

GO EXPLORE

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EXCURSIONS

Teahouse's hidden history uncovered

Learn more about a dark chapter in Canadian history at Fieldtrippers: Hidden History of Esquimalt Teahouse, Saturday at Esquimalt Gorge Park.

Fieldtrippers are themed outdoor field trips led by Royal B.C. Museum staff and community collaborators that take place four or more times a year. Join Dr. Yasmin Railton of the

Landscapes of Injustice project, Tsugio Kurushima from the Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society and Paul Ferguson, Royal B.C. Museum collections manager and military and homefront historian as they walk and talk about Japanese Canadians in British Columbia during the time of Pearl Harbour. They will offer insights on the

impact of dispossession and internment on thousands of Canadians, and the current campaign to restore the Esquimalt Japanese Teahouse.

You can join the group by donation. The field trip, suitable for ages 10 and up, runs 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday at Esquimalt Gorge Park. Meet at the Tillicum Road entrance parking lot, just

south of the Gorge Waterway.

Enter the park off Tillicum Road and follow the road down to the first lot you come to. Gather at the edge of the parking lot, near the entrance to the Japanese gardens.

Dress warmly and be prepared for winter weather. For more information, go to royalbcmuseum.bc.ca.



Chairman of the judges, Davin de Kergommeaux, pours Alberta Premium whisky at the Strathcona Hotel to promote the 15th anniversary of the Victoria Whisky Festival, which takes place at the Hotel Grand Pacific today through Sunday. DARREN STONE, TIMES COLONIST

Warm to whiskies at whisky fest



FESTIVALS

Whisky lovers can sample new and limited-edition whiskies, revisit favourite drams and hear the latest distillery news from around the world at the Victoria Whisky Festival, today until Sunday at the Hotel Grand Pacific.

This is the 15th year of the annual event, which attracts more than 50 distilleries presenting more than 200 whiskies with a broad range of styles, flavour profiles and philosophies from every corner of the globe.

Canadian whiskies will feature strongly in the festival, with competition from distilleries from Scotland, Ireland, England, the U.S., Canada, Japan, Taiwan, India and France.

Tonight, attendees will discover the best whiskies in the country at the 10th annual Canadian Whisky Awards gala.

Distillers from across Canada are jockeying for major awards, including Best Single Malt Whisky, Best Blended Whisky,

Blender of the Year, Best New Whisky and Whisky of the Year.

The coveted Whisky of the Decade award, in celebration of a decade of growth in Canadian whisky, will also be named at the awards banquet.

Distilleries in B.C. had their strongest showing in 2019, with major awards going to Vancouver Island's Shelter Point Distillery for the Innovation Award and de Vine Winery and Distillery for Best Whisky Spirit.

"The leaps that the Canadian whisky industry has made in the last 10 years have been incredible, both in the growth of the number of distilleries but also the range of flavours that still represent the uniquely Canadian style," says Davin de Kergommeaux, chairman of the judges and author of *Canadian Whisky: The New Portable Expert*. "This has not gone unnoticed internationally. There is growing demand around the world."

Canadian Club will showcase The Dock Man, a 42-year-old

whisky that holds the title of the oldest whisky ever released in Canada. The whisky pays tribute to the dock workers who diligently delivered quality whisky to bar owners and drinkers during the Prohibition era.

Last year, the Canadian Club 41-year-old was named best Connoisseur Whisky in Canada at the Canadian Whisky Awards.

The Victoria Whisky Festival hosts three days of events, including grand tastings, master classes and consumer tastings.

Net proceeds of the volunteer-run festival are donated to charitable organizations.

Master classes are \$40, grand tastings are \$60, consumer tasting \$140 and the VIP consumer tasting is \$190.

The event runs from 7 p.m. today until Sunday at the Hotel Grand Pacific, 463 Belleville St.

Tickets can be purchased from the Hotel Grand Pacific by calling James Burrough at 250-380-4455. For more information, go to victoriawhiskyfestival.com.



FAMILY

Create art at gallery's Family Sunday

Spend a day taking part in bracelet-making with emerging visual artist Jesse Campbell and listen to stories connected to his Métis and Cree roots at Family Sunday — Making and Sharing, Sunday at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

This Family Sunday event is about talking and listening to others — and creating art as a way to remember our shared stories. Expect a wide variety of hands-on making and artistic experimenting.

Campbell says the bracelet's five colours are inspired by the colours and teachings of the Métis sash. "Participants will then write or draw on the bracelet what those colours mean to them. This way we can understand the significance of these symbols in how we represent ourselves. During the sharing activity, the participants trade bracelets with each other and share how the meaning behind each bracelet relates to them."

Campbell is of Métis, Cree, Scottish and English ancestry and has been a practising mural painter since 2010. He also mentors youth on the craft of mural painting and understanding the diverse forms of Indigenous art across North America.

The event is included with the price of admission or the purchase of a family membership. Alternatively, visitors can enjoy this event with their Library Family Access Pass, Warm Welcome Pass for Newcomers and/or discounted admission with membership at a partner organization.

Family Sunday is a recurring event that runs 2 to 4 p.m. every third Sunday of the month until June at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, 1040 Moss St. For more information, go to aggv.ca.

Dine Around cooks up a delicious staycation

Celebrate Victoria's vibrant hospitality scene at Dine Around and Stay in Town 2020, easily Victoria's most anticipated foodie event, Friday until Feb. 2 at various restaurants and locales throughout the city.

The two-week festival is an opportunity for visitors and locals alike to sample what's on offer in the city's diverse culinary scene during the industry's shoulder season.

Participating restaurants will offer set-price three-course menus for \$20, \$30, \$40 or \$50 per person.

Local hotels are also offering an array of accommodation at reduced prices to entice those looking to sample a staycation. There are 16 properties to choose from, from budget to luxurious,



There will be appetizers aplenty at tonight's Dine Around Gala at the Victoria Conference Centre, which kicks off Dine Around and Stay in Town 2020. TIMES COLONIST

with rooms for \$109, \$129, \$149, \$169 or \$199.

The festival kicks off tonight with the Dine Around Gala, a launch party where more than 50 of the participating restaurants offer bite-size samples of what diners can expect during the festival.

Along with appetizers, the gala

will feature wine and beer from VQA wineries and B.C.'s finest craft breweries, and lively entertainment.

Tickets for the gala (you have to be 19 or older) are \$65. The event runs 5 to 7:30 p.m. tonight at the Victoria Conference Centre, 720 Douglas St.

The festival's presenting

sponsors are Destination Greater Victoria and the B.C. Restaurant and Food Services Association. The official charity is the B.C. Hospitality Foundation.

Tickets are available online through Ticket Rocket. For more information, go to: tourismvictoria.com/eat-drink/dine-around.

Museum has hibernation on the agenda

Learn all about hibernation at A Sleepy World, this week's topic for Wonder Sunday at the Royal B.C. Museum.

Children will learn why bears enter their dens in October and November to sleep until spring. Bears can hibernate between three and eight months, depending on the climate where they live.

Alejandra Zubiria Perez, a University of Victoria researcher who is studying the movements of grizzlies in the western slopes of central Alberta, will chat about her findings, and about how topography, food distribution, food availability and human activity affect grizzly bears' land-use patterns.

Children will learn how black bears hibernate in tree cavities, under logs or in caves. When natural dens are not available, a bear will dig a den.

The program is included in the price of general admission or membership. The event runs 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday in the Natural History Gallery of the Royal B.C. Museum, 675 Belleville St. For more information, go to royalbcmuseum.bc.ca.