

PREST: Do your worst, Vancouver: I'm not leaving

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Time to once again prove what a loser I am. I'm going to ... gulp ... continue living in Vancouver.

Phew, that was tough to admit. It's obviously not a trendy position. These days you can't swing a sack of dead salmon without smacking at least three people who are at that very moment writing an angsty "Why I'm leaving Vancouver" blog post.

One writer in the wildly popular Vancity Buzz online media source started her gripe list with the assertion that she's fed up with Vancouver because "it's coooooold."

It's weird that this author wants to leave Vancouver - it seems to me that once she explains how coooooold it is in Vancouver to anyone in the rest of Canada she'll be looking for soft foods such as Vancouver's famous sushi that she can eat with no teeth.

She goes on to lament that "In Canada, we don't really have any trains, so you get into a car and drive for four hours in any direction and you're in a forest."

You know, she may have a point there. Whenever I'm out on the open road in Canada I see our rail lines crowded with random rolling cargo and passenger wagons coupled together, pulled along by some sort of motorized iron horse and I always think to myself, why don't they just use a damn train?!

I'd encourage this writer to really test out her theory, drive for four hours in any direction and see where she ends up. If she doesn't like it, keep on driving. Just watch out for those weird unnamed objects chugging up and down the railway tracks!

Another writer in the wildly popular Huffington Post online media source complained that one of the worst things about Vancouver is that when you have parties, no one comes to them.

"You can plan a party, have a dozen people RSVP, and then have every one of them cancel an hour before the party."

The writer said this scenario happens so much to him that he gave it a name: getting "Vancouvered."

That's odd - I always thought getting Vancouvered meant spilling coffee on your yoga pants while stuck in a traffic jam listening to your hockey team lose in the playoffs. We've all been there.

Now I know this is not a competition, but I have never thrown a party and had no one show up, and I've never been to a party where no one else has shown up. They do say that people who are good friends have good friends. That bar might even be a bit high - I'm a mediocre friend at best and I have wonderful friends.

All the Leaving Vancouver essays eventually do come around to the one legit, non-train-related complaint about the city: housing prices.

Here's where I must admit that, as one of the unlucky millions who did not have the good sense to be born 20 years earlier so that I could get into the housing market before it went full Kanye West crazy, it is kind of depressing to watch investors and real-estate agents play property ping pong while politicians sit on the sidelines yelling "wooooo, great

shot!"

When I was growing up I assumed I would at some point buy a house, but I've come to accept that as long as I'm living here that will not happen. And I'm not even in Vancouver proper, but one of our two beloved North Vancouvers (city, I think).

But I'm not about to let my housing status determine my happiness. I can afford my rent, although it doesn't leave a lot of extra spending money. A lot of my friends back home in Alberta do seem to have extra cash for things like giant trucks, houses and boats. They all have freaking boats! Which is weird because I'm the one that lives by the ocean.

But then again, I live by the ocean! If I knew how to ski, surf, or sail, I could do all of those things in one day and then open up a craft brewery.

There are warnings now that the skyrocketing house prices and absentee owner/investors are going to turn this into a ghost town, a "husk of a city" the pundits call it.

Really? You mean there won't be thousands of families wrestling for good spots on the beach? There won't be hour-long lineups for the bridge? Please tell me more about this husk of a city thing. It sounds like paradise.

I've made my choices in life, I understand the consequences. And maybe one day I really, really won't be able to afford to live here. Or maybe someone will offer me a million dollars a year to work in the Northwest Territories.

If that happens, I'll have a tear in my eye as I wave goodbye to Vancouver, bound for Tuktuyaaqtuuq on some kind of magical railroad mystery machine.

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