

## GUIDELINES FOR VISITORS

- Houses are open from 1 - 5pm only, no earlybirds or latecomers.
- You may visit the homes in any order, but you may only visit each home once.
- Photography is strictly prohibited on tour properties.
- All attendees must have a ticket & be at least 6 years of age (infants in front carriers are permitted without a ticket, no other exceptions).
- Please do not bring large bags & backpacks.
- No food or drink, smoking or pets on tour properties.
- Cell phone usage is not permitted inside homes.
- Do not park in driveways, or block driveways or streets.
- Refrain from touching furniture, art and household items.
- Expect a line-up outside some of the homes.
- No washroom facilities are provided in the houses.
- You will be asked to remove your shoes at each home.
- We regret the tour is not mobility device accessible.

**1** 3180 W 19th Ave  
At Puget Drive



When the owners found this charming home, they loved its 1953 character and layout and wanted to retain its design integrity while making it their own. Not ones to tear anything down, they were looking for something sound and well designed. They had considered Vancouver Specials, but felt this home had more character. Working with designer Ben Bialek, who also designed the new front door, they renovated the interior of the home to reflect a passion for locally sourced materials and designed objects. Many of their furnishings are vintage Canadiana or new pieces locally made by artists and designers, including a vintage-style light above the stairs by Serge Mouille.

A den/bedroom off the foyer was converted into a dining room, leaving space in the old dining area to relocate the stairwell. The railing was newly designed and built by an expert craftsman. An existing bedroom and three-piece bathroom were converted into a master bathroom ensuite and a powder room on the main floor.

The wood flooring is an exact replica of the badly worn original design, now with radiant in-floor heat.

The basement had a 1970s rec-room feel which was removed. At this time the foundation walls were reinforced and structural support added as the house previously had no footings. The floor was excavated, then gravel and drainage added. A new concrete slab floor is warmed with natural gas radiant heat, and the house enjoys two fireplaces.

The home's mechanical system was also upgraded with new electrical and plumbing, air circulation system and a sprinkler system. Two chimneys were removed and a new roof and soffits installed.

Outside, a concrete pad had covered the yard, but the owners cut it back and removed the carport to create greenspace and patio areas. Utilizing the skills of a landscape architect, the yard was reinvented with retaining walls, pavers and a garden of native plant species including retention of a massive established evergreen. The fence line was pulled back as it had encroached onto city property. The exterior walls and stairs are all original, refreshed with a skim coat of stucco.

House Sponsor  
Ben Bialek, Interior Designer



## THE VANCOUVER SPECIAL

After Vancouver Specials first appeared around 1965 as a way to provide quick, inexpensive housing for a rapidly increasing immigrant population, the estimated number swelled to over 10,000 dwellings by the mid-80s. These homes were a unique Vancouver product designed to optimize standard Vancouver lots under the RS-1 District Zoning Schedule. Standard designs could be purchased from a stock plan office for about \$65. Building permits were issued quickly and construction could be completed in a few weeks. The flexible floor plan and large footprint provided room for extended family to live together, or for an entire floor to be rented out as a mortgage helper.

The Vancouver Special flat front, above-grade basement, boxy shape and low-pitch roofline make them ideal for personalization. Modern homeowners are making alterations to suit their own lifestyles, including taking down interior walls to create light and airy spaces, installing state of the art mechanical systems and updating energy efficiency with modern technology. All of this makes them an excellent fit for common goals of flexible living space and sustainable building practices.

### Vancouver Heritage Foundation

402 - 510 W. Hastings St. Vancouver BC V6B 1L8  
604 264 9642 [www.vancouverheritagefoundation.org](http://www.vancouverheritagefoundation.org)  
Charitable Organization #891765968  
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THIS BROCHURE IS YOUR 2016 TICKET  
SATURDAY 16<sup>th</sup> APR. 1pm - 5pm



VANCOUVER SPECIAL  
HOUSE TOUR  
VANCOUVER HERITAGE FOUNDATION

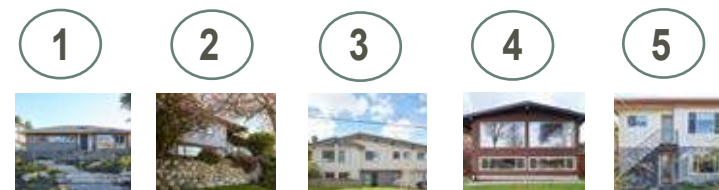
## THIS BROCHURE IS YOUR 2016 TICKET

Presenting Sponsor



### IMPORTANT TOUR REMINDERS

- **Wear Slip-on shoes** as you will be required to remove them at every house. Wearing or bringing slippers or socks is recommended.
- Bring a **Vancouver street map** to help you find the houses.
- **Bring this brochure to every house.** Volunteers will check off each house upon arrival.
- **No photography or cell phone use on tour properties.** Anyone who does not adhere to these guidelines may be asked to leave and tickets will not be refunded.



## WELCOME from VHF



As a registered charity working to promote heritage conservation, some may wonder why VHF is so interested in the Vancouver Special. With a relatively young history of about 60 years, the Special is representative of a particular era in the development of Vancouver. The building boom of the 1960s led to this uniquely Vancouver style which is once again seeing a return to popularity. The Special is also representative of other common house styles that lend themselves to updating for modern lifestyles and which contribute to the character and variety of our neighbourhood streets. Retention of such homes keeps building materials out of the land fill, preserves interesting and important elements of our city's history and shows how older buildings can be a big part of a sustainable future. We hope you are inspired by the creativity found in the homes on the tour and enjoy learning about a piece of Vancouver's architectural history. For more information on VHF and our innovative programming, we invite you to visit [www.vancouverheritagefoundation.org](http://www.vancouverheritagefoundation.org)



— Road  
● Tour home  
● Designated bikeway  
VS Vancouver Special  
3612 Main St.  
(see back page for special offer)  
VHF Info Booth  
4855 St. Catherine's St - House #3  
(day-of ticket sales and information)

## THANK YOU

The Vancouver Special House Tour is only possible through the tremendous effort of over 75 volunteers. We appreciate all of their contributions to ensure the success of this tour. Special thanks to all of the gracious 2016 homeowners and to Martin Knowles for providing tour photography. [www.mkphotomedia.com](http://www.mkphotomedia.com)

Beryl Allen	Iryna German	Marie Moonen
Jack & Debbie Allen	John Godfreyson	John Morse
Neil Armitage	Carol Gordon	Peter Mustard
Faran Asgharpour	June Harrison	Corry-Ann Neilands
Carol Attenborrow	Richard Hartfiel	Sandra North
Kevin & Christine Bowers	Rick Horne	Adele Oliver
Adrienne Brown	Philip Howden	Valerie Reed
Gloria Burgess	Livia Huang	Eleanore Robinson
Sheila Butt	Ingrid Hummelshoj	Steve Robinson
Anna Camporese	Heidi Hunchak	Yuko Sakata
Renata Carrico Barrela	Heather Hyde	Anita Seth
Christine Cassidy	Carole Jacques	Megan Tacq
Carrie Chan	Misty Jorgensen	Hillary Taylor
Sharon Cheney	Diana Kilgour	Sarah Taylor
Michael Croteau	Sooz Klinkhamer	April Underwood
Bart De Baere	Desiree LaCas	Cara Wang
Brenda Draney	Bonnie Low	Lindsay Wilkinson
Zelma Edgar	Kathy Mair	Evelyn Wong
Carol Flynn	Stephanie McWilliams	Helen Wood
Pamela Francis	Sam Mickelson	Darren Zuk
Ashley Fraser	Tom Mills	

**2**

4689 Haggart St  
West of Arbutus St, at Prince of Wales Park\*



This 1958 split-level rancher has retained its familiar form and floorplan. However, a renovation ten years ago saw it thoroughly updated for family living and has inspired modernizations of other similar homes in the neighbourhood. The current owner grew up in this home, owned by her parents for 15 years, and spent her high school years here. But amazingly, two other owners followed them before she and her husband purchased it years later, recognizing it could also suit their family.

By the time the current owners bought it, the house was in need of updates but they saw the potential to maximize the spacious feel of the main floor. Working with contractor Bayview Construction, they opened the hall to the living room, and removed the wall between the dining room and the kitchen. The living room was opened up to the roof to create a vaulted ceiling and the roofline at the back was also altered to add a peak above the dining area. Large patio doors and windows at the front of the house were recreated as they had been reduced by an earlier owner to just a window. Original wood floors had suffered water damage so new flooring was installed along with underfloor heating, but the large masonry chimney remains a feature of the living space, enhanced by the higher ceiling.

Three bedrooms on the upper level were brightened with paint and fresh flooring. In the middle bedroom, remembered as her father's office, dark paneling was painted out, while the family bathroom and master bedroom ensuite received a full renovation within the original footprint. A lower level provides the family room, office, further bedroom and bathroom, while the lowest level, nicknamed 'level 4', is home to the laundry area, storage and a games room paneled in durable plywood. During the renovation, wood casement windows were reinstated, many of which had been replaced by vinyl or aluminum units over the years. Renewed landscaping of the hillside garden completed the revitalization of this multi-level family home.

The neighbourhood was developed in the 1950s around Prince of Wales School and many of the homes date from that decade. Successful updating of this and other similar homes is offering a sustainable route of reusing rather than replacing homes and retaining the familiar character of the area.

**\*Haggart Street runs the west side of Prince of Wales Secondary School. The home is across the street from Prince of Wales mini school.**

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**3**

4855 St. Catherines St  
One block north of W 33rd Ave



The current owners bought this late-era Special in 2012 and spent 6 months renovating, doing as much of the work themselves as possible. This was their first project and they liked the location of the 1976 home near a preschool and across from a park.

Originally a single-family home, a new entrance off Durward Street provides private access to the 2-bedroom rental suite, retaining the upper floor for the owners. New windows and the removal of the low ceiling in the kitchen, dining room and living room add a sense of space. Re-framing the entire east wall helped to structurally support the new full-length cathedral ceiling. The roofing was replaced and new insulation added, along with new ventilation and skylights. A wall was removed along the stairwell and replaced with glass adding to the airy feeling of the upper floor. The sense of space was further enhanced by removing two walls on either side of the central kitchen area. The kitchen and bathrooms were updated with all new appliances and bathroom fixtures. Lighting in the bathroom and over the stairwell is by local designer Omer Arbel.

Instead of replacing the masonry on the fireplace, which would have been a massive undertaking, they elected to paint it out, but kept the pink marble hearth. The flooring is stained Baltic birch plywood installed with biscuit joints in 5'x5' sheets. It took over 100 hours to complete, but was a fraction of the cost of commercial flooring.

A ground-level south-facing patio with fencing provides private outdoor space for the lower-level rental suite, which also has access to a shared laundry room. Upgraded flooring and windows make the suite an attractive living space. The stairwell remains in its original location and the east side door on St. Catherines Street was retained as the main entrance.

The exterior aluminum siding was replaced but the entry area masonry is original. New windows have been installed generally in the original locations with a few modifications including enlarged openings in the living room and master bedroom. A small patio door at the rear was replaced with more generous French doors. The home is now a modern multi-family dwelling in a great neighbourhood, comfortable for both the owners and the tenant.



**VHF Info Booth**

Day of Tour ticket sales, pre-purchased ticket pick up and information

**4**

1518 E 37th Ave  
Two blocks east of Knight St



Built in 1962, the current owners purchased this early Vancouver Special in 2013. Previous owners had completed several renovations including the current kitchen, with millwork by a locally renowned carpenter. The kitchen was opened up to include extra cupboard space and a long central island which also serves as breakfast bar. Both the previous and current owners were interested in retaining the dramatic solid cedar ceiling which is both interior finish and structure for the roof. The dense boards are the underside of the exterior roof, with shingles nailed directly into the 2.5" thick tongue and groove.

More millwork by the same carpenter has added valuable storage to the underside of the stairs on the lower level as well as in the living room with low cupboards under the original single-pane front window. These provide practical storage space and an intriguing architectural feature that enhances the interior character. The house came with George Nelson lighting fixtures over the stairwell, in the dining room and in the kitchen. The owners added two more complimentary Nelson lamps to the flex room off the kitchen. As avid collectors of Mid-Century Modern furniture, the owners' furnishings fit in perfectly to the vibe of the home.

While most of the major work was done by previous owners, the current owners have made their own mark on the house. They removed a pony wall bookcase that used to sit at the top of the stairs, replacing it, along with the rest of the banister, with more modern glass. They also converted the upstairs bedroom from the master bedroom to a flex room, in order to have all the bedrooms on one floor. Upgrades were made to the bathrooms including new tile, hardware and mirrors.

The majority of the current owners' work came in the backyard, including salvaging and re-finishing a vintage back door, repairing structure and the deck membrane including new cedar posts, rim joists, the slatted screen, guards and railing. They also installed a new cedar staircase supported by a canted landing and new lighting on the deck and house entry. New landscaping consisted of removing the "English garden" overgrowth and replacing with river rock sections, a Japanese maple and elevated garden beds.

**5**

1834 Napier St  
Just west of Victoria Dr



This 1966 duplex was purchased in a unique agreement through the Vancity Mixer Mortgage. Having previously looked at condos, their realtor hadn't suggested they consider this house as he thought it was too small. However, after a three month search for a Vancouver Special, this home was purchased by two couples in 2008. With a yard and patio space, along with two identical three-bedroom spaces, it was perfect for everyone involved.

The house had been a rental and was in rough condition. The transformation has been achieved with a lot of work by the owners themselves over six months in between full time jobs, school, and a new baby. Bought in the summer, they spent a month cooking on a BBQ while gutting the kitchens and bathrooms, updating wiring and installing tile flooring. After moving in with only the essentials, renovations were completed in both kitchens and the bathrooms along with new drywall throughout. The exterior has not been altered aside from new exterior doors with high security jambs and new windows replacing those that had not already been updated by a previous owner.

The oak flooring is original but was so badly damaged that they stained it black. New tile flooring, the same on both floors, has radiant heat with additional heating provided through baseboard units. Removing the furnace allowed them to eliminate ducting to raise the ground floor ceiling and gain space. The bathrooms had low bulkheads over the baths which were removed before complete refinishing of the space. The kitchen layouts vary slightly but both previously had simple galley arrangements with a seating area and a wall between the dining and living area. That wall was removed on both floors, evident where the flooring changes. The downstairs ceiling needed replacing which allowed for a shallow drop ceiling with acoustic insulation.

The two couples decided to finish the two units to the same quality including professionally cut engineered quartz countertops that they installed themselves. They built and installed the cabinetry and built-ins and did their own tile work. They also replaced the back deck, built the new garage and installed new fencing. The finished house has turned out to be the successful product of a unique partnership and many hours of hard work.

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**Special offer  
tour day only!**

Vancouver Special, a locally run home furnishings store and tour partner, has a special offer for all Vancouver Special tour ticket holders. Stop by their shop at **3612 Main St.** between 11am and 6pm April 16th to receive 15% off all items. They will also have complimentary coffee and water for all tour goers!

