

Shopping in Victoria

Shopping in Victoria is fabulous! Whether just window shopping or on a major shopping spree, visitors can browse quaint shops, local markets and major shopping malls to find one of a kind treasures, great bargains, or the latest fashions. Victoria offers everything from antiques to local arts and crafts, to designs by the hippest trendsetters. Almost everything is in walking distance, and there are interesting viewscapes around every corner.

From the Inner Harbour, wander up Government Street to find the perfect gift or souvenir. Victoria's British heritage is apparent in many of the shops along Government Street, which display woolens and bone china from England, tartans from Scotland and Irish lace. Stop to sample handmade chocolates or the perfect cup of tea or coffee. Native art, jewelry, fashion, Christmas and souvenir shops also abound along the bustling sidewalks and interesting byways.

Four blocks along Government Street, turn right into Trounce Alley, one of Victoria's best-kept secrets. European fashions and gift shops await discovery. Across the street from Trounce Alley, Bastion Square, once the site of Victoria's Court House, Law Chambers, a brothel and several hangings, now alive with shops and restaurants. In the summer, Bastion Square Festival of the Arts features a bustling market, vendors and local artisans sell their hand made arts and crafts.

Just beyond Bastion Square, turn left off Government Street onto Johnson. Wander among heritage buildings, restored to maintain an old-town ambience, and visit Market Square. With over 40 merchants, Market Square offers one of the best selections of specialty shops anywhere.

Enter Canada's oldest Chinatown through the Gate of Harmonious Interest, at the corner of Fisgard and Government Streets. Still vital, it's full of art, curios, home furnishings and Asian wares. Once notorious for its many opium dens and gambling houses, Fan Tan Alley, North America's narrowest street (between Fisgard and Pandora streets) is now lined with shops and restaurants.

Only in Victoria will you find a street devoted to antiques and collectibles. Fort Street, a one-way street leading out of downtown Victoria, is known as Antique Row. Shop after shop lure the antique collector away from the downtown core and into a world of rare china, silver, toys, furniture and other treasures.