



## British Columbia Community Profile...

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# Qualicum Beach

### Overview

Steeped in quaint British heritage and famous for its local arts, crafts and beautiful English gardens, modern day Qualicum Beach on the eastern shores of Vancouver Island, offers residents and visitors alike a gentle countryside and seemingly endless, sandy beaches. Six provincial parks are located within a thirty-minute drive from the town. The original Coast Salish settlers of this area knew it as “where the dog salmon run” - a wonderful place to fish, pick berries and dig for clams. Today the Qualicum Beach economy is founded upon the agricultural, primary, manufacturing, and service and tourism industries.

### Accessibility

Qualicum Beach is accessible by highway and regular bus and rail service. The local airport offers regularly scheduled flights to Vancouver and other locations on Vancouver Island. The nearest major centre is Nanaimo, 30 km (approx. 40 minutes) south by road. Victoria, the provincial capital, is 150 km south (2 ½ hours) by road. Regular ferry service to the British Columbia mainland is available through Nanaimo and Victoria.

### History

Vancouver Island’s southeastern coast has been inhabited by the Coast Salish First Nations people for thousands of years. The Coast Salish had villages and settlements extending from Victoria to Campbell River when Captain George Vancouver explored the area’s coast in 1792. The first European settlement of Qualicum Beach began in 1906, when a railway official, Mr. H.E. Beasley, passed through the area. He was so enamored with the location he sponsored a land development company, “The Merchants Trust and Trading Company”, which built golf links and a hotel in 1913.

The 1914 War siphoned off many settlers and the hotel, after opening in 1913, became a soldiers’ convalescent hospital for amputees. It re-opened as a hotel in 1920. After the war, the town site continued to prosper and other hotels were built. Several lumber mills were a source of local employment and provided building materials.



YUKON

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

ALASKA, USA

ALBERTA

WASHINGTON, USA





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### Economy

The economy of Qualicum Beach is comprised of the agriculture, primary, manufacturing and service sectors with the latter accounting for the majority of employment. Tourism plays an important role in the economy of the area.

### Population Profile

Qualicum Beach is a relatively older community with a population of 8,502 and a median age of 58.1, compared to 38.4 for the province as a whole.

### Climate

Located on the sheltered eastern shores of Vancouver Island, Qualicum Beach enjoys a temperate climate due to its sea-level elevation and protected location. Summer temperatures average around 22 degrees Celsius and winter temperatures around 4 degrees. Snow is uncommon. Qualicum and the neighbouring community of Parksville receive among the lowest average annual rainfall levels on Vancouver Island (95 cm).

### Housing

The average cost of a single-family home in Qualicum Beach is \$320,000. A two-bedroom apartment rents for between \$800- \$1200 per month.

### Education/Daycare

There are 2 elementary (Kindergarten - Grade 5), a middle (Grades 6 – 8), and a secondary school (Grades 9 – 12) in the Qualicum Beach area as well as daycare services for young children. In addition, there is also a private school as well as a local campus of Malaspina University College which specializes in career and academic planning, community education and offers an Eldercollege program, boasting over 600 members.



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### Recreation

Qualicum Beach offers residents a wide array of recreational facilities including an ice arena, a community centre, a salt-water indoor swimming pool, soccer fields, baseball fields, curling rinks, tennis courts, and fitness gyms. No less than 6 world-class golf courses and provincial parks are located in the Qualicum Bay area and the pleasant, sunny, climate means enjoyment continues year round. Less than a two-hour drive away, Mount Washington is a magnet for skiers and snowboarders in winter and for summer visitors who love its spectacular ocean to alpine views

Within the Qualicum Beach area are many opportunities to enjoy some of the world's most spectacular forest and marine environments. Outdoor enthusiasts will appreciate easy access to hiking trails, rivers, and swimming areas. Popular activities include swimming, beachcombing, fresh and saltwater fishing, bird watching, golfing, horseback riding, boating, hiking, scuba diving, and camping. Qualicum Beach is known for its spectacular gardens and passionate gardeners and is the proud winner of a "Communities in Bloom" award.

In addition, a wide variety of service and special interest groups are active in the community. Special events and festivals include Fire and Ice featuring chile cook-offs and ice carving, Art in Action and the Brant Wildlife Festival.

### Culture

Qualicum Beach has an active arts community. The Old School House Gallery and Art Centre exhibits works of potters, weavers, painters and other local artists as well as holding frequent workshops, classes, and concerts. Live theatre and concerts are presented at the Village Theatre, home of Qualicum Beach's ECHO players, celebrating over 26 years of local theatre.

### Services & Amenities

Steeped in quaint British heritage and famous for its local arts, crafts and beautiful English gardens, Qualicum Beach boasts a pedestrian-friendly downtown shopping area. Services and amenities include grocery stores, banks, clothing stores, specialty shops, pharmacies, hardware stores, restaurants and tearooms, a library, a movie theatre, a local transit system and postal services. High speed Internet service is available here.



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### Services & Amenities Continued...

Places of worship in Qualicum Beach serve the Catholic, Christian Fellowship, Baptist, Christ Scientist, Full Gospel, Jehovah's Witness, Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Anglican, Untied, Seventh Day Adventist, and the Worldwide Church of God faiths.

### Health Authority

Qualicum Beach is located within the Central 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 Qualicum Beach*

<http://www.qualicumbeach.com>

*Qualicum Beach Chamber of Commerce*

<http://www.qualicum.bc.ca>

*Statistics Canada (Community Demographic Information)*

<http://www.statcan.ca/>

*Vancouver Island Health*

<http://www.viha.ca>

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