohol consumption should not give abstainers a compelling reason to start, especially where there is a family history of alcohol abuse. But for those who do drink responsibly and in moderation, there is a growing body of research that suggests the health benefits may outweigh the risks. As such, they can raise a glass and drink to their health — at least until another study comes out saying otherwise. $\mathbf{\Phi}$



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with

DIONNE LASLO BAKER

Dionne Laslo-Baker, Ph.D., Founder and CEO of DeeBee's Organics, on what it takes to break into the food industry.



Ahead of the Learning Curve

What motivated you to transition from making frozen treats at home with your kids to starting a company and taking your products to the grocery store?

Our first product was actually my kids' idea. My youngest asked if we could make some rooibos tea and my oldest wanted to make frozen popsicles with it. That's how it all started – we made the first Tea-Pops. From there we researched and experimented and in 2013 we launched DeeBee's Organics.

I was determined to show my kids that you can make treats and foods that don't have additives, artificial colouring or flavourings in them. Our whole society has become so accustomed to cheap food that's basically sugar, dye and water, or other filler. But we can go back to the way food is supposed to be made, which is simple with lots of fruit and real food that hasn't been sprayed. I started the company to show the kids we can do this, and also to show them that we could do this ethically, we can do it green, we can do it with a team in mind and as a family centred business.

How has your company changed since you started it four years ago?

We've evolved from being a frozen-novelty manufacturer to now becoming that nostalgic brand that recreates all the treats we loved as kids - but we wouldn't dare feed our own children that stuff because we would be mortified by the ingredients! We've reinvented those treats with clean labels, a short ingredient list, made them all organic and usually with an added benefit, like fruits or vegetables.

What has the learning curve been like for you?

I literally had to study and learn the industry for about a year or two, and in fact I'm still learning because it's a very complex, ever-evolving industry. You need to have an in-depth understanding and knowledge about everything from manufacturing, to sourcing and procurement, to logistics, to distribution and sales. Then there's the whole marketing side. How do you build a brand? That in itself is a full-time part of the business.

How has your product line evolved since you started?

We're always about innovation. Last year we launched our SuperFruit Freezies, which are the first ever organic shelf-stable freezies. Shelf-stable means they are at room temperature, not frozen, which has given us a whole new level of simplicity compared to our frozen products. It's actually good to start with the most difficult thing because everything else suddenly seems so much easier. When we launched the Super-Fruit Freezies we expected to sell between six to eight bags per week, per store. And right away in some stores we were selling 800 bags per week, per store! We sold out within the first few weeks, and it was the number one selling confectionary product in Loblaws. That was a game changer for us.

You recently broke into the U.S. market. What is your strategy for growing your company into other markets?

Last July we submitted our products on a whim to the Walmart U.S.A. open call. Thousands of people travel to the home office in Bentonville, Arkansas for these open calls and we were told that we were one of many hundred and that the buyers would take no samples. You make your pitch and you're gone. But when we got into the room, the buyers listened to our story, tasted our products and said, "Your product is even better than your story!" They gave us a green card, which is like their golden ticket, and that meant we were on to the next stage. Not only did that buyer taste it, they wanted everything that we had brought and before we knew it we were listed. From there, Walmart Canada saw us and since they are committed to supporting women enterprises, they have been really strong supporters of DeeBee's as well.

By this summer we'll be in 4,000 stores in Canada and the U.S. We've had big interest from Asia, but right now our focus is on North America and any growth into other markets will have to be done slowly and strategically. And our home office will stay in Victoria, because this is home.

How do you scale up to manage such large new contracts?

You need to scale up, but you need to scale up intelligently. So that means making sure you have the financing in place. We work with BMO and Export Canada – they both have really backed us and have been excellent supporters. We have also raised money from friends and family to become partners with us in the business.

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What have you learned about product and brand development since starting your company?

Our first sales were in Victoria at Aubergine Specialty Foods and Thrifty Foods with a product that, honestly, didn't taste very good. I went from thinking I could make my product like I make it in my kitchen at home, to bringing on very talented chefs and innovators and the product has evolved a lot. Anyone who tried our products back when we started Dee-Bee's wouldn't even recognize it now.

Because we originally called it TeaPops we also discovered that a lot of people misinterpreted the product name and thought that everything had tea in it, therefore it had caffeine. They didn't realize that we mostly use rooibos and hibiscus teas which are very healthy and caffeine free. And so now we've changed the name to better reflect the product. It's all fruit, but instead of water we infuse it with a tea, a herbal tea mostly. And it's all kid oriented. So we've rebranded it all to DeeBee's FruitPops.

What is your top marketing tip?

I would say, understand who is buying your product. Find out who your target market really is. If you are out there spending money on sports events, but your target market is actually moms of toddlers then you might be wasting your time, energy and money. It took us a while to really learn that. Our market is the modern parent, who's out there in the grocery store looking for treats that are good for her family and then she secretly eats them herself! So it's studying who that market is and working with experts who have been able to touch that market it successfully.

How do you come up with new product ideas?

Besides the end consumers, our other market is the buyers from the larger retailers. Those buyers will come to us and let us know that there is a need for a new product, and they will ask us to develop it and make it for them. We also look at data and statistics on where demand is and we innovate from there.

You started your career as a medical scientist with a Ph.D. in maternal-fetal toxicology and have

since made the jump into the food industry. It seems that your career has taken off on an entirely new trajectory. Has it?

I am and always will be a scientist. I studied the effects of exposure to drugs and chemicals during pregnancy on fetal development and later child development. I thought I was going to be an academic in the hospital and university settings doing research and publishing papers. But once you're a mom, you're always a mom, and once you're a scientist, you're always a scientist, so that comes with me into everything we do at DeeBee's. Everything is scrutinized by myself through the perspective of what would I think of this product as a maternal fetal toxicologist and as a mom. My goal is to talk to people and educate them about what the science says about what we're consuming and bring that science to the dinner table.

How do you handle the challenges that come your way?

I really believe that it's not the challenges you face, but how you face the challenges. And you will face

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many challenges every day. My personality is you don't walk away from the challenge, but you face it and you deal with it. And I think what defines a successful entrepreneur is that you face the challenge and you deal with it. I tell my team to find different solutions to any challenges they face and if they've worked a number of different solutions and still can't resolve the issue, come to me and I'll help you because I love that last 25 per cent of the puzzle.

What are you looking for when you hire new team members?

Passion and a keen interest to learn. A street-smart intelligence, and a commitment to be part of a team – to be a true player in a team. Leave your attitude at the door. We're all in this together and we all roll up our sleeves and get dirty.

What are your goals for five years down the road?

I'm hoping that DeeBee's will be in pretty much every retailer in North America. And that we are also trail blazers that set the standard for how food should be made. •



BY GARTH EICHEL

Bourbon-Glazed Grilled Salmon

3 Tbsp brown sugar

3 Tbsp bourbon (or Tennessee whiskey)

2 Tbsp light soy sauce

1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger

1 Tbsp fresh lime juice

3 garlic cloves, minced

1/4 tsp fresh-ground black pepper

4 wild Pacific salmon fillets, medium thickness

vegetable oil

1/4 cup thinly sliced green onions

1 Tbsp sesame seeds, toasted

In a bowl combine the brown sugar, bourbon, soy sauce, ginger, lime juice, garlic and black pepper. Place salmon fillets in the mixture and marinate in the fridge for one hour, turning regularly.

Set barbecue grill on medium-high heat. When hot, carefully brush the grill with vegetable oil. Remove salmon fillets from marinade and place on grill, skin-side down. (Keep marinade in reserve.) Cook fish for four or five minutes per side, depending on thickness.

Pour reserved marinade into a large saucepan and set on medium-high heat. Stir frequently and reduce.

Remove salmon fillets from grill and set on plates, skin side down. Brush one to two teaspoons of sauce on each fillet and sprinkle with green onions and toasted sesame seeds.

Serves Four Suggested wine pairing: Pinot Noir Alternative wine pairing: dry rosé













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