

Inner Harbour, the Heart of Victoria

Victoria's Inner Harbour is, arguably, the heart and soul of Victoria. As well as being the location of the first European settlement, much of the city's historical, cultural, recreational, and political events revolve around this area.

Historically the First Nations recognized the area as most suitable as a place to put down roots. When Fort Victoria was established, it was neighbours with a long established First Nations settlement. The view across the harbour from the Conference 2015 hotel is an area named the Songhees, after the settlement that existed in the mid 1800's, now a very posh collection of condominiums.

If you were fortunate to be travelling between Vancouver and Victoria in the early to mid 1900's, you would likely be aboard the pocket liners operated by Canadian Pacific and would be treated to a spectacular entrance into the harbour. The Empress Hotel was just ahead of the bow of your ship, once docked, and a short stroll away.



The CP Steamship Terminal building is currently the home of the Robert Bateman Centre and soon to be home of the Maritime Museum.

Many cultural events are centered on the Inner harbour. One in particular, the Symphony Splash Concert, is a very popular BC Day event staged on a barge and performed by Victoria Symphony.

Annual events such as Dragon Boat Races, Classic Steam powered boats and the world renown Swiftsure Sailing Race all rely on Inner Harbour as their venue or starting spot. All these events are immensely popular and enjoyed by both residents of and visitors to Victoria.

Recreational pursuits abound in the harbour. Of course many exciting Whale Watching tours leave from the harbour. If a more personal water experience is your forte, how about a kayak

paddle about the harbour. A recreational walk along the harbour walkways is inspirational without the need to "dress" for a more strenuous pursuit.

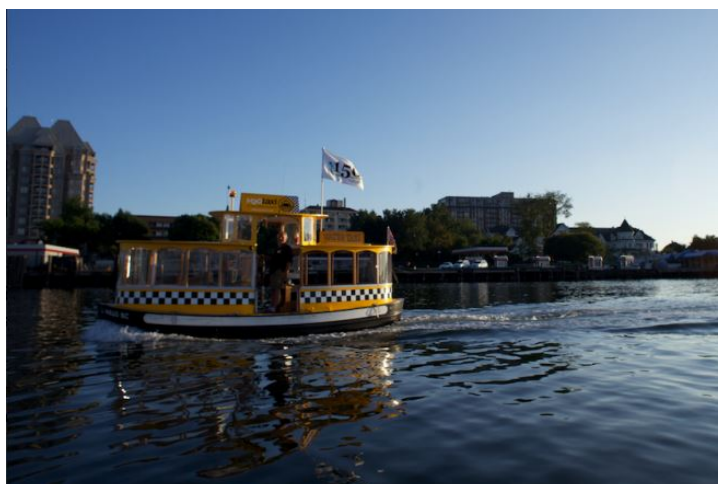
From the political aspect, the harbour hosts the seat of Government for BC in the form of the Legislature Building. Whether it is the pageantry of the Lieutenant Governor opening the commencement of a new session, a protest of a controversial government policy or legislation or a state visit to the Province, Inner Harbour is involved.

The harbour hosted the royal yacht Britannia during the Queen's 1971 visit to celebrate BC's centenary.



Britannia Arriving Victoria (Author's Collection)

One of the fun ways to experience the magic that is Inner Harbour is to use the Victoria Harbour Ferries. This is a fleet of small ferries providing transportation around the harbour.



The Conference 2015 hotel has a "taxi stand" on the wharf and just if you can hop on and sail away! Suggested activities with this mode of transport include the Gorge Tour, the Pickle Pub Cruise or the James Bay Explorer. A delight to watch is the Water Ballet on Sunday mornings, should you not plan to attend Church Service.



The Victoria Harbour Ferries website www.victoriaharbourferry.com/ will, perhaps, provide some inspiration to experience this fun transportation activity.

Please remember that the Coast Harbourside Hotel and Marina will honour the special hotel room rate up to 3 days after the conclusion of the Conference 2015. This could provide an opportunity to partake in the many opportunities Victoria offers. Touring the area on land or water will give you many memories to take home as a personal souvenir of the Conference 2015.

Keep checking the Victoria Branch Web site for upcoming News on
Conference 2015



Please visit the Victoria Branch website at
<http://www.uelac.org/uelvictoria/UELAC-Conference-2015-Victoria-BC.htm>

Conference 2015 Planning Committee Victoria, BC