

# TRAVEL CLOSE TO HOME

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## THE MAGNOLIA HOTEL & SPA

Isn't it funny how our mind almost always associates vacation time with going away? I can't even count the number of times I have said, "I need to get away". However, most of us really don't have the time, and I realized a mind shift was in order; teaching myself that get away doesn't have to mean getaway. So, I organized a staycation, packed an overnight bag, and with my husband in happy tow, took the 4.8 kilometre journey from my house to The Magnolia Hotel & Spa on Courtney Street in downtown Victoria.

The Magnolia Hotel & Spa was recently named the #4 hotel in Canada in the Conde Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards, and recognized as one of the top 25 romantic hotels in Canada by TripAdvisor 2015 Travellers' Choice Awards. Located just one block from everything – the inner harbour, restaurants, shops, nightlife, and museums – The Magnolia Hotel & Spa truly is at the heart of our lovely city.

I personally love the charming lobby, with its European bijoux ambiance and grand piano. You never feel rush or herded in this space – something I dislike about check-in areas at large, busy hotels.



Our Diamond guest suite was so pretty! Plush fabrics, an elegant carpet pattern and raw silk wall treatments were just some of the things I loved about this recently renovated room. Ten foot ceilings made our suite seem even more spacious, and the massive windows to the world were stunning. The room also featured a cozy gas fireplace and high end bed linens. Steve and I were experiencing the Romancing Victoria package, and we were thrilled to be greeted with Prosecco, chocolate truffles and Saltspring Soapworks bubble bath. Speaking of bubbles, the spa inspired bathroom was comfortably modern with a large soaker tub and separate glass shower. The fluffy robes and slippers were a really nice touch.

From our seventh floor suite; the spectacular views of this city at night were wonderful. I think we could have sat in front of the window for hours, but the city was calling so we donned our walking shoes and hit the streets. We walked around the city like tourists, choosing to combine two of the hotel's signature Curated Trails - Discover Victoria Trail and Tapa Trail. We walked historic streets, discovered places we didn't know existed, and dined on small plate delicacies along the way.