



## Captain Vancouver

FOR 10,000 YEARS the land belonged to the First Nations people.

In 1791 Don José María Narváez, commander of the small Spanish sailing vessel *Santa Saturnina*, was the first European to ever sail a vessel on Burrard Inlet waters. The Squamish First Nation at Elyamu (Jericho) were astounded to see a strange apparition with “three dead trees” on it, and elderly sages concluded that it was an island that had broken free from its fastenings beneath the sea. The younger braves from the village watched and saw men on board with pallid, almost white, faces. The village elders believed that the dead were coming back. Narváez was an explorer, and his rough maps were perfectly intelligible to a seaman.

A year later Captain Vancouver, after whom the city was named, arrived on the west coast in His Majesty’s Ship *Discovery* and began exploring Burrard Inlet. Here’s what the British Navy Captain Vancouver wrote in his journal:

On a nearer approach it was discovered that they were a brig and a schooner, wearing the colours of Spanish vessels of war ... these vessels proved to be the brig *Sutil*, under command of Señor Don D. Galiano, with the schooner *Mexicana*, commanded by Señor Don C. Valdés. Señor Galiano, who spoke a little English, informed me that they had sailed from Nootka on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June to complete an examination of the Gulf of Georgia, which had, in the preceding year 1791, been surveyed by some Spanish naval officers whose chart they produced.

On 13 June 1791 Captain Vancouver and some sailors took two boats and paddled them through the First Narrows to the eastern end of Burrard Inlet. As the boats passed through the narrows, First Nations braves from the village of Whoi-Whoi greeted them in dugout canoes and showered the strangers with great handfuls of soft white down feathers. These floated on the surface of the water and gave the first white visitors a hearty welcome. The sailors slept on the beach at the easternmost end of Burrard Inlet and left early the next morning for the mother ship.

Captain Vancouver’s ship *Discovery* was a British warship adequately equipped with the finest surveying instruments.

### Opposite Top

Before photography, there was painting. British Navy Captain George Vancouver is depicted on the deck of the Spanish Brig *Sutil* in conversation with Don D. Galiano, off Point Grey. Distinguished Canadian historical artist John Innes was commissioned in the mid-twentieth century to recreate this 1792 moment.

### Opposite Bottom

Another John Innes oil painting shows Captain Vancouver and some sailors in two small skiffs, accompanied by friendly local First Nations men in dugout canoes exploring Burrard Inlet. The Lions can be seen in the background.

### Following Pages

Today’s celebrated marine artist John Horton of Richmond depicts the same scene as Captain Vancouver and his crew entered the First Narrows to explore Burrard Inlet and are greeted by the locals.





**Homulcheson**  
(Capilano)

**Burrard Inlet**

**False Creek**

**Whoi-Whoi**

**(Vancouver)**

**(Stanley Park)**

**English Bay**

BEFORE THE WHITE MAN CAME. Burrard Inlet and English Bay were strewn with First Nation villages and landmarks at the arrival of Captain Vancouver in 1792. The familiar places were first recorded by City Archivist James Skitt Matthews in the mid-1930s and were overlaid in 2010 on artist Jim McKenzie's oil interpretation of the ancient landscape, showing the continued use of the region's major sites.



LOOKING EAST FROM 10,000 FEET. The aerial photographer and author attempted to recreate Jim McKenzie's oil painting of 1792 to show the dramatic changes to Greater Vancouver in just over two hundred years. This photograph, taken from 10,000 feet, shows the damage from storms. On 19 December 2006 a series of storms battered Vancouver with near-hurricane force winds that uprooted or simply snapped 1,000 of Stanley Park's first growth Western Red Cedar and Douglas Fir trees in the vicinity of Prospect Point and Siwash Rock.



Indian Arm

Fraser River

Moodyville  
(Sahik)

Second  
Narrows

New Brighton  
(Huphahpai)

Rogers Sugar  
(Chetchailmun)

Mission Reserve  
(Ustlawn)

Lonsdale  
(Estahlohk)

Hastings Mill  
(Kumkumly)

Main Street  
(Kiwahusks)

Gastown  
(Luck-lucky)

Cambie Street  
(Aun-mayt-sut)

Brockton Point  
(Paapeek)

Deadman's Island  
(Squtsahs)

Burrard Street  
(Puckahs)

Lumberman's Arch  
(Whoi-Who / Xwayxway)

Beaver Lake  
(Ahka-chu)

Lost Lagoon

First Narrows

Prospect Point  
(Sahunz)

Stanley Park  
(Slahkayulsh)

Second Beach  
(Staitwouk)

English Bay  
(Ay-tul-shun)

Broughton Street  
(Ay-ay-aul-shun)

Swiash Rock  
(Slah-Kay-Ulsh)

