



## Canadian Rockies - Sculptured by Glaciers

*Surround yourself with Western Canada's majestic landscapes...*

**Trip Length: 22 days / 21 nights**

**July / August**

**Minimum 8 adventurers / Maximum 10 adventurers**



**Included meals marked each day. B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner**

This tailor-made itinerary through British Columbia & Alberta's Rocky Mountains has been designed with adventurous folk in mind! Canadians say they have the 'promised land - the best in the world' and we're about to test it! The real spectacle of this magic and expansive landscape isn't hidden away in some dusty museum or the bustle of city streets. It's showcased in areas where we'll get to take in the fresh mountain air as we hike and explore with a group of outdoor enthusiasts.

Endless forests; dramatic bluffs; mountains hacked into the sky; pristine lakes; prairies; alpine meadows, indigenous paths carved thousands of years ago through mountain passes, and a storm-lashed coastline hugging many inlets and flanking the Pacific Ocean are where our sights are set. For those into wildlife you can look for grizzly or black bears foraging for berries, grey wolves, wolverines, lynx, moose, elk, beavers and porcupines. For the birds there's over 270 species including bald and golden eagles.

From Calgary, nick-named 'Cowtown', we'll jump across to Banff and its national parks where a maze of trails will get us into the swing of things. Glacier-fed Lake Louise and Yoho National Park, home to massive Takakkaw Falls, are ours to explore before we head to Jasper, often referred to as 'the real Rockies'. Then it's on to Wells Grey Provincial Park and Joffre Lakes before touching down in the charming village of Whistler, where skiing and mountain biking are its universal badge of honour. Our trip will end in Vancouver, western Canada's largest city, where historic buildings are the backdrop to culturally diverse and modern neighbourhoods, all with their own special vibe.

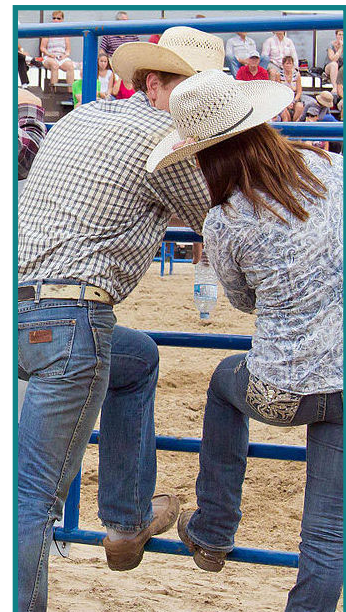
### **Day 1. Sunday 26 July (D)**

**Arrive Calgary - Tour orientation and transfer to the Rockies**

**Drive Time: 2 hrs**

Meet your group and guides in Calgary with a pick up from your hotel or a central meeting point in the mid afternoon. This gives you time to fly in on the first day of the tour, or arrive early to explore Canada's cowboy playground for a day or two. Watch the prairies turn to towering mountains in a matter of minutes during the drive west into the heart of the Canadian Rocky Mountains, that span the provinces of British Columbia and Alberta. Once we arrive at our campground on the edge of Banff town, our guides show us the camping gear and we set up the tents together. Once this is accomplished there will be a mouth-watering meal prepared by our guides. After dinner and desert we settle around the campfire and chat about the days to come.

**Overnight: Camping**



*Calgary, Cowtown*



## *Grotto Canyon, Banff*



### **Day 2. Monday 27 July (B, L, D)**

#### **Treasures of Banff**

##### **Drive Time: 1 hr**

After a delicious breakfast we head out to explore the highlights that Banff is famous for and a few that most people don't know about. Over the course of the day we will explore some viewpoints around town, like the world renowned Banff Springs Hotel and some impressive hoodoo formations, and **Take A Walk** through Grotto Canyon that has sheer cliff walls; a natural grotto feature, and pictographs left by passing indigenous nations over a thousand years ago. Enjoy a picnic lunch surrounded by some of the most iconic views in Canada. Spend the evening around the campfire watching the stars emerge.

##### **Overnight: Camping**

### **Day 3. Tuesday 28 July (B, L, D)**

#### **Wildflowers and Alpine Meadows**

##### **Drive Time: 2 hrs**

##### **Hiking: 6 hrs, 14 km, 800 m elevation**

After waking to the smell of coffee and fresh mountain air, our guides take us south from Banff into the heart of Kananaskis Country, an area known (or should we say unknown) for jaw dropping mountains and wilderness as far as the eye can see. We will experience one of the crown jewel hikes in this area as we trek through a previously burned section now alive with alpine plants. We'll learn how these plants support the local ecosystem, and then head into the alpine areas for endless views of jagged peaks and wildflowers. Later, we'll stop off in the town of Canmore (a local hideaway near Banff) to check out another cool mountain town. After another incredible feast for dinner, we can soak our legs in a historic set of hot springs. These hot springs originally made Banff a destination for visitors from around the world.

##### **Overnight: Camping**

### **Day 4. Wednesday 29 July (B, L, D)**

#### **Swiss Mountaineers and Mountain Tea Houses**

##### **Drive Time: 1 hr**

##### **Hiking: 4 - 6 hrs, 10 - 14 km, 500 - 700 m elevation**

Today we pack up camp and head to Lake Louise, where we will be based for the next couple of days. Our guides take us on an iconic hike that was first made popular by the Swiss guides that pioneered mountaineering in the Canadian Rockies. We start the day taking photos of Lake Louise and Victoria Glacier in the morning light and then head up into the mountains to visit the historic tea houses in the area, and maybe even eat some Swiss fondue while learning about the early pioneering days in the Rockies.

##### **Overnight: Camping**



*Lake Louise*





**Day 5. Thursday 30 July (B, L, D)**

**Moraine Lake and Beyond**

**Drive Time: 0.5 hr**

**Hiking: 4 - 6 hrs, 11 - 15 km, 500 m elevation**

Today we head up to Moraine Lake, which you will instantly recognise from some of the most beautiful photos that have come from the Rockies. Your guides will give you the gossip on the drama unfolding in the geology community and why the name of this lake is a total sham! Once you're in the know, we head up and beyond into the alpine valleys above Moraine Lake, then climb to the saddle of Wenchemna Pass and stand with one foot in Alberta and the other firmly planted in British Columbia.

**Overnight: Camping**

**Day 6. Friday 31 July (B, L)**

**In Awe In Yoho**

**Drive Time: 2 hrs**

That's right... today we pack up and head through Yoho National Park. Yoho is Cree (an indigenous term meaning 'to be in awe'), that we believe will fit the bill today. Our guides will show us all the gems of the park, including a couple of amazing waterfalls (one is the second highest in Canada), as well as **Taking a Walk** at Emerald Lake, famous for the old Canadian Pacific Railway Lodge on the edge of the lake. Pinch yourself to make sure you haven't teleported into a postcard! Relax in style tonight, dining at a local restaurant (own cost) and staying in a comfortable hotel.

**Overnight: Hotel**

**Day 7. Saturday 1 August (L)**

**A Day in the Life of a Fire Warden**

**Drive Time: 1.5 hrs**

**Hiking: 4 hrs, 7 km, 500 m elevation**

Today we hike to Paget Lookout, a historic fire lookout in the heart of Yoho National Park. The best part about fire lookouts is they have really good views! The national parks used these lookouts to watch for fires and then put them out as soon as they were spotted. Nowadays, Canadian's embrace forest fires as a vital natural process, but more on that during the tour! Once we get back down, we'll take a moment to explore the railway town of Field before returning to Golden, British Columbia for another well earned dinner (own cost).

**Overnight: Hotel**





**Day 8. Sunday 2 August (L, D)**

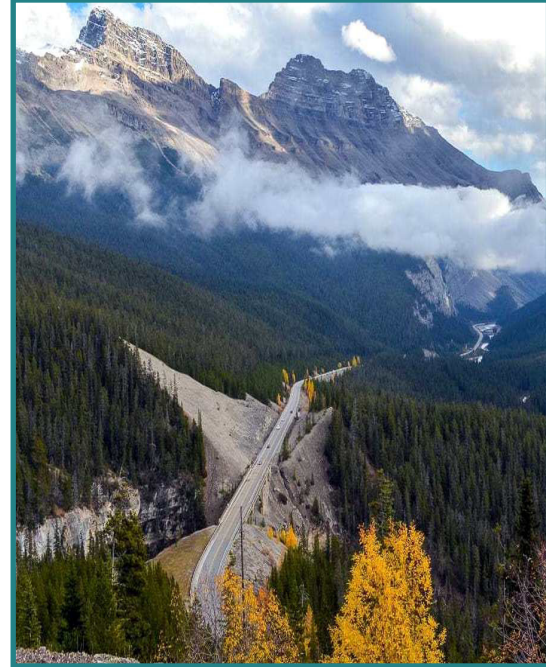
**Welcome to the Icefields Parkway**

**Drive Time: 3 hrs**

**Hiking: 3 hrs, 8 km, minimal elevation**

Leave Golden and Yoho behind as we begin our journey up the Icefields Parkway, one of the most photographed routes in the world. The parkway is renowned for its stunning vistas, each complete with a glacial lake, corresponding glacier, and series of majestic mountains in the background. This is a photographers' Mecca with the soft morning light accentuating the rugged mountain peaks as far as the eye can see. Wander into the wild on a hike with your guides, exploring the alpine area or along the shore of a pristine lake to a remote waterfall.

**Overnight: Camping**



**Day 9. Monday 3 August (B, L, D)**

**Secret Spot and Secret Hike**

**Hiking: 7 hrs, 14 km, 800 m elevation.**

It seems everyone wants to escape the crowds these days. Our local guides specialise in getting us off the beaten path and into places that are seldom seen, even by locals. Today, we actually leave the national parks that you travelled so far to see and enter a wilderness conservation area that is missed by almost everyone to visit the Rockies. This is a land of massive lakes, endless peaks, open skies and wildlife, and you are going to have a bird's eye view of it all from the top of our hike today. Tonight, we are back to camping beneath starry skies and next to one of the biggest lakes in the Rockies.

**Overnight: Camping**

**Day 10. Tuesday 4 August (B, L)**

**Icefields Parkway 2.0 and Glaciers**

**Drive Time: 3 hrs**

**Hiking: 3 hrs, 5 km, 300 m elevation**

Wake up to the smell of fire baked cinnamon buns and head back into the national parks, where your guides will show you a secret waterfall from up as close as you can get without having a shower. Next we hike Parker Ridge, where we can walk off our breakfast and see stunning glacier views. Enjoy the rest of the bucket list attractions along the Icefields Parkway while learning about the battle between ice and rock of the glaciers that shape this landscape. Don't worry about squirming into a sleeping bag tonight because we are checking into a comfy Jasper hotel!

**Overnight: Hotel**



*Hiking Parker Ridge*



**Day 11. Wednesday 5 August (B, L)**

**Local Favourites of Jasper**

**Drive Time: 1 hr**

**Hiking: 1.5 hrs, 4 km, 200 m elevation**

This is your day to experience the best that Jasper has to offer with the help of our local guides. Start with a short hike through a valley with five picture-perfect lakes, fed by natural springs so they are as pleasant to swim in as they are to see. Next we move on to Maligne Canyon, learning about the destructive force of water and seeing first hand how water shapes this



landscape. Don't panic, you'll still get to stand on top of a mountain today, you just don't have to work as hard for it. We hop on the Jasper Skytram and climb over 1000 metres in just under seven minutes, arriving at the barren mountain top of Whistlers Peak, where you will be rewarded with some of the best views of the entire tour. As you look at the surrounding peaks you will see Mount Robson, the highest peak in the Rockies at almost 4000 metres (reaching a 1000 metres higher than the peak you stand on!).

**Overnight: Hotel**

**Day 12. Thursday 6 August (B, L)**

**Jasper Hiking Day or Free Time**

**Drive Time: 3 hrs**

**Hiking: 6 km, 300 m elevation**

Today you can enjoy one of the best hikes around Jasper with your local guides, or maybe have a free day in Jasper to explore for yourself. If you wish, you could opt in for a guided horseback riding adventure or rent a bike and explore some beautiful lakes yourself. If you're still keen for a hike we can head out for a guided hike to Cavell Meadows or an alpine ridge near Maligne Lake. After a delicious dinner (own cost) we head out of town to a set of hot springs, very similar to the ones in Banff, and enjoy a well deserved soak in the therapeutic healing waters.

**Overnight: Hotel**





### Day 13. Friday 7 August (B)

#### Path of the Fraser River

**Drive Time: 4 hrs**

Depart Jasper for a scenic drive following the Fraser River west from Jasper towards the Pacific Ocean. This is the same path that was taken by early explorers for almost 200 years as they worked to pioneer trading routes to stitch Canada together. On the way to Wells Grey Provincial Park, we stop at virtually every waterfall and jaw dropping view.

**Overnight: Lodge / Inn**

### Day 14. Saturday 8 August (L)

#### Wells Grey Provincial Park

**Drive Time: 4 hrs**

**Hiking: 3 hrs, mixed**

Set out and explore one of the largest provincial parks in British Columbia, including some of the most amazing waterfalls. After experiencing the highlights we depart Wells Grey, heading for Lytton where we will be staying for two nights. Along the way we take a detour to follow a scenic route along the Fraser River, which also passes right beside Fort Berens Winery, so with a little convincing your guide might be inclined to stop in for a tasting! Once you have been properly wined you will arrive at Kumsheen Rafting Resort, which is a quaint and gorgeous glamping resort with historically significant accommodations reminiscent of the railroad building days.

**Overnight: Glamping Resort**

### Day 15. Sunday 9 August (L)

#### Rafting the Thompson River

Take a break from hiking and driving today, with a chance to raft one of North America's greatest rivers, perhaps the world. Introducing the mighty Thompson River... the fourth largest commercially rafted river in the world, known for crystal clear, warm water forming thunderous waves and whirlpools that were described as monsters by early fur traders. After a scenic float in the morning, you'll stop for an amazing riverside lunch, followed by the most exciting 22 kilometres of the entire river. The rafting journey also follows one of the most perilous sections of train tracks. You will be able to see the evidence of recent rock slides and wrecked trains.

**Overnight: Glamping Resort**

### Day 16. Monday 10 August (L)

#### Into the Coast Mountains

**Drive Time: 3 hrs**

**Hiking: 4 hours, 10 km, 600 m elevation.**

Blast off from the desert valleys of the resort and head into the wild ranges of the coast mountains. This is a seldom travelled route that is missed by most people who visit western Canada. As we head into the heart of the mountain range we stop for a hike at Joffre Lakes, where you can hike to the first, second or third lake, getting closer and closer to the glacier that feeds these lakes. Notice how the vegetation has changed from the Rockies to the desert and then into the Coast Mountains, as we get closer to the coast. Tonight we settle down in Whistler, one of the most famous mountain destinations in the world and for good reason! Over the next few days we will find out why.

**Overnight: Hotel**



*Joffre Lakes*

### Day 17. Tuesday 11 August (L)

#### Explore Whistler and Peak to Peak

**Drive Time: 1 hour**

**Hiking: 3 hours mixed**

Today you can take a free morning to explore the town of Whistler, full of shops, cafes and right on the edge of the mountain. In the afternoon we hop on the Peak to Peak Gondola, whisking you up to the top of the mountain, where we set out for a hike in the coastal alpine region. This is a good chance to spot bears from the gondolas, as they feast on wild berries on the high slopes.

**Overnight: Hotel**

### Day 18. Wednesday 12 August (L)

#### Whistler Hiking Adventure

**Drive Time: 1 hr**

**Hiking: 6 hrs, 12 km, 600 m elevation**

Today we head out for a guided hiking adventure around Whistler, heading up into the craggy peaks that surround this area, in search of pristine alpine lakes, breezy alpine meadows and panoramic views.

**Overnight: Hotel**

### Day 19. Thursday 13 August (L)

#### Sea to Sky

**Drive Time: 2 hrs**

**Hiking: 4 hrs, 10 km, 700 m elevation**

We depart Whistler and head south along the Sea to Sky corridor towards Vancouver. This is one of the most beautiful drives in British Columbia, heading through the Coast Mountains and descending to the salty waters of Howe Sound. Along the way we stop for a guided hike to the airy summit of Stawamus Chief, the second largest granite monolith in the world. Picture a giant rock towering 700 metres over the ocean, surrounded by glaciated peaks and with you standing right on the top, popping an organic strawberry in your mouth. After a good leg stretch we carry on into Vancouver, where adventure meets glamour on Canada's West Coast. We check into a centrally located, comfortable hotel for the rest of the tour.

**Overnight: Hotel**

### Day 20. Friday 14 August (B, L)

#### Best of Vancouver

**Drive Time: 1 hr**

**Hiking: 1-2 hrs**

Today we explore the best that Vancouver has to offer, including a tour through Stanley Park and its ancient forest, Granville Island and its bustling seaside market, and then head into North Vancouver for a walk through the coastal rain forest of Light House Park.

**Overnight: Hotel**

### Day 21. Saturday 15 August (B, L, D)

#### Bird's Eye View of Vancouver

**Drive Time: 1 hr**

**Hiking: 4 hrs, 10 km, 500 m elevation**

Start bright and early, heading for Lynn Canyon where we hike through a thousand year old rainforest, with trees towering over you and making us feel like ants. Dare to cross the suspension bridge spanning the gorge a couple of hundred feet in the air? Next we head up high to Mount Seymour where we hike as a group to third peak, earning epic views of Vancouver and the Pacific Ocean just beyond. From up here you will see the vast wilderness to the north of Vancouver, the sprawling metropolis of Vancouver and even the rugged shores of Vancouver Island far on the distant horizon. Tonight we go out for dinner together and reminisce about the amazing memories and good times we had over the last three weeks.

**Overnight: Hotel**



*Crossing Lynn Canyon Suspension Bridge*



## Day 22. Sunday 16 August (B)

### Farewell to Vancouver

Rest a bit this morning before our final breakfast as a group. Today your guide transfers you to the airport if you need to get there by 12 pm. Any later and it will be at your own cost.

**Trip ends**

## What's Included in the Canadian Rockies

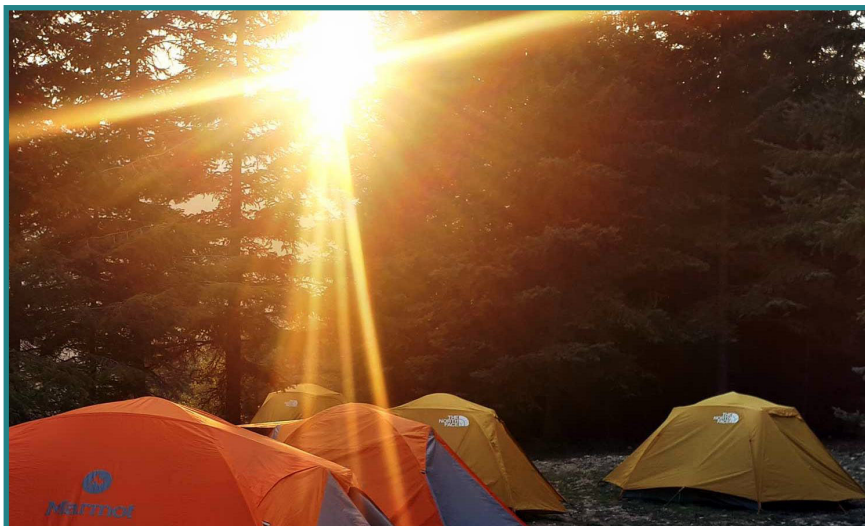
- Local Canadian guides for the entire trip - 2 for the camping component and 1 once we arrive in Jasper and hotels are the go
- All hotel accommodation as listed on a twin share basis
- Quality 3-4 person tents for 2 people. For those requiring a single tent, see page 1 for the extra cost
- Sleeping mats that inflate to 7.5 cm thick and can be made hard or soft to suit your sleeping needs.
- Meals as listed (**B, L, D**). 13 x breakfasts, 19 x lunches, and 8 x dinners. Where possible our guides source local fresh and healthy foods. It's not uncommon for camping food to surpass meals prepared by chefs in the restaurants! Where breakfasts are not provided in the hotels our local operator has found it more cost effective to purchase our own from a local cafe that has better food and coffee. That's important.
- All ground transport
- National park entry fees and permits
- Jasper Skytram tickets on Day 11
- Whistler Peak to Peak Gondola on Day 17
- Rafting on the Thomson River on Day 15
- Airport transfers from Vancouver hotel if you need to get there by 12 pm on Day 22.
- An Australian **Take A Walk Adventures** leader for the complete trip



*Quality Camping Food*

## What's Not Included in the Canadian Rockies

- International or domestic flights to Calgary, and from Vancouver to your next destination
- Airport transfers, except as detailed above
- Any accommodation prior to or after the tour dates
- Requested single supplement cost - if available
- Sleeping bags - these can be hired on request.
- Your own sleeping bag liner and pillow - some just like to bunch up their jumpers or use extra clothing to make a pillow for the camping nights.
- All personal trekking equipment including backpacks and trekking poles
- Meals other than those listed
- Trail snacks
- Personal bottled water. We suggest bringing a refillable water bottle as this cuts down on plastic waste
- Cost of optional activities; e.g. horse riding or cycling
- Cost for any additional accommodation and / or transport required if you are unable to complete section/s of the trip for whatever reason.
- Compulsory travel and accident insurance
- Cash for extra expenses, personal drinks and alcohol, tips for guides and other services
- Personal medications and first aid kit



*Sunset in the Rockies*



## Other General Information

- ATMs are readily available in cities, towns and villages throughout the Rockies, however, they will only dispense local currency
- US dollars are fine but we have been advised to have Canadian cash, since most places just take USD at par, and that costs around 30 per cent more
- Your place on this trip will be confirmed upon receipt of your booking form and \$500 deposit
- A detailed gear list will be available to those booking on the trip

Please note, this is a recce trip. Minor changes may be made along the way due to factors such as group abilities, weather conditions, trail conditions, safety hazards, road or park closures, or permits being unavailable. Our operators may add and remove attractions from this itinerary to enhance this adventure. This is left to the discretion of our on-the-ground guides and **Take A Walk** leaders. John and Lyn will accompany this trip.

This itinerary is a living document. Please ensure you download the latest version before confirming your travel plans.

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*Hiking on Seymour Mountain*

***If you're a lover of the wild, if unspoilt places are where you'd rather be, and the natural world is your oyster, the Canadian Rockies will not disappoint...  
Join us on this new 2020 adventure - we'd love to have you!  
John and Lyn***