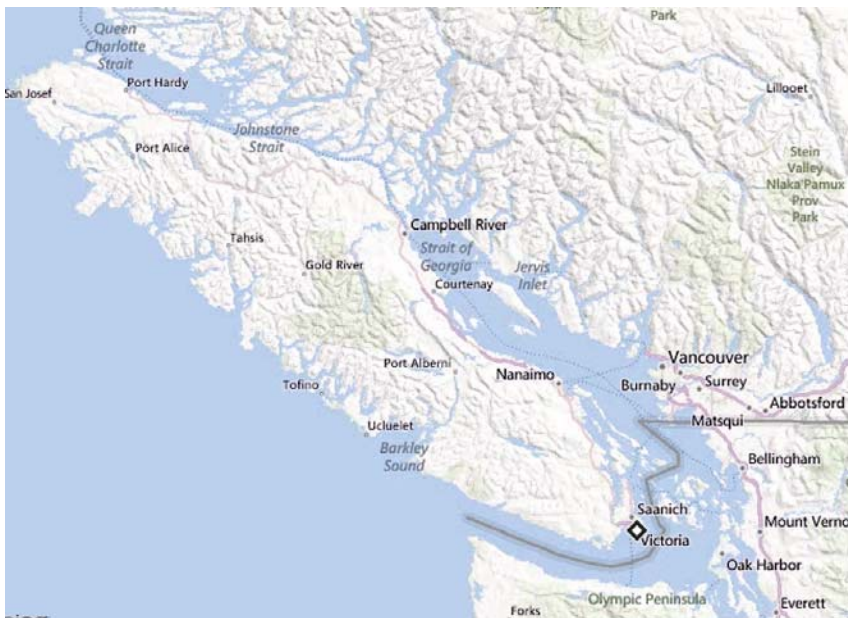


Day One - Victoria, BC, Canada

Well, here we are, our very first summer vacation together. Normally we do not take vacation in summer together because someone has to run the business. However, this year we have experienced staff and feel confident that the business will not fall apart without us.

We left Tampa this morning getting up at 4.30AM in order to make our flight to Vancouver, Canada via a stopover in Dallas, TX.

Because we have been to Vancouver before we decided instead to take a bus right from the airport direct to the ferry terminal and caught a ferry to Victoria. Victoria is located on Vancouver Island (Vancouver itself, strangely enough, is NOT located on this island, but on mainland Canada).



Vancouver island is HUGE, and Victoria is a decent size city (and the capital of British Columbia, a province in Canada), but never the less there is no highway or bridge to the island. The only way to get to Victoria is by boat.

The ferry ride was absolutely beautiful as the ferry edged its way between the many islands in the waterway between Vancouver and Victoria.

Getting here was not without its own trauma as less than 48 hours before we were due to leave, my laptop crashed and we absolutely cannot travel without a computer as it is the only way we can remain in contact with our two businesses. So it was a mad rush to buy a new one and then get it loaded with the software we need.

Night one I worked until 3 am in the morning loading the laptop and night two we had to get up at 4.30AM in order to make the flight, so to say I am tired right now, is not an exaggeration. Especially given the 3 hour time difference, so right now as I write this it might only be 9.30PM in Canada but on my time it is 12.30AM and I have been up since 4.30AM. Talk about a long day!

Also the new laptop is Windows 8 so a pretty big learning curve for me too!



On the ferry to Victoria, and yes, there is spiced rum in that bottle of juice and coke! The ferry did not have a bar so we made our own drinks! Damn these Canadians! Ferry ride is an hour and a half!



Of course we met someone to hang out with on the ferry. Believe it or not he had just come back from the EXACT same place where we have booked our January 2014 vacation. Go figure! (not saying where yet!)



On arrival we took a cab to our B&B and then went out to dinner at a local diner that was built out of an old gas station. Canadians once again live up to their reputation for being one of the friendliest nations in the world. Love them!

We had not taken the time to change our money to Canadian \$ as we are only here a couple days so we have done everything including the cab ride on a credit card. Even bought the cokes and orange juice on the ferry using a credit card in a vending machine. Gotta love plastic!

From what little we have seen of Victoria so far, it is very different to Vancouver (which felt like Seattle). It is very Victorian (big surprise here) and reminded us more of Auckland in New Zealand than North America.



Our Bed and Breakfast (above) is located right next to a "castle" you can see in the background. This was a 20,000 square foot private home built in 1887 by the richest man in Western Canada who made his fortune in coal mining.

Tomorrow we explore Victoria. Dinner at Pluto's...

