

## Abigail's: No Ghosts Here!

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Many of the older restaurants and accommodations in Victoria, and even the Royal Victoria Golf Course have ghost stories attached to them. Guests of Abigail's Hotel often ask for the ghost story and the incredibly accommodating staff would love to tell them one. Unfortunately, the ghosts have not been forthcoming.

Abigail's Hotel is perched on the edge of downtown Victoria, just a stone's throw from the Inner Harbour and it is truly one of Victoria's best kept secrets. Well not any more! I am letting the cat out of the bag! I have lived here for over 20 years and driven by countless times, each time wondering what it was like. I have been in a number of stately old hotels and they were all nice, but often disappointing. Not so with Abigail's.

When we drive past the entrance to the hotel, we immediately notice the well-kept English gardens. Passing between the Coach House and the Inn, both buildings look very similar. At first glance, we could not tell that they were built 50 years apart. We park and are immediately greeted by Tomas, the super friendly front-desk attendant. He guides us to our room and fully informs us about the hotel and the services. Breakfast in bed sounds appealing, but we opt for breakfast with the other guests.



Abigail's Hotel at dusk - Victoria BC  
Photo courtesy of Abigail's

You can tell how much they care, especially when Marion tells us how they invite some of the neighbors over for Christmas dinner. The owner's philosophy is certainly well entrenched in all of the staff and is evident in the care and attention to detail in both the hotel design and style as well as in the service provided to guests.

When we check out, we are presented with a small gift bag containing a two bottles of water, treats and a guidebook to other "select accommodations". Working in tourism makes me really appreciate the businesses that take it seriously. This business has truly earned its "five stars".

So, now it is time to play tourist! Our choice for the day is to visit the Victoria Art Gallery. The Art Gallery is just minutes from



Our room at Abigail's - Oh so cozy!  
Photo courtesy of Abigail's

Our room is spacious and adorned with just about every amenity we could ever desire. Is it the delicious welcoming cookies, the cozy couch in front of the fireplace, the four poster bed, or the marble ensuite bathroom with Jacuzzi and rain-head shower? Our room is decorated with rich country furnishings, goose down duvet and pillows, silk bedspread, and fancy throw pillows. It is luxurious and very comfortable.

The library in the main building is a meeting place and between five and seven o'clock, refreshments and complimentary hors d'oeuvres are available. In a short time, we meet friendly people from Louisiana, Nevada, Ontario, and Alberta. Tomas is at hand taking good care of us.

Abigail's and is inside historic Spencer Mansion in the Rockland neighborhood. We go there because there is an exhibition of the art of [Takao Tanabe](#), an artist born in Seal Cove, British Columbia. The artist is a recipient of several major awards and is internationally renowned. His art provides a unique view of land, sea and sky apparent in his expansive and beautiful landscape paintings. The formidable size of his paintings presents an awe-inspiring vision of Canada and particularly the West Coast.

We continue our exploration by heading out to Sidney by the Sea for lunch. Since we have hit most of the local restaurants, we are looking for a new experience. A friend had mentioned the Dakota restaurant at the Victoria Flying Club, so we check it out! From our table, we can see out onto the runway, so all through lunch a variety of planes taxi quite close by. We heard the breakfasts were award winning and find that they serve breakfast on the weekends all day long. We make our selection and enjoy a very good lunch.

After lunch, we explore Sidney and do some shopping and touring.

On the way home, I reflect on our fabulous stay at Abigail's. I am thinking about ghost stories that I could make up for inquiring minds. The fact is, they just don't need a ghost. Abigail sells herself!



The comfy Library at Abigail's  
Photo courtesy of Abigail's

For supper, we take a short walk downtown, no more than 3 or 4 short blocks. We visit the very popular Noodle House to find out what all the fuss is about. Well, not what we anticipated, but a unique experience and very tasty food! I did not expect spoiling my wife with chopsticks and a takeout cardboard box, but nothing is too good for my Queen!

In the morning, we sit down to a superb gourmet breakfast. A large table seats most of the guests. Arriving late, we sit at a table for four and are soon joined by a young couple from Oregon. Abigail's is designed and operated so that people can easily interact with each other, adding to the enjoyment of the visit. If you come for privacy, the spacious rooms can be your private hide-away and you can order you breakfast in bed!

After breakfast, Marion Hansen (general manager) takes us on a tour of the hotel. Each room is unique, yet all have the same special touches that make Abigail's unique. All of the staff, from marketing, management, housekeeping and dining are so friendly and helpful. It is hard to imagine



The comfy Library at Abigail's  
Photo courtesy of Abigail's

Reflections on Abigail's: peaceful, quiet, comfortable, luxurious but not ostentatious, friendly, a meeting place, charming, romantic, very special. The finest accommodation in Victoria!

[Back to start:](#)

why anyone would stay anywhere else.

