



A PRACTICAL HANDBOOK FOR OCEANSIDE

Parksville and Qualicum Relocation Guide

2026 EDITION

Moving to the Oceanside coast, from two brothers who call it home.

Travis Bach and Kiel Bach
RE/MAX Professionals · Oceanside, BC

bachrealestate.ca

WELCOME

Welcome to Oceanside

There is a particular quiet here that people notice the moment they arrive. The tide pulling back for what looks like a mile, a village street you can walk end to end, mountains across the water holding the last of the light. It is an easy place to fall for. The more useful question is whether the everyday life behind that first impression is the one you are actually after.

Two homes at the same price can hand you very different lives. One sits a short stroll from the sand, the shops, and a morning coffee. Another gives you trees, acreage, and the kind of space where the loudest thing is birdsong. Neither is the right answer. They simply suit different people.

We have helped retirees and downsizers, remote workers, and young families find their footing along this coast, in Parksville, in Qualicum Beach, and across the smaller communities tucked between them. The thing we keep coming back to is that this is not one place. Every town and rural pocket keeps its own pace, its own feel, its own trade-offs.

So we wrote this for the deciding, not the selling. Inside you will find the communities laid out plainly, what it costs to live here, the move itself broken into manageable steps, and the small things people tell us they wish they had known before the truck pulled up.

What matters is whether this coast fits the life you are building. If it does, let's talk about what comes next. If it does not, you will hear that from us just as plainly.

Travis and Kiel Bach

Bach Real Estate Group · RE/MAX Professionals

YOUR CENTRAL ISLAND GUIDES



Travis Bach

REALTOR®

(250) 619-2517

travis@bachrealestate.ca



Kiel Bach

PREC*

(250) 667-4182

kiel@bachrealestate.ca

WHAT'S INSIDE

Contents

01	Is the Oceanside Coast Right for You? The question to ask before the house	4
02	Coming From Where You Are For Alberta and Lower Mainland movers	8
03	Find Your Fit: The Communities Parksville, Qualicum Beach, and around	11
04	If Oceanside Isn't the One Nanaimo, the Comox Valley, and beyond	17
05	What It Actually Costs Prices, taxes, and the full monthly picture	20
06	Making the Move Timeline, logistics, health care, working remote	24
07	Living Like a Local What nobody tells you, and where to start	28
08	How We Help What working with us looks like	31
	The 90-Day Checklist Print it, pin it to the fridge	Back

Section dividers are not numbered; the page number is on the first page of each part.

PART ONE

Is the Oceanside Coast Right for You?

Before the house, the question that matters most: does this life fit you?

PART ONE · THE BASICS

Oceanside at a glance

Parksville and Qualicum Beach sit on the east coast of Vancouver Island, about half an hour north of Nanaimo, in the stretch locals call Oceanside. Together with the smaller communities around them, they make up a quieter, beach-town corner of the mid-island, built around some of the best sand on the coast.

THE REGION

Oceanside, mid-Island

THE TWO TOWNS

About 24,000 together

TO NANAIMO

About 30 minutes

TO VANCOUVER

Ferry from Nanaimo

AIRPORTS

Nanaimo and Comox

WINTERS

Mild, usually above 0°C

Getting around. The big advantage here is location. Nanaimo, with its hospital, shopping, ferries, and airport, is about thirty minutes south. The Comox Valley is roughly an hour north, and Port Alberni and the wild west coast lie to the west. Highway 19 runs the length of the island just inland, so the rest of the coast stays easy to reach.

Climate. Oceanside has one of the mildest, sunniest climates in the country. Winters mostly stay above freezing and snow is uncommon, while summers settle into the comfortable low to mid twenties. Parksville alone logs over two thousand hours of sunshine a year. You trade a wet, grey stretch from late fall into spring for a long, easy outdoor season.

Health care and schools. The Oceanside Health Centre in Parksville offers urgent care, lab, and medical imaging, with the regional hospital in Nanaimo about thirty minutes away. There are public and French immersion schools in both towns, and Vancouver Island University's campuses in Nanaimo and beyond are an easy commute.

PART ONE · THE DRAW

Why people end up here

Everybody's reason is a little different. A slower pace after years in a big city, more time by the water, a milder winter, a beach to walk every morning. For many people it is the feeling that they have earned a quieter chapter, and for a growing number of young families, it is room to grow up near the ocean.

The beach is the centre of life. This stretch of coast is famous for its sand. When the tide pulls out at Rathtrevor it leaves warm, shallow flats that go on for what feels like forever, and summers here revolve around the water, walking it, swimming it, paddling it, or just watching the light change over the Strait.

A genuinely slower pace. Life here moves slower than Nanaimo, let alone Vancouver or Calgary. The towns are small and walkable, errands are quick, and you are rarely more than a few minutes from a trail, a garden, or the shore. You still get the shops, the services, and good food, just with far less of the grind.

Room for the life you want. From walkable village homes and oceanfront condos to acreage and hobby farms just inland, the area covers a wide range. The point is matching the home to the life you are after, rather than taking whatever happens to be available.

An active retirement, not a slow one. Oceanside made its name on retirement, but the retirement here looks nothing like it used to. The pickleball courts are full, the rec centres are busy, and there is a genuine social scene. Parksville has the Oceanside Place arena, and Qualicum Beach the Ravensong Aquatic Centre, with its pool, gym, and wellness programs. The homes have followed suit: patio homes, ranchers, and bungalows built for easy single-level living.

Families are part of the mix now. For all the retirement talk, both towns have worked to bring in young families, and it shows in the schools, the playgrounds, and the sports leagues. The community keeps broadening, and you will find the quiet and the school run side by side.

“

The beach sets the pace here. Most people slow down to match it within a week.

PART ONE · WORTH KNOWING

What are the trade-offs?

Most guides talk up the beaches and the ocean views, and those hold up. The trade-offs are worth knowing before you arrive, not after. None are deal-breakers for most people, but worth going in with eyes open.

OCEANSIDE MIGHT NOT BE FOR YOU IF

You need a family doctor tomorrow. Register with the Health Connect Registry early. There is urgent care in Parksville and a hospital in Nanaimo, but landing a permanent GP can take time.

You want big-city everything. The job market is small, nightlife is limited, and some shopping, appointments, and services mean a trip into Nanaimo. Remote work solves much of this.

You can't stand grey winters. It is mild, not cold, but it is wet and overcast from late fall into spring. The people who do best simply keep going outside anyway.

You want a fast-growing market town. The pace is quiet by design. That is the appeal for most people who move here, but it is worth being sure it is what you want.

A note on safety. People always ask whether a place is safe. Oceanside is quieter than a city, but it is still pocket-dependent, changing from one street to the next, even between two parts of the same community. We are glad to walk you through the specific pocket of any area you are considering.

Want a feel for the area before you visit? See our community tours at youtube.com/@bachrealestate

PART TWO

Coming From Where You Are

Two very different starting points. Here is what changes for each.

PART TWO · FROM ALBERTA

If you're coming from Alberta

Most of the people we help come from one of two places, and the move feels a little different depending on which. If you are leaving Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer, Airdrie, or Cochrane, here is what tends to change.

Your equity comes with you. Many Alberta sellers arrive with strong buying power. The thing to plan for is the set of BC-specific costs that show up at closing, the Property Transfer Tax in particular. We walk through the exact numbers in the Costs section so nothing catches you off guard.

A few systems to set up. Some things run differently here. BC adds a provincial sales tax on top of GST, your vehicle insurance moves to ICBC, and your health coverage switches to MSP. None of it is complicated, it just takes a few forms, and the sooner you start, the smoother the landing.

The weather trade. You are swapping snow and deep cold for rain and grey. Winters here rarely drop below freezing, so the adjustment is not really the temperature, it is the stretch of overcast months from late fall to spring. The payoff is a much longer, sunnier season for being outside.

Staying connected. Getting back is easy. The Comox Valley airport (YQQ), about an hour north, and Nanaimo (YCD), about thirty minutes south, both have direct WestJet flights to Calgary and Edmonton, so trips home, and family flying out to visit, are simple.

WHAT ALBERTA MOVERS TELL US THEY WISH THEY'D KNOWN

- Apply for MSP (BC's health plan) as soon as you have a move date.
- Switch to ICBC within 90 days of arriving in BC.
- Budget the Property Transfer Tax. It is a meaningful line at closing, not a rounding error.
- Most homes here heat and cool with a heat pump, not a gas furnace, a small but noticeable adjustment.

PART TWO · FROM THE LOWER MAINLAND

If you're coming from the Lower Mainland

If you are leaving Vancouver, North Vancouver, Surrey, Langley, Abbotsford, the Tri-Cities, or anywhere in the valley, your move is less about new paperwork and more about pace and space. You already know how BC works.

You know the systems already. ICBC, MSP, the Property Transfer Tax, the wet winters, none of that is new to you. So the larger adjustment is the rhythm of daily life, not the paperwork.

More room, less grind. Most people making this move are trading density and long commutes for space and quiet. Buyers are often surprised how much further the same budget goes here, and how much time they get back when the commute shrinks to minutes.

Your equity goes a long way here. Selling in the Lower Mainland, and especially somewhere like North Vancouver, often means arriving with strong buying power. Plenty of people trade up in space and comfort and still put a meaningful amount back in the bank. It is one of the biggest changes movers tell us about.

You're not cutting ties. The mainland stays close. The Hullo passenger ferry, BC Ferries, and Harbour Air seaplanes all run out of Nanaimo, half an hour south, so a day trip to Vancouver or a family visit is realistic. Plenty of people keep work or family connections over there and settle into the back-and-forth quickly.

What to weigh. The pace here is slower and quieter than even Nanaimo, and the job market is small. If a busy scene is what energizes you, think that part through. For remote workers, retirees, or anyone happy to head over now and then, it tends to be an easy trade.

WHAT LOWER MAINLAND MOVERS TELL US THEY WISH THEY'D KNOWN

- The ferry becomes routine faster than you would think. Most people use it less than they expected to.
- Pick your pocket carefully if walkability matters. Qualicum Beach village and central Parksville are the walkable ones; much of the area is car-first.
- If you are changing jobs, plan around a small local market, or keep remote work.
- You can still be at YVR or downtown Vancouver in a morning when you need to be.

PART THREE

Find Your Fit The Communities

Most people don't start with a house. They start with how they want to live.

PART THREE · START HERE

The Fit Check

Before you look at a single listing, work through these ten questions. There are no wrong answers; they just point you toward the parts of Oceanside most likely to suit you. Fill it in, then use the key on the next page to see where to start.

01 Where are you moving from?

02 Working remotely or commuting?

Remote

Commuting

A mix

03 Kids at home?

Yes

No

04 What's your budget range?

05 Walkability or privacy?

Walkability

Privacy

A bit of both

06 Is an ocean view important?

Must-have

Nice-to-have

Not needed

07 Do you want acreage or space?

Yes

No

08 New home or character home?

New

Character

Either

09 Busy lifestyle or a slower pace?

Busy

Slower

In between

10 How often will you head to the mainland?

Weekly

Monthly

Rarely

PART THREE · THE KEY

Where to start looking

Take what you wrote down and match it to the priorities below. These are the same starting points we would give you in person. Most people land between two or three communities; that is normal, and a good place to begin.

If beach summers and walking to the sand matter most

Parksville beachfront · Qualicum Beach waterfront · the Rathtrevor area

If you want a walkable village with shops and cafes

Qualicum Beach village · central Parksville

If golf and a calmer oceanfront appeal

Nanoose Bay · Qualicum Beach waterfront

If you're after acreage, privacy, or a hobby farm

Errington · Coombs · Whiskey Creek and Hilliers · Dashwood

If a marina and an easy spot between the towns suit you

French Creek

If you want rural oceanfront and the quietest pace

Qualicum Bay · Bowser · Deep Bay

If you're keeping an eye on the budget

Whiskey Creek and Hilliers · Errington · parts of Parksville

Want listings and a closer look? Talk it through with us, or explore at bachrealestate.ca

PART THREE · SIDE BY SIDE

The communities at a glance

A quick comparison across the Oceanside communities. Views and walkability use a simple three-dot scale, and prices are relative within the area, not the wider market. Your fit depends on the specific pocket as much as the community, so treat this as a starting point.

COMMUNITY	BEST FOR	VIEWS	WALK	PRICE
PARKSVILLE AREA				
Parksville	Beach, services, family and retiree mix	● ● ○	● ● ○	\$\$
Parksville beachfront	Steps to the sand, oceanfront homes	● ● ●	● ● ○	\$\$\$
French Creek	Marina, handy between the towns	● ● ○	● ○ ○	\$\$
QUALICUM BEACH				
Qualicum Beach village	Walkable heritage core, shops, cafes	● ○ ○	● ● ●	\$\$\$
Qualicum Beach waterfront	Quiet, oceanfront, sought-after	● ● ●	● ● ○	\$\$\$
BETWEEN AND RURAL				
NanOOSE Bay	Oceanfront, Fairwinds golf, treed lots	● ● ●	● ○ ○	\$\$\$
Errington	Rural, acreage, forested and private	● ○ ○	● ○ ○	\$\$
Coombs	Rural character, the famous market	● ○ ○	● ○ ○	\$\$
Dashwood	Quiet residential, between the towns	● ○ ○	● ○ ○	\$\$
Whiskey Creek and Hilliers	Rural, larger lots, more attainable	● ○ ○	● ○ ○	\$/\$\$
THE NORTHERN COAST				
Qualicum Bay, Bowser, Deep Bay	Rural oceanfront, the quietest stretch	● ● ○	● ○ ○	\$\$

See most of these areas on video: youtube.com/@bachrealestate

PART THREE · A CLOSER LOOK

Parksville and Qualicum Beach

THE TWO TOWNS, AND JUST BETWEEN THEM

Parksville BEACH TOWN, FULL OF LIFE

The larger of the two towns, built around its beach. Rathtrevor and the community park anchor the summers, the services are all here, and the housing runs from walkable in-town homes to oceanfront. It is the busier, more family-leaning of the pair, and the centre of active retirement on the coast: pickleball, the Oceanside Place arena, and plenty of patio homes, ranchers, and bungalows.

MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOU IF

- ✓ You want the beach and the services close, without a city around them
- ✓ You're a family or a downsizer who likes a bit of life nearby
- ✓ A mix of in-town convenience and beach access suits you

Qualicum Beach REFINED VILLAGE CALM

Just up the coast, Qualicum Beach is quieter and more polished: a walkable village core, heritage streets, gardens, galleries, and golf close at hand, with sought-after homes along the waterfront. The Ravensong Aquatic Centre brings a pool, gym, and wellness programs right into the village, and it has long drawn people looking to slow down somewhere that still feels cared for.

MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOU IF

- ✓ You want a calm, walkable village with a genuine sense of community
- ✓ You're drawn to the arts, gardens, or golf more than nightlife
- ✓ Peace and quiet rank higher for you than a busy main street

French Creek and Nanoose Bay MARINA LIFE AND OCEANFRONT GOLF

Between the towns, French Creek centres on its marina and seafood, while Nanoose Bay, closer to Nanaimo, is home to the master-planned Fairwinds and Schooner Cove communities: ocean-view homes set beside a championship golf course, a full marina, and a wellness centre, all at a quiet pace of their own.

MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOU IF

- ✓ You boat, golf, or want an ocean-view home with a little more land
- ✓ A master-planned community with its own amenities appeals
- ✓ You'd like to sit between Oceanside and Nanaimo's services

PART THREE · A CLOSER LOOK

The rural side and the northern coast

INLAND AND UP THE COAST

Errington and Coombs ACREAGE AND COUNTRY CHARACTER

A short drive inland, Errington and Coombs are rural and forested, with acreage, hobby farms, and a relaxed, country feel, Coombs anchored by its famous market with goats grazing on the roof.

MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOU IF

- ✓ You want land, privacy, or room for animals and a garden
- ✓ A longer run for groceries is a fair trade for space and quiet
- ✓ You work from home or are easing into a rural retirement

Dashwood, Whiskey Creek and Hilliers QUIET, LARGER LOTS, BETTER VALUE

These rural pockets between the towns and the highway tend to offer larger lots and more attainable prices than the waterfront, while keeping you close to both Parksville and Qualicum Beach.

MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOU IF

- ✓ You want more home and land for the budget
- ✓ You're happy a few minutes from town rather than in it
- ✓ Quiet, treed surroundings appeal more than walkability

Qualicum Bay, Bowser and Deep Bay RURAL OCEANFRONT, SLOWED RIGHT DOWN

North of Qualicum the coast opens up and the pace drops further. This stretch is rural and oceanfront, with more land between neighbours and a fishing-and-shellfish rhythm to the water.

MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOU IF

- ✓ You're after a spot on or near the water, well away from any bustle
- ✓ Acreage or oceanfront at a gentler price appeals
- ✓ The quietest pace on this coast is exactly the point

Send us your Fit Check answers and we will point you to the pockets worth a closer look. Book a quick call at calendar.app.google, or call Travis (250) 619-2517 or Kiel (250) 667-4182.

PART FOUR

If Oceanside Isn't the One

Four mid-island options worth a look, from Nanaimo to the Comox Valley and beyond.

PART FOUR · IF OCEANSIDE ISN'T THE ONE

A bigger town, or a bit further north

Sometimes the right fit is near Oceanside rather than in it. The mid-island has options in every direction, each with its own pace and price. Here are a few worth a look, a larger town just south, a valley to the north, and a couple of further-out alternatives. We work across all of them, so if one pulls at you, we can take you through it in more detail.

SOUTH AND NORTH · NANAIMO AND THE COMOX VALLEY

Nanaimo THE FULL-SERVICE HUB, 30 MIN SOUTH

The central island's hub, with the hospital, the ferries, the airport, and the widest range of housing and prices. A single-family benchmark near \$815,000 sits below Oceanside, and the choice runs from walkable heritage pockets to acreage.

MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOU IF

- ✓ You want city services, a hospital, and the ferries close at hand
- ✓ A wider range of homes and entry points matters to you
- ✓ You'll cross to the mainland often and want to live near the terminals

The Comox Valley MOUNTAINS, OCEAN, AND AN AIRPORT

About an hour north, Courtenay, Comox, and Cumberland sit between the Strait and the ski runs at Mount Washington, with their own airport (YQQ) flying direct to Alberta. A single-family benchmark near \$871,000 runs close to Oceanside, with more of a four-season feel.

MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOU IF

- ✓ You ski, or you want mountains and ocean in one place
- ✓ An airport with direct Alberta flights nearby is a strong draw
- ✓ You'd like a slightly larger community with its own momentum

PART FOUR · IF OCEANSIDE ISN'T THE ONE

West, and a little further south

PORT ALBERNI AND THE COWICHAN VALLEY

Port Alberni AFFORDABLE, OUTDOORSY, WEST-COAST GATEWAY

Inland at the head of its inlet, about forty-five minutes west through Cathedral Grove, Port Alberni is by far the most attainable choice, a single-family benchmark near \$508,000. It is a fishing-and-forestry town and the gateway to Tofino and the wild west coast.

MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOU IF

- ✓ Budget is the priority, and you'll trade beachfront for value
- ✓ You love fishing, rivers, lakes, and the outdoors
- ✓ The pull of the west coast is strong and you want a base

The Cowichan Valley WINE, FARMS, AND A WARMER CLIMATE

South past Nanaimo, the Cowichan Valley around Duncan is the warmest, driest corner of the coast, and its wine and farm country. A single-family benchmark near \$790,000 stretches a budget further than the Oceanside waterfront, and it sits midway between Nanaimo and Victoria.

MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOU IF

- ✓ Valley living pulls at you: wine, farms, rivers, a warmer climate
- ✓ You want to sit between Nanaimo and Victoria without choosing one
- ✓ Value and a bit of land matter more than ocean at the door

Thinking about one of these? Book a quick call and we will tell you what each place feels like to live in: calendar.app.google

PART FIVE

What It Actually Costs

Prices, the taxes that surprise people, and the math beyond the purchase price.

PART FIVE · WHAT IT ACTUALLY COSTS

What your budget buys

Prices on the island shift through the year, so treat these as a snapshot rather than a quote; we will always pull the current numbers for the home and area you are looking at. As of spring 2026, here is roughly where the Oceanside market sits.

SINGLE-FAMILY HOME

About \$924,000

TOWNHOUSE

About \$553,000

CONDO / APARTMENT

About \$408,000

Parksville-Qualicum single-family benchmark; board-wide townhouse and condo (VIREB MLS® Home Price Index, May 2026). A benchmark is a typical home of that type, not the cheapest or the priciest.

What that means in practice. Parksville and Qualicum Beach run higher than most of the island for single-family homes, the beach, the climate, and the steady draw of buyers from away all push the number up. A condo or townhouse sits well below it, and the community and pocket you choose move the price as much as the house itself.

How nearby areas compare. If the Oceanside single-family number feels tight, looking a little further can stretch it. Nanaimo runs near \$815,000, the Cowichan Valley to the south near \$790,000, and Port Alberni to the west closer to \$508,000. It is one more reason the communities in the last section are worth a look.

Want the current number for a specific home or area? Ask us: [calendar.app.google](#)

PART FIVE · WHAT IT ACTUALLY COSTS

The Property Transfer Tax

This is the tax newcomers most often forget to budget for. It is a one-time tax paid at closing, based on the home's fair market value, and it applies to almost every purchase. The rate is 1% on the first \$200,000, then 2% on the portion up to \$2,000,000, with higher tiers above that.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE ON A HOME AROUND \$924,000

1% on the first \$200,000	\$2,000
2% on the next \$724,000	\$14,480

Property Transfer Tax	about \$16,500
-----------------------	----------------

First-time buyers. There is an exemption, but it is narrower than people expect. It fully covers a home up to \$500,000, drops to a reduction of up to \$8,000 between \$500,000 and \$835,000, and phases out by \$860,000. The catch for newcomers: you need to be a citizen or permanent resident and either have lived in BC for a full year or filed two BC tax returns, so many people arriving from out of province do not qualify at first. See the rules at gov.bc.ca.

Newly built homes. A separate exemption covers brand-new homes fully up to \$1,100,000, and it is not limited to first-time buyers. If it is your principal residence, repeat buyers can use it too.

THE SHORT VERSION

- Budget the Property Transfer Tax as a meaningful line at closing, not a rounding error.
- On a typical Oceanside single-family home that is often in the \$15,000 to \$18,000 range, unless an exemption applies to you.

PART FIVE · WHAT IT ACTUALLY COSTS

What else to budget for

THE SPECULATION AND VACANCY TAX

Parksville and Qualicum Beach were both brought into the province's Speculation and Vacancy Tax zone in 2025. If the home is your principal residence you will not owe it, but here is the part that trips people up: every owner has to file a short declaration each year, by March 31, even when fully exempt.

Miss the declaration and you can be billed as though the home sat empty, so set a yearly reminder. For anyone who does owe, a vacant second home, for instance, the rate as of 2026 is 1% of assessed value for citizens and permanent residents. Declare or read more at gov.bc.ca.

WHAT TO SET ASIDE, BEYOND THE PRICE

- One-time, at closing: the Property Transfer Tax, legal or notary fees, a home inspection, an appraisal if your lender asks for one, and mortgage default insurance if your down payment is under 20%.
- Every month: your mortgage, municipal property tax, home insurance, utilities, and a strata fee if you buy a condo or townhouse. Most homes here run on a heat pump, which keeps heating and cooling lower than a gas furnace.

Financing. Most buyers put down between 5% and 20%. Under 20%, your lender adds mortgage default insurance to the loan. What you qualify for, and the rate you are offered, move with the market, so a pre-approval early on is worth it; it tells you what you can actually spend before you fall for a place. We are glad to point you to island mortgage brokers we trust.

We are REALTORS®, not accountants or lawyers, so treat these as planning numbers and confirm the specifics with a mortgage broker, notary, or accountant. We will gladly run the current figures for any home you are weighing.

Book a quick call to talk numbers: calendar.app.google

PART SIX

Making the Move

The countdown, island logistics, health care, and working from the coast.

PART SIX · MAKING THE MOVE

The countdown

A move to the island has a rhythm to it. Here is the shape of the last three months, so nothing important gets left to the week you are loading the truck. Your situation will shift the details, we will build a plan around yours, but this is the backbone.

90 DAYS OUT

- ☐ Get pre-approved and lock in what you can actually spend, Property Transfer Tax included.
- ☐ Start the search with us and narrow your communities. Your Fit Check is the head start.
- ☐ If you're selling first, get your current home on the market.
- ☐ Book a mover early. Island dates fill up fast, especially through summer.

60 DAYS OUT

- ☐ Register with the Health Connect Registry for a family doctor. The wait can be long, so start now.
- ☐ Once you're in offers, line up financing and book your home inspection.
- ☐ Give notice at work or to your landlord, and book your moving-week ferry or flights.
- ☐ If you have kids, sort schools and request their records.

30 DAYS OUT

- ☐ Confirm completion and possession dates with your notary or lawyer.
- ☐ Set up utilities, internet, and a mail forward to the new place.
- ☐ Plan your switch to ICBC. You have 90 days from arriving to move your vehicle over.
- ☐ Start a change-of-address list: banks, the CRA, subscriptions, the works.

MOVING WEEK

- ☐ Apply for MSP as soon as you're a resident, and keep your old provincial plan running through the wait.
- ☐ Do the final walk-through, then pick up the keys.
- ☐ Sort your BC Services Card at an ICBC driver licensing office.
- ☐ Take the first week easy. Find the kettle, find the beach, breathe.

PART SIX · MAKING THE MOVE

Getting on and off the island

Oceanside's quiet advantage is that Nanaimo's transport links are only about half an hour south. Whether it is a meeting in Vancouver or family flying in, here are the options and roughly how long each takes.

OPTION	GOOD FOR	ROUGHLY
BC Ferries	Vehicles and passengers, Departure Bay to Horseshoe Bay	1.5 to 2 hrs
BC Ferries	Vehicles and passengers, Duke Point to Tsawwassen	About 2 hrs
Hullo	Foot passengers, downtown Nanaimo to downtown Vancouver	About 70 min
Harbour Air	Seaplane, Nanaimo Harbour to downtown Vancouver	About 20 min
Qualicum (XQU)	Small local airport, limited scheduled flights to Vancouver	Varies
Nanaimo / Comox	WestJet, including direct to Calgary and Edmonton	Varies

What it means for a commute. The ferry terminals and the Hullo are about thirty minutes south in Nanaimo, so the back-and-forth takes a little planning but settles into a routine. The Hullo and Harbour Air make a day trip to Vancouver realistic, and a hybrid schedule of a couple of mainland days works well for many. For a daily downtown commute, weigh it carefully.

Heading back to Alberta. If family is in Calgary or Edmonton, two airports have you covered with direct WestJet flights: Comox (YQQ) about an hour north, and Nanaimo (YCD) about thirty minutes south, no connection through Vancouver required.

PRO TIP: THE ASSURED LOADING CARD

- If you'll be crossing often and can't always reserve, BC Ferries sells an Assured Loading card. It costs more than a standard fare, but it guarantees you a spot as long as you present the card at least twenty minutes before the scheduled sailing, no reservation needed, which makes it a commuter favourite. Check bcferries.com for current routes and pricing, since the terms change.

PART SIX · MAKING THE MOVE

Health care, and working from here

GETTING SET UP WITH CARE

Find a family doctor early. Register with the provincial Health Connect Registry as soon as you have a move date. It is the wait-list that matches you with a family doctor or nurse practitioner, and the wait can be long, so the sooner you are on it the better.

Where to go in the meantime. The Oceanside Health Centre in Parksville handles urgent care on a walk-in basis, and has lab and medical imaging on site. It is not a full hospital, though. For emergencies, the regional hospital is Nanaimo Regional General Hospital, about thirty minutes south, with other emergency departments in the Comox Valley and Port Alberni.

Sort out MSP. Apply for BC's Medical Services Plan the day you become a resident. You can apply right away, and coverage begins after a wait of the rest of your arrival month plus two more. Coming from another province, keep your current health plan active through that gap. Coming from outside Canada, arrange private coverage for it.

WORKING REMOTELY

The connection is solid in town. Parksville and Qualicum Beach have fast, reliable internet. In the rural pockets, though, Errington, Coombs, and the northern coast, it is worth checking the specific address before you commit, since service can change road to road.

You're on west-coast time. Pacific time keeps you lined up with Vancouver, Seattle, and California, so staying in sync with a west-coast team is easy. For anyone splitting time with the mainland, the ferry-and-seaplane mix out of Nanaimo makes a hybrid week realistic.

HOWEVER YOUR MOVE SHAPES UP

- Every move has its own moving parts: a sale to time, kids to settle, a remote job to keep humming. Tell us your timeline and we will build the countdown around it. Book a quick call whenever you are ready.

PART SEVEN

Living Like a Local

The things you only learn once you live here, and where to start.

PART SEVEN · LIVING LIKE A LOCAL

What nobody tells you

Every place has a few things you only pick up once you live there. Here is what we would tell a friend moving to Oceanside, so none of it catches you sideways.

It moves at a small-town pace. Parksville and Qualicum Beach are small, and they feel it, in the best way most days, and the occasional frustrating one. The everyday essentials are here, but bigger shopping, some appointments, and a wider choice of restaurants mean a half-hour run into Nanaimo.

It's a driving area. Outside the village cores, life is spread along the coast and transit is limited, so most households need a car. Qualicum Beach village and central Parksville are the walkable exceptions, worth knowing if you would rather not drive for a coffee.

The winters are grey, not cold. Snow is rare and short-lived, but the run from late fall into spring is wet and overcast. This is one of the sunniest spots in the country over the year as a whole, and the people who love it here just keep going outside anyway.

Summers are glorious, and busy. The beaches, the sand-sculpting festival, and the warm tidal flats draw crowds from July into August. It is a wonderful time to live here, but book campsites, restaurants, and long-weekend ferry sailings well ahead.

It has long drawn retirees, and that's shifting. Oceanside has a settled, older feel that many people move here for. But both towns are working to bring in young families, so you will find a broadening mix, the quiet and the playgrounds both.

Safety is pocket-dependent. It is quieter than a city, but whether a spot is safe still changes street to street. We are glad to walk you through the specific pocket of anywhere you are considering.

PART SEVEN · LIVING LIKE A LOCAL

Go do these

When people ask how to settle in, our answer is simple: get outside and start exploring. Here is a short list to find your feet, the kind of thing that turns a new place into home.

ON THE BEACH

Walk Rathtrevor Beach when the tide is out and the warm, shallow flats stretch on forever. Spend a lazy afternoon at Parksville Community Beach, and in summer come see the world-class sand sculptures at the Parksville Beach Festival, which runs through July and August.

IN THE PARKS AND ON THE TRAILS

Chase the waterfalls at Englishman River Falls and Little Qualicum Falls. Wander the woodland and gardens at Milner Gardens and Woodland in Qualicum Beach. And stand among the giants in the old-growth at Cathedral Grove, a short drive west toward Port Alberni.

IN THE TOWNS

Stroll the walkable village core and Saturday farmers market in Qualicum Beach, take in a show at The Old School House Arts Centre, and browse the shops and waterfront in Parksville. Both towns reward slowing down.

WORTH THE DRIVE

Visit the Coombs Old Country Market, where goats graze on the roof in summer. Go caving at Horne Lake Caves, or play a round at Fairwinds, Morningstar, Eaglecrest, or Pheasant Glen. Nanaimo's bigger shopping and the Hullo to Vancouver are half an hour south, and Mount Washington is your ski hill in winter.

We keep a running list of local favourites: the trails, the food, the events worth your time.

Just ask: [calendar.app.google](#)

PART EIGHT

How We Help

What working with us looks like, and how to reach us when you're ready.

PART EIGHT · HOW WE HELP

What working with us looks like

We built this guide because the biggest mistake we see is choosing a house before choosing the life. Our work is helping you get that order right: understand the fit first, then find the home that delivers it. Here is what that looks like in practice.

We start with the fit, not the listings. We begin with how you want to live: the Fit Check, the pockets, the trade-offs, so the search is pointed from the first day instead of scattered across whatever pops up online.

We know the pockets, not just the town. Feel, value, and safety change street to street here. We will walk you through the specific pocket of anywhere you are considering, so you are choosing with the full picture.

We'll tell you when it isn't a fit. If a place, or even Oceanside itself, might not be right for the life you are after, we will say so, even if that means pointing you south to Nanaimo or somewhere else on the island. We will lay out the trade-offs plainly: what works, what does not, and what to weigh. The call is always yours.

We help with the move, not just the deal. From pre-approval and inspections to ferries, MSP, and the ninety-day countdown, we help you line up the whole thing, not just the paperwork at the end.

We're local, and we're not going anywhere. We live here, raise our families here, and you will run into us long after the keys change hands. Your move is the start of the relationship, not the end of it.

Relocating? Here's how we work the distance

Most of the people we work with are moving from somewhere else, so we have shaped how we work around exactly that: making a move from a distance feel simple.

We meet you at the ferry. Hop the Hullo over from downtown Vancouver and we will pick you up on the Nanaimo side, then drive you the half hour up to Oceanside. It saves you the cost and time of bringing a car across, and we make the most of the day from the moment you land.

We build the day around you. We map out a tour of homes that fit your Fit Check, then work in stops that give you a feel for the area: a beach, a coffee spot, the school run, the drive you would actually make. You leave knowing how it feels to live there, not just what the houses look like.

Two brothers, no hand-offs. We are a small team by design. You work with the two of us start to finish, never passed to an assistant or an agent you have never met the way it can go with bigger teams. You get two people who know your search inside out and want the same thing you do.

We're easy to reach. We are available by phone and text, and most questions get an answer within minutes. Either way, you have our word on it: we will always get back to you within two hours.

See it before you come over. Our YouTube channel is made for people relocating: neighbourhood tours and area walk-throughs that give you a feel for the mid-island long before you get on the ferry.
youtube.com/@bachrealestate

PART EIGHT · HOW WE HELP

What you get with us

The practical things we set up and handle, so your search runs smoothly from wherever you are starting.

- ✓ Custom home searches built to your criteria, with new listings sent to you the moment they hit the market.
- ✓ A first look at new and off-market listings, so you're not always playing catch-up.
- ✓ Live video walkthroughs of any home, so you can shortlist from a distance before you fly over.
- ✓ A full market analysis on every offer. We pull the comparables so you know whether the price is on point. The decision is always yours; our job is making sure you have the right information to make it.
- ✓ A vetted local network at your fingertips: mortgage brokers, notaries, inspectors, movers, and trades we trust.
- ✓ Coordination of the two-market shuffle: timing the sale where you are with the purchase here.
- ✓ Help finding a rental or a place to land if you arrive before you've bought.
- ✓ Help with the things that matter once you're here: schools, the commute, getting settled, and we're still around long after the keys change hands.

What clients say

We are proud of the people we have helped land on the island. A few words from them, with plenty more on our Google profile.

“

I couldn't recommend Travis more highly. Calm, helpful, and completely down-to-earth.

Beth H. · Nanaimo

“

Working with Kiel and the Bach Real Estate Group was an absolute game-changer.

Alicia G. · Nanaimo

[Read more reviews on Google](#)

When you're ready, let's talk

Whether you are months out or ready to look this weekend, we would love to help you find your fit on the mid-island. Reach out however suits you, a call, an email, or grab a time that works for you.



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 neighbourhood guides at bachrealestate.ca

Follow along: [Instagram](#) · [Facebook](#) · [YouTube](#)

Welcome to the mid-island. Let's find your place in it.

OCEANSIDE RELOCATION · COMPANION CHECKLIST

The 90-Day Move Checklist

Print it, pin it to the fridge.

A move to the island has a rhythm to it. Here is the shape of the last three months, so nothing important gets left to the week you load the truck.

90 DAYS OUT

- ☐ Get pre-approved and lock in what you can actually spend, Property Transfer Tax included.
- ☐ Start the search with us and narrow your communities. Your Fit Check is the head start.
- ☐ If you're selling first, get your current home on the market.
- ☐ Book a mover early. Island dates fill up fast, especially through summer.

60 DAYS OUT

- ☐ Register with the Health Connect Registry for a family doctor. The wait can be long, so start now.
- ☐ Once you're in offers, line up financing and book your home inspection.
- ☐ Give notice at work or to your landlord, and book your moving-week ferry or flights.
- ☐ If you have kids, sort schools and request their records.

30 DAYS OUT

- ☐ Confirm completion and possession dates with your notary or lawyer.
- ☐ Set up utilities, internet, and a mail forward to the new place.
- ☐ Plan your switch to ICBC. You have 90 days from arriving to move your vehicle over.
- ☐ Start a change-of-address list: banks, the CRA, subscriptions, the works.

MOVING WEEK

- ☐ Apply for MSP as soon as you're a resident, and keep your old provincial plan running through the wait.
- ☐ Do the final walk-through, then pick up the keys.
- ☐ Sort your BC Services Card at an ICBC driver licensing office.
- ☐ Take the first week easy. Find the kettle, find the beach, breathe.



Travis Bach
REALTOR®
(250) 619-2517
travis@bachrealestate.ca



Kiel Bach
PREC*
(250) 667-4182
kiel@bachrealestate.ca