



THE WORLD'S GREENEST CITY

Scenic, futuristic Vancouver

My first impressions of Vancouver were those of an ultra-clean, futuristic city. Where else could you literally eat off the platform of a railway station? I imagined an invisible army of cleaners working non-stop!

Vancouver is a very young city. This year, 2012, it celebrates its 126th anniversary. Just over a century ago, what is now Vancouver was a forest! Granville Street, the busy main street, was a **logging path**¹ cut through the forest.

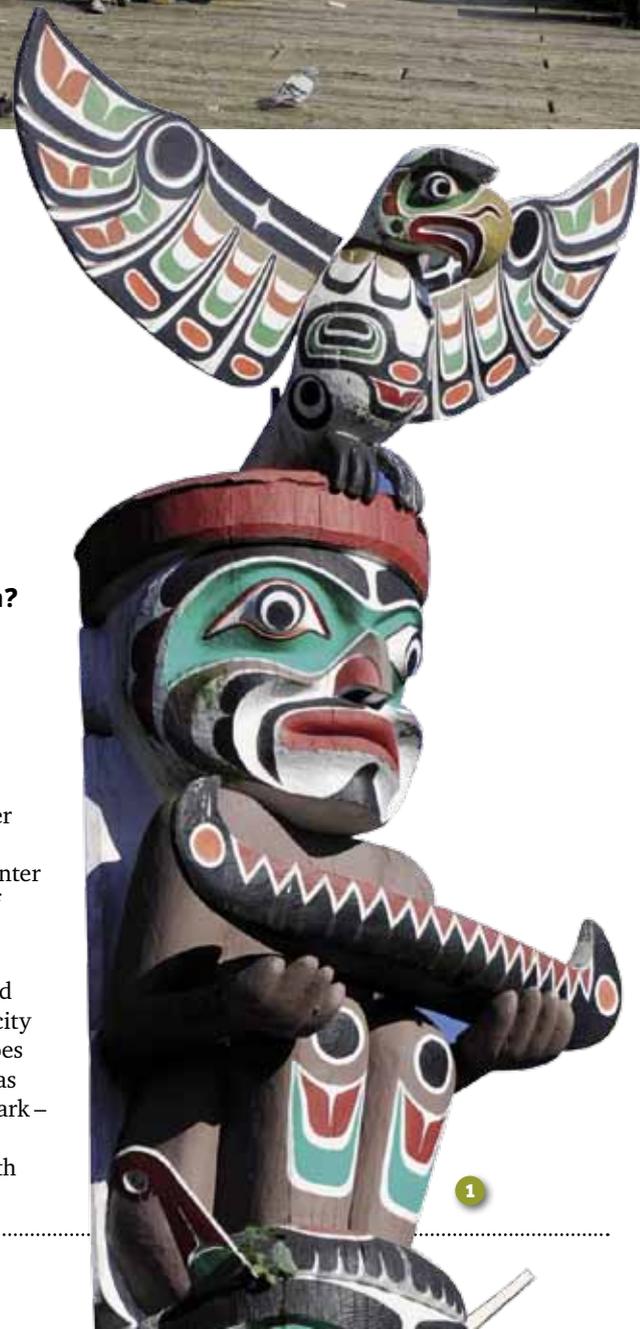
Today, Vancouver is one of the largest Canadian cities, with a population of more than 2 million in the metropolitan area (that is if we count all the **suburbs**²). It is an ethnically **diverse**³ metropolis. The Chinese are the biggest ethnic group, making up almost 30% of the population. English is the first language of only 49% of Vancouver residents.

The city is set in **stunning**⁴ scenery, on the shores of the Pacific Ocean

and surrounded by the North Shore Mountains. This is where you can ski on snowy mountain slopes and swim in the ocean, all in one day! Vancouver has a pleasant climate, with average summer temperatures of 18°C and winter temperatures of 3°C, making it one of Canada's warmest cities.

The city cares a lot for the environment. The mayor promised that "Vancouver will be the greenest city in the world by 2020" and his wish does seem to be coming true. Vancouver has many parks, one of which – Stanley Park – is the largest city park in Canada.

Cycling is actively encouraged, with cycle tracks along the sides of most





2 Stanley Park is an oasis surrounded by **skyscrapers**⁸, home to a variety of wildlife and local tree species. A big part of it is a forest, but there are also several attractive beaches along the shoreline. The park has forest trails, cycling, jogging, walking and roller-skating tracks. You can also see totem poles by Native Americans there.

2 The architecturally impressive central **branch**⁹ of the Vancouver Public Library occupies a whole city block. Its shape **resembles**¹⁰ that of the ancient Colosseum in Rome. The library contains light, airy spaces for reading, internet facilities and bistros.

3 Granville Island is a paradise for artists. Abandoned (no longer used) **warehouses**¹¹ and factories are now colourfully painted and contain **woodcarving**¹², painting and **sculpting**¹³ studios, and arts and **craft stores**¹⁴. Emily Carr University, one of the world's leading art and design universities, is situated there. The photo shows some of the luxury floating homes (boat houses) moored (anchored) at Granville Island.

4 Science World resembles a huge, **glittering**¹⁵ golf ball and features interactive scientific displays and exhibits.

5 The SkyTrain is one of the longest automated (operating without a driver) transport systems in the world. It **hurtles**¹⁶ along at high speed, far above the city streets. It is just like riding on a **roller coaster**¹⁷, especially when you fly around **sharp bends**¹⁸ or race downhill at **dizzying**¹⁹ speeds!

6 The Sea-to-Sky Highway connects Vancouver with Whistler, which hosted important events in the 2010 Winter Olympics. It is a **scenic route**²⁰ with the ocean on one side, rocky cliffs on the other and **snow-capped**²¹ mountains in the distance.



streets. All buses have a special **rack**⁵ to carry bicycles in the front. Bikes are allowed free on city trains, called SkyTrains. The doors of the SkyTrain **are level with the platform**⁶, so you just push your bike into the train without any problem. Of course, all stations have lifts, so you don't have to carry your bike up or down any steps.

Vancouver repeatedly appears on the list of "World's Most **Liveable**⁷ Cities", and with its scenery, active lifestyle and friendly citizens, it is easy to see why.

Pearl Harris (South Africa)

VOCABULARY

¹ **logging path** – dřevařská stezka

² **suburb** ['sʌbɜ:b] – předměstí

³ **diverse** [dai'vɜ:zɪs, 'dai:vɜ:zɪs] – rozmanitý, pestrý

⁴ **stunning** – úchvatný

⁵ **rack** [ræk] – držák

⁶ **are level with the platform** – jsou v jedné úrovni s nástupištěm

⁷ **liveable** ['lɪvəb(ə)l] – příjemný k životu

⁸ **skyscraper** ['skɑ:skreɪpə] – mrakodrap

⁹ **branch** [brɑ:n(t)ʃ] – pobočka

¹⁰ **to resemble** [rɪ'zemb(ə)l] – podobat se

¹¹ **warehouse** ['weəhɑ:ʊs] – skladiště

¹² **woodcarving** – řezbářský

¹³ **sculpting** ['skʌlptɪŋ] – sochařský

¹⁴ **craft stores** [krɑ:ft] – obchody s rukodělnými výrobky

¹⁵ **glittering** ['glɪtərɪŋ] – lesklý, třpytivý

¹⁶ **to hurtle** ['hɜ:t(ə)l] – řířit se

¹⁷ **roller coaster** ['rəʊlə 'kəʊstə] – horská dráha

¹⁸ **sharp bends** – ostré zatáčky

¹⁹ **dizzying** – závratný

²⁰ **scenic route** ['sɪ:nɪk ru:t] – vyhlídková trasa

²¹ **snow-capped** – se zasněženými vrcholky