



FOR AN ACTIVE RETIREMENT ON THE CENTRAL ISLAND

Retiring in Nanoose Bay

2026 EDITION

Quieter and greener, with golf, the marina, and the trails, and room to breathe.

Travis Bach and Kiel Bach
RE/MAX Professionals · Central Vancouver Island

bachrealestate.ca

WELCOME

The quiet one

We're Travis and Kiel Bach. Nanoose Bay is the coast's quiet middle: a green, spread-out, semi-rural stretch between Nanaimo and Parksville, where retirement comes with more room, more trees, and more water than town living, and where a golf course, a marina, and miles of trails sit close at hand.

This guide centres on Nanoose Bay, from the Fairwinds community to the rural acreages, with Parksville and Nanaimo each a short drive away. It is about the life first and the home second, because the right place here is the one that suits you now and still fits you twenty years on.

WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

- ✓ What a quieter, active week looks like here, and where it happens.
- ✓ The arts, gardens, and community scene, and how to plug in fast.
- ✓ Choosing a home, in Fairwinds or on acreage, that keeps suiting you.

YOUR ISLAND TEAM



Travis Bach

REALTOR®

(250) 619-2517

travis@bachrealestate.ca



Kiel Bach

PREC*

(250) 667-4182

kiel@bachrealestate.ca

THE PLACE

Why people choose the quiet

Nanoose Bay trades the bustle of town for space, trees, and water. Here is the character of the place.

Room to breathe. Larger lots, acreages, and oceanfront homes give Nanoose a green, private, semi-rural feel, with the Fairwinds community offering a more built-up, amenity-rich option within it.

Between two towns. You sit about fifteen minutes from Parksville and twenty from Nanaimo, so the shops, services, and care of two centres are close, even though your own street stays quiet.

A resort-style hub. The Fairwinds community gathers a golf course, a full marina at Schooner Cove, a wellness club with a saltwater pool, and over twenty kilometres of trails into one place.

Wild on your doorstep. Notch Hill's meadows and views, Enos Lake, Moorecroft Regional Park, and the arbutus and Garry oak bluffs make the outdoors feel like an extension of the yard.

The trade, plainly

Nanoose gives you space, trees, and quiet in exchange for fewer shops at your door. Most errands are a short drive to Parksville or Nanaimo, while Fairwinds Landing's country market and pub cover the day to day.

THE PLAIN PITCH

Your week, not your house

The thing worth buying here is not square footage, it is the pace and the setting. Here is a week that is entirely ordinary for an active retiree in Nanoose.

A FAIRLY ORDINARY WEEK

Monday: a round at Fairwinds, then lunch at the Bar and Grill.

Tuesday: a swim or a class at the Fairwinds wellness pool.

Wednesday: a Friends of Fairwinds hike, or a studio morning over in Parksville.

Thursday: out on the water from Schooner Cove, fishing or sailing.

Friday: a Notch Hill walk for the view, then friends over.

Weekend: the Parksville or Qualicum market, the garden, or a day on the boat.

The point is simple. Buy the home that puts a week like this within easy reach, and the rest of retirement mostly takes care of itself. That is the lens we shop with you.

THINGS TO DO

Fairways, water, and trails

Quiet does not mean still. A quick tour of how an active retirement actually fills its days here.

Fairwinds Golf Club NANOOSE BAY · GOLF

An 18-hole, year-round course winding through rainforest above the ocean, with a driving range and the Bar and Grill, the heart of the community since 1984.

The marina at Schooner Cove BOATING

A renovated 250-berth, full-service marina with a fuel dock, the launch point for sailing, fishing, kayaking, and crabbing on a sheltered cove.

The Fairwinds Wellness Club POOL AND COURTS

A 20,000-square-foot club with a saltwater lap pool, gym, tennis, and exercise studio, open year-round and easy on the joints.

Notch Hill and Enos Lake TRAILS AND VIEWS

Over twenty kilometres of trails, from Notch Hill's meadow views of the Strait to the quiet loops around Enos Lake, through arbutus and Garry oak.

Moorecroft and the beaches SHORELINE

Moorecroft Regional Park's gentle waterfront paths, plus Wall Beach and the swimming beach at Brickyard Bay.

Friends of Fairwinds SOCIAL AND ACTIVE

Weekly hiking and dog-walking groups, bocce, croquet, mah-jong, and more, an easy way to stay active and meet people.

THE CREATIVE SIDE

Quietly creative

Nanoose may be the quiet one, but it is far from idle on the creative front, and the full Oceanside arts scene is minutes away. People find a newcomer in quickly here, whether you arrive with years of practice or have always meant to start.

Art in the Garden NANOOSE · THE HIGHLIGHT

For more than a decade, a three-day summer art show and artisan fair has filled a ten-acre Nanoose farm with over a hundred Island makers, live music, and food, raising funds for local groups.

Nanoose Place COMMUNITY CENTRE

The community's own volunteer-run hub, with classes and special-interest groups across art and leisure, plus a volunteer-built alpine and rock garden.

The Library and Event Hall VOLUNTEER-RUN

A volunteer community library and a rentable hall, the kind of small-town gathering spot where clubs, talks, and classes happen.

Gardens, guilds, and craft nights HANDS-ON

A semi-rural place draws gardeners and makers, with rock and alpine gardens, weavers and spinners guilds nearby, and craft nights at the local cafe.

Galleries minutes away THE MAC AND TOSH

Nanoose sits inside the Oceanside arts council's area, so the McMillan Arts Centre in Parksville and The Old School House in Qualicum, with their galleries, guilds, and classes, are a short drive.

Music and theatre ON STAGE

Community theatre at the Village Theatre in Qualicum, concert series at The Old School House, and the arts council's summer festival, all close by.

MAKING IT HOME

How to stop being the new person

The quiet worry in any retirement move is not the house, it is whether you'll make friends. In a spread-out place like Nanoose you won't bump into neighbours on a sidewalk, so plugging in is a little more deliberate, and very much worth it.

Start with one thing. Pick a single regular activity in the first month: a Friends of Fairwinds hike, a class at Nanoose Place, a round at the golf club. Showing up every week is how a new place quietly becomes home.

Volunteer. Nanoose Place, the library, Art in the Garden, the Lions, and the search-and-rescue crew all run on volunteers, and it is the fastest way to meet people who already share something with you.

Bring the partner who didn't push for the move. Relocations get tested when one of you settles in and the other floats. Plan a landing spot for each of you, separately, before you arrive.

An easy first month

Join one group at Fairwinds or Nanoose Place, get out on a couple of the trails, sign up for one volunteer shift, and introduce yourself at the country market. That is usually enough to feel placed by the end of your first season.

THE HOME

Buy once, not twice

Here is the piece most retirement buyers miss. Buy for the active person you are today, and quietly for the one you'll be in twenty years. A big lot and a long driveway feel like freedom at sixty-five and like work at eighty, and staircases have the same habit, so the trick is to buy once.

The cost of moving twice. Buying again is not just a hassle, it is expensive. Sell and rebuy, and tens of thousands of dollars can vanish into commission on the sale and property transfer tax on the next purchase. A little forward planning now tends to pay for itself many times over.

One level, or one that could be. Main-floor living, with the primary bedroom, laundry, and a full bath on the entry level, is the single feature that lets a home grow old alongside you.

Match the lot to the years ahead. An acre and a workshop are a joy now. Picture the upkeep at eighty, and choose a lot, a grade, and a driveway you'll still enjoy rather than fight.

Mind the rural systems. Many Nanoose homes run on a well and septic and sit up a long or steep driveway. Ask about water, the septic field, and winter access before you fall for a place.

Low maintenance, or lock and leave. Smaller-care homes and well-run Fairwinds stratas mean more time on the trails and the water, and an easy exit if you travel or snowbird.

What we look at with you

Single-level options, step-free entries, lot grade and size, driveway and winter access, well and septic, strata rules where they apply, and the drive to errands and care. The goal is a home that suits you at sixty-five and still suits you at eighty-five.

THE GARAGE

Where the gear lives

If anywhere on the coast has room for the hobby, it is Nanoose. The boat, the trailer, the project car, the e-bikes, the kayaks, the motorhome: the trick is matching the property to what you bring.

The shop and the garage. Acreage here often allows a proper workshop, a dream for makers and mechanics. Think about depth, height, power, and room for a bench or a lift, not just two cars.

Boat, trailer, and RV. Rural lots usually have room, but Fairwinds and stratas have design guidelines, so check the rules, or simply keep the boat down at the Schooner Cove marina.

Bikes, boards, and the rest. Secure, dry storage for e-bikes, kayaks, and paddleboards is easy to overlook and a genuine nuisance to live without.

Tell us your hobbies first

If you tell us what you tow, ride, build, or store, we read every listing through that lens and rule out the homes that can't hold your life, before you waste a Saturday viewing them.

CLOSE TO CARE

Care close to hand

Active now does not mean care never matters. In Nanoose you have the quiet advantage of sitting between two centres, with care a short drive in either direction.

Urgent care to the north. The Oceanside Health Centre in Parksville, about fifteen minutes away, offers urgent care every day, with lab work, medical imaging, and mental health supports.

The hospital to the south. Nanaimo Regional General Hospital, about twenty-five minutes south, is the regional hospital for surgery and specialists.

Everyday health both ways. Pharmacies, clinics, dentists, and physiotherapy sit in both Parksville and Nanaimo. There is more detail in our separate Health Care guide.

Why this shapes the search

In a rural area the drive to care is part of the decision. Buying within an easy reach of urgent care and the hospital is the kind of choice you make once, early, while it still feels irrelevant, and are quietly grateful for later.

THE NUMBERS

A few things worth knowing

A short, retiree-specific note on the money side. None of this is financial advice, and the rules change, so confirm the current details and talk to a professional.

The home owner grant. British Columbia's home owner grant reduces property tax on a principal residence, and owners sixty-five and older can claim a larger amount, subject to an assessed-value threshold.

Property tax deferment, with a caveat. Owners fifty-five and older can apply to defer property taxes through the province while keeping at least twenty-five percent equity. As of 2026 the interest changed to prime plus two percent and now compounds, so treat it as a cash-flow tool to weigh carefully, not a free ride.

The rural costs to weigh. Acreage, a well, a septic system, and a longer commute to shops carry their own upkeep and travel costs. Set against that, there is no town lot premium and often more home for the money.

Plan the whole picture

Strata or no strata, property tax, insurance, well and septic servicing, and upkeep vary widely between a Fairwinds condo, a patio home, and a rural acreage. We'll walk through the true monthly cost of any place you're considering. Confirm current figures and programs at gov.bc.ca and with your own advisor.

THE FIRST SEASON

Landing well

- ✓ Tell us how you want to spend your week, and we'll point you to the homes and pockets that make it easy.
- ✓ Choose a home that works on one level, or could, so you buy once.
- ✓ Match the lot to the years ahead, and check the well, septic, and winter access on any rural place.
- ✓ Map the gear: shop, garage, and parking for the boat, trailer, bikes, or RV.
- ✓ Join one group at Fairwinds or Nanoose Place, and sign up for one volunteer shift in the first month.
- ✓ Register with the Health Connect Registry if you need a family doctor, and note the Oceanside Health Centre for urgent care.
- ✓ Walk Notch Hill for the view. It is the quickest way to feel why people land here.

HOW WE HELP

The life first, the house second

We're guides first. Tell us the week you want in retirement, the gear you're bringing, and whether you picture Fairwinds or a quiet acreage, and we'll match you to the right place in Nanoose, and to the people, clubs, and trails that make settling in easy.

TALK IT THROUGH WITH US



Travis Bach

REALTOR®

(250) 619-2517

travis@bachrealestate.ca



Kiel Bach

PREC*

(250) 667-4182

kiel@bachrealestate.ca

Book a 20-minute call, or explore listings and area guides at bachrealestate.ca

PLEASE NOTE

This guide is a general overview to help you plan, not financial, legal, or medical advice. Programs, facilities, hours, fees, and figures are current at the time of writing and they change, so please confirm the latest with the Regional District of Nanaimo, Island Health, gov.bc.ca, and your own advisors before you act.