



We're better together

Think Local First is a membership-driven, non-profit society in Greater Victoria. Our aim is to create awareness around the power we all have to support our community with our shopping dollars.

We encourage people to patronize local, independent businesses so we can keep Greater Victoria a vibrant, economically healthy, sustainable community. We also provide support to our 200+ business members through our website, app, networking events, social media channels and co-op advertising opportunities.

The economic slowdown resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic's requirements for social distancing and self-isolation, is still being felt around the globe. Since mid-March many businesses around British Columbia have either:

- revamped their level of service,
- pivoted their business model, or
- closed their brick and mortar locations.

Those hardest hit are the local, independent businesses that are the backbone of our communities' economic sustainability.

How can we help local
businesses during this
time?

Think Local First, in partnership with Vancity and Shopify, created an initiative to support local, independent businesses who have temporarily closed their doors. The website SupportLocalYYJ (<https://supportlocalyyj.com/>) sold gift certificates for future use on behalf of those businesses.





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Buy Gift Certificates to Support Our Local Businesses

Show your love for Greater Victoria's local, independent businesses by purchasing gift certificates for future use.

[VIEW ALL GIFT CERTIFICATES](#)

Gift certificates are available in \$10, \$25, \$50 and \$100 denominations.

Buy some from each of your favourite businesses on this website.

FOOD & DRINK



Spinner's Gastro Brewpub
from \$10.00



Dutch Bakery & Diner
from \$10.00



Il Terrazzo
from \$10.00



House of Boateng
from \$10.00



Silk Road Tea
from \$10.00



Big Wheel Burger
from \$10.00



Zembri's Restaurant
from \$10.00



Royal Bay Bakery
from \$10.00



2% Jazz Coffee
from \$10.00



Mosi Bakery
from \$10.00

VIEW ALL

RETAIL



Thistle & Wren
from \$10.00



Dodd's Furniture and Mattress
from \$10.00



Fortune Gallery
from \$10.00



Sports Rent
from \$10.00



Reunion Boutique
from \$10.00



Curious Comics
from \$10.00



Island Blue Print
from \$10.00



Moe's Home
from \$10.00



Wychbury Ave
from \$10.00



Sunshine Gift Shoppe
from \$10.00

VIEW ALL

SERVICES



Inspire Hair Design
from \$10.00



Woolability
from \$10.00



Kimberly Jarems Woodwind Repairs
from \$10.00



WebMax.ca
from \$10.00



Tangerine Hair Salon - Redesable only with Jennifer Sealey
from \$10.00



Cedar Vista Stables
from \$10.00



The Spa Magnolia
from \$10.00



The Nulla Project
from \$10.00



S.O.S. Tire & Wheel
from \$10.00



Victorie Butterfly Gardens
from \$10.00

The platform provided for businesses to receive the full value of the gift cards purchased without the expense of payment processing costs.

The aim was to provide an injection into their current cash flow.

The intent is that gift certificate buyers will wait to redeem the certificates after the pandemic has passed and businesses have re-opened their locations.

It worked!!

Support Local YYJ had 174 Greater Victoria businesses and sold over \$23,000 in gift certificates when it was rolled into Support Local BC on 17 May 2020.

How did we get the
message out about
Support Local YYJ?

- Email to Think Local First member businesses
- Reached out to our community partners
- Social media including graphics sent to participating business
- Media release – interview with CHEK local news, radio interview
- Paid promotion via Victoria Buzz
- PSAs with a local radio station media partner
- Customers recommending businesses to join

Support Local YYJ
to
Support Local BC

- Connected with economic development organizations that I had connections with – BCEDA, Love Northern BC, LOCO BC.
- How the program would be structured
- Created a cost-recovery funding model where communities pay the fees so their businesses can join
- Set up back end structure, website, accounting, email, etc.
- Hired a summer student
- Refined the program and online platform so it would remain meaningful

Want to add your business? Learn More.

Business Portal Login →

Call: 1-888-772-4667 | Mon-Fri 7am-8pm



- Shop ▾
- Send a Gift
- FAQs
- Participate ▾
- About ▾



Support Local British Columbia.

SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY BY PURCHASING GIFT CERTIFICATES FROM LOCAL BUSINESSES FOR YOURSELF OR AS A GIFT.

[Shop & View Communities](#)

British Columbians love local businesses!

You've purchased over **\$97,430** in gift certificates from **1,170** businesses in the **64** communities on the Support Local BC website

**What have we done to
improve the program?**

Keep the program meaningful as province opens up:

- added a business portal powered by Duoplane that allows businesses to login and manage gift certificate sales in real time
- connected the WayPay service that allows us to pay businesses weekly via direct deposit
- added a map to the home page so residents and visitors to our communities can find (or discover) their favourite local businesses
- created a comprehensive business resources page that includes video tutorials and a handy graphic of the steps to rock their participation

**What kind of success are
we having?**

- 1,284 businesses participating from over 66 communities in BC
- Sold \$99,345 in gift certificates!
- Connection with community partners across the province
- Making sure that local businesses know they are supported

What's next?

- Connecting an app that can be used a wayfinding tool as people travel around their communities and province
- Listening to businesses and customers
- Continue to leverage the platform and social media to raise awareness for all the amazing, local businesses in our communities. Love Northern BC \$25 bonus; Vancity Love Local week 5-12 Aug
- Share your ideas



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