

## Beautiful Country Indeed

Thursday, 16 July 2009

OK, so it's always up there, alongside Melbourne and Geneva in those (probably Swiss/Australian-based) studies into quality of life. But I never gave a moment's thought to Vancouver as a place to go. In fact, I'd studiously avoided Canada as a country for a decade. Why go to Detroit-facing Toronto when there's Chicago over the way? Why listen to poorly pronounced French when you can go to Paris? Why go to Vancouver when I have spent twenty-something weeks in the Pacific Northwest courtesy of Portland?

Well suffice to say that a trip to those parts for (parents') Independence Day over July 4 weekend left me suitably impressed. Thanks to Al&Jane, Erin and AlBraaan for showing us the ropes. Sydney-style inlets / beaches, the most spectacular urban park in N America and mountains-on-the-doorstep. The summery weather may have helped but it's a top-3 contender for West-Coast N American cities to inhabit. Of course, there's only one non-coastal place to live in, but that goes without saying...