

D.W.

Winter storm-watching is a powerful experience.



TOFINO STORM-WATCHING GUIDE

The “Wet” Coast comes alive in winter. Here’s how to make the most of your storm-watching weekend

BY DAVID WEBB

TWO DECADES AGO, the proprietors of Tofino’s Wickaninnish Inn had an outlandish idea: sell stormy weather. This luxe property was the first to bring in tourists for bad weather, not balmy. It seemed crazy—but the concept had legs.

WINTER WANDER-LUST

Winter storm-watching is now one of Tofino’s most iconic experiences.

Planning a trip to the Van Isle coast? Looking forward to five-metre-tall waves, sideways rain, moody skies and wind you can lean into? Read on for vital tips:

Top Beaches

North Chesterman Beach: View waves from near the rocky outcropping in front of the Wickaninnish Inn, looking toward Lennard Island Lighthouse.

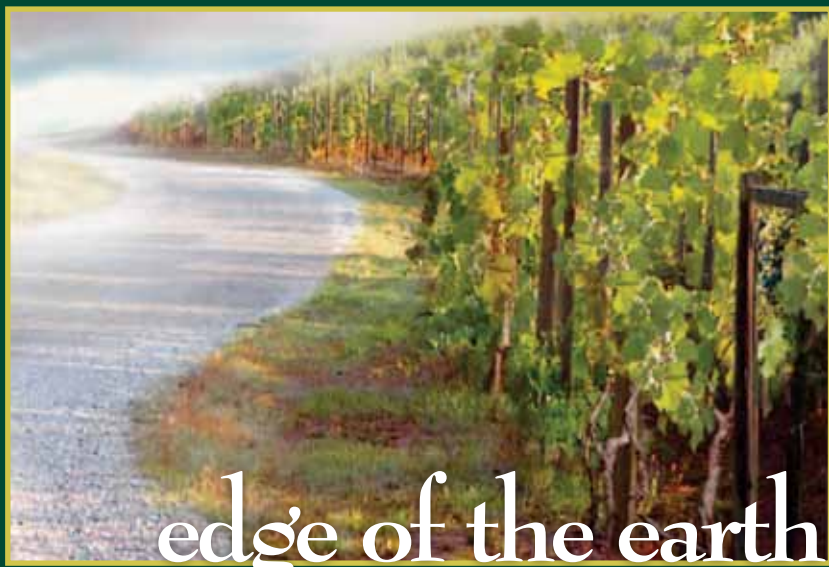
South Chesterman

Beach: Look south to the rocky headlands of Pacific Rim National Park Reserve—big waves often break over a large point.

Kwisitis Visitor Centre: Located in Pacific Rim

National Park Reserve, this visitor centre offers not only a great spot to see the storms (Wickaninnish Beach) but info about the natural and human history of the region as well.

TOURISM TOFINO



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Travel Tips

Storm-watching apparel should include a waterproof jacket and pants, rubber boots, wool socks, insulated layers, a toque and gloves. Leave the broly at home—strong winds don't cooperate with umbrellas.

Winter is the one time you'll hope for bad weather, but Tofino can boast bluebird skies year-round. Helicopter tours (atleoair.com) and surf lessons (pacificsurfschool.com) are two activities to consider if the storms settle.

Roy Henry Vickers's Eagle Aerie Gallery (royhenryvickers.com) is a must-visit, or simply grab a drink at the Driftwood Café in the Wickaninnish Inn (wickinn.com) and peruse local artwork in the adjacent Henry Nolla Gallery.

Chow Down

Tiny Tofino punches well above its weight class when it comes to dining. Narrow your options with these top picks:

Rhino Coffee House: A Tofino staple for quality coffee, baked goods and breakfast wraps. rhinocoffeehouse.com

Shelter: Local and regional seafood and farm fare come together in unique and inspiring ways. Lunch and dinner. shelterrestaurant.com

Picnic Charcuterie: Unassumingly set in the Tofino Industrial Park, stop by to stock-up on finely crafted



Picnic Charcuterie



Tofino Brewing Company

meats for your winter picnic. picniccharcuterie.com

Red Can Gourmet: Expect an intimate fine-dining experience with expertly crafted dishes—or pickup a pizza instead! redcangourmet.com

Tofino Brewing Company: Whether pre- or post-dinner, stop by to sip a flight of beer and grab a growler to go. tofinobrewingco.com

Sleep Tight

The **Wickaninnish Inn** is a Relais & Châteaux property that lives up to the hype. Bask in West Coast luxury; sleep to the sound of crashing waves. From \$340. wickinn.com

The BriMar Bed & Breakfast offers a welcoming stay on the shores of South Chesterman Beach. All rooms have ocean views; breakfast is hearty and delicious. From \$149. brimarbb.com



The BriMar Bed & Breakfast

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