



Exploring the customs of two First Nations of Canada



Visitors to the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games are invited to visit the new Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre and to celebrate the customs of some of the First Nations of Canada while also exploring the region's rich natural heritage.

Located in Whistler, B.C., across from the Four Seasons Resort, the cultural centre features a forest botanic garden that showcases non-timber forest products such as alpine mushrooms and other indigenous medicinal plants, which grow in abundance in the Lil'wat Nation and Squamish Nation territories. The harvesting of these plants and culinary herbs provides an emerging economic opportunity for these First Nations.

The new cultural centre, a collaboration between the Squamish and Lil'wat First Nations and the Resort Municipality of Whistler, officially opened its doors in the summer of 2008 to introduce visitors to the traditions of these two First Nation communities and help preserve their traditional way of life.

The botanic garden project was supported by the First Nations Forestry Program, a forestry capacity-building program funded by Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). This program has been actively funding forestry ventures and opportunities for First Nations communities across Canada since 1996. The program supports the unique relationship between forests and First Nations by fostering First Nation capacity to sustainably manage forest lands and participate in forest-based opportunities, both on and off Reserve land.

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