

SHOP 'TIL YOU DROP IN BURNABY

Whether you're coming to Burnaby to work, rest or play, you'll want to take some time for a little – or a lot of – shopping. When you do, make sure to leave your watch at home. Never mind hours – it will take days to cover all of the city's exceptional range of shopping experiences.

From palatial shopping centres to charming retail districts and boutique art galleries, the city's merchants take you above and beyond – making shopping in Burnaby a memorable and worthwhile adventure.

One of the city's most prominent retail mall establishments is Metropolis at Metrotown – the largest shopping and entertainment complex in the province with nearly 500 shops and services, 16 movie theatres and a range of dining experiences.

As a shopper's paradise, Metropolis has it all – rare jewellery, popular handbags, uber-stylish yoga apparel, basic work boots, cool gizmos, essential tools ... if you can imagine it, Metropolis has it. (It really is shop 'til you drop.) After working up a hunger in traversing one end of this shopping "palace" to the other, you'll need to refuel. When you do, make sure to visit any number of the mall's diverse restaurants – or visit the colourful food court, the world's largest with seating for 1,000. No matter what you're in the mood for, Metropolis is sure to have it.

And at the end of your shopping day (or even in the middle) when your feet ache and you're shopped out – just temporarily, of course – and you just need to sit for a spell ... the Silvercity Metropolis Theatre's massive screens and comfy chairs await you. Grab some sustenance in the form of chicken strips, a bucket of buttery pop corn and a refreshing drink, lounge in one of the oversized movie-theatre chairs and prepare to be entertained. With 10 huge screens showing the latest Hollywood flicks, there's always something worth seeing.

While in Burnaby, you should also take some time to go to the charming Heights area – one of the city's most unique, outdoor shopping experiences reflecting the city's diversity. Located in the distinct and historic area of Hastings Street, the Heights District is known for its quaint stores and one-of-a-kind shops. Here, it's easy to spend an entire day strolling the character-filled sidewalks that lead to some of the city's best Italian bakeries, cafes and specialty stores. Stop by Brown's Books and say hello to Roger, or visit Marlene at Essential Oil Techniques to learn the true healing powers of oils such as eucalyptus and peppermint. Then make sure to grab a bite at one of the area's Italian cafes, Greek "taverns," sushi bars – or any of the area's diverse eateries.

For authentic African art outside of Africa – look no farther than Burnaby. Art, culture and retail spaces are wonderfully combined at the Cornerstone Gallery in the city's university district. Browse the gallery for authentic African artwork and artful pieces, such as jewelry, rugs, ceramics, pottery and the world-famous Shona Stone Sculptures. Originating more than 2,000 years ago in Zimbabwe, Shona Stone Sculptures are recognized for their remarkable impressions of human spirit that are captured forever in beautiful stone pieces. Shona Sculpture has evolved gracefully through hundreds of generations, as the craftsmanship and skillful techniques are passed from elder generations to younger ones. As an art form, it is part of the most prominent contemporary movement ever to emerge from Africa.

Just a warning, though. Once you enter the Cornerstone Gallery, you may find yourself bedazzled and seduced by the beautiful, warm and rich colours and textures of the art that surrounds you – jewelry, vases, pottery, rugs, and the list goes on. But at this gallery, you can actually take the art home with you.

From extravagant shopping centres to quaint shopping areas to authentic art retailers, Burnaby is a shopper's dream. When you come to Burnaby, be sure to book some retail therapy and experience some of the many exciting shopping areas around the city.