



Granville Island

Granville Island Artisans – In the Market for Art

In storefront artists' studios that were once foundries and machine shops, shoppers discover hand-blown glass ornaments, custom-made eyeglass frames, organic yoga wear, gardening gear, fishing reels, wooden musical instruments, Inuit hand-carved sculpture, colourful beads and charms, and a treasure trove of goods from potters, weavers, textile artists, and jewelry makers.

Several co-ops on the island represent the work of more than 3000 artists from across the province. Wood lovers can check out the country's top showcase for quality handcrafted design at the Wood Co-op which displays the work of 135 of BC's most talented woodworkers.

Circle Craft Co-op in the Net Loft displays and sells the juried work of co-op members. Year-round, the work of 200 local artisans is for sale and show. From pottery, fashion design, jewelry, sculpture, stonework and glass-work, the items are all unique and handmade. Since 1984, the Gallery of BC Ceramics, owned by the Potters Guild of BC, has displayed and sold a wide selection of handmade pottery by 100 artists. Original paintings by Canadian artists can be found at The Federation of Canadian Artists.

Railspur Alley is the heart of the Granville Island art scene. An eclectic collection of shops include Northwest Bungalow Furniture, inspired by the Arts and Crafts, Mission, and Craftsman styles. At Funk Shui, textile artist Jessica deHaas makes wearable art from hand-dyed merino wool, cotton, silk and linens.

On Cartwright Street, 11 artists-in-residence include the custom-built wooden boat and kayak maker Alder Bay Boat Company, and Form and Forge, where gold- and silversmith Jurgen Schoenheit forges supple chains, elegant cutlery, bold rings, and his specialty – gold and silver bow-ties.

In the Net Loft, Paper-Ya carries beautiful papers from around the world. Also, Maiwa Handprints and Supply source exotic and historic dyes, rare fibers, fabric prints, silk-screens, and a huge selection of books and documentaries.

Inside a massive studio called ie creative, giant loops of mirror-polished stainless steel hang from the ceiling. Cheryl Hamilton, who owns the studio along with partner Mike Vandermeer, a nuclear physicist-turned artist, does large-scale sculpture.

Children enter through a kid-size door into the Kids Market, housed in a two-storey, 100-year-old factory and an adjacent train caboose. This is a (?) mecca for children, with 24 shops for youngsters and their families. Next door, after a day of shopping, kids splash in the water park, the largest free attraction of its kind in North America, and explore the pond, winding paths and open fields of Sutcliffe Park.