“Gardens Galore”

Vancouver & Victoria

British Columbia

May 9 – 16, 2011

7 Nights

Monday, May 9: Upon arrival at the Vancouver International Airport you’ll be transferred to the AAA Four Diamond Fairmont Waterfront Hotel. This hotel is on Condé Nast Travelers 2010 Gold List of the World’s Best Places to Stay! Luxury accommodations have been reserved.

Rest and settle in before being whisked away to our Welcome Dinner at the famous Vancouver, BC Skyline Blue Water Café and Raw Bar. Housed in a 100-year-old, brick-and-beam converted warehouse, the restaurant showcases fresh local seafood, sashimi, sushi and Alberta prime steak!

Dinner

Tuesday, May 10: Your private guide is prepared to show you Vancouver – “One of the most picturesque cities in the world.” Stanley Park, English Bay, Queen Elizabeth Park and Chinatown.

Luncheon will be served at Seasons Hill Restaurant in Queen Elizabeth Park, Vancouver’s Horticultural Jewel. While dining, enjoy an array of matchless views from each seat within the restaurant and its ivy wrapped patio. Exceptional Pacific Northwest cuisine.

Queen Elizabeth Park
Private tour and tea and Dr. Sun Yat Sen Gardens. The design of the garden is based on the harmony of the four main elements: rock, water, plant and architecture.

**Breakfast, Lunch**

**Wednesday, May 11:** It’s a gorgeous garden day!! *Nitobe Memorial Gardens* is considered to be the best traditional, authentic Japanese Tea and Stroll Garden in North America and among the top five Japanese gardens outside Japan! A joy to behold!

*University of British Columbia Botanical Gardens* is Canada’s oldest continuously operating botanic garden featuring 70 acres of plants from around the world, surrounded by a beautiful coastal forest setting. Enjoy a 16th century Physic Garden, Alpine Garden, Asian Garden and the garden’s newest attraction – the *Greenheart Canopy Walkway*!

Luncheon served at *Shaughnessy Restaurant* in the tranquility and splendor of the renowned Van Dusen Gardens. The restaurant provides a retreat with casual elegance, soothing ambiance and picturesque garden vistas. The restaurants West Coast menu focuses on fresh ingredients, many of them from the Van Dusen Garden itself.

Your afternoon will be spent on a private tour of the *Van Dusen Botanical Gardens*. This 55-acre Botanical Garden of international stature has a unique design with plants organized to represent the flora of various ecosystems, including the native Pacific Northwest as well as sub-tropical Africa, the Himalayas, Arctic Canada and others.

**Breakfast, Lunch**

**Thursday, May 12:** The spectacular North Shore! Cross the *Lions Gate Bridge* to the North and visit *Capilano Suspension Bridge* and *Treetops Adventure*. Stroll through colourful tree-shaded gardens with traditional totem poles and native displays, and cross the 450-ft. suspension bridge overlooking the magnificent canyon! Grouse Mountain Skyride awaits you – whisking you up to the *Peak of Vancouver: Grouse Mountain*.

Luncheon served at the *Teahouse Restaurant* in Stanley Park. Be prepared for magnificent views and a culinary delight prepared by Executive Chef Francois Gagnon!
After luncheon – *Granville Island!*
Wander and wonder at the public market lined with many colorful stalls packed with fresh fruit, vegetables, and specialty vendors. Explore the many art galleries, and handicrafts shops. Observe the unsurpassed views and endless line of picturesque kayaks, fishing boats and yachts of all sizes.

**Granville Island**

*Breakfast, Lunch*

**Friday, May 13:** Start your journey to Victoria – British Columbia’s capital city – with a scenic ferry ride through the spectacular Gulf Islands to the southern most tip of Vancouver Island. Watch for wildlife – whales, seals and various seabirds – in the Straight of Georgia!

**Butchart Gardens**

*Butchart Gardens* is our first stop! Dine at the original Butchart family residence; then enjoy a leisurely afternoon strolling through the Sunken Garden, which features the magnificent Ross Fountain, English Rose Garden, Japanese Garden, Italian Garden and fantastic Show Greenhouse!!
Your hotel is the landmark AAA Four Diamond Fairmont Empress located in the heart of downtown Victoria, overlooking the Inner Harbour and just steps away from the Parliament Buildings. Don’t miss a visit to the Royal BC Museum next door!! Luxury accommodations have been reserved.

**Fairmont Empress Hotel**

**Breakfast, Lunch**

**Saturday, May 14:** Today you will be visiting some of Victoria’s most beautiful and private gardens.

*The Uplands* is one of the earliest planned communities in British Columbia. It was originally built to house the well-heeled gentry. You will be viewing a hidden half-acre urban garden. The gardener is a true artist who utilizes a broad pallet of exotic and unusual plants that she has combined in her own imaginative way.

*Four Seasons Garden:* A half-acre urban garden created by a dynamic lady who is an active member of Victoria’s gardening community. Her garden has placed first in a national competition for best year-round garden design.

*Heritage Gardens:* Plantings inspired by the Dutch landscape designer Piet Oudolf surround a 1920’s patio. The garden offers wonderful mixed borders incorporating new plant introductions, including some from New Zealand and Australia.
Luncheon served at the award-winning *Marina Restaurant*. Take pleasure in the tastes of the West Coast in a spectacular waterfront setting. Sweeping views of Mt. Baker and the Straits of Juan de Fuca.

**Breakfast, Lunch**

**Sunday, May 15:** *Hatley Castle and Gardens* have a long history. The Castle and Grounds are now a designated *National Historic Site*.

The grounds feature hundreds of heritage trees significant for their size, rarity and diversity, including 250-year-old Douglas firs. The showpieces of the park are generally considered to be the formal gardens, of which the Italian, the Rose and the Japanese Gardens are the best known.

*Hatley Castle*

High Tea at the Fairmont Empress Hotel! Assorted sandwiches, homemade scones with jam and jersey cream, a variety of pastries, seasonal berries, and of course, Empress Blend Tea!

Afternoon at leisure.

Farewell to all at the *Restaurant Matisse*, Victoria! Winners of Restaurateurs of the Year, Critics Choice Award and Best French Menu, this cozy restaurant is an absolute favorite among Victorians who love traditional French cuisine. John Phillips and his gracious staff present elegant dishes that marry French classics with local ingredients. Indulge your senses with one of Victoria’s premiere dining experiences!

**Breakfast, Tea, Dinner**

**Monday, May 16:** Transfers will be provided to the Victoria Airport for all those flying out within one hour of each other.

**Breakfast**

*Join Us!*