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 and we will no longer provide plastic shoe bags for carryng shoes.
- We regret the tour is not mobility device accessible.

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's flat front, at-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
Charitable Organization #891765968

Facebook.com/TheVancouverHeritageFoundation Twitter.com/VanHeritage

1 405 E 35th Ave
At Prince Edward St

Although the current owners weren't specifically looking for a Vancouver Special, when they found this one in late 2015 they loved the neighbourhood and saw potential for a home that was bright and open with lots of versatile space for their family. The fact that this 1978 home had been fully renovated by previous owners made it all the more appealing.

The previous owners provided lots of information about the work that had been done over the years. It had been occupied by its first owners until 2007, and all of the original details, including the décor and layout, dated from its construction. The second owner completely renovated both levels of the home, installing skylights and new hardwood floors, overhauling the kitchen and bathrooms and upgrading the plumbing and lighting. They added a ground floor in-law suite and sealed it off from the main living area, with its entrance at the front of the house. The exterior was painted a uniform grey, and the balcony was updated and deepened.

The third owners, who purchased the home in 2012, undertook cosmetic upgrades to update the kitchen backsplash, the carpeting on the stairs and in the bedrooms, and the built-in cupboard and retro-inspired platform bed in the master bedroom. In the breakfast area, a former closet was converted to a coffee station and wet bar with the addition of a built-in drink fridge and granite countertop. For a time they rented the in-law suite to a landscape architect who beautifully transformed the gardens and backyard. They had planned to install a sleek gas fireplace in the living room but, after finding it extremely difficult to remove the stone surround, opted to keep the remaining stone below the mantle.

The current owners personalized the space with their collection of 1930s and 40s Israeli art from his grandfather, Moshe Katz, who opened the first art gallery in Tel Aviv. The owner's mother currently occupies the in-law suite but future plans for the home include reinstating the door between the suite and the main house, and opening the wall between the living room and bedroom at the front of the house.

SAVE THE DATE!

15th annual
Heritage House Tour

June 4, 2017
10am - 5pm
$40/$30 students

THIS BROCHURE IS YOUR 2017 TICKET

SATURDAY APR. 22nd 1pm - 5pm

VANCOUVER SPECIAL HOUSE TOUR

VANCOUVER HERITAGE FOUNDATION 25 YEARS

THIS BROCHURE IS YOUR 2017 TICKET

IMPORTANT TOUR REMINDERS

- **Wear slip-on shoes and bring a resuseable bag** as you will be required to remove them at every house. Wearing or bringing slippers or socks is recommended. *Please note we are no longer providing plastic shoe bags.*
- 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.

SIDESADDLE

This tour is bike-friendly with an easy to navigate self-guided route and cyclist stop where you can access free air, oil and mechanic support, washrooms and water.

Corporate Sponsor

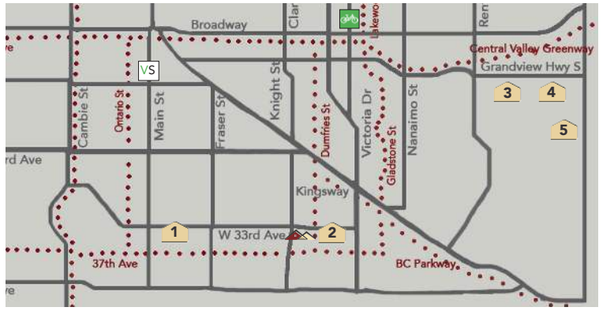
Hammer & Watkinson ON TOP OF THE MARKET

1 2 3 4 5

WELCOME from VHF

VANCOUVER HERITAGE FOUNDATION 25 YEARS

As a registered charity working to promote heritage conservation for the past 25 years, 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.



Road

Suggested bike route

Tour home

VS **Vancouver Special**
3612 Main St.
(see back page for special offer)

Sidesaddle Bikes
2496 Victoria Dr.
(washrooms, cyclist rest stop)

VHF Info Booth
Kensington Park
E 35th Ave at
Dumfries St - near
House #2
(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 2017 homeowners and to Martin Knowles for providing tour photography. www.mkphotomedia.com

Beryl Allen
Jack & Debbie Allen
Farangiss Asgharpour
Carol Attenborrow
Rose Bergen
Jessica Blesch
Kevin & Christine Bowers
Gloria Burgess
Carrie Chan
Ada Con
Marlene Conway
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Barbara Westmacott
Lindsay Wilkinson
Diane & Frank Winter
Evelyn Wong
Harry Wong
Tracy Wong
John Wood
Ellen Xiang
Rai Yasir
Daren Zuk

2 1652 E 34th Ave
Two blocks east of Knight St

The current owner and his brothers inherited this Special in 2014 from their parents who bought it new in 1976. Wanting to keep the house in the family, the owners bought the house from the other brothers. Three other adjacent Specials are still owned by their original owners, and the children of the four families grew up together.

The owners worked with the architect to plan a modest renovation that would open the top floor while incorporating elements of their Okinawan and Metis heritages. Okinawan martial arts principles are reflected in the open-concept layout and sliding and folding doors, which allow energy to flow freely throughout the home.

The interior was taken to the studs to upgrade wiring, plumbing and insulation. A two-bedroom suite was added on the lower level, while the main level was transformed. A live-edge dining table is the home's centrepiece featuring wood sourced from Chilliwack. Built-in storage running the length of the house, combined with wide-plank flooring throughout, help unify the space. A former bedroom at the front of the house was converted into a *washitsu*, or traditional Japanese-style room, with a raised tatami mat floor and sliding shoji screens. It is used as a sitting space and traditional eating area, and also functions as extra sleeping space for guests. Personal touches, like the magnetic photo wall and twig hooks made by the owner at their last home, speak to the owners' personal and family histories.

Outside, much of the original path to the house was removed. A new, curved stone path connects the house to the sidewalk and a *hinpun*, an Okinawan freestanding wall believed to keep the bad spirits out, screens the entry door. The lavish garden incorporates Okinawan and Indigenous themes, and contains four evergreens that were planted when the house was built. The exterior massing is unchanged but a new rock-dash finish was applied to the lower level. The exterior was painted in black, white, yellow and red to reflect the colours and corresponding cardinal directions of the indigenous medicine wheel. Thoughtful design has created a home that incorporates history and welcomes friends and family.

House Sponsor

a Vancouver Specialist since 1999
STEPHANIE ROBB ARCHITECT

VHF Info Booth
Kensington Park, E 35th at Dumfries
Day of tour ticket sales, pre-purchased ticket pick up and information

3 3024 E 15th Ave
Two blocks east of Renfrew St

The current owners first saw this 1966 Special in 2009. They loved the neighbourhood and its proximity to schools, parks and family but when they saw the view from the front steps, they were sold.

It had sat empty for about a year before it went on the market and needed a lot of cosmetic work: the walls, shag carpet and exterior were various shades of purple. One of their fathers, a carpenter by trade, acted as home inspector and said that, despite the look of the house, it had solid bones and was worth renovating. After a complicated selling process, the new owners took possession a year after they first spotted the home.

They enlisted the help of relatives who worked in construction for the exterior work including deepening the balcony, replacing windows and doors, and repainting. Inside, they worked with the existing floorplan and as a result were able to save the original inlaid hardwood floor that was preserved under the carpet.

Her father and brother did most of the interior work, replacing all of the ceilings, rearranging the main bath and removing a portion of the kitchen wall. They also completed all of the painting, crown moulding and trim. The master closet was reconfigured in order to widen the master ensuite, allowing a few more inches of space between the toilet and the sink. A single door from the breakfast nook to the back patio was removed and French doors installed in the dining room. They hired outside contractors to refinish the original floors, install the custom kitchen and tile the bathrooms.

On the lower level, a bank of closets was installed to offer much-needed storage. It also disguises the washer and dryer, and a cleverly concealed door to two rental suites. After a tricky purchase process and significant renovation, the result was worth the wait and is now a beautiful family home.

4 3112 E 15th Ave
Three blocks east of Renfrew St

The original owners bought the home in 1966 and were still living in it nearly 50 years later when they decided to help their daughter and her husband get into the housing market. The kids would take over the home from their parents and renovate the home to suit their needs with the understanding that they also build a space within the home for their parents. It was important that this space feel like an independent home and not a secondary suite.

A key factor driving the design was to respect and continue the original clean lines of the Vancouver Special while having fun modernizing its shape and form. Though not a traditional Vancouver Special, the house did have the iconic low-pitched roof and large horizontal living room window. In order to achieve 12-foot ceilings in the lower-level living room, the front bedroom on the main floor was removed. The window opening and roofline over half the house were retained, as was the transom window above the front door.

The homeowners love of contemporary design and minimalist aesthetic were factored into the design by the architect. A wall was removed between the living/dining room and kitchen, and the ceiling vaulted. The Douglas Fir slat canopy over the dining area, inspired by Japanese interior design, warms cool white and concrete elements. Wood accents continue in reclaimed fir stairs and the cedar ceiling and soffits of the master suite.

The roofline of the new master suite was inspired by traditional Vancouver Specials with a 12-foot vaulted ceiling. A north-facing sliding door in the suite was outfitted with a wooden privacy screen that doubles as a guardrail. In the master bathroom, glass walls bring in light and steel fins around the window provide shade from the summer heat.

Both suites are elegant, well-designed spaces that feel like self-contained homes while allowing the family to stay under one roof.

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one seed architecture + interiors
VERTICAL GRAIN PROJECTS RENOVATION AND CONSTRUCTION

5 3633 Rupert St
At E 20th Ave

This Special belonged to the current owner's parents, who bought it brand-new in 1974. After they passed away in 2013, the current owner bought the home from their estate. Although it was in impeccable condition, the interior and exterior were outdated and the layout was impractical for the current owners' needs.

Upon taking possession of the home in early 2014, the owners renovated the main floor and lived there until the more extensive lower-level renovations were finished then moved downstairs. The owners planned the renovations based on their desire to age in place and include a walk-in shower with space for assistive seating and shorter risers on the staircase.

The home was completely gutted during the 6-month renovation. The main supporting wall running the length of the lower level was replaced with a steel I-beam to create an open-concept living/dining/kitchen area. The exterior walls were fully insulated, wiring and plumbing were updated, and an on-demand hot water tank was installed.

Because the owners intend for this to be their last home, they chose long-lasting and high-quality finishes throughout, including durable Italian porcelain floor tiles, Italian appliances and a granite shower surround. Growing up, the owner and his family spent a lot of time enjoying their backyard and he wanted to continue the tradition but in a low-maintenance way. The entire yard was laid with interlocking brick and the former carport converted into a four-season patio. A shed and covered barbecue area occupy the space where his parents' garden used to be.

Although the owners like the sleek cedar and painted brick combination of other renovated Specials, it wasn't their style and didn't match the interior. Instead, they went with a Craftsman-inspired design that included square porch posts, a wood-shingled gable and rugged stone cladding. The home is now a modern and accessible space ready for the next phase of the owners' lives.

House Sponsors

C&S TILE
MARGRANITE

VS **Special offer tour day only!**

Vancouver Special, a locally run home furnishings store and tour partner, has a special offer for all Vancouver Special House Tour ticket holders. Stop by their shop at **3612 Main St.** between 11am and 6pm, April 22nd to receive 15% off all items. They will also have complimentary coffee and water for all tour goers!

vancouver special