



## British Columbia Community Profile...

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# Comox

### Overview

Nestled peacefully between the Beaufort Mountains and the Strait of Georgia is the quiet oceanfront town of Comox. Located on the central east coast of Vancouver Island, it is in an area comprised of a number of small communities, farms and forests. Comox, with its short, mild winters and warm dry summers, is one of the most diverse recreational and cultural locations in the world. Known for its abundant wildlife, it is a place where you can ski, golf, fish, and go to the theatre, all in the same day. Comox offers all of the amenities of a larger city with the charm of a small town setting. Industries in the area include public service, construction, tourism, forestry, mining and agriculture.

### Accessibility

The Comox Valley is accessible by highway, bus, rail, and air service. Regular flights can be accessed through the local Comox Valley Regional Airport, which is served by three major airlines. The nearest major centre is Nanaimo, 107 km (approx. 75 minutes) to the south. Victoria, the provincial capital, is 220 km (2 ¾ hours) to the south by road. Frequent ferry service to the British Columbia mainland is offered through both Nanaimo and Victoria.

### History

The Port of Comox was founded in the mid 1800s on the slopes of the Comox Peninsula. Overlooking the protected waters of Comox Harbour (once known as Port Augusta), it was an important refuge for the ships of the Royal Navy and transport steamers.

The name Comox is derived from the Kwakwaka'wakw Indian word Komuckway, meaning “place of plenty”, a reference to the abundant game and berries in the Comox Valley. European settlers adapted the name to Komoux, then finally to Comox.





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### Economy

The Comox Valley, including the City of Courtenay, the Town of Comox and the Village of Cumberland, is known for its ability to weather economic downturns. The service sector provides the majority of employment here including the retail industry, a large public service component anchored by CFB (Canadian Forces Base) Comox, construction and a growing hospitality and tourism industry featuring skiing in the winter and golf and fishing year round. The primary industries of forestry, fishing, mining and agriculture also play a role in the economy.

### Population Profile

Comox has a population of 12,136. It is part of a total area population of approximately 58,000 people.

### Climate

Comox enjoys short, mild winters and warm, dry summers. Weather systems that bring heavier rainfall and storms generally pass over enroute to British Columbia's mainland. The average summer temperature ranges from 12.3 to 22.5 degrees Celsius, while the average winter temperature ranges from -0.3 to 5.2 degrees. Comox receives an average of 1100 mm of rain and 74 cm of snow each year.

### Housing

The average cost of a single-family home in Comox is \$280,000. A two-bedroom apartment rents for approximately \$700 per month.

### Education/Daycare

There are 10 elementary, 4 middle, and 3 high schools in the Courtenay/Comox area. Some daycare services are available for young children. Post secondary education is available at the Comox Valley campus of the North Island College located in Courtenay. The Comox Valley campus offers a wide range of programs including diploma programs in fine arts; business administration and computer science; a nursing program; university studies courses and developmental programs.



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### Recreation

The Comox Valley offers residents a wide variety of recreation facilities, including recreation centres, school gyms, playing fields, water ways (ocean, river, and lakes), a ski mountain, 7 golf courses, tennis courts, biking trails, walkways, two swimming pools (one indoor/one outdoor) and an aquatic centre. The community also offers numerous organized recreation programs.

Surrounded by a beautiful valley, and the largest glacier on Vancouver Island, Comox offers residents a host of outdoor recreational opportunities, including fishing, golfing, boating, scuba diving, rock climbing, kayaking, and mountain biking. Mount Washington Ski Resort, the second busiest winter-recreation destination in British Columbia, is an easy drive from Comox Valley.

Each year Comox is home to the Nautical Days Festival, a celebration of the community's affiliation with the sea.

### Culture

This Comox Valley area is well-known known for its artistic community, boasting the highest per-capita concentration of artists in Canada - over 550 artists and crafts-people make their home here. Their products include native crafts, pottery, stained glass, fine arts, and woven materials. There are four theatres in the area, which is also home to a number of performance artists and musicians.

The Filberg Festival, held in August, features the best of British Columbia arts and crafts.

### Services & Amenities

Comox has recently undertaken a downtown beautification project with a view to attracting tourists. Services and amenities include grocery stores, banks, clothing stores, pharmacies, hardware stores, restaurants, a library, a local transit system and postal services. Fish and seafood can be purchased directly from local fishermen at the Comox Harbour Marina. Residents also have easy access to the services and amenities of nearby Courtenay, which is known as the urban centre of the Comox Valley. High speed Internet service is available here.

Places of worship in the Comox area serve the Alliance, Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Christian Reformed, Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Congregational, Episcopal, Evangelical, Gospel, Lutheran, Mennonite, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Seventh Day Adventist, Unitarian, United, and Unity faiths.



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### Health Authority

Comox is located within the North Island Health Region of the Vancouver Island Health Authority. Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) provides healthcare services that include acute care facilities, mental health & addictions, environmental and public health, home, and community care. For comprehensive information on Vancouver Island Health Authority, visit their website (see Internet References below).

### Internet References

*BritishColumbia.com*

<http://www.britishcolumbia.com/regions>

*Town of Comox*

<http://comox.ca>

*Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce*

<http://www.comoxvalleychamber.com>

*Vancouver Island Health*

<http://www.viha.ca>

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