



fall fun activities

By Kelly Thompson

As the rainy autumn season begins, umbrellas and raincoats become symbolic of west coast living. After sunny summer vacations, this time of year has a tendency to have us all feeling a bit down, but it can also be an opportunity to explore all that the lower mainland has to offer in the way of events, museums, and culture (without the tourists). Rainy weather also provides the chance to reconnect with members of our family as the fall season often denotes the return of school and work routines.

WestCoast Families has rounded up five fun fall activities for families, all available at our very own doorstep. There's even a few things to do on those days that offer rare breaks of sunshine. So grab the umbrella (just in case), dash to the car, and explore!

The Pumpkin Patch and Country Farms 12900 Steveston Highway, Richmond www.countrypumpkinpatch.ca

October 5th marks the day that Richmond's Country Farms becomes the Pumpkin Patch, where families can relax on hayrides, visit with farm mascots Korny Corn and Polly Pumpkin all while jiving to the wagon band that offers day-long musical entertainment. Adults can relax during walks through the duck pond and waterfalls while their kids pick the perfect pumpkin to carve for Halloween. Families can also pay a visit to the resident farm animals and after a fun day on the patch, grab a snack from the Snack Shack. The Pumpkin Patch allows families to get into the Halloween spirit, all while learning where their food comes from.

All entry fees include a child-size pumpkin, carry bag, visit with the farm animals, entertainment and hayrides. Prices vary year to year in fluctuation with crop yields, so be sure to check out the website or call beforehand for cost and hours.



Science World 1455 Quebec Street, Vancouver www.scienceworld.ca



With more than 550,000 visitors every year, TELUS Science World never fails to impress those both young and old. Every corner offers exciting rotating exhibits, hands-on learning experiences and fun for every member of the family.

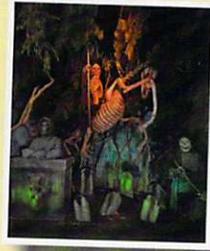
October will see many exciting new learning adventures at Science World. From September 28th until October 27th, Science World presents Around the World in 30 Days, a month-long event focusing on all the wondrous science and technology right in the Vancouver community. With a theme of music and the music industry, Around the World in 30 Days will highlight the benefits of science, technology and innovation to the Vancouver area and throughout British Columbia.

October also features the AMPED exhibit, which opens on October 12th and is aimed at teens and young adults. Through various hands-on experiences, AMPED will allow science lovers the opportunity to explore the inner workings of writing, recording, and performing music. The focus will be on creativity and the use of technology in understanding how music is made.

Cost is \$25 per adult and \$17.75 for children between the ages of 3 and 12. Visit the Science World website for more information and hours of operation.

Dunbar Haunted House
 8934 Shaughnessy Street, Vancouver
www.dunbarhauntedhouse.com

Halloween is a time for ghouls and goblins and the best place to find them is at the Dunbar Haunted House, a place where families can be full of fright while indulging their generous sides, since the house is family-run and all proceeds are donated to charity.



The Dunbar Haunted House is open from October 15th-31st and the 2013 theme is the Terror of History, with displays that include an Egyptian tomb, crusading knights, a witches forest, a pirate's lair and a monster's ball, just to name a few. The sets are elaborately and impressively done, frightening those with even the most steely of nerves. Those with children younger than ten are encouraged attend the haunted house during daylight hours on weekends when there are no live actors. But for those who revel in fear, regular cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under the age of 12. Please note that the Dunbar Haunted House is a cash only operation. Visit their website for hours and further information.

Vancouver Writers Fest
 12900 Steveston Hwy, Richmond
www.writersfest.bc.ca/

Vancouver Writers fest runs from October 22nd – 27th with most events held at Granville Island. Ticket prices vary as much as the events themselves, ranging from adult evenings that include readings and book signings, to events specifically for the younger reader in the house, such as lessons on improving their own writing craft. And for those who want to flex their own literary muscles, there is even a writing contest for both children and adults. Your kids will thank you for helping to build their love for books and the written word.



Vancouver Police Museum
 240 E. Cordova Street, Vancouver
www.vancouverpolicemuseum.ca

Vancouver is a city rich with history, and the legacy of the illustrious Vancouver Police Department is told at their downtown museum in a charming old building. While touring the birthplace of Vancouver's finest, visitors will learn about the history of women in the Force, ethnic diversity, and all about the most famous officers of the canine variety. There is plenty of hands-on fun to be had with police uniforms to try on (including a shockingly heavy bulletproof vest!), historic weapons to see, a prison cell to be locked in, and an excellent history on how Vancouver itself was a far less glamorous city, once upon a time.



For your children's inner gumshoe, using their newly honed sleuthing skills, kids can work with VPD Museum employees to help solve a fake crime by dusting for fingerprints, taking shoeprints, and adding up the clues.

Admission is \$12 per person and children under the age of 6 are free. Family rates are also available and the museum is open Tuesday to Saturday from 9-5

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