

Saltspring Island Backgrounder

- Salt Spring is one of the **Gulf Islands** located at the southern end of the Georgia Strait, between Vancouver Island and British Columbia's mainland. Saltspring is 27 km long and 14 km wide, with 133 km of shoreline.
- Located in the rain shadow of Vancouver Island's mountains, Salt Spring enjoys a drier, milder climate than the surrounding area, with cooler summers and warmer winters. Rolling meadowlands and rich soil make it ideal for all kinds of farming.
- The island attracts visitors and residents with its mild climate and annual sunshine in excess of 2,000 hours.
- The largest of six Gulf Islands situated off the east coast of Southern Vancouver Island home to roughly 10,500 year-round residents.
- The Island boasts a hospital, schools, a pharmacy, natural health clinics, Yoga and fitness facilities, garden centres, a hardware store, organic bakeries, cafes, all kinds of gourmet restaurants, Wineries, a Brewery, pubs, bed and breakfasts, countless galleries and a world famous Saturday market.
- Saltspring runs on a small business economy, whether its home based, agricultural or tourist based.
- Long a favourite of visual artists like Robert Bateman, Saltspring Island has become a haven for writers and musicians too. Stephen Leacock Medal winner Arthur Black and poet Phyllis Webb are two of the Island's most prominent writers. The island is home to respected musicians like Harry Manx, Valdy and Randy Bachman who maintains a studio on the Island. The Island also boasts a modern concert venue and cultural center (ArtSpring).
- **Saturday Market:** From April to October, you can find over a hundred artisans - potters, jewelers, fibre artists, woodworkers and other creative folk - selling their wares every Saturday in beautiful Centennial Park in the middle of downtown **Ganges**. Since its origins as a local Gulf Island farmer's market, the Market has gained an international reputation. For more information, visit www.saltspringmarket.com.

ArtSpring, the island's 270 seat centre for the performing arts, enjoys an eclectic year-round schedule, including world beat, jazz, folk and classical concerts, theatre productions, readings and lectures, along with the island's annual film festival. With over 5,000 square feet in exhibition space, the centre also showcases the work of international and local artists.

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