

# James Island

Victoria, British Columbia, Canada



Type: Greenfield  
Designed: June 2003  
Size: 760 Acres  
Program: A small village of 54 homes  
11-room world class hotel  
9 hotel cabins  
A hamlet of 51 homes  
17 family compounds  
16 family estates  
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James Island is located in the San Juan Islands of British Columbia, approximately 15 miles northwest of Victoria and 100 miles north of Seattle. The island, now privately owned, was the site of a dynamite factory from the late 1800s through the mid-20th Century. In 1963, the factory was demolished, and the island was vacant for several decades. It was then zoned to receive 210 single-family units; and a number of utilities and curbs were built, along with 11 holes of an 18-hole Jack Nicklaus golf course.

Situated in the rain-shadow of the Olympic Mountains, James Island harbors an extraordinary ecosystem, unique to the Pacific Northwest. The master plan preserves this pristine natural environment while offering a built form that fosters a leisurely pace of living. The island is only two miles in length and one mile in width, making it easily accessible by foot or bicycle. Only electric and human-powered vehicles will be allowed on the island.

A tiny village located on the sandy spit of Melanie Bay welcomes residents and visitors at a common arrival point. The larger village, located on the southwestern corner of the island, will have numerous shops, restaurants, boutiques, and a theater surrounding a common green. A hotel with views of Sydney Bay and the Olympic Mountains will be located atop the southern bluff.

Three residential building types are proposed for the island: family estates, family compounds, and village townhouses and houses, all of which minimize their impact on the land by utilizing existing clearings and vistas. Family estates are single-family residences composed of multiple buildings nestled within the natural landscape and offering dramatic views of the bay. Family compounds are composed of multi-generational buildings arranged around a central green. By concentrating 54 homes on small village lots and clustering buildings in compounds, many large open areas of the island can be left in their pristine, natural state. Along with the residential building types, there is a variety of common pavilions for community events such as clam bakes and bonfires.

