

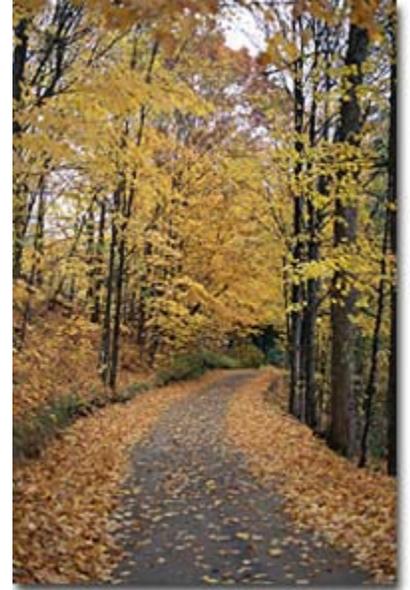
# Saanich Peninsula

First inhabited by Wsanec First Nations people, the Saanich Peninsula is a long finger of land that extends north from Victoria toward Sidney, a bountiful countryside where rural and urban lifestyles blend well together.

Flanked to the west by Saanich Inlet and Georgia Strait to the east, the Saanich Peninsula offers a fabulous choice of outdoor recreational activities, including golfing, hiking, cycling, canoeing and kayaking, windsurfing, and freshwater and saltwater fishing.

The Saanich Peninsula is criss-crossed by many country roads, ensuring an interesting and rewarding country drive past parks, bays, beaches, elegant country homes, farmland, and hobby farms. Roadside fruit and vegetable stands offer locally-grown fresh produce, dairy and poultry products for sale, and a number of marinas offer a host of activities of interest to visitors and locals alike.

The Saanich Peninsula is a cyclist's paradise, with relatively quiet country roads and the [Gallopig Goose Trail](#), which runs from Leechtown near Sooke through Victoria and north on the Saanich Peninsula all the way to the Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal. Combined with the Peninsula Trail system, this network of trails offers hikers and cyclists over 100 kilometres of scenic pathways to discover.



Saanich Peninsula country road in the Fall season

Golf Courses on the Saanich Peninsula include the Glen Meadows Golf & Country Club in North Saanich, the Ardmore Golf Course in North Saanich, the Sunshine Hills Golf Course in Central Saanich, Cordova Bay Golf Course, Prospect Lake Golf Course, Royal Oak Golf Course, and Cedar Hill Golf Course in Saanich. Courses in and around Victoria are Gorge Vale Golf Club, Uplands Golf Club, and the Royal Victoria Golf Club.

**Population:** 37,670

**Location:** The Saanich Peninsula is located at the southern tip of Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Canada. The Patricia Bay Highway 17, known as the Pat Bay Highway, runs the 20-mile (32-km) length of the Saanich Peninsula, from Victoria in the south to Sidney and the Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal on the northern tip. From Victoria Downtown, travel north on Blanshard Road, which becomes the Pat Bay Highway that ends at the ferry terminal pay booths.

View a [Map of the Saanich Peninsula](#).

## North Saanich

- The rolling interior lands of North Saanich afford sweeping views of hills and valleys, and a generous feeling of open space and rapport with nature. Said to be the finest rural-residential area in all of Canada, North Saanich boasts a long coastline on three sides, enveloping agricultural farmlands, cosy bays and generous protected parklands. North Saanich enjoys unexcelled views of water, islands and mountains, along with close proximity to air and sea transportation.

Located in North Saanich is the town of Sidney, the Victoria International Airport, the Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal (links to Vancouver and the Gulf Islands), and the ferry terminal for the route from Sidney to the San Juan Islands and Anacortes in Washington. Parks in North Saanich include John Dean Provincial Park, Horth Hill Regional Park, Coles Bay Regional Park. Links are provided on the North Saanich page.

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*Eetsun-Hunnumut*, the Saanich language motto of North Saanich, is loosely translated to mean "the land where it is good to be". Agriculture is very important to the municipality today, as evidenced by the number of farms, and roadside produce and flower stands.

Communities in North Saanich include Deep Cove, Sidney and the ferry terminal at Swartz Bay. North Saanich has an extensive park and trails network linking municipal, regional, and provincial parklands, making it a very popular area for day hiking, cycling and horseback riding.

**Population:** 11,258

**Location:** North Saanich occupies the northern portion of the Saanich Peninsula in Greater Victoria, bordered to the west by the Saanich Inlet, to the north by Satellite Channel, to the east by Haro Strait, and by Central Saanich to the south. Communities in North Saanich include Deep Cove, Sidney and the ferry terminal at Swartz Bay.

**View map of the area:**  
[Map of Greater Victoria](#)

- [Sidney](#)

Set amidst natural beauty and unspoiled charm, the vibrant community of Sidney-by-the-Sea is the gateway to the BC Gulf Islands and the US San Juan Islands. This bustling commercial hub of the Saanich Peninsula is blessed with majestic views of the ocean, the Olympic and Cascade Mountain ranges. Sidney offers a multitude of unique galleries, gift stores, antique shops, restaurants, bakeries and coffee bars.

- [Swartz Bay](#)

Swartz Bay is the main ferry terminal for Victoria and southern Vancouver Island, and the province's second largest and busiest ferry terminal after Tsawwassen. BC Ferries provides a vehicle and passenger ferry service from Swartz Bay to [Vancouver](#) (Tsawwassen) and the [Southern Gulf Islands](#).

- In addition to the ferry terminal, North Saanich is also the location of the **Victoria International Airport**, making it the true Gateway to the Capital Regional District of Victoria.
- Take a flight back in time at the **British Columbia Aviation Museum** - the showcase of Canadian aviation history, including Canada's first planes, wartime fighters and a full-size replica of the Gibson Twin Plane that beat the Wright brothers' famous accomplishment set in 1903.
- Just south of Sidney on the Pat Bay Highway is the **Saanich Historical Artifacts Society**, a 29-acre park and large heritage museum, with many outdoor displays, picnic tables, nature trails and a pond. A beautiful destination with lots to see and do.



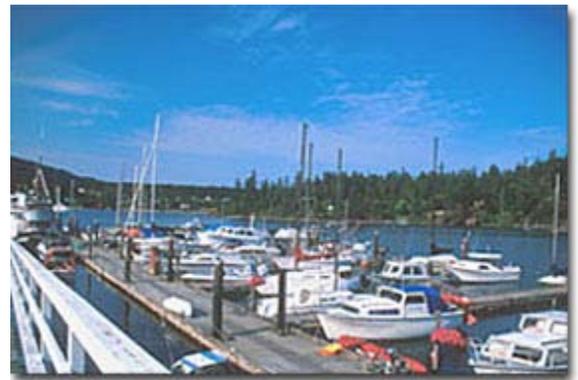
Coles Bay Regional Park, North Saanich



Sidney Spit Provincial Park, Sidney

- For a magnificent view of Sidney, the Gulf Islands, and the North Saanich communities, take a drive up McTavish Road to the University of Victoria's **Dunsmuir Lodge**, which is bordered by over 600 acres of forested park.
- **Kayaking:** Launch your kayak in Deep Cove, and explore the calm waters of the **Saanich Inlet**, where negligible tidal currents make this a great paddling area for novices and experts alike. A public boat launch beside the federal dock at the north end of Lands End Road at **Swartz Bay** is a good place to launch your boat or kayak and head for any number of nearby islands or to explore the coastline of the Saanich Peninsula. Those in open canoes should be cautious of the wash from ferries and larger marine traffic around Swartz Bay. Paddlers can launch from either the boat ramp or wharf in **Sidney** and head across the channel to Sidney Spit Provincial Marine Park or Princess Margaret Provincial Marine Park. To locate the launch, drive to the east end of Beacon Avenue.
- **Biking:** Mount your bicycle and travel the country lanes on trails that aptly describe the beautiful scenery and woodland countryside - *The Coles Bay Sun and Surf Route*, *The Flatlands Farm Route* and *The Strawberry Fields Forever Route*. The Saanich Peninsula extension's northern trailhead of the [Gallopig Goose Trail](#) is on the Sidney waterfront and runs a considerable distance south from the intersection of Lochside Drive and Beacon Avenue in North Saanich to Quadra Street near Victoria. The Lochside section is rougher and less well marked as it passes through urban neighbourhoods, but highly enjoyable as it leads through rural Saanich.

- **Marinas:** North Saanich boasts the largest concentration of marinas on Vancouver Island. Several marinas and boating facilities are located along Sidney's eastern shoreline, including the fabulous Port Sidney Marina. Other marina facilities in North Saanich are Canoe Cove Marina, just west of Swartz Bay, Van Isle Marina in Tsehum Harbour, and Deep Cove Marina in Deep Cove on Saanich Inlet.
- Sidney is popular with the Northwest boating fraternity, with boaters from California, Oregon, Washington and Vancouver choosing Port Sidney as the best destination marina on the west coast!



Picturesque Deep Cove Marina

- Enjoy fabulous views of the Peninsula, Gulf Islands and Cascade Mountains from [John Dean Provincial Park](#), which straddles the boundary between North Saanich and Central Saanich, just a few miles north of Brentwood Bay. The park was the first donated provincial park in British Columbia, and the mountain and the surrounding area feature prominently in the culture of the native Saanich people.
- The hiking trails in [Horth Hill Regional Park](#) in North Saanich leads to one of the highest viewpoints at the top of the Saanich Peninsula. It climbs gradually through a semi-arid forest to the summit. From here you have splendid views of the Gulf and San Juan Islands, Mount Baker's volcanic cone, Hurricane Ridge's scissor-cut profile, and all of the Saanich Peninsula and Inlet laid out before you in stark relief.
- Visit [Coles Bay Regional Park](#), a quiet refuge on Coles Bay in the Saanich Inlet. The 4-hectare park has a rough, barnacle-covered rock beach typical of the Saanich Peninsula's west side. A mixed wooded creek flows past towering western red cedar into a muddy beach rich in tidal lagoon life, a great spot for bird watching and hiking. The water in this deep fjord is always invigorating. Bring along a pair of beach shoes to best enjoy the environment.
- **Wildlife:** Saanich Inlet is a unique, shallow-mouthed fjord - a fragile backyard wilderness visited by eagles, ospreys, minks, river otters and on occasion, pods of killer whales.
- **Golf:** The Victoria area boasts 8 championship golf courses in close proximity, including [Cordova Bay Golf Club](#), [Olympic View Golf Club](#), Gorge Vale Golf Club, [Royal Colwood Golf Club](#), and [Bear Mountain Golf and Country Club](#). Nearby Oak Bay has the [Victoria Golf Club](#) and Uplands Golf Course.

See [www.SaanichPeninsula.ca](http://www.SaanichPeninsula.ca) for links to Municipal - Town Websites

## SaanichPeninsula.ca



The Saanich Peninsula is located on southern Vancouver Island, north of Victoria, British Columbia.

The Peninsula provides one of the most desirable areas in Canada to live or visit, and is known for its quality of lifestyle and mild climate.

The Saanich Peninsula is home to the District of Central Saanich, the District of North Saanich, and the Town of Sidney. To visit these municipalities, select from the adjoining map.