

MEDIA ADVISORY

Gold Rush! El Dorado in British Columbia

May 13, 2015-October 31, 2015

In 1858, word of gold rang out in British Columbia's Fraser Canyon, setting off a dramatic migration of people and propelling this once remote region of western North America into the modern age.

Gold Rush! El Dorado in BC, a major new exhibition created by the Royal BC Museum opening May 13 in Victoria, tells fascinating stories of adventure, heartbreak and upheaval as everything changed forever with the gold rushes of the late 1800s.

Royal BC Museum curators and exhibition designers will bring the gold rush to life as only they can – through the very best of its unparalleled collection of rare artifacts, archival photographs and original historical documents.

Gold Rush will explore how everything changed during this fevered era, as class and racial barriers were broken down and people seized the extraordinary opportunities that glittered before them.

Visitors can marvel at the dazzling Turnagain Nugget, the largest existing gold nugget from BC at 1,642g (52 oz.), see a real stagecoach on loan from the **Historic O'Keefe Ranch**, and witness the cultural influences of gold through the Bill Reid gold box, just a sampling of the more than 400 objects on display.

Through interactive displays, families, and especially children, will enjoy trying their hand at a simulation Rocker Box, which demonstrates separating gold from sediment, **examining the differences between real and fool's gold and trying their own luck with** an exciting game of fortune. Interactive multimedia stations will give visitors the chance to experience what life would be like for them in a gold rush-era town and explore how the **legacy of the gold rush shaped modern British Columbia's landscape**.

Gold Rush! at the Royal BC Museum also includes the exclusive North American engagement of *Allure of Gold*, a companion exhibition of pre-Hispanic gold art, on loan from the Museo del Oro in Bogota, Colombia. This remarkable collection showcases the central role this sacred metal occupied in the life of indigenous people in Colombia. This will be the only opportunity in North America to see these objects together, some of them on tour for the first time outside Colombia.

The exhibition will also showcase stunning objects from partner institutions such as the Royal Canadian Mint and Barkerville, allowing visitors to come face-to-face with the real history of gold in BC and beyond.

After its premiere presentation in Victoria, *Gold Rush! El Dorado in BC* will travel to the Canadian Museum of History in Ottawa and China.



For more information and a full calendar of exhibition-related events, check out www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca.

About the Royal BC Museum

The Royal BC Museum explores the province's human history and natural history, advances new knowledge and understanding of BC, and provides a dynamic forum for discussion and a place for reflection. The museum and archives celebrate culture and history, telling the stories of BC in ways that enlighten, stimulate and inspire. Looking to the future, by 2017 the Royal BC Museum will be a refreshed, modern museum, extending its reach far beyond Victoria as a world-class cultural venue and repository of digital treasures.

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