



The new Trottier Observatory opens Friday at SFU with a big bash. You can check out some stunning views of the universe, or stay at home and stargaze through a telescope. (NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center)

## 5 weekend events in the Lower Mainland, April 17-19

*Gaze at the stars, play retro video games and join in on a kite dance for the Cherry Festival*

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The beaches are still closed after last week's oil spill in English Bay — but that doesn't mean we should all stay home when the weather forecast for the weekend is brilliant. Here are a few ideas for how to get out and make the most of the spring weather.

The new observatory opens with a big bash tonight, and it will be a beautiful night to stargaze. You can see Jupiter and Venus and even the International Space Station. If you've already sent in your RSVP, head out with your telescope and your family to ooh and ahh with fellow star-lovers. If not, be on the look out for future events.

**When: Friday, April 17**

Every April, thousands of people flood Georgia Street for the largest 10K run in Canada. If you're registered, you can wear old clothes and as the day gets warmer, leave them on the side of the road to be picked up for donation. Even if you're not participating, come cheer on your favourite runner and take in the route from the side-lines with its beautiful scenery and fun live music.

**When: Sunday, April 19**

If you haven't had the opportunity to appreciate some of Vancouver's beautiful cherry blossoms don't fret, there is still time. If you're looking for something a little different, check out the Shiamak dancers perform a choreographed collaboration with Egan Davis' cherry petal kites. It's happening Saturday at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre Plaza.

**When: Until April 29**

This free two-day festival features some of Canada's best writers. There are writer's workshops, panel discussions and even a book fair featuring local talent. One of the highlights includes an in-depth discussion with award-winning writer John Vaillant hosted by CBC's Grant Lawrence.

**When: April 17 -18**

Now in its 4th year, the Retro Gaming Expo features beloved video games from the past, tournaments and some awesome old-school music. The expo is held at a licensed venue, so why not grab a beer with some friends and play some Pong, Donkey Kong or Super Mario.

**When: April 18**

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