

Walks

Got an hour to kill? Here is a list of walks to some nearby beaches, parks and areas of botanical note.

Arbutus Cove Walk

15-20 min

Arbutus Cove is a small cove with lovely views of San Juan Island and Mt Baker. The beach is secluded and is a favourite with locals and in spite of its proximity to the university is almost never visited by students, who prefer Cadboro Bay Beach. There are very nice arbutus trees along this lovely beach and at the point (1).

Exit University from Finnerty and Sinclair Entrance. Continue down Finnerty until Arbutus. Turn left on Arbutus. Continue 200 m until Hollydene. Turn right on Hollydene and walk downhill until you spot the trail entrance (it is marked) for Arbutus Cove. There are a lot of steps.

At low tide you can walk the entire length of the beach without having to scramble over the rocks. There is another entrance at the far end of the beach which takes you a path back to Arbutus Road if you want a slightly longer walk.

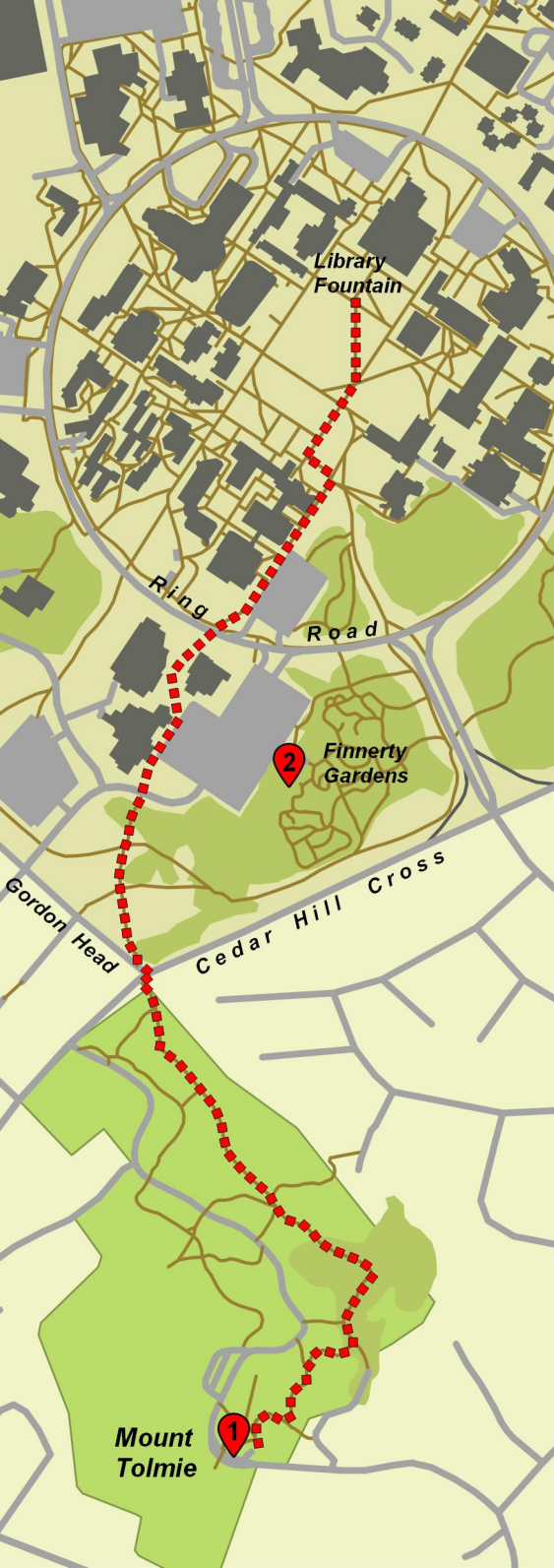


Bigleaf Maple Walk

25 - 30 min

Go to the SE corner of Parking lot 1. Take the straight path into the woods. About 50m along there are two paths that bear to the left which will both lead you to the top of a set of stairs into Mystic Vale. At the bottom of the stairs, there is a pond to the right which feeds into Hobbs Creek. Take the path that descends into the ravine and follow along the creek. About 100 m along the path jogs to the right. Look up above the path about 15 feet. There is a Bigleaf Maple that hangs over the path (1) that has a spectacularly large sector of albino leaves, which are, in essence, parasitizing the rest of their hard-working neighbouring leaves on the rest of the tree. Continue along the path until you come to the exit, at the top of Hobbs Street. Walk along Hobbs, crossing Sinclair until you reach Maynard Park, which is an open field. Just before the corner of Hobbs and Maynard there is a large Bigleaf Maple with a stunning trunk (2.)

Across the road from the tree, on the other side of Hobbs Street, is a footpath to Frank Hobbs Elementary School. Along the path, note the arbutus that has grown into the fence. When you arrive on the school grounds, go to the portable classroom (3.) Beside it is an interesting morphological variant, known as a lyre maple. You'll understand why when you look at the shape of the large branches. Continue through the school to Haro Street, turn left and climb the steep path and cross Sinclair to get back to the residences.



Mt. Tolmie Walk

~40 min

Start at the fountain in front of the library. Cross the quad towards the Douglas-firs on by the totem pole on the hill. Follow the path until the McLaurin Building (where the conference sessions are being held) and bear left. Continue along the path the runs beside the building until you reach the Ring Road. Cross the road and bearing to the right go between the Fine Arts Building and the Phoenix Theatre and into the woods.

After crossing a small road, follow the path and the woods will open up into a large meadow surrounded by Garry oaks. Follow this path until you reach Gordon Head Road. After reaching the road, head to the intersection with Cedar Hill Cross Road and cross over to the park. Immediately across the road there should be a path.

This path heads steeply up Mount Tolmie. This is a fine Garry oak meadow ecosystem that a lot of locals have helped maintain and restore by removing Scotch broom. After the first steep incline the trail will take you through some oaks with much denser undergrowth. After this wood, hang left and then hang right on the trail that turns steeply up the hill. Follow the path along this relatively flat part of the park and head towards where the concrete reservoir goes into the mountain. There you will find a small set of stairs leading to the summit. The view from the top of the hill (1) is one of the finest in the city, with panoramic views of Juan de Fuca Strait, the Olympic Mountains, as well as Haro Strait and Mount Baker.

If you have time on your way back (or at any other time on your trip) take a detour on Cedar Hill Cross and visit UVic's Finnerty Gardens (2). It was largely created around a number of private collections of rhododendrons donated to the university. There are very nice old rhodos. The university gardeners have done a lovely job creating and maintaining this superb garden.

Finnerty Cove - Haro Woods Walk

~30 min

From the residences proceed to the junction of Sinclair Rd. and Haro Rd. Cross Sinclair and walk until the road turns into a path that declines steeply to a school – Frank Hobbs Elementary. Continue along Haro until you reach Arbutus. Note the large poplars on the left (1) – This stand of *Populus trichocarpa* is part of the Haro Woods that the university was bequeathed by the Hudson's Bay Company some years ago. Cross Arbutus and continue along Haro, bearing left constantly until you reach the beach access. Follow the path until you reach the water, then turn left and there is a shelter on the point (2) with stunning views of the Haro Strait and San Juan Island. Follow the paths to the left of the cabin and you will come across Finnerty Cove, a small quiet beach.

From the beach cross the parking lot and follow the roads around the hospital building. Once around the building follow the road towards Arbutus and Haro woods. As you walk out the entrance road to the Hospital, look at the holly on your left (3.) These are the remnants of what was, a century ago, a booming industry in Victoria – namely selling holly to mainlanders at Christmas. Return to Arbutus Road, turn right and walk 50 m, then turn left onto Finnerty and return to the university.

If you are feeling adventurous, you can explore the maze of trails in Haro Woods on your way back to the University.

