

Photos by Sandrine Jacquot

B.C.

72 Hours: Rest and Wilderness at the Naturally Pacific Resort in Campbell River

Campbell River has a growing tourism industry thanks to its proximity to wildlife and outdoor adventure. Here's your three-day itinerary

By Sandrine Jacquot / November 20, 2025

Campbell River has deep roots in the natural resource economy—it's known both as the Salmon Capital of the World and for its booming forestry industry. But it also happens to be a growing wilderness-exploration destination, welcoming tourists from all over the globe for its proximity to salmon, bears and whales. It's exactly this natural environment that I fell in love with when I visited in October, from the mesmerizing waterfall at Elk Falls Park to a full day of observing wild grizzly bears in Orford Bay.

Planning a visit yourself? Here were a few of my favourite spots and activities.

Getting to Campbell River

It's relatively easy to reach Campbell River from the mainland. Take the ferry across to Vancouver Island from Horseshoe Bay and drive (roughly an hour and a half on the road from Nanaimo), or catch a quick and scenic flight on Pacific Coastal Air from Vancouver YVR's South Terminal. If you're planning for summer 2026, you can reach Campbell River from Vancouver by seaplane with Harbour Air.

Day One

Check Into the Naturally Pacific Resort



Photo by Sandrine Jacquot

The [Naturally Pacific Resort](#) in Campbell River is like a little pocket of quiet luxury to anchor yourself before setting off on adventure. The rooms are comfortable, bright and airy, with beautiful balcony views of the water and mountain range in the eastern-facing rooms. The resort (which opened in May 2024) has a long list of amenities, including a pool, a sauna and steam room, a hot tub, complimentary bikes, an outdoor fire pit, access to a spa, a well-maintained golf course and an upscale yet casual restaurant—and it's an extremely pet-friendly hotel.

Go Golfing (or Golf Virtually at Velocity Driving Range)



Photo by Sandrine Jacquot

The resort also sits on the well-maintained 18-hole course at Campbell River Golf Club. But for a unique day on the green, the on-site driving range and golf simulator at Velocity Driving Range offers a unique experience. Tee up at the driving range, and watch the virtual technology track the ball's path on the TVs at each bay. You can play golf virtually on real-world courses internationally, or enjoy a casual game of Go Fish.

The most amount of [golf](#) I'd ever done was mini golf. Despite my hesitation to take a few swings, I felt a small boost of confidence seeing school kids enjoying the virtual golf alongside the pros. Since I was (mostly) unsuccessful in my attempts at the driving range, I instead focused my energy on enjoying the snacks my group had ordered from the kitchen, like the lattice fries, cauliflower wings and spicy tuna lettuce wraps.

Dine at Carve Kitchen + Meatery



Photo by Sandrine Jacquot

Even if you're not staying at the Naturally Pacific Resort while you're in Campbell River, it's worth having a meal at [Carve Kitchen + Meatery](#). The restaurant is a modern take on the classic steakhouse led by executive chef Ryan Watson. It sources ingredients from local producers to complement its own 22,500 square-foot garden (which guests can tour twice a week starting come spring). The restaurant's fresh philosophy is reflected in the vibrant live plant wall.



Cheesecake for Two at Carve Kitchen + Meatery. Photo by Sandrine Jacquot

For dinner, I had to try the [steak](#) (of course!). I paired my striploin with peppercorn sauce and two sides, miso sesame green beans and the glazed heirloom carrots in thyme and honey. Other must-try dishes include the OMG onion rings (stuffed with a decadent duck confit), the heirloom and tomato [salad](#) made and the cheesecake for two (or three) that I'm still thinking about.

Day Two

A Slow Morning at Immersion Spa



Photo by Michael Vanarey

After breakfast at Carve, head to the resort's wellness centre, [Immersion Spa + Wellness](#), for a slow morning. Anyone can book an appointment to enjoy the amenities: facials, massages, manicures, pedicures and a range of treatment rituals. I lounged in the large mineral pool with magnesium, sodium and potassium (which soothes and restores the skin), and rotated between the two unique Italian-made spa showers. Each shower—one hot and the other cold—blends different sensory therapies (light, smell, water and sound) for a rejuvenating experience.

From there, I went to a 45-minute sound bath healing session. I've done a [sound bath](#) before, but this was a private session with just myself and a practitioner. Lying in a dark room on a massage table, the provider places the bowls on different chakras (chest, stomach, by your feet and near your ears). I could feel every tap of the singing bowls reverberating, a low hum of vibrations throughout my body—the weight of the bowls on my body was grounding. I left in a deeply calm, almost lethargic state.

Snack and Explore Town



Photo by Sandrine Jacquot

The town of Campbell River itself is quite charming near the waterfront. Some parts are walkable, but the best way to get around is by car. So after a calm morning, fuel up with a coffee and flaky, buttery croissant at [Freya Nordic Baking & Kaffe](#). My favourites were the lavender and yuzu roulé, the pineapple cruffin and the raspberry jam bowtie. There are also lots of cute local shops to explore in Campbell River, like [West Coast Wildflowers](#), [Standing Spruce Farm & Apothecary](#) and [Mussels & More Pottery](#). Don't forget to walk along Discovery Pier, which doubles as a regular local fishing spot.

Hike Elk Falls



Photo by Sandrine Jacquot

Elk Falls is a must-visit for nearby nature in Campbell River. Only a 10-minute drive from town, Elk Falls and its suspension bridge are free to access year-round. The best time of day to **hike** to this gorgeous (and accessible) rushing waterfall is in the mid-to-late afternoon to catch the sunlight hitting the mist.

Go to a Tasting at Shelter Point Distillery



Photo by Sandrine Jacquot

For those who appreciate [local spirits](#), head to [Shelter Point Distillery](#) just outside of town for a tasting. Shelter Point distills barley from its own farmland (of which it has 380 acres) and from other B.C. farmers to produce single malt and single grain whiskies. After sampling different varieties in the beautiful distilling room, the classic single malt and the Smoke Point were standouts.

Dine at Mattone Italian Kitchen



Waterfront view at sunset from Mattone Italian Kitchen. Photo by Sandrine Jacquot

End a day full of exploring with a hearty meal featuring all the best carbs ([pizza](#) and pasta, of course). [Mattone Italian Kitchen](#) offers a slightly more casual dining experience paired with an absolutely stunning view. Do your best to snag a table by the windows, and be sure to try the arancini and local steamed clams or mussels.

Day Three

A Day-Long Bear Watching Trip



Photo by Sandrine Jacquot

Campbell River is known for its wildlife—I can confirm it lives up to the reputation.

Naturally Pacific Resort partnered with [Campbell River Whale Watching and Adventure Tours](#) for a Fall Grizzly Getaway Package to promote the season's end. Guests could book a two-night stay, which included a full-day grizzly bear tour. My group got an early start for a roughly three-hour boat ride up the Bute Inlet and into Orford Bay. There, we met our guides from the Homalco First Nation and [Homalco Culture & Wildlife Tours](#) for an afternoon of grizzly bear watching. That day, my group saw a total of 11 grizzly bears, a pod of killer whales and a pair of humpback whales. It was a beautiful experience to see animals in the wild up close for the first time. The resort is bringing back the Grizzly Getaway Package for October 2026, so you can start planning your nature-watching day.

Read more about bear watching in Campbell River: [What It's Like to Go Bear Watching in B.C.](#)

Dine at Beach Fire Brewing



Santa Fe chicken salad at Beach Fire Brewing. Photo by Sandrine Jacquot

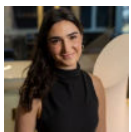
When you get back to town, head to local favourite [Beach Fire Brewing](#) for a casual dinner. There are house-made brews, communal seating and a lively environment (that sees live music, trivia and comedy nights).

Enjoy an Evening by the Fire



Photo by Sandrine Jacquot

End the trip with one final (relaxing) send-off. Grab a blanket from the front desk and curl up by the fire pits at the resort. Order a drink, curl up with a book or chat with friends for a low-key evening to mark the end of a memorable trip.



Sandrine Jacquot

Sandrine Jacquot is the editor of BCLiving and the brand partnerships writer for Canada Wide Media. She writes about travel, food, wellness, shopping and any local stories that showcase the beauty of B.C. Send pitches or get in touch with her at sjacquot@canadawide.com.

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