

1. Thank You to RBC

This Punjabi Market Walking Tour is presented in partnership with RBC.

Indian Summer Festival thanks RBC for being our Emerging Artist Partner and a champion for this project, created in collaboration with the Punjabi Market Regeneration Collective. We are also grateful to Simon Fraser University, Langara College, University of British Columbia for supporting our festival.

We are humbled to be able to take you on this journey, on the unceded Coast Salish territories of the x^wməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam) Peoples

2. Main Street and 51st Ave

Gurpreet:

A place full of spices, fit with fashion. Or cultural expression and social advocacy.

Welcome to the Punjabi market in present-day Vancouver, British Columbia, located on the traditional and unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples, specifically, the lands of the Musqueam Nation.

Let's begin part one of the Punjabi market walking tour on the west side of Main street.

Our first stop is the Northwest corner of Main street and 51st avenue. If you look up at the second set of street light posts, you'll see beautiful Musqueam band banners.

Here to tell us more about the banners is Debra Sparrow:

Debra Sparrow:

I'd like to start by acknowledging that you're in the Musqueam territory and lands.

Gurpreet:

This tour is a collaboration between the Indian Summer Festival and the Punjabi Market Regeneration Collective. It features historical imagery, visible markers and several calls to action in hopes of uplifting the local community and businesses.

My name is Gurpreet Sian, and I will be your tour guide for today. I've lived in South Vancouver for the past 25 years, but I have memories of visiting the Punjabi market with my family for much longer than that. The market is a place that is very dear to me. A place where I have fond memories from my childhood. A place where I hope to continue having memorable moments with my own children. It has been a part of most of my life. So, it's an honour to share its story with you.

Now, let's explore the market through our senses. And stay tuned to enjoy the touch, tastes, smell, sights, and sounds of the Punjabi Market.

The Punjabi Market is a three-block commercial district located on Main Street between east 48th avenue and east 51st avenue. Since 1970, South Asians have gathered in the Punjabi market, whether it be for a shopping trip, a meal with family and friends or large festive gatherings, such as the annual Vaisakhi celebration in the spring.

We are going to revisit some of the Punjabi Market's rich history, and hear firsthand accounts from people who have been influential in creating and now sustaining this space.

3. Frontier Cloth House

Gurpreet:

Let's begin part one of the Punjabi Market walking tour on the west side of Main Street. Our first stop is the Northwest corner of Main street and 51st Avenue. If you look up at the second set of street light posts, you'll see beautiful Musqueam band banners.

Here to tell us more about the banners is Deborah Sparrow, who is a Musqueam weaver, artist and knowledge keeper. She is self-taught in Salish design, weaving, and jewelry making. Deborah also designed the logo for the Canadian men's and women's hockey team for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic winter games in Vancouver.

Please welcome DebraDeborah.

Debra Sparrow:

This banner is a representation of our history here in this land — throughout what you know as Vancouver. As we move a little bit away from here, we are acknowledged with Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh. But in this particular area of Vancouver, it is Musqueam territory. And so he (Chief Wayne) is happy to have these banners up to acknowledge our village Musqueam, which is really not far from here.

We drive past 49th and Main and 49th and Fraser...and always have acknowledged and seen the Punjabi Market but were never really stopped to take that moment. And maybe, the Punjabi market hasn't stopped to take the moment to know us. And so, this brings us together in opening a dialogue, and a relationship, hopefully, in the future. So, on behalf of chief Wayne, he'd like to, as we say in our culture, hold our hands up.

That we're making our way through the city again, whether it's by a banner, or whether it's blanketing the city as I have been working on.

Gurpreet:

Thank you, Debra.

And, while we're here at this corner, I'd like to bring to your attention the now-vacant building that was once home to the hottest fashion trends from the other side of the world. The walls may be covered in graffiti today, but if you look up, you can still see the outlines of the letters for

Frontier Cloth House. Frontier was the staple fabric shop in Vancouver from the '70s to the early 2000s. A Vancouver landmark that carried wedding and special event attire. People from around the world would come to the Punjabi Market to visit Frontier Cloth House, and handpick from their selection of unique and beautiful clothing. Over time, Frontier made a name for itself as a high-end bridal boutique shop as well. It is one of the many shops to move across the Fraser River to Surrey, as the market has changed in recent years.

4. Himalaya Restaurant

Himalaya was opened in 1973 by Kewal Pabla as a place where Vancouverites could sample Pabla's exotic, East Indian food and sweets. Part sweet shop, part buffet. and, as of 1986, part banquet hall, the building has been in the Pabla family for three generations.

So what exactly do you order at Himalaya Restaurant? Well, they're known for their cholay bhaturay, home-style parathas, gajjar da achar, or pickled carrots, and their chaat. Each (chaat) papdi is traditionally made one piece at a time. They've also offered a buffet since the eighties.

But aside from the food, it's perhaps the customer stories and experiences that are most memorable. It was common for people to bring their loved ones here as the first stop when they would arrive in Vancouver, after a long flight from India. Before heading home, they would come to Himalaya.

Often referred to as simply “Pabla’s”, many first dates took place here as well. “Let’s meet at Pabla’s,” is all that needed to be said. No Google maps was necessary, [because] everyone knew exactly where to go.

And many of those first encounters in the eighties and nineties had storybook endings, leading to marriage. Some of those happily married couples now bring their children and grandchildren back to Himalaya to share their stories with the owners.

With the mass movement of businesses relocating to Surrey, Himalaya has also considered shutting their doors for good. But their customers simply will not let that happen. Customers say it would be devastating and heartbreaking to see Himalaya go because so many of them have such fond memories associated with the restaurant. With this in mind, the owners have deliberately maintained a retro ambiance inside the restaurant with tables that are from the eighties and have never been changed. It has become a monumental landmark of the area.

Despite the changes to the neighbourhood, Himalaya is still standing strong. A second location, in Richmond, has been running since around 2005 as well.

The Pabla family is so intertwined in the fabric of the Punjabi Market that, in 1986, Kewal Pabla built a house for his family just around the corner from the market — where 22 family members all lived together. The house is still there today.

So, head on inside and pick up a couple of gulab jamans. Your taste buds will thank you.

And while you're eating, or watching your friends eat while you wait, we'd like to share a social justice story with you as well.

5. Social Justice

Gurpreet:

The early days of the Punjabi Market were a special moment in time. But not everything was sweet like gulab jamans. Those days were also marred by murders and domestic abuses, including a shooting at the Skeena Temple.

In fact, there was a Feminist March that was held in the area, and to tell us more about it is Daisy Kler, a community advocate and organizer of this movement.

Daisy:

My name's Daisy Kler. I work at the multicultural family center within Reach Community Health Clinic.

I started a group called the South Asian Women Against Male Violence. Probably about six months before we held the rally here in Little India. And we...I decided that we needed a particular voice, which is the South Asian women's voice, because there had been a spat of attacks on South Asian women. Most of the attacks ended up in murder and they were domestic violence cases. And so there was a lot of media frenzy

and a lot of discussion that...I found [was] racialized, and quite racist actually, about South Asian men being particularly violent; [and] this being a problem in the South Asian community.

And so, I wanted to be a voice and have a voice as a South Asian feminist, and to speak out against that, but also to challenge south Asian men to not be complacent and to speak out about violence against women, and to obviously not perpetuate violence against women. So a group of us organized the South Asian Woman Against Male Violence, and then another attack happened — and these were quite brutal.

One woman was found...her burned body was found in a car. Another one was stabbed multiple times. One woman was blinded. So these were quite severe. And so we decided to hold a rally. And that's how it started.

There has been a long history of a feminist movement in Vancouver and South Asian women have always been a part of it. India Mahila Association started in the early seventies. Where I was working at the time, Vancouver Rape Relief, had started in the seventies. So there was a lot of strong backing for the anti-violence movement. So, when we created the South Asian women against male violence, we had great allies. And we wanted to be in the heart of what we called little India at the time — now the Punjabi Market — and we wanted to be here because it was our space.

What violence against women tells women is be silent, don't take up space, don't talk,

don't be in a public area and we wanted to rebel against that. We wanted to say we're strong, we're here, we have a voice — and we also wanted to challenge the racist and sexist ideas within the media and the South Asian community. And so we held the rally here without permission. We just picked a spot and called our allies together to hear what we had to say.

It was a warm April day, unusually warm, actually. I remember getting here and being nervous. Our stage was basically a pallet, one of those wooden pallets, and we had a portable mic. It was very grassroots done quite quickly. We knew that it was going to be marking the anniversary of the Gakhhal massacre, or the Vernon massacre. Where an ex-husband killed his ex-wife and her family when they were at a wedding...celebrating a wedding. And so for us, that date meant something.

The weather really cooperated with us. I remember feeling really, really proud because the South Asian community and organizers came out. So we had, you know, members of India Mahila Association, Raminder Dosanjh, Harjeet, Ujjal Dosnajt, Sharn Gill and a lot of political activists from the South Asian community came to acknowledge that this was a political moment and that we needed to do something about it.

I remember the restaurant setting up a table and bringing out chai for everybody. We didn't ask them to do that, it was a very nice gesture that they did that for us.

And lots of media. I probably took 26 media calls that day. So we had a lot of interest even though it was called together very quickly, there were

probably about 70 to a hundred people. And we invited also other allies like the Asian Women's Coalition Against Prostitution — spoke about Asian specific violence — India Mahila and the South Asian Women Against Male Violence

Feminism is part of the South Asian community and I wanted all of that to be a model for other women to come forward, to organize, to speak out. My grandfather came here in 1905 so my family has a long history in Vancouver; specifically East Vancouver. And I think as the prices here in Vancouver become higher and higher for real estate, Immigrant communities that are starting out are being pushed out. But there has always been a long and strong history of South Asian organizing, South Asian community in Vancouver. And the market has always played a role in having South Asians feel like they have a place that's their own.

Gurpreet:

Thank you Daisy.

Food and fashion were always two of the biggest draws of the Punjabi Market.

6. Guru Bazaar

Gurpreet:

We started this tour with Frontier Cloth House. Let's continue walking north towards 49th Ave and bring the story back to fashion once again!

Guru Bazaar was considered a staple of Vancouver's South Asian retail landscape and Punjabi Market's biggest family-owned fabric store, carrying every type of fabric imaginable. Owner Sunny Khurana began working at the shop with his father when he was just 10 years old.

But...where exactly is it? Well, it was roughly where the Freshii and INS Market are now located. The old building that previously stood here was home to Guru Bazaar for more than three decades, before the business was moved to 79th Ave and 128th Street in Surrey.

Khurana says one of his biggest fears was losing business to a store that was closer to the clientele he was serving, most of whom had moved to Surrey in 2013 due to high rent costs and the gentrification of the Market. Guru Bazaar was left with little choice but to follow suit.

In its heyday, Guru Bazaar was considered one of the best destinations for Indian garments. Selling high-end sarees, bangles of every colour, wedding outfits, fabrics, shoes, and even gold jewelry. Shoppers would travel from as far as Victoria, Nanaimo, Williams Lake, Prince George, and Terrace.

Let's continue now and walk towards 49th and Main.

And with that, we have reached the end of Part One of the Punjabi Market walking tour. The second half of the tour will begin across the street, in front of Roots Cafe.

Please remove your headphones from your ears, and cross the street safely, as this is an incredibly busy intersection.

See you on the other side.

7. Dankmart Delicacies

Gurpreet:

Welcome to the Punjabi Market Walking Tour. If you're continuing from part 1 of the tour, which was along the West side of Main Street, then welcome back.

If you're just getting your tour started, then welcome to part 2 of our tour along the East side of Main Street

We've got a few things to discuss here on this corner before we continue our stroll. Further down Main St. past Oxygen Yoga, next to Naz's Pharmacy is a shop called Dank Mart. We can't see it from here, you would have to walk a bit further down the road, but it's worth pointing out because the relocation of many of the original businesses provided opportunities for new types of businesses to open their doors in the Punjabi Market.

THC Canada was opened by Spenser Sangara and Amin Shahin Shakur in 2016.

In October 2018, when cannabis was legalized in Canada, Spenser and Amin decided to create a unique snack shop to complement their dispensary. They wanted to make this block a one-stop-shop for cannabis lovers. Dank Mart was born at 6418 Main St!

Hundreds of people lined up during the April 2020 opening. Folks of all ages from across the greater Vancouver area were excited to try out the exclusive treats. Their shop includes snacks and sodas that are extremely hard to find. Many are imported from international destinations. There is also branded clothing, shoes, smoking, accessories, and art. Since the opening, Dank Mart has attracted people from all over BC to the area, increasing the foot traffic within Punjabi Market.

Unfortunately, we as a community lost Shahin Shakur, who was killed when his life was tragically taken behind the store location. He is survived by a daughter and partner, while his business partner Spenser has continued to run the businesses in honour of his best friend. With all of its success, Dank Mart has also expanded with a second location in Downtown Vancouver on Robson Street.

After the death of Shahin, The Snackie Chan Foundation was launched, with proceeds of certain purchases from THC and Dank Mart going towards the foundation. The goal is to build safe recreational areas for youth in Vancouver and programs to reduce violence on the streets.

8. Banners and Signs

Gurpreet:

While we're on the corner here, if you look up at the street light posts again, you'll see some more beautifully designed banners. To tell us more about the process of creating the banners is Jag Nagra, a graphic designer turned illustrator, who is inspired by her Indian roots

Jag:

My name is Jagandeep Nagra, or Jag as many know me by. I grew up in the suburbs, not surrounded by many south Asians outside of my own family. Coming to Punjabi market as a child and suddenly being submerged in a sea of color and community felt like a homecoming in many ways. It was a way for me to connect with and recognize my history. It was a place where all of my senses woke up, and a place where decades later, I would feel the same energy connection and wonder that I did as a child.

The two banners I designed comprise a phulkari pattern and a peacock. Phulkari is a traditional embroidery from the Punjab region of India, where individual stitches create bold, colorful patterns. And much like a phulkari, what makes up a community is the weaving of individuals. Thread by individual thread is intertwined to tell a story, One that connects us all.

Sharing our respective cultures' rich history of pattern making and weaving, and our connection to nature, Together, Debra Sparrow and I were able to create a series of banners that soar side by side in the market.

Debra:

Roadways in the world today replaced the rivers that were the roadways of the past. Where people congregated for food and gatherings in Musqueam. The old people tell of a story of a two-headed serpent

making its way through the waterways, leaving behind lilies. Over the past two centuries, the stories have disappeared deep into the bottom of the river. Only to emerge in a vision by Isaiah Sparrow.

After the story was related to him, it was an honor to have such a young man follow his history. Bringing back stories that are never ending and important for the places we live.

The geometric designs reflect the blanket patterns woven by the Musqueam women, and are as old as time. The modern designed birds are filled with Salish elements. Like us in this modern day world, we adapt to.

The colors are in keeping with Jag's, and her amazing reflection of her history. Both as ancient as time, we walked together on this land.

Gurpreet:

Thank you Jag & Debra.

We're not done with this intersection yet. It is the most famous corner of the Punjabi Market after all, and in July 1993, Vancouver's Punjabi Market was officially recognized with bilingual signs in English and Punjabi, the first of their kind outside of Asia.

When they were first installed in 1993, they were met with racism as some felt they were "dividing the neighbourhood". When the signs went up, community members supported the use of bilingual signs, but disagreed and condemned the designation of the 3-block area as the

Punjabi Market. They argued that the name wasn't representative of the mix of different ethnicities residing in the area. But, the signs remained and they continue to beautifully grace the streets of the Punjabi Market.

The market also features street engravings on the pavement, so keep an eye out for them as you are walking up and down the sidewalks.

9. All India Sweets

Gurpreet:

Okay, we're finally ready to move on from this corner and continue walking back towards 51st avenue, where Part 1 of the tour started.

For those of you who are continuing from part 1, it may seem like we just ate Gulab jamans at Himalaya Restaurant. But who can say no to some more Indian food and drinks? And if you missed out on the first half, and are just joining in now, we can enjoy some treats together.

Let's walk south away from 49th Ave to our next stop, All India Sweets. Coincidentally, at this time, all of the jewelry shops are on this side of the street. We'll be walking by a few of them now. Don't worry, we'll be talking about jewelry in a few minutes, and visiting a couple of the shops as well.

As we continue, just past Nurmahal Fashions is where you will find All India Sweets.

Prior to the new building going up across the street, All India was actually located right on the corner of 49th and Main, where Tim Hortons is now. They moved to the current location about 4 years ago. The current owner, Steve Ram, bought the business about 10 years ago and had a difficult decision to make when the new development project was started. Thankfully, he decided to keep the business in the Punjabi Market as it had become a staple there since first opening in the 1970s.

One thing that Ram says he learned quickly after he bought All India is that the restaurant is not just a business. Its meaning to the community, and its meaning to so many individual people is what Ram hopes to share with every dish he serves.

In 2013, All India received a Vancouver Heritage Foundation Places that Matter plaque. Ram said that despite the decrease of businesses in the market, the spirit of the community is still very much alive. And he was reminded of that when All India had to relocate. When he announced the original building was to be torn down, Ram was overwhelmed by the reaction from the community. “The amount of support and the amount of people who cared was just amazing and it’s what makes what we do fun”, he said.

All India is known for its vegetarian buffet and for also serving food from different regions in India. So head on in and tingle your taste buds with some delicious chai and samosas, which may just be one of the most perfect food combinations in the world

10. Shan Sarees

Gurpreet:

For our next stop, we're not going too far. It's a business that no longer exists, but it's also the business that started the story of the Punjabi Market.

Sucha Singh Claire and Harbans Kaur Claire had a dream of building an ethnic enclave like the one they saw in Southall, London. So on May 31st, 1970, they opened Shaan Sari's, the first store in the Punjabi Market. It was located in between HC Jewelers and Sadhna Sari's at 6576 Main St, which is now RK Designs & Jewellers.

No one can tell this story better than Mr & Mrs Claire, so we'll let them do the honours.

Sucha Singh Claire:

When I was over there [in England], there were no Indian businesses. After staying 7 years, during my stay over there, a lot of businesses opened like grocery and fabric stores for the [Indian] communities.

So, then I decided to move to Canada. I came over here in October 69'...Actually, I got the information when I was in England that in Vancouver that there are no Indian businesses, like grocery or fabric stores. So I decided there that when I go to Canada that I will open my own business.

I arrived here on 31st of October 1969, then I tried to find a place where I could open my fabric store. I noticed in those days that the Ross Street Gurdwara was going to be opened on Vaisakhi Day 1970. So I picked up a location in that area of Main and 49th.

Now, at the moment, where the Himalaya restaurant is, there was a coffee shop. I was sitting over there and I saw the store for rent. I rented that place at 6576 Main Street, [and] we opened our store on 31st of May 1970. The Gurdwara opened in the month of April, a month before we opened our store.

That [Gurdwara] was the attraction for the Indo-Canadian community to come for grocery, for jewellery, for fabric. Then the other business people who were very interested in opening their own business, I invited everybody to come to this area. [I thought] when a lot of the businesses would be here, the more and more people, the more and more customers would come to this area.

Harbans Kaur Claire, Spoken in Punjabi:

We started the market when we opened the first Sari business. Before us, there was no Sari business. Then we started adding more products like suits and drapes.

People still stop us and ask us to reopen the store so that they can come shop with us like they used to. Even our old employees tell us how much they miss our business. They miss it so much that they keep asking us to reopen so they can work with us again. Everyone was happy, our

employees were happy and our customers always left happy after shopping with us, and we were also very happy.

Sucha Singh Claire:

People were coming, and they appreciated that I started this [market], that will help to create and keep the culture — the Punjabi and the Canadian culture. In the middle of the 1980's, we formed a Punjabi Market Association. That [association] approached the City to recognize that area as the Punjabi Market because at that time there were 70 businesses run by the Indian community. Then Mr Bellamy, a councillor in the City Hall, in 1982 he put a motion in the City Hall to recognize that area to be the Punjabi Market. But due to the opposition from the...I can say that this is...discrimination or racial issue, and most white people started to oppose the idea of the Punjabi Market. [As a result of this] Mr Bellamy took that motion back.

We tried, and we carried on our fight to be recognized as the Punjabi Market. In 1983, Mr Gordon Campbell, the mayor of the City Hall, passed a resolution that the area would be called the Punjabi Market. In the month of June, he put the signs that you see in the Punjabi Market. So that was officially, in 1993, that area was recognized as the Punjabi Market.

At that time, there were 400 people working in our shops, and that was great for the City. And we were paying the taxes for the properties, and the tax on our sales, and that was good economic help to the City, and it was created by the Punjabi Market.

Gurpreet:

Thank you Mr & Mrs Claire.

We're going to visit one more jewelry shop next, so we'll continue down the path. Be careful again as you cross the intersection at 50th Ave.

11. Bharti Art Jewelers

Gurpreet:

Next to the medical clinic and pharmacy on the corner, is Bharti Art Jewellers.

Opened in 1973, Bharti Art Jewellers started out on Kingsway near Fraser Street in a small shop before moving to Main Street during the 1970's. Rasikbhai (the founder), was a very knowledgeable master of jewellery, and his wife Bharti quickly gained trust and confidence from the local community. They were well known for their impeccable service and the best purity of gold. Bharti Art Jewellers has become a popular and trusted name in Greater Vancouver.

Their son Sanjay Parekh now runs the business. The Parekh family established their roots in the traditional art of jewelry many generations ago in India. In the early 1930s, the Parekh family operated a small home based business in a small village selling only 22K gold jewelry.

Just one shop over from Bharti Art Jewelers is one of the last remaining clothing stores in the market, the one and only Mona Cloth House. Located in the heart of the market, Mona Cloth House is your one-stop

shop for Indian fashion. From suits, shoes, and jewelry to fabrics and rich textiles - a vast palette of beautiful colours fill the shop with vibrant life!

Named after owner Madan Dhingra's daughter, Mona Cloth House opened its doors on March 31st, 1990 and has been one of the original shops in the market.

Madan Uncle became an iconic figure in the market. He was the Uncle who told you truthfully whether or not to purchase an outfit, making sure you always looked your best. His warm heart, dedication to his customers and stories continue to make shopping special for everyone who enters his store.

Growing up and shopping at Mona's is embedded in many childhood memories. One of the first things you would see would be Madan Uncle standing behind his cash register, and it is still one of the first things you can see as you enter even today.

The cash register has a history of its own. It was purchased in 1992 and put into use when the GST & PST taxes were introduced, and it has been there ever since! So head on in and let the fabrics trickle through your fingers. The cash register alone is worth it!

We're getting close to the end of our tour. Let's keep walking down the street towards the final shop that we'll be visiting today.

Bombay Bazaar, owned by Usha Shukla, carries a large variety of costume jewelry, gifts, decorative flowers, traditional cookware, incense, fabrics & dresses, bangals, musical instruments, religious statues, and

altar items, all imported from India. The most popular items customers come in for are jewelry and statues.

The Shukla family moved to Vancouver from Delhi, India in the 90s and opened Bombay Bazaar in 2001. It is yet another family-owned and operated business in the market.

Usha says 20 years ago the market was incredibly busy as it was the main shopping place, but it has slowed down significantly since then. Bombay Bazaar is a hidden treasure, and you're likely to find some gems within the shop as well. The spiritual figures sold in the shop are really something to see and feel!

We're going to walk past Nanda jewelers, and stop at the intersection of Main and 51st.

If you look across the street and up into the trees, above the Sunset Community Center sign, you'll see the bright marigolds hanging down.

A reminder again, to please cross the street safely.

12. Visakhi and The Khalsa Diwan Society

Gurpreet:

Next, you will see an installation of images that revisits the long standing history of so many who have migrated from India, bringing their culture with them. One of the largest celebrations to be infused into Vancouver's cultural landscape is Vaisakhi.

The Vaisakhi Nagar Kirtan is a procession organized each year by the Khalsa Diwan Society. Every April, it is witnessed by hundreds of thousands of people and celebrates Vaisakhi, one of the most important days for Sikhs and Punjabis.

Vaisakhi signifies the first harvesting of crops in Punjab and also celebrates the birth of the Khalsa in 1699. The procession travels along Main St from Marine Drive, then turns East on 49th to make its way to Fraser St. Khalsa Diwan Society are the hosts of the parade as it begins and ends at the Ross Steet Gurdwara. Vancouver hosted the first and largest Vaisakhi celebration outside of Punjab. In the market, it also marks the unofficial beginning of the wedding season, which is the busiest time for the market's jewellers and clothing shops.

Let's talk a little more about the Khalsa Diwan Society, as they have a rich history of their own. KDS is a pioneer Sikh society formed on July 22, 1902. In 1908, the society purchased and built the first Sikh Gurdwara at 1866 West 2nd Avenue in Vancouver, which was inaugurated on January 19th, 1908. It was the first Sikh Gurdwara in North America and served the Greater Vancouver Sikh community until the property was sold for \$100,000 to build a new Gurdwara Sahib as the population grew.

(music interlude)

With more settlers arriving, the first ever Punjabi newspaper, Swadesh Sewak, was also distributed in the community in 1910.

On March 30, 1969, the foundation for the new Gurdwara was laid on a 2.75 acre piece of land on the corner of Ross Street and SE Marine Drive. The opening ceremony for the 500th birthday of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was held on Nov 30, 1969.

On April 25, 1970, the new Gurdwara location opened its doors at 8000 Ross Street. This is the present day location of the Ross Street Gurdwara. The building was designed by well known Architect M/S Erickson and Massey. The Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was moved from 2nd Avenue to the new location on Vaisakhi day of 1970.

The Khalsa Diwan Society has played a major role in the social and economic development of BC for over a century. They are a pioneer in raising Sikhi related issues and receiving recognition for Sikhs in Canada, having played a key role in the Komagata Maru apology and monument. The Gurdwara Sahib is also home to a beautifully curated Komagata Maru Museum.

They continue to work to build a strong community based on Sikhi values and principles by offering Punjabi language classes, youth kirtan/gurbani training, as well as computer training for new immigrants, youth, and seniors. They also assist seniors in filling passport and visa applications and Income tax returns.

Annual sports activities are also organized, including soccer, kabadi, wrestling, volleyball, and basketball, with over 100 teams taking part in the annual tournaments.

13. Marigolds in the Market

Congrats if you made it this far! We've got one final stop to make, and it just may take your breath away.

Throughout South Asia, marigolds are used for festivals and celebrations year-round. These beautiful flowers represent the sun, symbolize brightness and bring forward positive energy.

Marigolds in the Market is a public art installation presented by the Punjabi Market Regeneration Collective, with support from the City of Vancouver, United Way of the Lower Mainland, BC Rentals, and Club Card. The marigolds themselves were provided by Bombay Bazaar.

The installation was created in May 2021 to spread positivity in the Sunset area and celebrate the vibrant history of this diverse neighbourhood and its connection to the community. The goal is to help create a sense of place in the Punjabi Market, and to bring the community together. The PMRC felt this was a great way to do that.

And that brings us to the end of today's walking tour. Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the history of the Punjabi Market in Vancouver. We hope you will share what you learned today with your friends and family, and also encourage them to visit the Punjabi Market to take in all that it has to offer.

This tour has been brought to you by the Indian Summer Festival and the Punjabi Market Regeneration Collective.

My name is Gurpreet Sian, and it has been a pleasure guiding you through the Punjabi Market.

Sat Sri Akal and Goodbye.