

Westworld

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FALL 2008

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weekenders



PENDER HARBOUR

the getaway

Vancouverites could think of it as the 30-40-60 escape: 30 minutes to drive from downtown to Horseshoe Bay, 40 minutes to ferry over to Langdale and 60 minutes to motor north to the Lower Sunshine Coast's Pender Harbour.

A labyrinth of bays, coves, islets and lakes, this sheltered harbour and its Madeira Park, Garden Bay and Irvine's Landing communities has for decades drawn both vacationers and retirees. Long before it became "Venice of the North," however, the local Sechelt Nation celebrated winter potlatches here, Spanish and English explorers left place names such as Malaspina and Pender and turn-of-the-century settlers launched the fishing, logging and farming mainstays that have given way to today's tourism and artisan ventures. But it's the area's longtime water-access-only status that has been the predominant force in shaping the development that rims this harbour, where crumbling wooden boardwalks, decaying fishing-net sheds and weather-worn cottages now share the waterfront with post-and-beam glass-walled vacation homes.

the hideaway

Dominated by massive Douglas fir and red cedar, this prime waterfront acreage once sported Lowe's Resort, a bare-bones fishing retreat popular for family getaways between 1952 and 2005. But as of July 2008, the Painted Boat Resort Spa & Marina and its 31

two-bedroom waterfront villas is the new kid on the rock, with airy suites featuring a patio or deck and an earth-tone palette. The resort scores green points for low-flow toilets, rain gardens, low-voltage outdoor lighting and a restaurant with a perfect-place-to-watch-the-sunset patio and menu that tends to regional fare (to wit: Qualicum Beach scallops with edamame shallot beurre blanc). Toss in the resort's spa (opening in May 2009), fitness centre, infinity pool/hot tub and 60-slip deep-water marina, and Pender Harbour's predominantly mom-and-pop B&B and cottage scene will never be the same. From \$250 per night. ☐

📞 1-866-902-3955; crrm.com/painted-boat.php

the inside track

Less knots, more view: Captain Paul's Slo Cat, for an insightful cruise into corrugated bays past historic buildings, accompanied by seals and eagles (604-741-3796; slocat.ca). **Hepcats and wharf rats:**

12th Annual Pender Harbour Jazz Festival, September 19 to 21 (phjazz.ca). **The**

Pender ascender: 1.5 hours up – that would be straight up – the Mount Daniel

Hiking Trail (the Sechelt First Nation once used its summit as a lookout for spotting incoming war parties). **Art à la**

carte: Copper Sky Gallery & Café, for

homestyle meals and works by B.C. artists. **Yum on**

the run: Java Docks' cinnamon buns and gelato; Triple-B's Buda-Bing Burgers (and fabulous fries).

Forged but not fake: The Flying Anvil Studio's whimsical but functional metal art. **Patio central:**

Laid-back Garden Bay Pub, with harbour views, live music and occasional sightings of local celebs Joni

Mitchell and Terry Jacks. ☐ –Sheila Hansen

