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WEEKEND GETAWAY FROM VANCOUVER: HARRISON HOT SPRINGS

November 16, 2016 by Lori Henry [Leave a Comment](#)

Harrison Hot Springs is a resort village on the south edge of Harrison Lake in [British Columbia](#), Canada. A 90-minute drive east of [Vancouver](#), it's a popular weekend vacation spot.

Known as a place for romantic getaways due to its natural hot springs, village atmosphere and resort town vibe, Harrison is more than spas and holding hands along the lakeside paths. Although it's that, too.

For me it's a cozy and accessible gateway to the wilderness. And visiting in the off-season means you have the place mostly to yourself.

WHAT TO DO IN HARRISON HOT SPRINGS

In the summer months, Harrison Hot Springs is a playground for water sports, fishing, hiking and swimming enthusiasts, as well as a base for local farm tours. Year round, you can access natural hot springs in the public pool, or stay at the Harrison Hot Springs Resort & Spa for access to their [private indoor and outdoor pools](#).



Hiking near Harrison Hot Springs: Deer Lake Trail in Sasquatch Provincial Park.

On a recent visit, my partner and I spent most of our time in the forest, hiking and exploring backroads. Short walks around Harrison Lake are also lovely, including the Sandy Cove trail past Whippoorwill Point.

For a more intense hike, try the Campbell Lake Trail (10 km – Harrison’s answer to Vancouver’s steep Grouse Grind) or the intense Bear Mountain Trail: there’s an option to stop at a lake 6 km in or continue on to Bear Mountain Summit, another 4 km up.

I also recommend driving north to Sasquatch Provincial Park, where you’ll find easy trails at Deer and Hicks lakes. For the more adventurous, drive the forest service roads along the east and west shores of the lake to explore unpublicized trails (watch out for logging trucks).

RESTAURANTS IN HARRISON HOT SPRINGS

There are many eateries along the main street of Harrison Hot Springs, but only two that regularly source their ingredients from nearby farms.

MUDDY WATERS CAFE

*Restaurants in Harrison Hot Springs: Muddy Waters Café.
The owner, Richard (right), and employee, Leanne.*

This daytime eatery (open in the evenings during the summer) has an evolving menu of dishes sourced from the local valley. Of note are the various homemade burgers including the black bean garden patty, steelhead and crab claw, grass-fed elk, and ground rib steak burger.



Muddy Waters has three acres of farmland where they grow some of their produce and use another farm to raise black angus cows for their beef dishes. The atmosphere is small town friendly, without being sleepy. (328 Esplanade Avenue)

MORGAN’S BISTRO

For fresh local ingredients and a farm-to-table menu, Morgan’s Bistro is my dinnertime favourite. Dishes like the Mediterranean Cioppino (wild prawns, Salt Spring Island mussels and Icelandic cod in fire roasted tomato broth) and the Hand-Made Meatballs (made with Angus beef tenderloin and Johnston’s natural pork served in oven roasted tomato sauce and finished with Grana Podano cheese) are standouts.

We met the co-owner, Stewart Pritchard, who gave us an example of how connected the restaurant is to its suppliers: he had spent a season with Kettle Valley Winery in the Okanagan picking the grapes for the 2013 bottle of pinot noir we were drinking. (160 Esplanade Avenue)

HARRISON HOT SPRINGS HOTELS

The Harrison Beach Hotel overlooks Harrison Lake from the main village road, so the location is excellent. It has clean, spacious rooms and suites: the lake view rooms (some with large patios) are highly recommended.

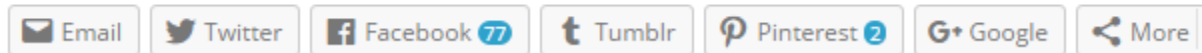
The interior of a cottage at Rowena's Inn on the River in Harrison Mills, BC. Photo by [John Zada](#).

If you're interested in staying outside of town, drive 20 minutes west to Harrison Mills. There's a lovely property with cottages overlooking the Harrison River called Rowena's Inn on the River. While there are rooms in the English-style manor, it's the cottages that I fell for. They have wood burning fireplaces (with ready-chopped wood), deep soaker jacuzzi tubs and views of the river and out onto the 160-acre estate and golf course.



Every November this part of the river is thrust into action as the Fraser Valley Bald Eagle Festival takes place. Rowena's has installed a live eagle cam for enthusiasts.

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