

The Waymarker

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This month, we step into the theme of Blossoms & Beginnings—a gentle unfolding of all that’s been resting beneath the surface. Let this be your invitation—to pause, to reflect, to begin again.

May Update

This Month, We’re Focused on Re-alignment!

As we step into a new phase of growth at The PlaidPath, it feels like the perfect time to refocus and align our efforts. We've just launched a new Patreon structure, introduced our first downloadable field guide, and we're getting ready for our inaugural trek along The VAN to VIC Trek this summer. Moving forward, my focus is shifting towards community development and interaction. I'm incredibly excited to announce that we'll soon be launching a *free-to-the-public Walking Club* with The PlaidPath, a space where anyone can join in, connect, and walk together—whether you're local or from afar.

The PlaidPath is ever-evolving, and as we grow, it only makes sense that our social media approach follows suit. I've decided to stick with a theme for each month to create a place for everyone—no matter who you are—to gather, share stories, reflect, and learn from one another. It's about creating a space where community comes first, where we can celebrate the power of the trails, the stories they hold, and the healing they offer.





Exciting Updates Coming Your Way!

There's so much to be excited about! I'm thrilled to share that I've had a recent meeting with spokespeople from the Trans Canada Trail (TCT), which opens the door for even more collaboration and awareness around the TCT's importance. We're also expanding our reach by launching our tours on platforms like Viator and Get Your Guide, giving more people the opportunity to experience the beauty of our treks. Additionally, our own booking platform for direct bookings is currently in redevelopment, which means more streamlined ways for you to book and experience The PlaidPath.

In even more exciting news, we're preparing to launch three brand new *day tours* with The PlaidPath, coming soon in Vancouver, Victoria, and Nanaimo. Each of these will offer an immersive trekking experience that celebrates the unique beauty and culture of each location, while remaining centred in our approach to holistic wellness and healing.

On a personal development note, I've enrolled in a course to become a *Certified Interpretive Guide*, deepening my knowledge of how to connect people with the natural and cultural history of the regions we trek through. This will directly enhance the experiences we offer, as I'll be bringing a deeper layer of storytelling and interpretation to the trails.

Lastly, I'm working on a new workshop focused on the benefits of *holistic wellness on the trail*. This will be available both in-person and as a digital recording, helping you integrate mindfulness, self-care, and wellness practices during your outdoor adventures.

And here's a fun update: We applied to *Dragon's Den* and although there's no news yet, the audition was a fantastic growing opportunity. It allowed us to really hone in on what The PlaidPath is all about and further refine our offerings as we continue to evolve and grow.

Thank you for being part of this journey—I can't wait to continue growing together!

Matthew Cugnet (Director of The PlaidPath)

In Partnership with the TCT

We're thrilled to continue our growing partnership with the *Trans Canada Trail*—the world's longest network of recreational trails. Stretching over 28,000 km and connecting communities from coast to coast, the TCT isn't just a trail; it's a living, breathing journey through the diverse cultural and natural landscapes that shape Canada. It invites us to move with intention, discover untold stories, and find connection in every step.

This month, we're proud to contribute to the TCT's inspiring *Made to Be On* campaign by sharing how *The PlaidPath* chooses *the mode we walk in*. Whether it's walking with curiosity, reflection, joy, or courage, our treks are shaped by the moments we create and the mindset we bring to the trail. Our monthly themes and stories echo this philosophy, inviting everyone to tune into the rhythm of their own journey, wherever they are.

By aligning with the mission of the TCT, we're not only supporting a vital national initiative—we're also deepening the experience for every trekker who walks with us. This partnership is a key part of our commitment to community, education, and connection to the land.



Made to Be On

The *Made to Be On* campaign is a storytelling initiative by the Trans Canada Trail that celebrates the diverse ways people experience Canada's iconic trail network. It's more than just a call to get outside—it's an invitation to connect with yourself, your community, and the land in a way that feels authentic to you.

Whether you're *on foot, on wheels, on water, or simply on pause*, this campaign honours the many "modes" we choose when we step onto the trail. It's a recognition that movement can be reflective or adventurous, quiet or communal. There's no single way to explore the trail—only the way that's right for you.

At its heart, *Made to Be On* is about empowerment. It encourages Canadians of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities to embrace the trail on their own terms. It celebrates how being "on" the trail can mean being fully present, deeply connected, and alive to the possibilities that open up when we walk with intention.

As a proud supporter and contributor to this campaign, The PlaidPath shares stories of people walking in their own unique mode, because however you arrive, you were made to be on.



Spend a Day on The TCT

Lower Mainland Highlights:

Looking to explore the TCT in a way that's accessible, meaningful, and filled with local beauty? Here are some of our favourite day walks across the Lower Mainland (and one just across the Salish Sea) that offer a perfect mix of nature, culture, and community connection:



Vancouver Waterfront + Stanley Park | ~15km

Begin in Olympic Village and trace the shoreline along False Creek, taking in sweeping views of the city skyline and the bustle of Granville Island. Follow the Seawall all the way around Stanley Park—passing iconic spots like the Totem Poles, Brockton Point Lighthouse, and Third Beach. This loop is lively, scenic, and perfect for both wanderers and cyclists. Great cafés and washrooms line the route.



Burnaby Mountain Trail | ~5km

Climb through forested paths and rich mossy undergrowth to reach sweeping views of Indian Arm and the North Shore mountains. The route winds past Simon Fraser University and offers a blend of nature and quiet contemplation. You may even catch a glimpse of bald eagles overhead.



Rocky Point to Clarke Street, Port Moody | 3-6km

Start at Rocky Point Park, known for its waterfront boardwalk, vibrant playground, and weekend food trucks. Meander along the trail, then extend your walk through historic Clarke Street to explore local shops, breweries, and murals. Keep your eye out for seals or great blue herons in the inlet.



Fort-to-Fort Trail, Langley | 8km One-Way

Start at Derby Reach Regional Park and follow the Fraser River to the charming village of Fort Langley. This mostly flat riverside trail offers a mix of farm landscapes, old-growth trees, and historical markers from BC's early settler days. Fort Langley makes a lovely post-walk stop for lunch or browsing local artisan shops.



Capilano River Regional Park Loop | ~6km

Step into a forested world of towering firs and roaring water. This loop takes you alongside the Capilano River, across salmon hatcheries, and up to the shores of the Capilano Reservoir. Expect dramatic canyon views, suspension bridges (optional!), and peaceful trail sections for quiet reflection.

Trail Tidbits

Did you know...?

- **The Trans Canada Trail is the longest recreational trail in the world**—stretching over 28,000 km and weaving through every province and territory in Canada. You could walk coast to coast to coast without ever leaving it.
- **Hiking boosts creativity by up to 50%.** Studies show that unplugging and spending just 20 minutes in nature can clear mental fog and open space for problem-solving and creative thought.
- **Walking shoulder-to-shoulder encourages deeper conversation.** That's why trail talk often feels more meaningful—it lowers social pressure and increases openness, especially in new friendships.
- **"Forest bathing" (Shinrin-yoku), a Japanese wellness practice, reduces stress hormones and boosts immunity.** Just being among trees—even without strenuous hiking—has proven emotional and physical benefits.
- **The TCT connects over 15,000 communities across Canada.** Every time you step on the trail, you're part of a living thread that ties people, cultures, and landscapes together from sea to sea.

Gentle Trail Tips for Your First Steps

Blossoms & Beginnings means showing up exactly as you are—curious, cautious, or completely new to the trail. Whether you're lacing up for your first walk or returning after a pause, these gentle trail strategies are here to guide your steps. You don't need to be "ready." You just need to begin.

1. **Bring a thermos with your favorite tea - comfort elevates clarity.**
2. **Walk with a question and end with a breath.**
3. **Blisters happen. Carry moleskin, but also patience.**
4. **Don't race the path.**
5. **Pack light, but don't forget a small notebook.**



Action Plan for May

This is your gentle nudge to step into something new—with intention, curiosity, and community. Here's your five-step action plan to move in your own *Mode to Be On* this month:

- ☐ Download this Field Guide.
- ☐ Schedule three trail walks in your calendar.
- ☐ Share your “Mode to Be On” and tag @theplaidpath with the hashtag #awakeninmay.
- ☐ Invite a friend to walk with you.
- ☐ Reflect on how you felt after each walk—what bloomed in you?

Stay in the Loop

The PlaidPath is growing—and so is the community walking beside it. Follow us on Instagram [@theplaidpath](#) for stories from the trail, seasonal reflections, and updates you won't want to miss. Want to go deeper? Join us on [Patreon](#) and become a founding member of *The PlaidPath Community*—where every step supports connection, creativity, and care.

Here's what's blooming this season:

- **VAN to VIC Trek** now open for summer bookings.
- **New self-guided mini adventures** launching late June.
- **Day tours in Vancouver, Nanaimo & Victoria** releasing soon.
- **Local meetups forming** - walking clubs are on the way.
- **Workshops, field guides & behind-the-scenes content** just for members.

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