



VANCOUVER BIENNALE SELF GUIDED TOUR

ENGLISH BAY BEACHES



Start:	Beach Avenue (at the edge of Stanley Park)
Finish:	Kitsilano Beach
Duration:	~4 km/2.5 miles
Extension Option:	Point Grey Road to Jericho Beach Granville Island
Time:	½ day, full-day with extension option

This self-guided walking tour takes you through the most popular sunbathing, swimming, and sunset-watching beach in the downtown Vancouver area. The tour starts from Beach Avenue at the edge of Stanley Park and takes you to Kitsilano Beach on the south shore of English Bay. While you marvel at the beauty of nature, you will enjoy the public artwork from the City of Vancouver and Vancouver Biennale (2009-2011) along the beachfront.

This tour guide has been prepared by the Vancouver Biennale, a non-profit organization that mounts biennial exhibitions of international contemporary art in public spaces including parks, beaches and urban plazas, turning the city into an open-air museum. Each exhibition includes a diverse mix of world renowned artists and rising super stars in sculpture, new media and performance works. The Vancouver Biennale is committed to leaving a legacy of public art in the city, as well as creating educational materials, professional symposiums, public lectures and publications.

To LEARN MORE visit the Vancouver Biennale website at www.vancouverbiennale.com

#1 Beach Avenue (at the west entrance into Stanley Park)



The “Walking Figures” is a legacy piece from the 2005-2007 Vancouver Biennale originally placed in Queen Elizabeth Park. Installation at this site is pending.



Walking Figures (Vancouver Biennale) Magdalena Abakanowicz (Poland), Cast iron



1

THESE 18 ENORMOUS, HEADLESS CAST IRON FIGURES appear to be walking aimlessly without the guidance of reason or sight. The figures were identically cast, but later given subtle individual identities through various surface treatments. The sombre tone and sheer weight of the figures make reference to both time and loss. Walking Figures is part of a group of 106 figures cast simultaneously in her studio in Poland; another set comprised of 106 figures, titled “Agora” is on permanent installation in Chicago’s Grant Park. This monumental sculpture is a Legacy piece from the 2005-2007 Vancouver Biennale.



...continue walking along Beach Avenue, at the corner of Denman and Beach Avenue, the Morton Triangle...



A-maze-ing Laughter (Vancouver Biennale) Yue Minjun (China), Patinated bronze



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IN “A-MAZE-ING LAUGHTER” Beijing-based artist Yue Minjun depicts his own iconic laughing image, with gaping grins and closed eyes in a state of hysterical laughter. These laughing figures are the signature trademark of the artist. We see, but do not hear the laughter. The scale is “un-naturally” large, exaggerated and excessive like the laughter. Yue Minjun was a leading figure in what became to be known in the 1990’s as Cynical Realism, an artistic movement that emerged in China after the 1989 student demonstrations in Tiananmen and the suppression of artistic expression. Humor, cynicism, repetition and an emphasis on the individual are common characteristics of this artistic movement.



For refreshment you will find many small ethnic eateries and coffee shops along Denman Street and at the corner of Denman and Beach Avenue.



Raincity Grill

RAINCITY GRILL was one of the first restaurants in the city to take advantage of local ingredients and produce and in doing so helped define Pacific Northwest cuisine. The menu focuses on seafood, game, poultry, and organic vegetables from British Columbia, Alberta, Washington State and Oregon.

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...as you continue your walk along Beach Avenue, at the foot of Bidwell, along the shoreline walk...



Inukshuk (City of Vancouver)
Alvin Kanank (Canada), Granite boulders

BUILT OF STACKED GRANITE BLOCKS IN A HUMAN FORM, Inukshuks are symbols of welcome in the arctic north. It is built of gigantic rocks and stands 6 meters high. The welcoming figure was made on the Inuit model for the Northwest Territories pavilion at Expo 86. The figure was sited at English Bay after the fair. The stones were brought in from a quarry in the Fraser Valley and then shaped and stacked by crane and pinned together with rebar. Inukshuks in the north are usually much smaller and the rocks are balanced on each other. They act as sign posts or distance markers that can be seen on the flat horizon. Artist Kanak said, "By a lake an Inukshuk means lots of fish." (Source: Public Art Registry, City of Vancouver)

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...at Sunset Beach Park, off Beach Avenue between Broughton and Jervis...

#2 Sunset Beach Park



Engagement (Vancouver Biennale)
Dennis Oppenheim (USA), Painted aluminum, steel, glass



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THE DIAMOND RING, reflective of romantic unions and celebrating commitment and tradition, is re-conceptualized here in this monumental sculpture. One of the most influential, innovative and respected artists working today, Oppenheim seeks to incite thought and engage dialogue via exaggeration and overstatement.

“Engagement” rises nearly 30 feet. Sitting on top of the rings where the diamonds would be traditionally, there are two translucent houses of plexiglass and aluminum, illuminated and precariously tilted away from each other. Oppenheim often declines to interpret or explain his work, leaving the interpretation to the viewer. The work was subsequently acquired by the Vancouver Biennale Legacy Foundation in 2007 as a gift to the citizens of Vancouver. View the artwork illuminated at night!



...at the foot of Broughton Street...



AIDS Memorial (City of Vancouver)
Bruce Wilson(Canada), Corten Steel



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THIS RIBBON OF STEEL composed of 20 steel panels anchored to concrete piers and is engraved with the names of nearly 800 people from BC who have died of AIDS. The panels have a natural rust-oxidized finish. It winds down the slope from the parking lot at Sunset Beach towards English Bay. “Though situated in a hub of life and activity, this unique setting provides a sanctuary of quiet reflection. Set in a treed bowl, the graceful lines of the memorial are designed to complement the rustic, tranquil beauty of the grassy, landscaped hillside... this British Columbia landmark of hope and courage is dedicated to the memory of those lost to HIV/AIDS, to the caregivers who eased their passing, and to those who live with the presence of their absence.” (Source: Public Art Registry, City of Vancouver)



...continue your walk down to the Sunset Beach at the bottom of Jervis ...



217.5 Arcs x 13 (Vancouver Biennale) Bernar Venet (France) Corten Steel



7

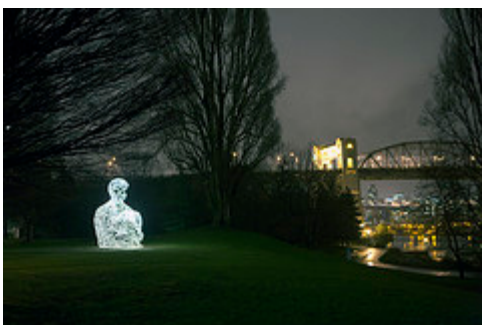
VENET ILLUSTRATES the beauty, balance and plasticity of raw steel in his artistically mathematical manipulations of this industrial material. Nature, the universe, and life are all interconnected and explainable mathematically according to Venet. Venet's massive work "217.5 Arc X 13" is part of his "arc" series, sculptures all made of corten steel beams. In this work all beams are curved to the same degree and nested, balanced, and rest securely on the bow of the arc. The repeated thirteen resting curves give the piece a rhythmic feel that suggests movement. The raw, unpainted surfaces retain the natural color of the CORTEN steel- a rich red-brown rust color reflecting the materials interaction with natural elements, an "authentic" surface that Venet insists on. This sculpture was acquired by the Vancouver Biennale Legacy Foundation in 2007.



...two more blocks on Beach Avenue at Thurlow ...



We, 2008 (Vancouver Biennale) Jaume Plensa (Spain) Aluminum



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THIS IS ONE OF THE FEATURE INSTALLATIONS in the 2009-2011 Vancouver Biennale. A work that celebrates the linguistic diversity of the human race by putting multiple alphabets together on a single human form. Sitting proudly, without a face, the larger-than life figure is made up of characters from eight alphabets, Latin, Greek, Russian Cyrillic, Hebrew, Hindi, Japanese, Arabic and Chinese. Characters make up the skin of the body form and open for interpretation by a global and multi-lingual Vancouver audience. The 16 foot, painted stainless steel sculpture, draws us away from the daily distractions of a constantly bustling city and helps us appreciate the beauty of linguistic diversity. Plensa, who works both in Barcelona and Paris, is a widely acclaimed artist who has received numerous national and international awards and has exhibited in public museums globally. The sculpture is lit from below at night, check out the night view.



As you walk along Beach Avenue, you can see the stunning stainless sculpture looking like wings of a big bird across the Bay on the south shore. To take a closer look and explore more works on the south shore, you can walk across the Burrard Bridge and right on Chestnut Street or take the False Creek Ferries from the Aquatic Centre to Vanier Park.

#3 Vanier Park



Stop (Vancouver Biennale)
Michael Zhang (USA - China) Aluminum, steel, paint



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"STOP" explores the possibility of subverting the power of signs through placement, dislocation and design. By positioning the STOP sign, a common sign that we unconsciously and collectively obey, out of its expected location and away from automotive traffic, Zheng asks us to reconsider the power of the original sign and to explore new possibilities for its interpretation. The artist intentionally used pink on one side to "lighten" and make the signs less authoritarian. Zheng hopes that the experience of coming upon this work in the park setting will be somehow warm and disarming so as to invoke curiosity in visitors and to cause them to actually slow down and stop to ponder, making the site The Stop.



Gate to the Northeast Passage (City of Vancouver)
Alan Chung Hung (Chinese Canadian), Corten Steel



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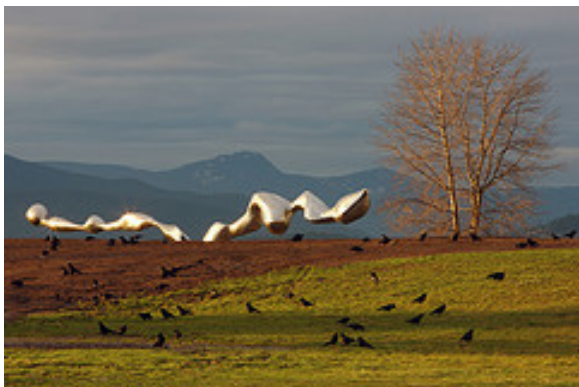
THIS LARGE STEEL SCULPTURE is set on a 26' x 28' plaza of paving stones. The sculpture consists of a 15' square of corten steel. Each side of the square is 15' long by 3' high by 3' wide. The bottom side appears to be cut apart in the middle and the two parts wrenched apart to form a gate or arch. The corten steel enables the surface rust to form a protective coating. The artist said, "The objective of the sculpture is to create a symbolic image with definite visual expression, awakening awareness in Captain George Vancouver's contribution to the world, his remarkable and meticulous surveys which included the north Pacific coast." The piece frames English Bay from the north view and the Centennial Museum from the south view. (Source: Public Art Registry, City of Vancouver).



As you cross the grass from one side to the other, the sculpture presents a variety of framed views of the mountains.



Freezing Water #7 (Vancouver Biennale) Jun Ren (China) Stainless steel



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JUN REN DRAWS HIS INSPIRATION FROM PURE FORMS, liquid water or mercury stopped in motion to reveal its shape as a drop or spill caught in the air. Weighing 7 tons and 30 meter/98 feet wide with no hard edges, the form appears light and fluid. Ren represents the energy and opportunity of the 'New China', he has become a respected sculptor of monumental and historical sculpture with works spanning cities throughout China. His older work embodies a spirit of heroism that reflects the political, economic, cultural and historical characteristics and contradictions that flow through this time of great transition in Chinese society.



If you are interested in space exploration and planetary system, the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre is worth a visit here in Vanier Park. Learn about Space and the night sky through the Planetarium shows, live demonstrations, and interactive exhibit gallery. Next to the Space Centre is the Gordon MacMillan Southam Observatory, which allows star gazers to look through a 1/2 metre Cassegrain telescope on clear weekend nights.

From Vanier Park, you get a great view of the North Shore Mountains and the north shore of English Bay. Drop in at the Vancouver Maritime Museum at 1905 Ogden Avenue to learn more about maritime history, industry and technology of Canada. Then continue your walk westbound along Ogden Avenue which connects into Maple Street then turn right onto McNicoll which becomes Arbutus Street. Alternatively just walk westbound along the walking path and you will enter Hadden Park.

#4 Kitsilano Beach Park



The Boathouse Restaurant



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THE BOATHOUSE RESTAURANT'S spectacular beachfront location offers panoramic vistas of English Bay and beyond to the Gulf Islands and North Shore mountains. An enclosed heated patio offers best view of sunset or storm watching.



Echoes (City of Vancouver)
Michel Goulet (Canada) Stainless steel

THE STAINLESS STEEL CHAIR FORMS installed here are casual, akin to kitchen or café chairs. The work titled Echoes, has an inscription on each seat in French or English text with simple, thoughtful phrases, such as “minor dreams weaved tight”, or “HE ARRIVED EARLY I ARRIVED LATE so we met” and “pousser un cri plus lion dans la gorge” which translates to “a push to cry plus a lion in the throat”. These phrases reflect aphorisms of everyday emotions and dream-like thoughts that anyone can relate to. The chairs are playful and interactive, with pieces of text that create an environment that invites interaction and fosters contemplation. Its placement at Kitsilano Beach along the walkway will provide a place of respite for passerby’s. Echoes was acquired by the Vancouver Biennale Legacy Foundation in 2007 and donated to the City of Vancouver



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Wind Swimmer (City of Vancouver)
Doug Taylor (Canada), Wood, steel, aluminum, lead



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THIS WIND SCULPTURE is a woman in a bathing suit who has articulated limbs that allow her to swim through the air. The speed of her movements is controlled by a propeller and the local wind currents at Kitsilano beach. Wind Swimmer was inspired by the artist’s meeting with an older man who swam regularly off Stanley Park. Taylor decided to build him a mate to swim along with him. The mechanism is specially engineered so that at winds of more than 55mph it turns sideways and slows down. (Guddrun Will, Vancouver Courier, May 19, 1996). (Source: Public Art Registry, City of Vancouver)

Extension

Option 1: (Westbound) Point Grey Road to Jericho Beach

Continue along Cornwall Avenue until it turns into Point Grey Road where real estate is in high demand. Houses on narrow frontages command premium prices due to their unobstructed spectacular views of the North Shore.

From Kitsilano Beach, if you walk for another 2.2 km you can then turn right on Alma Street and head along Cameron Avenue. Soon you will come to steep stairs that lead down to the Point Grey foreshore. Marvel at the bluff-clinging houses as you stroll along the beach. If the tide is out you can wend your way through the logs and rocks. (Source: Tourism Vancouver Walkabouts)

Option 2: (Eastbound) Granville Island

You can take Bus 022 (Knight Service) on Cornwall Avenue cross Vine Street to Granville Island or it will be a 2.1 km or 1.4 miles walk.

Granville Island was once an industrial manufacturing area and is now a major tourist destination. Granville Island is known for its public markets, restaurants, fresh bakeries and unique craft stores - you can easily spend an entire day there. Its community of craft studios, includes a Glassblowing studio, the B.C. Potter's Guild Gallery, The Craffthouse Gallery, The Circle Craft shop, art galleries, boat builders, a Wood Co-op Shop, Woodworkers studios and many more. Check out all the wonderful foods and fares of the market, navigate your way through the narrow roads and lanes, go through book stores, visit the art exhibits, the Kids Only Market. Other amenities include a large marina, a hotel, the Emily Carr University of Art and Design and its Charles H. Scott Gallery, Arts Umbrella (provides children visual and performing arts education) , the Arts Club Theatre Company and Carousel Theatre.

IMAGE CREDITS:

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