

Gay Friendly

CANADA

ATLANTIC Charlottetown

BRITISH COLUMBIA

QUEBEC Montreal

Vancouver

Whistler

ONTARIO

Toronto, Ottawa

Thompson Okanagan

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ALBERTA Calgary





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CANADA



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Front Cover Photo:

Anti-SOGI Counter Protest
Credit: Gayvan.com

Back Cover Photo:

Whistler Pride & Ski Festival Parade
Credit: Gayvan.com

We are delighted to publish our 18th annual Gay Friendly Canada Guide in various media formats once again this year, for the convenience of our audience. Whether you prefer print or online media, we have it all. Besides print, we also have an online PDF edition that you can download, an online interactive flip-book edition, and a Kindle e-book edition on Amazon.

Travel is one of our passions, and Canada has a lot to offer from coast to coast. A sophisticated tourism infrastructure of national, regional and local organizations provides easy access and information about events, attractions, festivals, hotels, dining, bars and nightclubs. The business community has also shown great support by sponsoring LGBTQ2SAI+ events, and featuring LGBTQ2SAI+ people in their mainstream advertising. Considering how things used to be, it's remarkable to see major corporations, politicians, businesses, organizations, and people from all walks of life on the streets waving the rainbow flag, and declaring Love is Love.

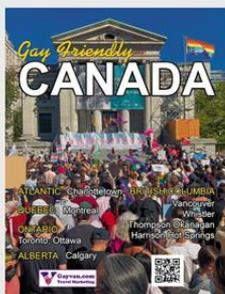
As a result of the courage and heroic efforts of our LGBTQ+

pioneers, who stood up and demanded equality and recognition, Pride events are now celebrated across the country, in all major cities, as well as medium size and smaller communities everywhere. Queer film festivals are also thriving, LGBTQ2SAI+ sports groups of all kinds are active and visible, health-related organizations hold conferences, rainbow crosswalks are showing up at many locations, and drag is now recognized in the mainstream.

In recent years, however, despite being one of the most progressive countries in the world in regards to equality for all, far-right ideology has started to creep into Canadian society as well. As witnessed this past year, anti-Drag Story Time protests, and anti-SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) protests against SOGI programs taught in public schools, were planned across the country. In response, many Canadian officials condemned the protests, and counter protests were also organized, many on a grassroots level. Our cover photo for this edition shows the counter protest in Vancouver, where an estimated crowd ten times the size of the initial protester group turned out to show that most Canadians are generally supportive.

Canada continues to be a relatively safe and welcoming country for people from all walks of life, including the LGBTQ2SAI+ community. There is a need, however, to continue to stand on guard to ensure equality for everyone.

With all of that said, we hope you enjoy our 18th annual edition. Right now is a wonderful time to explore Canada, whether you are a visitor, planning to visit, or are one of us who call Canada home.



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GETA
Member of the
Gay European
Tourism Association



Credit: Gayvan.com Travel Marketing

ATLANTIC

Charlottetown

The provinces of Newfoundland/Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick form Canada's east coast region. This region has a diverse and rich cultural and historical heritage. It boasts of amazing parks, beautiful beaches, historic sites, and the most UNESCO World Heritage sites in Canada.

This region is home to nearly two and a half million people, who live in charming cities, with scenic islands, pine forests, and rugged coastlines. The landscape is dotted with picturesque lighthouses, and the ports offer some of the finest seafood in the world. These are some of the reasons to visit this vibrant region.

The rainbow flag is proudly displayed in major cities, as well as in some of the smaller urban centres during the summer months. Rainbow crosswalks are popping up where you might not expect them, and it can be a wonderful experience to plan a visit to coincide with one of the region's LGBTQ+ Pride events. You can check out festivities in Halifax, Sydney, Amherst, Yarmouth, St. John's, St. John, Moncton, Fredericton, Charlottetown and Summerside, among others.

Charlottetown

Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, is the historic site where the Charlottetown Conference of 1864 led to the formation of Canada. It is a popular destination for international tourists and cruise ships.

Attractions such as The Confederation Centre of the Arts, the 2024 Charlottetown Festival, excellent golf courses, and stunning beaches with the warmest salt water swimming north of Florida, attract hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. With about 115 major international cruise ships planning to visit Charlottetown in 2024, this charming city has a wide range of accommodation, amenities and services, as well as a vibrant culinary scene that can compete with much larger cities in other parts of the world.

Fierté Canada Pride (FCP), the national association of Canadian Pride organisations, will host their 2024 National conference and AGM in Charlottetown, March 7 – 10, 2024.

Pride PEI, which organizes year-round events, including the annual Pride Festival and Parade, now a highlight of the summer season, will celebrate 30 years in 2024. Visit their website for details.

Resources:

- www.fiertecanadapride.org
- www.pridepei.ca
- www.halifaxpride.com
- stjpride.ca
- www.riverofpride.com
- frederictonpride.com
- sjpride.ca



Photo Credit: Stéphan Poulin – Tourisme Montréal

QUEBEC

Montreal

Quebec, Canada’s French speaking province is world-renowned for its delightful Joie-de-Vivre, old world charm, and some of the hottest LGBTQ+ celebrations on the planet.

Quebec City

Quebec City, the lovely capital city, is often likened to a trip to Europe, without leaving North America. You can feel the history and romance of centuries in the cobblestone streets of Vieux-Québec (old Quebec), which is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

LGBTQ+ nightlife in Quebec City is centred in the Saint-Jean-Baptiste neighbourhood, where the biggest and most famous Le Drague Cabaret Club is located. Bar St. Matthews, which is popular with the levi/leather/bear scene, and Sauna back Boys is also nearby. Rainbow flags are also seen at many other bars, pubs and businesses in the area, which regularly welcome LGBTQ+ visitors. The Quebec City Pride Festival (Fête Arc-en-ciel de Québec) is a colourful four day event that happens over the Labour Day weekend every year, with drag queens, community march and parties galore!

Montreal

Montreal is the province's largest city, and the world's second largest French-speaking city. Montreal’s Gay Village, Le Village, is one of the biggest in North America, and is

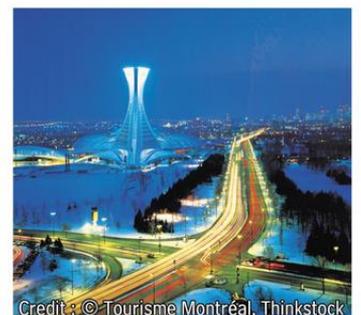
along St. Catherine Street East, where you can find bars, pubs, clubs, saunas, restaurants, shops, guesthouses, and more.

Popular places include Aigle Noir, Le Stud, GI Joe, Stock Bar, Le Cocktail, Bar Taboo, Complexe Sky, Oasis, Campus, Club Unity, District Video Lounge and Sauna Centre-Ville.

Known worldwide as one of the sexiest gay party destinations on the planet, Montreal is the sophisticated host to a long list of world-class events, including Festival Fierté Montréal Pride, one of the world's largest LGBTQ+ francophone celebrations of Pride. With over 200 activities based on their world-renowned gay village, Le Village, the festivities run from August 1 – 11, 2024. Check out the following resources for more.

Resources:

- www.quebec-cite.com
- www.mtl.org
- www.fiertemtl.com/en
- www.arcencielquebec.ca



Credit : © Tourisme Montréal, Thinkstock



Photo Credit © Destination Toronto

ONTARIO

Toronto

Toronto, Canada's biggest city competes with cities like New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco as a major destination for international LGBTQ+ travelers, and its annual Pride celebrations are unmatched. Toronto is home to over five million people, including the largest LGBTQ+ population in Canada.

Church-Wellesley Village, the first gay village, is an urban destination with the largest proportion of LGBTQ+-owned and welcoming businesses in Canada. It has famous LGBTQ+ bars and clubs, bookstores, saunas, cafes, restaurants, and community organizations, and it is also where many LGBTQ+ Torontonians live. LGBTQ+ visitors often use this as a starting point when they want to explore the city. It is also where Toronto's extensive Pride celebrations, now called Pride Month, will happen from June 1–30, 2024. The Pride Festival and Pride Parade, usually take place during the last week of June. Check Pride Toronto's website for details for 2024.

The West Queen West Art & Design District, known locally as the Queer West Village, is Toronto's second neighbourhood of interest for the LGBTQ+ community. It has broadcasters, gay-welcoming bars, restaurants, shops, cafes, design houses and galleries galore, and it is open to everyone, no matter their age, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

Queer East Toronto, which includes Leslieville, The Beaches and Greektown, are also becoming popular areas for LGBTQ+ Torontonians. They are more relaxed than the Church Wellesley Village, and these LGBTQ+ welcoming neighbourhoods have a wide range of restaurants, pubs, shopping and nightlife.

Toronto Queer Film Festival: "The Toronto Queer Media & Arts Centre (TQFF) is a collectively-run, artist-run, nonprofit organization in Toronto, Ontario. TQFF started in 2016 to provide community art exhibition space for experimental, contemporary, and/or social justice themed film and video art by queer filmmakers." Visit their website for more festival information.

Canada's largest LGBTQ+ Centre, The 519, is at 519 Church Street in the Church-Wellesley Village. This registered charity is an agency of the City of Toronto and works with community businesses and sponsors, to provide a wide range of services, programs and meeting spaces for the LGBTQ+ community. For example, with the city of Toronto, The 519 and Homes First Society are opening their first dedicated shelter for 2SLGBTQ+ adults to provide temporary housing to 2SLGBTQ+ refugees with a focus on Trans women, as outlined in a news release by the city.

Another valuable Toronto-based resource is The ArQuives, Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives, which launched an online database that lets the public search their diverse collection of records. They also offer tours of their Jared Sessions House where they have their public programs, as well as walking tours of Toronto's LGBTQ2+ historical neighbourhoods, and presentations about their collections.

Resources:

www.destinationtoronto.com

torontoqueerfilmfest.com

www.the519.org

www.pridetoronto.com

www.queerwest.org

arquives.ca



Photo Credit: Ottawa Tourism

Ottawa

Resources:
capitalpride.ca
ottawatourism.ca/en
www.suitedreams.com

Ottawa, the elegant and appealing capital city of Canada, is the country's fourth biggest city. The buildings on Parliament Hill have a remarkable Gothic Revival style that is complemented by the modern style of the National Arts Centre, National Gallery of Canada, Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Canadian Tribute to Human Rights Monument, the beautiful Rideau Canal and other national attractions of interest.

Ottawa is also the home of the national government, where the first national law that legalized same-sex marriage was announced on July 20, 2005, and where any legal debates and new laws are made.

Ottawa's thriving LGBTQ+ Village was officially acknowledged in 2011 and is located in the downtown core in a six block area around Bank Street. The Village is where you can find queer-owned and operated businesses, bars and nightclubs, restaurants, rainbow coloured crosswalks, and an entertainment hub with live shows. The Village also hosts a community fair and a beer garden during the annual Pride celebrations.

The capital region has festivals all year long, including the Fierté Capital Pride Festival, which is one of Ottawa's most colourful festivals, held in August every year. Their Board of Directors and Festival Operations Committee organize 8 days of events including public art installations, a festival weekend with multiple stages, the Capital Pride Parade, and the official Pride Guide. Check their website for 2024 details.

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Photo Credit: Northern Lights Calgary Skyline - Albrían Contreras

ALBERTA

Calgary

Alberta, home to over four million Canadians, is blessed with the rugged mountain peaks of the Canadian Rockies, sparkling modern cities with state-of-the-art transportation and communication systems, as well as fully developed tourism infrastructures, which are convenient starting points for amazing natural, sporting and cultural adventures.

The LGBTQ+ community is open and visible in Alberta, with celebrations in major centres like Calgary and Edmonton, but also in smaller urban areas and mountain resorts, such as Jasper, Lethbridge, Red Deer and Banff, all of which have installed rainbow crosswalks in recent years in celebration of Pride.

Calgary

Calgary, the biggest city in Alberta, has hosted a Winter Olympics, and is known around the world for its yearly rodeo festival, The Calgary Stampede. Calgary is the home of Canada's oil industry, and a rising high tech sector is adding to the downtown core of impressive modern skyscrapers, with a young, diverse working population.

Calgary is also where Mark Tewksbury lives, Olympic Gold Medalist in the 100-metre backstroke at the 1992 Summer Olympics. Mark was the first Canadian

Olympian to openly identify as gay, and now he is a motivational speaker and co-founder of Great Traits, a professional development company that offers high-performance applied leadership training in Toronto and Calgary.

In 2024, the Calgary Queer Arts Society is celebrating twenty six years since the launch of the Fairy Tales Queer Film Festival in 1999, as well as their later projects such as the OUTReels Diversity Education Program, Youth Queer Media Program, The Coming Out Monologues, and six years since the Fairy Tales Queer Presentation Society became the Calgary Queer Arts Society.

Calgary Pride will mark its 34th year in 2024, and although the dates were not confirmed at press time, it usually happens in the last week of August, extending into September when needed. Check the Calgary Pride web site to verify dates for 2024, as well as their ongoing year-round calendar of events.

Resources:

www.calgarypride.ca

thegreattraits.com

www.travelalberta.com

www.calgaryqueerartsociety.com

pridecentrefedmonton.ca

edmontonpridefest.com

www.visitcalgary.com

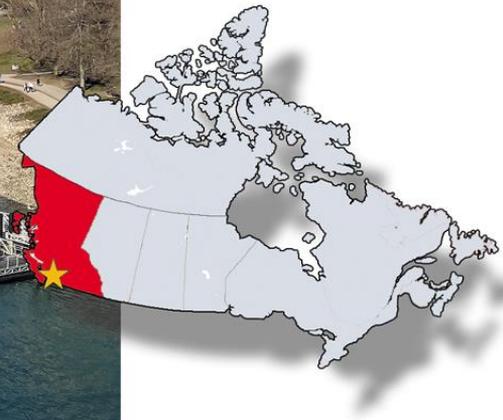


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BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Vancouver

Vancouver, the largest city on Canada's pacific coast, has a dramatic skyline of shiny glass towers, set against a pure backdrop of rugged coastal mountains. This modern city's metro area is home to over 2.5 million ethnically diverse people, and is ranked on many global lists as one of the world's most beautiful places, with one of the highest qualities of living. It's also where the largest LGBTQ2+ community in Western Canada lives.

Nine major beaches curve around the city, many with

long stretches of gorgeous sandy beaches, which are easily reached via the stunning 28 kilometer Seawall, by car, bicycle, or on foot. Some also have Canada's longest stretches of subtropical looking palm trees, which are an unexpected surprise for many. A great way to end a busy day is to sit under the palm trees to watch the sunset at English Bay or Sunset Beach, before going up the hill a few blocks to Vancouver's famous Davie Village.

Davie Village, in Vancouver's amazing West End is seen by many as the heart of Vancouver's LGBTQ2+ community, and is where most of Vancouver's gay entertainment venues and businesses are located. This 24/7 neighbourhood has a wide assortment of reasonably priced restaurants with cuisine from around the world, cozy pubs with patios, dance clubs, coffee shops, hotels, saunas, and more.

The City of Vancouver and the West End Business Improvement Association (WEBIA) have worked closely with the community over the years to make the neighbourhood more welcoming, including the iconic rainbow crosswalks at Davie and Bute streets, rainbow banners along the street posts, and computerized strings of multi-coloured LED lights above the sidewalk stretch of Davie Village.

At the centre of the village is Jim Deva Plaza, right next to the rainbow crosswalks, which honours one of Vancouver's gay pioneers and community heroes. A

stylish aquamarine speaker's corner is also a very fitting tribute to Jim, as many who knew him would agree. Just steps away from his legendary Little Sister's Book & Art Emporium, where many start their visit to LGBTQ2+ welcoming Vancouver (see Ad P2).

Events galore highlight Vancouver's LGBTQAI2S+ annual calendar, and 2024 will be no exception. One of the first major events of the summer season is the Queer Arts Festival, with 11 days of visual art, performance, theatre, music, dance and literary events, making it one of the top queer arts festivals in the world.

The Vancouver Pride Society produces the annual Vancouver Pride Parade and Vancouver Pride Festival. Pride festivities stretch out over more than a month long schedule, starting with East Side Pride in June, and ending with the Pride Parade and Pride Festival on the Sunday of the BC Day long weekend, which falls on August 4, 2024. The annual Vancouver Pride Parade is the biggest parade in the city, and with official city status, draws estimated crowds of hundreds of thousands of spectators each year. A new parade route now launches from the intersection of Denman and Davie streets, and proceeds about four kilometres down Beach Avenue and Pacific Street to Concord Community Park near Science World, which is also the new Vancouver Pride Festival location.

The Vancouver Pride Society also announced the organization's bid to host Canada Pride in 2024. Although



VANCOUVER QUEER FILM FESTIVAL



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Across Canada on OUTtv

details were not available at time of writing, feel free to check their website for future updates.

The Vancouver Queer Film Festival, the largest queer arts event in Western Canada will celebrate its 36th festival 2024. With a strong focus on Canadian filmmakers and telling stories of queer, trans, and two-spirit communities, as well as featuring a documentary shorts program, these films screen amongst films which premiered at Sundance, Cannes, Berlinale and other internationally recognized festivals.

As you can see, Vancouver's LGBTQ2+ community is an active, visible and integrated part of Vancouver's cultural mosaic. Proudly represented in the political spectrum, tourism industry, Civic calendar of events, film and TV industries, and all walks of business. LGBTQ2+ Vancouverites enjoy this fabulous destination just the same as everyone else.

Resources:

- www.destinationvancouver.com
- westendbia.com
- vancouverpride.ca
- queerfilmfestival.ca
- queerartsfestival.com
- www.gayvan.com

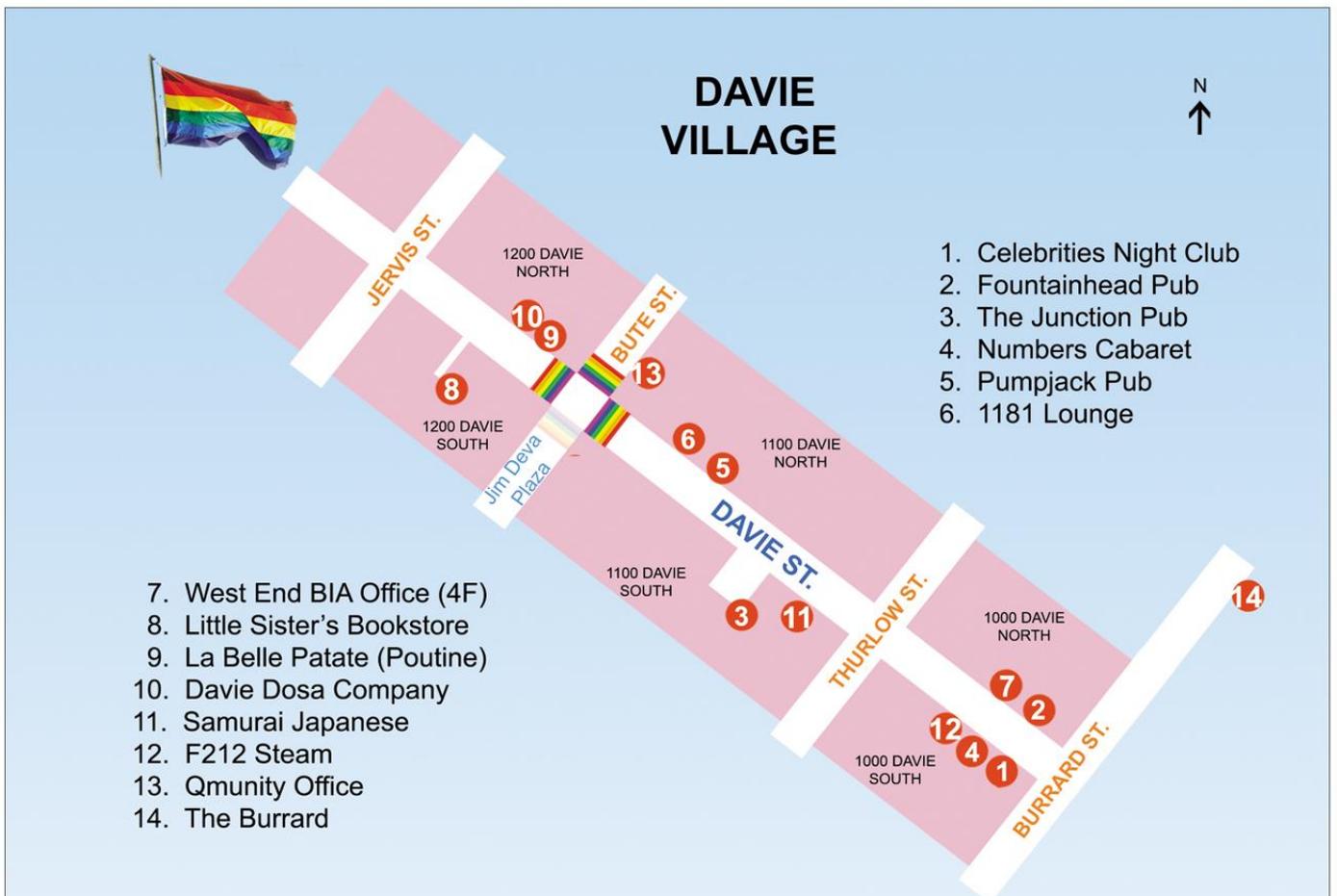
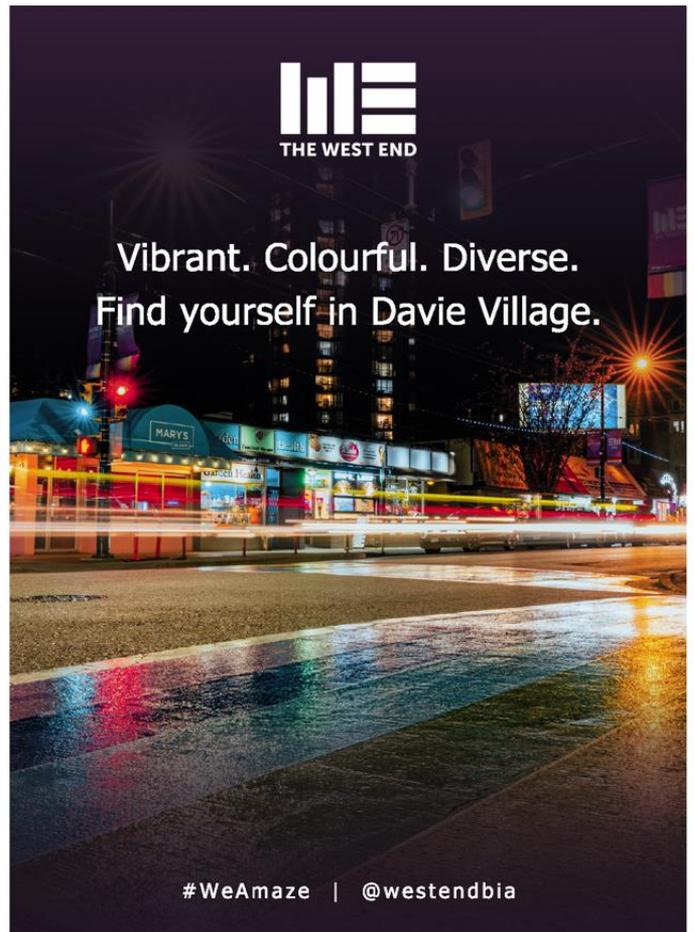




Photo Credit: Gayvan.com Travel Marketing



Whistler Blackcomb

Whistler Blackcomb is a world-famous, world-class ski resort within two hours of downtown Vancouver.

Whistler Blackcomb is world-class in every way, with a wide range of accommodations, great restaurants and pubs, a lively nightlife scene, and shopping galore. It is best known for its amazing skiing and snowboarding, but it is also a full service, year-round destination. Amazing golf courses, awesome river rafting, picturesque horseback riding, exciting zip lining, and many other thrilling outdoor adventures, including the stunning Peak 2 Peak Gondola are some of the wonderful options available.

It is rated as the No. 1 Ski Resort by many international media, and has received accolades such as; Top Canadian Ski Resort, Best Ski Resort in Canada, Best Ski Resort in the World, No. 1 Ski Resort for Apres Ski, No. 1 Overall Resort, and more.

Whistler Pride & Ski Festival is also one of the top LGBTQ+ ski events in the world, and that is why visitors from all over the world are on the guest list. A fantastic lineup of events this year will include The Welcome Party, Daily Guided Ski and Ride groups, a Comedy Night, Sip N' Dip At Scandinave Spa, Thursday T-Dance, Throwback

Thursday, Splash Pool Party, Friday T-Dance, Furrocious, Saturday T-Dance, Snowball-The Main Event, and more!

It is best to plan ahead to book the host hotel, or pick from a wide range of accommodation via Tourism Whistler. It is also highly recommended to book your event tickets in advance, or buy a full Week Pass or Weekend Pass to get express entry to all your favourite events.

The Gayvan.com team visits Whistler Blackcomb every year, and we are excited to attend the Whistler Pride & Ski Festival again as they celebrate their 31st Whistler Pride & Ski Festival, January 21-28, 2024. See you in Whistler!

Resources:

www.whistlerpride.com

www.whistler.com





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In the vibrant heart of wine country, Kelowna combines the sophistication of gourmet food and fine wines with the energy of festivals and music, all set against serene vineyard views. Penticton provides a change of pace, inviting you to relax with its craft beers and scenic paths, perfect for a leisurely ride or stroll. Meanwhile, Osoyoos offers a stunning contrast with its unique desert landscape and rich cultural tapestry.

Visit the Thompson Okanagan for some unforgettable sights, friendly local vibes, and moments that you'll carry with you for a lifetime. Visit our website (www.travellingout.ca) for more information on each region, trip ideas, events, and more.

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www.travellingout.ca



Credit: Tourism Harrison

Harrison Hot Springs



A short drive from Vancouver by car, bus, boat or seaplane will take you to Harrison Hot Springs, a charming destination for any BC itinerary. You can find a variety of lodging options to fit your budget in this all-year-round village located in the stunning Fraser Valley of southwestern BC. The village overlooks the scenic Harrison Lake, where you can relax and enjoy a break from the busy city life or the stress of traveling.

Spring offers many exciting outdoor activities, such as high tech geocaching, helicopter tours, or scenic golfing, among others.

Summer is perfect for hiking, as well as other popular activities like paragliding, watersports, river-rafting, or taking the gondola over the Fraser River at Hell's Gate.

Fall is the time to witness the incredible sight of thousands of Sockeye Salmon coming back to their regional spawning grounds, and to enjoy the harvest season, with fields of corn and other crops covering the beautiful landscape.

Winter brings fun and adventure with skiing, boarding, tubing or snowshoeing, and the village's namesake, Harrison Hot Springs, is a great way to start or end your day. You can choose from two hot springs options near the shores of Harrison Lake, a public pool open all year, or a signature resort with multiple pools, exclusively for guests.

www.tourismharrison.com

Summer

Spring

Fall

Winter

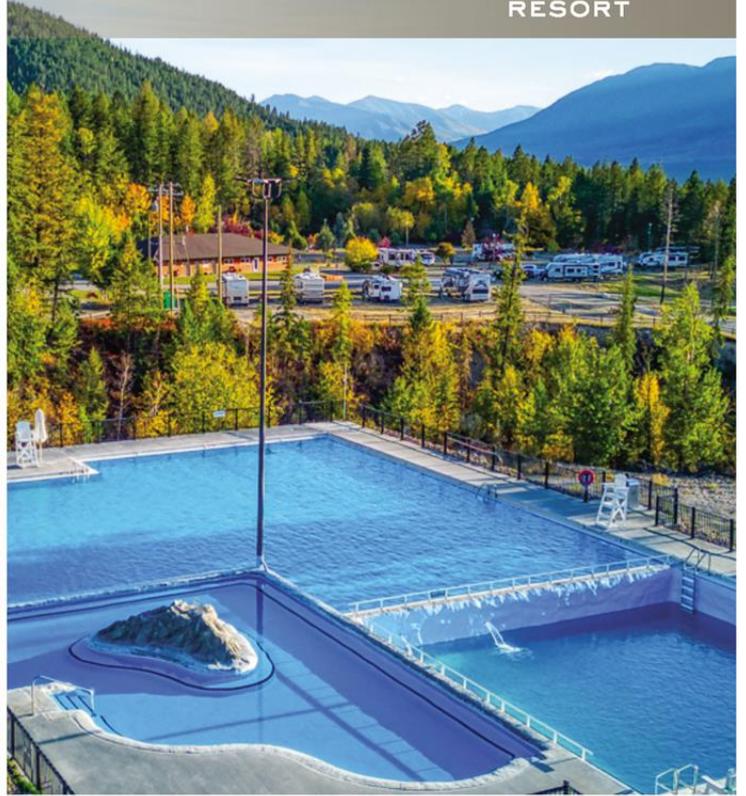
HARRISON HOT SPRINGS
HARRISON RIVER VALLEY

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Poets Cove
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FAIRMONT
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RESORT



Harrison

HOT SPRINGS RESORT



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