

Fore - Duck & Cover

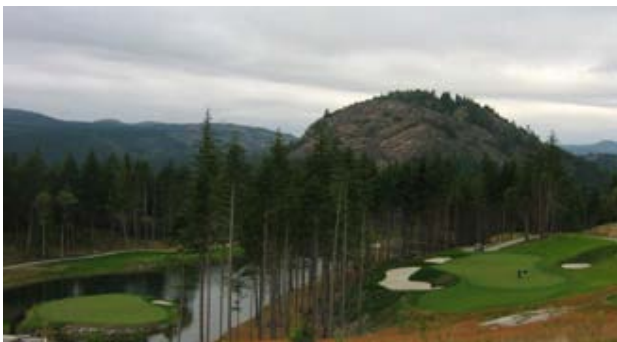
Vancouver Island - A Golfing Mecca

by Ron Kirstein, edited by Lisa Cole

What do grizzly bears, earthquakes and Vancouver Island golf have in common? A "duck and cover strategy", that's what! New technology has allowed even novice golfers to hit the ball a long way. Trouble is, when you're just a couple degrees off course and you hit the ball far, then you're really off course, prompting more and more piercing bellows: "Fore!"

Vancouver Island, British Columbia, is golf Mecca. Imagine, on this beautiful 500 km (300-mile) long island in the Pacific Northwest, there's a golf course for every level. No matter what your skill, you can find a course that will best suit you.

No bears on Bear Mountain... but lots of deer! The 19th hole is an optional bonus - it hangs off a cliff with a spectacular view of Greater Victoria. Bear Mountain, on the western edge of Victoria, is one of the most scenic courses you'll find.



Spectacular from the island green to the sculptured fairways. Photo by Ron Kirstein



Play on the edge of the ocean at the Victoria Golf Course
Photo by Ron Kirstein

Well-groomed greens, sculpted fairways and panoramic ocean views make Cordova Bay, on the eastern shore of Victoria, one of the finest courses you'll find on Vancouver Island. Four sets of tees allow you to choose the challenge that best suits your game.

Sometimes you find a hole where you'd like to have a serious discussion with the course architect, like at the Crown Isle Golf Course, where a fine tee shot put me 12 feet in front of the hole. I putted about 18 inches past it, then the unthinkable happened: my ball found a groove and rolled at a right angle to the line of my putt - off the green, within inches of the water hazard! My chip back onto the green was just short of the hole. Yes... it rolled right back to me! My fourth shot could not be short, so I blew it 10 feet past the hole. I putted tentatively towards the hole and the gap that 'eats' balls. Naturally, I putted light and in great disgust, got a six.

The Crown Isle Resort has some of the best facilities of any course on the Island. It's typical of resort courses with housing developments nearby. The club house is spectacular.

Golf carts, fully equipped with GPS systems, are included in the green fees. Get too close to the green, the cart shuts down and tells you on the screen to back off! Then on the 8th hole, a reminder pops up that you can order food to be ready at the end of the 9th hole! Impressive, eh! There are four sets of tees, with excellent equalization for novices and shorter hitters.

An elevated green with the backdrop of a waterfall is typical of Olympic View Golf Course, also on the western side of Victoria. The 12th hole is where nightmares are born: a precise tee shot to a narrow fairway beside a long water hazard, followed by a second precise shot to an elevated green! This is just one of many challenging holes here. A golf cart is recommended for the hills. Olympic View has the best equipped practice area on any course on Vancouver Island.



Scenic Holes at Olympic View Golf Course
Photo by Ron Kirstein

If it's your lifelong dream to live on a golf course, Vancouver Island has lots of courses with houses bordering them: Arbutus Ridge, Morning Star, Bear Mountain, Pheasant Glen, Crown Isle and others offer exemplary housing.

Imagine a course where each fairway is lined with tall Douglas Fir, virtually isolating it from the others. This is Storey Creek. Every hole is different and the course offers challenges with narrow fairways, water hazards and strategic sand traps. If playing along the edge of housing developments irritates you, then try Storey Creek, just south of Campbell River.

With a backdrop of Mount Arrowsmith, well-manicured greens and fairways, an executive-length golf course awaits you: Mount Arrowsmith Golf Course is one of the Island's best-kept secrets.

An automated telephone booking system makes for easy-access. Drive 10 minutes north of Qualicum Beach and you'll be playing one of the finest executive courses on the Island! It has one par 5 hole (the rest are par 3 and 4).

There are approximately 60 golf courses on Vancouver Island - each offering something for everyone. Read a synopsis at:
<http://tourismmall.victoria.bc.ca/vancouver-island-golf.htm>

Ron Kirstein is the owner of the Vancouver Island Travel and Tourism Web Site. An avid golfer for over 50 years, Ron has almost completed his goal of playing all of the courses on Vancouver Island! To view pictures and more in-depth descriptions, visit Ron's Travel Magazine at <http://tourismmall.victoria.bc.ca/travelmagazine/>
[Back to start:](#)

