

VANCOUVER ISLAND GARDENS

Explore 9 exquisite gardens!
May 9, 2018 - 6 Days



a world to experience



Fares Per Person:

\$1730 double/twin

\$2190 single

\$1615 triple



> Please add 5% GST.

> **Early Bookers:** \$100 discount on first 15 seats; \$50 on next 10

> **BC Seniors (65 & over):** \$12 discount with BC Gold Care Card

> **Experience Points:** Earn 42 points from this tour.

Redeem **42 points** if you book by **March 14**.

Includes

- Coach transportation for 6 days
- 5 nights of accommodation and hotel taxes
- 2 Strait of Georgia ferry crossings
- Milner House & Gardens
- Filberg Heritage Lodge & Park
- Hatley Castle Gardens
- Butchart Gardens with behind-the-scenes tour
- Victoria Butterfly Gardens
- Finnerty Gardens
- Abkhazi Garden
- Silk Road tea tasting
- Tours of 3 private gardens around Victoria
- Gratuities for guides at the gardens
- Luggage handling at hotels
- Knowledgeable tour director
- **9 meals:** 2 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 1 dinner

The Garden Trail

Vancouver Island has always been known for its exceptional gardens and enthusiastic gardeners, and Wells Gray Tours has offered many tours that focus on this theme. The immense variety of plants, shrubs, and trees that flourish in the rich soil and moderate climate make the area a horticultural paradise. This tour takes you up close and behind the scenes in both public and private gardens to learn the best tricks of the trade. The gardens range from small gems like Abkhazi to world famous such as Butchart. Highlights include a unique perspective at Butchart Gardens through the eyes of the gardeners, a privileged look at three private home gardens in Victoria, and the woodland glades lined with rhododendrons at Milner Gardens in Qualicum Beach. Most garden visits are accompanied by an expert gardener. Here is your opportunity to explore nine exquisite gardens on Vancouver Island, from Comox to Victoria, and admire the splendid spring blossoms.

Kamloops > 250-374-0831
Kelowna > 250-762-3435
www.wellsgraytours.com

Penticton > 250-493-1255
Vernon > 250-545-9197
Toll Free > 800-667-9552



Itinerary

Wednesday, May 9:

Meals: L

We travel via the Coquihalla and take the ferry from Tsawwassen to Duke Point. Our accommodation for two nights is at the Beach Club in Parksville. Every room has an ocean view.

Thursday, May 10:

Meals: B,L

We visit **Milner Gardens** in Qualicum Beach, a heritage home surrounded by 70 acres of woodland gardens, the dream of Veronica Milner. She gathered plants from the temperate zones of the world, including a significant collection of rhododendrons. It was her vision that created this incredible combination of garden and old growth forest which has been visited by Queen Elizabeth. Veronica gifted the property to Vancouver Island University in 1996. We continue to Comox and tour **Filberg Heritage Lodge and Park**, built in 1929 by Bob Filberg, president of Comox Logging & Railway Company. Bob died in 1977 and donated the property and \$11 million to maintain it as a park. The gardens consist of nine landscaped acres with plantings such as maples and magnolias, plus rare and exotic trees such as London Planes, and Atlas and Deodora cedars.

Friday, May 11:

Meals: B,L,D

We drive into Victoria to **Hatley Castle Gardens**. The Japanese, Italian, and Rose Gardens were created in 1912 by former Lieutenant-Governor James Dunsmuir and wife Laura. Their landscape architects designed 20 acres of gardens around the mansion and 100 gardeners were employed to maintain the grounds. Next is **Butchart Gardens**. In 1909, Jennie Butchart set about converting her

husband's limestone quarry into the Sunken Garden. In 1939, the Butcharts gave the gardens to their grandson, Ian Ross, who spent the rest of his life creating and promoting this renowned attraction. We see the gardens from an entirely new angle — on a behind-the-scenes tour with one of the master gardeners. Later, we visit the **Butterfly Gardens**, a tropical jungle with thousands of butterflies and other creatures. We stay three nights at Chateau Victoria near the Inner Harbour. Dinner is included at Vista 18 atop the hotel.

Saturday, May 12:

Meals: L

First, we stroll through **Finnerty Gardens** at the University of Victoria. Next is **Abkhazi Garden**, a heritage garden created by Prince Abkhazi and his wife Peggy in 1946 and noted for its majestic trees and dramatic location. Lunch is included in their heritage home. This afternoon, we go to **Silk Road teahouse** for tasting and shopping.

Sunday, May 13:

Meals: L

Happy Mother's Day! Visit three **private gardens** with a local guide and sometimes the owner providing commentary. The gardens are subject to change, but are uniquely different gems, hidden in the backyards of some fine Victoria homes. The rest of the afternoon is free time.

Monday, May 14:

Meals: L

During the ferry ride to Tsawwassen, enjoy the extensive Pacific Lunch Buffet. (Note: Most ferries on this route offer the buffet, but an alternative will be arranged if the ship changes.) Then we head for home via the Coquihalla Highway.

Tour Policies

Payments: A deposit of \$150 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due March 14, 2018.


Discounts: Early bookers receive \$100 discount on first 15 seats and \$50 on next 10 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after March 14. BC seniors (65 & over) receive \$12 discount offered by BC Ferries, so you must bring your BC Gold Care Card or the new BC Services Card.

Cancellation Policy: Up to March 14, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$50 per person. From March 15 to April 6, the cancellation charge is 40% of the tour fare. From April 7 to April 24, the cancellation charge is 70% of the tour fare. After April 24, there is no refund.

Fare Changes: Changes to taxes or surcharges from tour suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond the control of Wells Gray Tours, therefore Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes until departure.

Travel Insurance: A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

Photo Credit: Qualicum Beach Tourism (Milner Gardens)

 **Activity Level:** Moderate activity with considerable walking in the gardens if you want to see everything. There are many stops during this tour and you must be able to get on and off the coach by yourself without delaying your fellow travellers. The coach cannot carry a scooter. If you are not able to participate in Activity Level 2, Wells Gray Tours recommends that you bring a companion to assist you. The tour director, driver and local guides have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance.

e-points: This tour earns 42 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One e-point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until March 14.

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