

WALKING

# AMBLESIDE FOREST WALK

By Vancouver Biennale

7KM ROUND TRIP | 8,750 - 10,500 STEPS  
1:45 - 2:20 HOURS

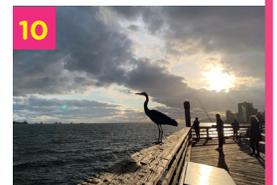
## ABOUT THE TOUR

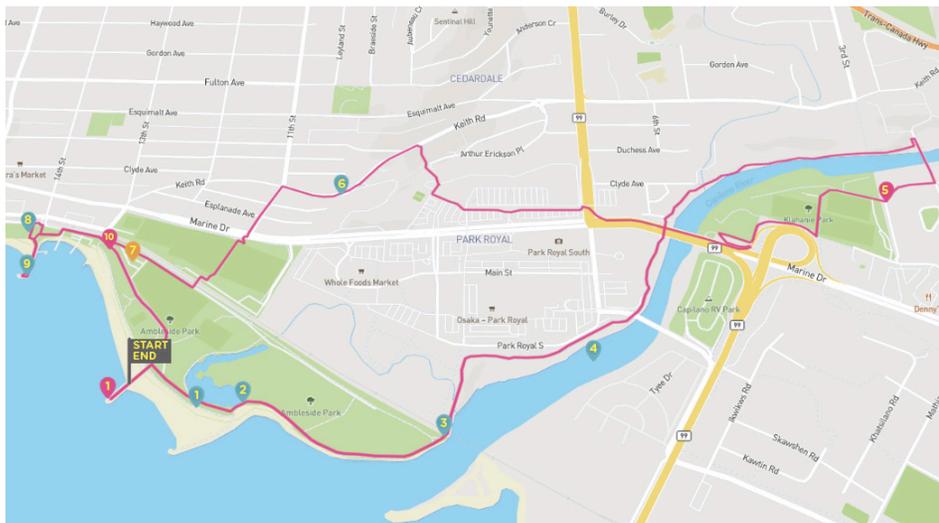
West Vancouver is on the traditional and unceded territories of the Coast Salish People, in particular, the Squamish, Tseil-Waututh and Musqueam First Nations.

Starting at Ambleside's Welcome Figure, in proximity to the Capilano River estuary, the walk will take you through the ancestral summer fishing and camping territories of the Squamish and Tseil-Waututh Nations. You will follow the river toward the salmon hatchery and Cleveland Dam and then cross over the bridge at Woodcroft Estates on to Fullerton Avenue and a new towering high-rise community, thus offering a striking juxtaposition of Nature and urban environments. Taking you to revered Indigenous sites and early settlement locations, the tour will conclude at the historic Ferry Building, adjacent to Ambleside's fishing pier.

## ROUTE STOPS

1	<b>SQUAMISH NATION WELCOME FIGURE - STAN JOSEPH</b>	Ambleside Park Geach Groyne
2	<b>X̱WEMELCH'STN (CAPILANO INDIAN RESERVE)</b>	
3	<b>CAPILANO PACIFIC TRAIL</b>	Dog Walk Area of Ambleside
4	<b>SPIRIT TRAIL</b>	Spirit Trail at Ambleside
5	<b>CAPILANO ESTUARY + SITE OF INDIGENOUS ROCK WEIR FISHING</b>	Capilano River West of Bridge St.
6	<b>X̱WEMELTCH'STN - FAST MOVING WATER OF FISH JAMES HARRY</b>	3000 Park Royal S
7	<b>SQUAMISH NATION BURIAL GROUND AND JOE CAPILANO MAUSOLEUM</b>	102 Keith Rd.
8	<b>AMBLESIDE ARTISAN FARMERS' MARKET</b>	1000 Argyle Ave.
9	<b>FERRY BUILDING</b>	1414 Argyle Ave.
10	<b>AMBLESIDE FISHING PIER</b>	Ambleside Park
11	<b>SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAIN</b>	Ambleside Park
12	<b>AMBLESIDE PARK</b>	Foot of 13th Street





**START**

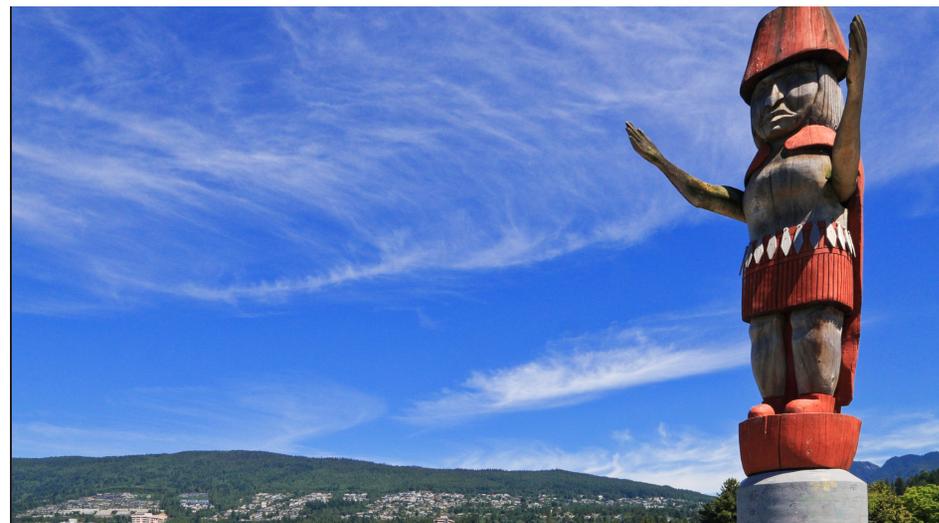
While you're walking, we invite you to . . .

**SEE** - Along this route, there is ample interesting signage about the history and development of this area. Take a moment to read some of the content.

**HEAR** - We've put together a Spotify playlist featuring some of our favourite Indigenous artists (<https://spoti.fi/3dbqBqg>). Otherwise, you can simply enjoy the surrounding environment as Nature's own playlist.

**THINK** - This tour shows the stark differences between the preserved history of the land and new developments. What effects does urban sprawl have when cities are on or in proximity to these historic sites, and what can we do to help protect traditional lands?

**DO** - Take plenty of photos and share your favourites with us on social media (#VanBiennale)!



**#1 - SQUAMISH NATION WELCOME FIGURE | STAN JOSEPH**

***Squamish Nation Welcome Figure***  
**Stan Joseph with the assistance of Wes Nahanee**  
**2001**

*Squamish Nation Welcome Figure* is a West Vancouver landmark in Ambleside Park, visible from Lions Gate Bridge, Stanley Park, and the waterfront of West Vancouver. Constructed from an old-growth cedar log from Hollyburn Mountain, the Welcome Figure is a gift from the Squamish Nation, marking K'aya'chtn (gathering of ocean canoes). In honour of the teachings and wisdom of the Squamish Nation grandmothers, the sculpture fosters respect for the land, animals, and people that occupy it.

**MORE INFO** <https://www.westvancouver.ca/arts-culture/public-art/squamish-nation-welcome-figure>



## #2- XWEMELCH'STN (CAPILANO INDIAN RESERVE)

You are now about to enter the Xwemelch'stn ("Fast Moving Water of Fish") community, also referred to as the Capilano Indian Reserve.

The First Nations village at the mouth of the Capilano River became the Capilano Indian Reserve (Xwemelch'stn) in 1923, a separate legal entity from the District of West Vancouver.

One of the oldest and largest villages of the Squamish, the village is the Squamish Nation's most populated reserve.

The reserve is named, like the adjacent Capilano River, after the Capilano chieftaincy, the best-known being Joe Capilano.



## #3 - CAPILANO PACIFIC TRAIL

You will now follow up the Capilano River via the Capilano Pacific Trail, although it goes much further than what we have included in today's walk.

The walk continues past the riverbed; however, due to a recent landslide (see photos above), the trail to the Capilano River Hatchery is CLOSED. If you're interested in visiting the fish hatchery another day, it can be accessed via the Cleveland Dam parking lot at the base of Grouse Mountain.

If you would like to hike further or revisit this trail on another day, please check the trail conditions



#### #4 - SPIRIT TRAIL

Winding its way along the scenic waterfront, the North Shore Spirit Trail is a treasure for all to enjoy, particularly as a respite from urban busyness. It is a fully accessible 35-km greenway that extends from Horseshoe Bay to Deep Cove. This unique waterfront-oriented trail provides pedestrians, cyclists, inline skaters and people with wheeled mobility aids safe access across the North Shore.



#### #5 - CAPILANO ESTUARY + SITE OF INDIGENOUS ROCK WEIR FISHING

Estuaries are areas where rivers meet the ocean, creating what is known as brackish water (sweet and salty). Generally partially enclosed, they create unique ecosystems for plants and animals, particularly salmon.

Salmon has been important to Indigenous people along the Pacific for many generations: this fish has been used in trade and for sustenance, and frequently appears in Indigenous culture and mythology. One method that is used to catch salmon is rock weir fishing, which has been used at the mouth of the Capilano River by countless generations of the Squamish First Nation.

Rocks are set up to create barriers to trap salmon in small ponds; then simple nets are used as people wade into the water to retrieve the salmon and bring them onto land. An annual harvest can contribute to feeding a community for months.

While en route to the next stop, watch for signage along the way that discusses the history and development of the area.



**#6 - XWEMELTCH'STN - FAST MOVING WATER OF FISH**

***Xwemeltch'stn - Fast moving water of fish***

**James Harry  
2019**

Artist Statement:

“This work mimics the shape of the cedars and firs that once occupied this land. Old growth trees are becoming increasingly difficult to acquire for carving, which led me to use metal as an alternative material to cedar. Through my years at Emily Carr I integrated this concept into my art practice and it has now become an integral part of my work. Utilizing modern materials while staying true to the visual language of Coast Salish design has been the core component of my art practice. This public art opportunity is a great fit for my continued work of shifting perspectives on Indigenous art. The imagery depicted on the post are two salmon swimming in unison. There are eggs in between representing rebirth and the cycle of the salmon's life. As a whole, the design follows the movement of the river. I have designed the sculpture so that you are forced to move around it to read the story. This makes for a more bodily and visceral experience.”



**#7 - SQUAMISH NATION BURIAL GROUND AND JOE CAPILANO MAUSOLEUM**

Tucked amidst an array of private homes and apartments, this sacred site is the final resting place of many who belonged to the Xwemeltch'stn (Capilano Indian Reserve) community.

This space includes a small number of private graves amidst totem poles. Among the burial markers and totem poles you will see a large house-like structure made of stone, the Joe Capilano Mausoleum, which stands as a monument to the prominent community leader and his well-known activism.



**#8 - AMBLESIDE ARTISAN FARMERS' MARKET**

Summer Sundays from 10 am to 3 pm, May through October

Besides a selection of prepared foods including baking, syrups, jams, jellies, honey, salsas, and antipasti, one may also find numerous B.C. crafts, such as jewelry, clothing, wrought iron, garden sculptures, soaps, and pottery.



**#9 - FERRY BUILDING**

From its beginning (in 1913) as a bustling ferry terminal to its present use as an art gallery, this heritage building has always been important to our community.

In the early 1900s, West Vancouver was not only home to the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish People, villages and community) but also a summer holiday spot for Vancouver residents. Lions Gate Bridge hadn't yet been built, and a ferry began to transport people between downtown Vancouver and Ambleside to encourage more people to move to West Van permanently.

The Ferry Building is currently going through a restoration process to move the building up and onto a new foundation in order to protect it from rising flood levels.



**#10 - AMBLESIDE FISHING PIER**

The Ambleside Fishing Pier is a popular spot for fishing, crabbing, or just enjoying the view. For those keen on learning more, check out the signage in the vicinity.



**#11 - SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAIN**

***Spirit of the Mountain***  
**Xwalacktun (Rick Harry)**  
**2006**

This signature sculpture is another West Vancouver landmark, greeting visitors at the entrance to Ambleside Park. Commissioned after West Vancouver was designated a Cultural Capital by the federal government in 2006, *Spirit of the Mountain* evokes the Lions Gate Bridge. The bridge takes its name from The Lions, the two famed peaks above West Vancouver that the Squamish people call The Twins or Sisters. Legend says that the high-born twin sisters brought peace between the Squamish and Haida people.

Two upright paddles incorporated into the design represent mutual respect. Between the paddles is a Squamish Thunderbird head, which symbolizes the Squamish Nation. In the background, the great canoe represents the journey to build a foundation for future generations within the communities of West Vancouver and the Squamish Nation.



## #12 - AMBLESIDE PARK

With fantastic views of Downtown Vancouver and Stanley Park, Ambleside Park is a lovely spot to conclude the walk. Stay alert for spotting local wildlife since this park and shoreline are home to many seabirds, fish, and other marine life (please don't feed any wildlife).

Did you capture an amazing photo or video on the walk? Please share it with us on social media using the tag #VanBiennale!