



Vancouver Grand Prix Finals Trip Notes **December 4 – 12, 2018**

Headlines:

- Beverly, my sister, got me started going to skate events about 4 years ago. It's included the World's in Boston, Helsinki and Milan. We'll miss Japan this year but likely go to Montreal for 2020s.
- This was the Grand Prix Finals, and we were in the USs event this October held in Everett Washington. Next year's Grand Prix Finals will be in Strasbourg France where Tom and I visited this September. Beverly and I will want to go and maybe Tom too.
- Cold and wet in Vancouver. Very cold in the stadium and even the moderators were telling of going out to coffee shops to get warm.
- Lovely and luxurious (to me) two-bedroom apartment.
- Food was better than most stadiums but still unhealthy and too much of it. You just sit and stare and eat. I added drinking. The results came home to roost when I stepped on a scale.
- Beverly is the perfect travel companion for this. She knows all the skaters, remembers them all, can pronounce the names of so many foreigners with multi syllable names, is willing to share her knowledge, and is a good roommate.
- Tourists for two days after the event.

The only report sent of the trip - I needed sleep!

Off to Vancouver – or as Tom says: somebody has to do it; and life is good.

Tuesday, December 4 had me off to another skating event for nine days. I met up with my sister, Beverly, in the San Francisco airport where we went onto Vancouver Canada together, got a rental car, followed by settling into a lovely apartment in the old historic district of Kitsilano.

Our apartment is one of the nicest outside of my Paris rental company. We chose a two bedroom located between the skating arena on University of British Columbia campus and downtown Vancouver but in a lively historic area full of shops and restaurants. Would we have any time for shopping or restaurants? NOT! Or very little.

From www.kitsilanosuites.com: *Nestled in the heart of historic Kitsilano on the quiet tree-lined of West 6th Avenue, you will find the heritage property of Kitsilano Suites designed in the Arts and Crafts style. Our character house offers fully furnished suites that providing guests with comfortable self-contained accommodations, finished to exacting standards to ensure a comfortable stay with all the amenities of a home away from home.*

Originally built in 1912 as a single family dwelling, and converted into veterans housing apartments in 1946, the building has been restored to its original splendor. Completely updated mechanical systems include new electrical, plumbing, fire sprinklers, fiber optic communications, and the latest in sound separation technology. Featuring custom gourmet kitchens with granite counter tops, luxury sleep sets with high quality bedding & linens to ensure a restful sleep, and full bathrooms with claw foot tubs/showers and heritage bathroom fixtures imported from Italy. Original wainscoting woodwork, hardwood flooring and stained glass windows throughout. Each suite features a dedicated outdoor

porch or balcony area with bistro seating sets for enjoying the landscaped gardens and tranquil street scape.

Why here? This is the Grand Prix finals and you might recall that we went to the first of the series in Everett Washington in October. I wanted to attend the one in Grenoble France but I wasn't into spending the wild cost for travel there. How exciting is it that next years is in Strasburg France where Tom and I had ten days in September!

The Grand Prix finals are a delight to see only the best-of-the-best. Yet some of our favorites didn't make the grade and are competing in Zagreb Croatia at the same time.

Not quite so perfect are the junior competitors mixed in. Some are super but some are just baby 13 year olds who skate well but really, should they be traveling the world and looking up adoringly at their older partner? My heart ached for them. They'd finish and go back to the Kiss-and-Cry where some coaches gave them a pat or a hug but some would have me wanting to scream "they are just a kid; please give them a well-deserved hug".

Yet. My heart burst with admiration for some more mature skaters. Wherever is the balance

Winners. Not many outside of Russian and Japanese and at least three times all three winners and thus their raised flags and national anthem were Russian. A note on that: the Russian government supports the arts. American kids must have their own support and then if and when they medal, companies sponsor them. Too late for America to be fully competitive.

It's hard work! Competitive ice skating is surely tough, junior or senior, but also is sitting on our ass as a spectator from 10am to 10pm. A marathon in itself. We had near five days like that and the other three as easy tourists. I was in Vancouver a few days maybe in 2012 pre a week long hike in the Whistler area; then more recently with Tom for about a week when I did Vancouver's marathon. Tom had then arranged a high rise apartment with a massive amount of windows and views. He found our current apartment too. Maybe he will next find us an apartment in Strasbourg.

Weather. Despite it being from 30 to 40 outside, it's felt colder indoors. I've really suffered numb hands despite many layers of clothes and doubled gloves. You don't get a cold from being cold? Maybe it's the constant shivering that has me working on a cold. Or not even being near a bed long enough let alone able to sleep. Beverly has kindly spared me the cleaning of car frost in the morning. I'm not acclimated to cold as much because my last trip was in the Caribbean with mid to high 80s.

Food. Fortunately we stocked up on groceries (and alcohol) our first day when Beverly cooked a huge pot of vegetable, chicken and veggie noodles. It's a good thing as we've mostly subsided on junk stadium food followed by midnight bowls of healthy soup. This arena does have more decent food than usual but it's a mistake to not leave for a real meal. We were afraid of missing some super skater. Smile. What we missed was civilized dining but the stadium soup and chile were good as were the peanut-butter sandwiches from the apartment (one had to sneak in food to get through security.)

Still, life is good. It's wonderful to be with my easy going, smart and expert-on-skating sister. We are looking for more events but are at least committed to Greensboro NC in January 2020 for nationals and Montreal in March 2020 for World's.

After a couple of days of tourist we go home on Wednesday, December 12.

End



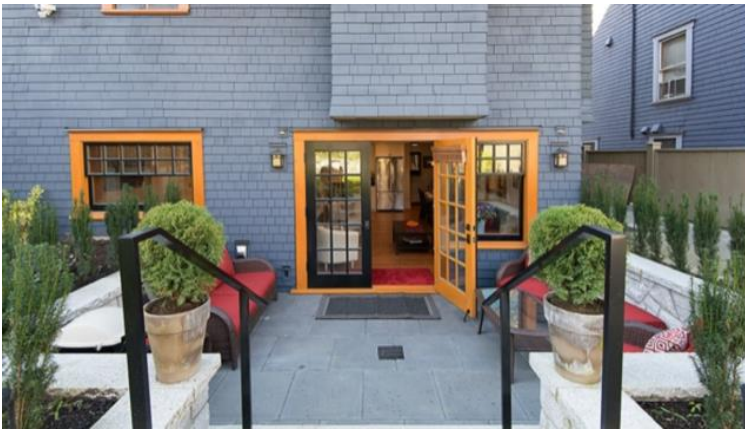
Flying in we saw a number of super high snow clad mountains and volcanoes. Arrival at our apartment was full of pleasant and luxurious surprises. The landlord just did everything correct and then some.



There were slippers so we wouldn't hurt the lovely wood floor. We added a poinsettia to the red touches. The kitchen held a fruit basket, fresh bread, and the dining table held a basket of snacks and still yet the refrigerator came complete with milk, cream, butter, juices, jams, etc. We had our choice of coffee machines plus coffee and tea supplies.



Every room had lots of lighting and its own thermostat. The bathroom tub and shower were all in one which was a neat idea, huge number of lights, eight each of towels and washcloths as well as two luxurious robes, all the usual hotel amenities, and a heated floor.



Our backyard with a huge old lovely tree too, and the front of the historic house was holiday light covered. Yet it was a neighbor's blue lights that usually helped us find our way home.

Tourist days:

Art Museum in downtown area had a special art-fashion exhibit. Amazing! A highlight that can be partly seen with this link: <http://youtu.be/hAas1UaJcFw>

More: <https://wwd.com/fashion-news/fashion-scoops/guo-pei-to-launch-high-end-ready-to-wear-line-10818367/amp/>

The designer: Guo Pei at <https://www.vogue.com/article/guo-pei-yellow-is-forbidden-documentary-rihanna-met-gala-2015/amp>

<https://www.cnn.com/style/amp/guo-pei-haute-couture-paris/index.html>

Surprisingly I sort of remembered her as I'd seen her designs at the Metropolitan Museum of Art a couple years ago.



Granville Island was only minutes from our apartment, on the Kitsilano side but under the bridge into the main city. We could have spent another full day there easily. Its grown a lot since I was there last. We laughed at the Christmas tree with lit up miniature bottles which the owner said they had a good time emptying after Christmas. The art market and doll maker were favorites, and art was not limited to dolls. See what they did with an ugly factory site?



But it was out on the park's point and lookout where we found these crafty little moose mittens and hat for Beverly's granddaughter Mallory. Beverly walked out to the point where a great view of the bridge to Capilano Bridge is but we didn't risk the mud and go down to the water. One day we walked a lot of Kitsilano and I even managed to buy a pair of slacks. Kitsilano re-named "KitsMas".



The fashion exhibit at the downtown art museum was a huge hit. To see the video link above makes it all the more dramatic as some costumes needed to be worn and moved. We think the huge yellow one was Rihanna's or similar.



We drove the neighborhood holiday lights often and went downtown to the massive amount of lights more than once. Lights of Hope seemed to be related to a church and extended a couple blocks.

Itinerary

Tue Dec 4 - Diana

6:00am Depart Newark EWR via UA#1483 – 6:31 hours
9:31am Arrive San Francisco SFO for plane change – 1:09 connect time

10:40am Depart San Francisco SFO via UA#5818 – 2:29 hours - same flight as Beverly
1:09pm Arrive Vancouver BC Canada YVR

- Beverly

Stay overnight at STL Airport

6:45am Depart St Louis STL via UA#5275 – 4:53 hours
9:38am Arrive San Francisco SFO for plane change – 1:02 connect time

10:40am Depart San Francisco SFO via UA#5818 – 2:29 hours - same flight as Diana
1:09pm Arrive Vancouver BC Canada YVR

Rental car Hertz

Apartment Kitsilano Suites – 8 nights – reconfirmed 11/19/18
2465 West 6th Avenue between Larch Street and Balsam Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6K 1W2 Tele: 604-732-4038
www.Kitsilanosuites.com – Mark email at Kitsilano Suites <info@kitsilanosuites.com>

Owner: Mark Diesvelt, Kitsilano Suites, 2465 West 6th Avenue, Suite 100, Vancouver, B.C. Canada
V6K 1W2 Cell: 604-351-7392

See www.KitsilanoSuites.com for pictures and see full description below - at end.

Directions per Mark from Vancouver Airport:

Follow Grant McConachie Way E and Granville St to W 26th Ave in Vancouver - 18 min (10.1 km)

Follow W King Edward Ave W and Arbutus St to W 6th Ave - 9 min (3.5 km)

Contact assistant Karli, while Mark away. 778 989 9251

Schedule: Grocery list in file. Figure out the bus or parking to event.

Wed Dec 5

Dec 5-9 with first day practices and last day, Sunday, the grand exhibition. See schedule in file.

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final 2018

At UBC - Doug Mitchell Thunderbird Sports Centre, 6066 Thunderbird Blvd., Vancouver, BC

<https://skatecanada.ca/2018-isu-grand-prix-of-figure-skating-final/>

UBC parking - <https://thunderbirdarena.ubc.ca/transportation/getting-here>

Dec 5-9 Skate

Mon and Tue, Dec 10 and 11

Tourist - If weather decent, can drive to Whistler or the Canyon swinging bridge.

Wed Dec 12 – Diana and Beverly

4:30am Depart apartment – turn in rental car

7:45am Depart Vancouver BC YVR via UA#5979 – 2:57 hours

11:42am Arrive Denver DEN for plane change

Bev connect time: 1:18 hours; Diana connect time: 3:48 hours

- Beverly

1:00pm Depart Denver via UA#4744 – 2:05 hours

4:05pm Arrive St Louis STL

- Diana

3:30pm Depart Denver DEN via UA#331 – 3:38 hours

9:08pm Arrive Newark EWR

Hotels canceled:

1. Sheraton Vancouver Wall Center for 7 nights at C\$1825 (home of Uniworld Skate) From Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre Hotel - Please be advised that there are at least 2 transfers by bus that you have to take from our hotel to the Douglas Mitchell Thunderbird Stadium. The cost is \$2.85. You can find out more about route information via www.translink.bc.ca by inputting our address and typing in 6066 Thunderbird Blvd. Travel time by bus is approximately 50 - 60 minutes. Otherwise, you can take a taxi and that would cost approximately \$30 - \$35 per trip. This would take approximately 20 - 25 minutes. If you are interested in staying with us, our prepaid rates for the nights you are requesting starts at \$292 CAD plus taxes for a Traditional Room with One King.
2. Holiday Inn Vancouver Centre Broadway for 7 nights at C\$1902 or C\$235 night plus \$23 day parking (home of SkateFanTours)
3. West Coast Suites at UBC for 7 nights at C\$285 night plus \$10 parking (home of SkateFanTours)
4. Hampton Inn at airport C\$278 – not booked

Potential Costs:

SkyTrain from airport to UBC \$7.75 to \$9 or taxi C\$30-35.

Rental car logic: For tourist, 2x from airport, for grocery shopping, and if weather bad.

Daily bus to UBC, or parking on UBC limited and pricey.

Interesting links

Cultural Heritage of Vancouver:

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/destinations/2018/04/18/vancouver-cultural-heritage/525749002/>

The City That Had Too Much Money - Bloomberg

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2018-10-20/vancouver-is-drowning-in-chinese-money>

From www.kitsilanosuites.com: See pictures and see full description below. *Nestled in the heart of historic Kitsilano on the quiet tree-lined of West 6th Avenue, you will find the heritage property of Kitsilano Suites designed in the Arts and Crafts style. Our character house offers fully furnished suites that providing guests with comfortable self-contained accommodations, finished to exacting standards to ensure a comfortable stay with all the amenities of a home away from home.*

Originally built in 1912 as a single family dwelling, and converted into veterans housing apartments in 1946, the building has been restored to its original splendour. Completely updated mechanical systems include new electrical, plumbing, fire sprinklers, fiber optic communications, and the latest in sound separation technology. Featuring custom gourmet kitchens with granite counter tops, luxury sleep sets with high quality bedding & linens to ensure a restful sleep, and full bathrooms with claw foot tubs/showers and heritage bathroom fixtures imported from Italy. Original wainscoting woodwork, hardwood flooring and stained glass windows throughout. Each suite features a dedicated outdoor porch or balcony area with bistro seating sets for enjoying the landscaped gardens and tranquil street scape. We invite you to review our web site to learn more about our premium Kitsilano location and our first class accommodations.

Including high speed fiber optic wireless internet service at no additional cost to our guests. Each suite features dedicated telephone service with voicemail systems. HDTV's featuring a great selection of channels to choose from, including Netflix. Each suite has its own independent electrical service to avoid any power interruption or electrical overload, with self-governing heating systems. Gas fired on-demand water heaters insure constant hot water. The latest sound separation technologies have been incorporated throughout the building to reduce any sound transmission between suites.

The property has been extensively renovated and restored to include all of the following:

Restored stained glass windows.

Restored and refinished hard wood floors.

High quality wool carpets in hallway common areas.

Repaired and refinished wainscot woodwork and wood trim.

Wood burning brick fireplaces restored to their original condition.

Heritage style fir suite entree doors built to meet fire code requirements.

Original refinished fir wood windows featuring custom built storm windows.

Completely restored original front porch with private back balcony.

Claw foot bath tubs, restored and refinished to their original condition.

Custom built kitchen cabinets with granite counter tops.

Modern appliances in all suites.

Landscaped gardens with private back yard and sun patio with lounge chairs.

New foundation with seismic upgrades

New electrical system with separate electric service to each suite.

New plumbing throughout the entire building.

Completely insulated to meet or exceed Building Code requirements.

All new wall board finished with high quality paints.

Multiple sound separation systems between suites.

Engineered fire sprinkler protection system.

Certified fire alarm system.

In-suite smoke detection systems.

Laundry facilities with industrial quality coin operated washer and dryer.

Suite#10: Suite 10 is a two bedroom suite featuring 980 sq. ft. professionally designed open floor plan of comfortable quality living space. Hardwood floors throughout the living areas and bedrooms and heated tiled floor in the spa style bathroom. Living room area features fireplace and double French doors opening onto a large garden patio with quality deck furniture, overlooking the landscaped gardens. Fully equipped gourmet kitchen with granite counters and stainless steel Jenn-Air appliances. Dining table for 6 with high quality dish wear, stem wear and stainless cutlery. King and queen bedrooms with large windows and luxury Sterns & Foster sleep sets. Spa style bathroom with large claw foot tub and separate shower. Great attention to heritage details throughout, complete with quality furnishings & finishing's.

Located on the ground floor of the house, suite 10 is a two bedroom apartment that has access to a large private patio that overlooks the fully landscaped back yard and gardens. There is no back lane to the property providing added privacy for quite time enjoyment. The back yard features an ancient maple tree that is over 100 years old and stands over 50 feet (15 meters) tall. Everything in this suite has been restored and upgraded to provide a balance of modern convenience and timeless heritage living. This main living area features hardwood floors, quality furniture, fireplace, double hung wood windows and double French doors opening onto a private patio with quality deck furniture and BBQ. Modern conveniences include HD TV with over 150 channels including Netflix and Crave TV, fiber optic high speed internet, and

telephone system with personalized voice mail. Tastefully decorated with select art, and quality decorations for added enjoyment and visual stimulation. Dining area features an expandable dining table with comfortable chairs for 6 people.

The gourmet kitchen features custom cabinets; granite counter tops, stainless appliances including a Jenn-Air gas cook top & electric convection oven, exterior vented range hood, full sized freezer on bottom refrigerator, whisper quiet dishwasher and a microwave. Accessories include a toaster, coffee makers, coffee grinder, blender, food processor, Kitchen Aid mixer, juicer, quality pots & pans, porcelain dishware, a wide assortment of quality cups, glasses & stemware, stainless cutlery and an extensive selection of kitchen tools and kitchen knives. Mixing bowls, plastic storage containers, cutting boards and serving bowls & plates are included for those who want to entertain or enjoy extended stays.

The separate bedrooms offer a Stearns & Foster king size luxury mattress in the master bedroom and a Stearns & Foster queen size luxury sleep set in 2nd bedroom. Bedding includes 400 thread count cotton bed linens, both feather down & polyester duvet comforters and a selection of down and qualloifil pillows to ensure a restful sleep for all preferences. Both bedrooms feature bedside tables with reading lights, closets and storage for clothing, and a large opening window for additional ventilation. Modern conveniences in each room include an HD TV, alarm clock, with programmable thermostats for added comfort and convenience.

The bathroom features the original 6 foot (2 meter) long claw foot bath tub totally perfect for enjoying relaxing bubble baths or soaking away the day's stresses. The bath tub has been refinished and includes brand new chrome heritage faucet & shower fixture. The separate stand shower features high water flow shower head. Custom made vanity with plenty of drawers, marble counter top and porcelain sink with quality stainless taps. Featuring high quality cotton bath towels, hand towels and face clothes. The natural gas fired on-demand water system ensures an endless supply of hot water. For your convenience, enjoyment and safety, we provide a hair dryer, beach towels, First Aid Kit, clothes iron and ironing board.

Our on-staff professional cleaners ensure a very high level of cleanliness through the suite. Cleaning services are available and range in price from \$40 - \$100 per cleaning depending on the amount of time and frequency of cleaning. Laundry service rates are available by request.

Suite comes equipped with a complete assortment of cleaning tools & supplies. There is a separate laundry room located on the ground floor. The laundry room features commercial size coin operated (2 x \$1 coin) washer & dryer with complimentary laundry soap, bleach, stain remover and fabric softener.