



British Columbia Community Profile...

Denman Island

Overview

Denman Island is located in the Strait of Georgia just off the eastern coast of Vancouver Island, between the mid-island communities of Comox and Parksville. Accessible by a short ferry ride from Vancouver Island, Denman combines a scenic west coast landscape and mild climate with a tranquil island lifestyle and proximity to urban amenities. Lush and fertile, it is known for its farmlands and thriving artistic community. Both Denman and the neighbouring Hornby Island are part of a group of 13 islands administered by the Islands Trust, an organization mandated to preserve and protect the unique character and environment of the area.

Accessibility

Denman Island is located opposite Buckley Bay on the eastern coast of Vancouver Island, an hour north of the city of Nanaimo and 2 ½ hours north of the capital city of Victoria. It is accessible by the BC Ferries vehicle and passenger scheduled ferry service, a 15-minute ride. The city of Courtenay, a major centre with a population of over 18,000, is located just 23 km north of Buckley Bay and is accessible via regular bus service. The nearest airport is located in Comox, just outside of Courtenay.

History

Denman Island was once the home of the Puntledge First Nations, who set up summer camps on the island. The first European settlement occurred in 1874, when Scottish settlers began to work the interior lowland. By 1894, there were over 100 settlers. Descendents of the island's earliest communities still live here today.





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Economy

Agriculture, fishing and forestry supported the early settlers on the islands, however today, tourism, recreation, and a large arts community contribute significantly to the economy.

Population Profile

The combined population of Denman and Hornby Island is 1,982 with a median age of 39 compared to 38.4 for the province as a whole. The population of Denman Island is 1,016.

Climate

Denman Island enjoys a moderate climate and one of the best gardening environments in Canada. Summers are warm and sunny with temperatures reaching the high 20s (Celsius). Winters are generally mild with considerable precipitation.

Housing

The average cost of a single-family home on Denman Island is \$320,000. Rental accommodation is limited; however the average cost of two-bedroom accommodation is \$600 to \$750 per month.

Education/Daycare

The Denman Island Community School provides kindergarten to grade 7 classes, as well as a variety of educational, support, and recreational services. Programs include literacy, early intervention, high school support, community Internet access, health and wellness as well as continuing education for lifelong learners. Junior and senior secondary school students travel by ferry and bus to Courtenay.



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Recreation

19 km long and 5 km wide, Denman Island's landscape is characterized by sandy beaches, rocky coves, hiking trails, lush forests, and scenic farmland. The beauty of Denman's natural environment appeals to artists and outdoor enthusiasts alike. The island is home to three beautiful provincial parks, which provide an ideal venue for outdoor recreational opportunities including, hiking, camping, swimming, kayaking, and fishing. Cycling is also popular and almost anywhere on the island you can observe an abundance of wildlife including bald eagles, blue herons, hawks and ospreys, pheasants, deer, sea lions and otters.

Nearby, the Comox Valley region of Vancouver Island offers downhill skiing and snowboarding at Mt. Washington and some of B.C.'s best cross-country skiing, golf, equestrian facilities, as well as marinas.

Culture

Denman Island is home to a lively arts community and boasts many nationally renowned artists and writers, inspired by the area's natural beauty. Works include pottery, jewelry, textiles, woodwork, paintings, sculpture, and music. There is an art gallery and museum in Denman Village, which has a collection of works by island artists and profiles local history.

Special events on Denman Island include a high profile concert series, a Christmas craft fair, a weeklong pottery fair and an annual home and garden tour that is very popular with tourists. A large community hall is used for concerts, theatre, lectures and dances.

Services & Amenities

Denman Island offers a variety of stores and services including a general store and post office, a market, a bookstore, a bakery and pizzeria, cafes, a hardware store, a library and a number of galleries and studios. Plans to implement high speed Internet service are under way. The twin cities of Courtenay and Comox, located just 23 km North of Buckley Bay, offer easy access to a wider range of services and amenities.

There are two churches on the island: a United church and an Anglican church, both with weekly services.



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Health Authority

Denman Island is located within the North Island Health Region of the Vancouver Island Health Authority. Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) provides healthcare services that include acute care facilities, mental health & addictions, environmental and public health, home, and community care. For comprehensive information on Vancouver Island Health Authority, visit their website (see Internet References below).

Internet References

British Columbia.com

<http://www.britishcolumbia.com/regions>

Denman Island.com

<http://www.denmanisland.com>

Statistics Canada (Community demographic information)

<http://www.statcan.ca>

Vancouver Island Health

<http://www.viha.ca>

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