

Tsawwassen's Splashdown Park will reopen as Big Splash Waterpark this summer

Beloved 33-year-old waterpark is being taken over and renovated by Executive Hotels & Resorts

By Michelle Ghoussoub, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jan 11, 2017 7:21 PM PT Last Updated: Jan 11, 2017 7:21 PM PT

Last May, there was an [outpouring of nostalgia and sadness](#) when it was announced that Tsawwassen's iconic Splashdown Waterpark would be closing its doors after 33 years.

But fans of the park need not fret: the park is now set to open in June 2017, renovated and rebranded as [Big Splash Waterpark](#).

Vancouver-based company Executive Hotels & Resorts announced it has established a 99-year lease with the seven-acre property's owner and has plans to build a boutique hotel adjacent to the site.

Longtime general manager Harold Frederiks said he's relieved the park will be staying open.

"Up to the end of September, it was pretty sad to see this all coming to an end. When negotiations started to get this up and running, it was pretty exciting and we're all fired up to get this ready for summer," he said.

Joe Ennis, director of hotel services for Executive Hotels & Resorts, said the public outcry at the closure was in part what inspired the project.

"When Splashdown was closing down, we realized that it's exactly in our location and we thought it would be a great idea to restore it and bring it back to the public," he said.

'In need of a makeover'

Splashdown Park won't just have a new name but also an entirely new look.

The renovations, which have already begun, will update the layout and landscaping of the area and introduce new slides and a kids zone.

The plans also include an adult-only hot tub, a "Vegas-stye" cabana program, an espresso and gelato bar and a VIP private viewing deck equipped with a DJ stand.

"A lot of people would recognize that Splashdown was a 33-year-old waterpark and was in need of a makeover," Frederiks said.

"It's a different feeling working with a big corporation and these guys, they know what they're doing."

He promised that despite the upgrades, the park will maintain its family-friendly feel.

"I'll be here," he said, "I'll make sure everyone feels welcome and it'll be a great experience."

Tsawwassen hot spot

Ennis said Tsawwassen is an "emerging market" the development group is excited to be a part of.

Frederiks said the area has changed drastically since he began managing the waterpark over 16 years ago.

"Tsawwassen has become a real entertainment and shopping destination. It's a big deal now," he said.

Big Splash Waterpark has plans to partner with the newly opened [Tsawwassen Mills mall](#) for a "slide and shop" program.

Ennis said at the end of the day, it's all about family-fun.

"Everybody loves a waterslide, and it's one of those really fun things that Vancouver doesn't offer in the summer. It's just one of those beloved family traditions," he said.

Big Splash Waterpark is set to open in June 2017. The hotel is expected to open in 2019.

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