



News Blurb: New Aboriginal-Themed Hotel In Vancouver

Visitors interested in learning more about Canada's rich First Nations culture have the opportunity to stay at an entirely aboriginal-themed hotel in downtown Vancouver. Opened in May by Skwachâys Lodge, the hotel has 18 rooms, featuring distinctly cultural accommodations. Designed by six aboriginal artists and Vancouver-based interior design firms, each room boasts a unique theme featuring various animal spirits and original indigenous artwork like carvings, blankets and paintings. The property also features a sweat lodge and gathering places that include an artist's workshop, smudge room (a room for religious ceremonies) and guest lounge. Skwachâys Lodge's historic brick exterior is crowned by a traditional longhouse with a 40.5-foot totem pole (called the "Dreamweaver") shooting toward the sky. Closer to street level, visitors and passersby alike can view a video display celebrating First Nations culture that sits half-submerged in a glass sidewalk. Guests also have the opportunity to test out their creative juices through hands-on First Nations experiences (carving, weaving and painting classes), and also have the chance to meet with local aboriginal artists. Situated at the crossroads of Gastown and Chinatown, the Vancouver Native Housing Society development first opened its doors in 2012 as a social housing structure. Now, two floors of the property have been transformed into an experiential hotel that will give back to the non-profit society and local community. To learn more, visit <http://bit.ly/VhIit9>.