

## EXPERIENCE THE ONSET OF SPRING IN CHERRY-PINK VANCOUVER

By Jordan Hutchinson

Botany buffs rejoice! Thanks to Vancouver's mild climate, the city starts to spring out of winter earlier than you might imagine. As early as late February, visitors and locals can witness the blossoming of the city's 40,000-plus cherry trees. Come spring, 35 varieties of cherry trees announce the end of winter by blanketing Vancouver's streets with delicate flowers. From exploring the city's array of majestic gardens to attending one of the most colourful festivals of the year, here's how you can enjoy the best of Vancouver's stunning spring season.



**Garden hop.** Start off with a visit to the 55-acre [VanDusen Botanical Garden](#), which touts tree-lined paths, vibrant flower gardens, peaceful lakes and colourful birdlife. In spring months, view cherry tree varieties, flowering bulbs, early rhododendrons and camellias. Next, take a stroll through the [UBC Botanical Garden & Greenheart Canopy Walkway](#) (located on the University of British Columbia campus), where you'll see cherry blossoms, magnolias, early rhododendrons and spring ephemerals. The colourful **Nitobe Memorial Garden** – considered one of the top Japanese gardens outside of Japan – also boasts cherry trees, streams, stone lanterns, a reflecting pond and a rare authentic tea garden with a ceremonial teahouse. Lastly, head to Vancouver's Chinatown neighbourhood for a stroll through [Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden](#). Built by 52 master craftsmen from Suzhou, China, this urban oasis is the first garden of its kind outside of China, and features delicate blossoms intertwined in a landscape of weathered rocks, peaceful paths and a jade-green pond.

**Celebrate.** This year's [Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival](#) takes place April 3 to 28. In addition to soaking up views of beautiful blossoms, festival-goers will experience lively musical performances, colourful artist demonstrations and educational guided cherry tree walks. Additional highlights include a free outdoor [Cherry Jam Downtown Concert](#), the [Sakura Days Japan Fair](#) at [VanDusen Botanical Garden](#), the [Sakura Illumination Tour](#) on [Granville Island](#) and more.

**Picnic, walk or bike the cherry-pink way.** Use the [Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival bloom map](#) to locate your favourite blossom variety and the whereabouts of city streets lined with blooming cherry trees – then decide whether you want to eat, walk or bike under the pink canopy. If you're keen to join a group, pedal along at the [Bike the Blossoms](#) event – a free blossom bike ride that takes place on April 26.