



TRIP ITINERARY

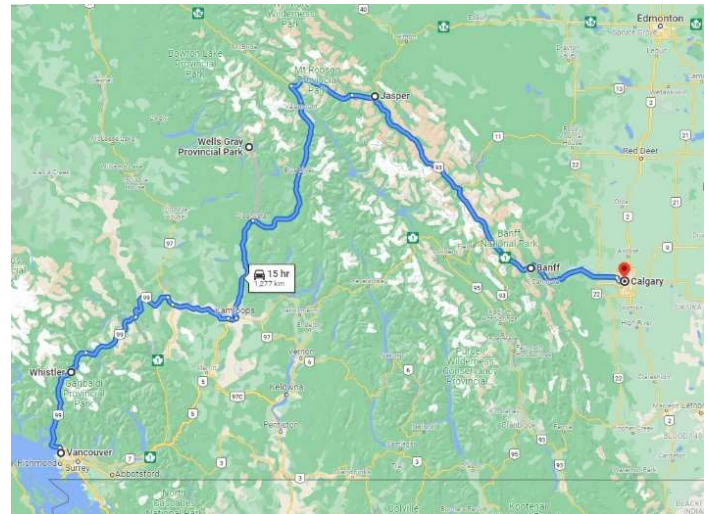
Western Canada Highlights

Canada



Highlights:

- Explore Vancouver's legendary street food stalls, markets and parks.
- Take excursions with indigenous guides to really get a feel for Canada's history, culture and nature
- Whale watching from Vancouver: also spot porpoises, orca, sea lions, seals, & bald eagles.
- Take a 4WD Tour to look for Black Bears in Whistler
- Stunning Scenery of the Rocky Mountains: hike or cycle around glassy, turquoise lakes
- Be as active or relaxed as you like: hiking trails, white water rafting, zip lines, horse riding are available – or ride gondolas, rent a kayak/canoe, and soak up the hot springs.



This classic Western Canada self-drive itinerary travels from Vancouver, through the stunning mountains and valleys of British Columbia, to the Rocky Mountains in Alberta. There are some long drives, but photo stops are never far away. The itinerary is great for those who love some activity, whether of the walking trail or more adrenalin-fuelled type. There are some ideas for more quirky tours to take along the way, and some 'don't-miss' food stops.

Accommodations can be tailored to individual budgets: everything we offer is tailor made, and this itinerary is a sample to provide an idea of what is possible ... please contact us so that we can tailor the perfect holiday for you.

Trip Summary: 3 Vancouver – 2 Whistler – 2 Wells Gray – 2 Jasper – 3 Banff

DAY 1 - ARRIVAL IN VANCOUVER

Explore downtown Vancouver: people-watch at a pavement café, window-shop along Robson Street, then cut down to the waterfront for panoramic sea and mountain vistas. The West End has a good choice of restaurants for dinner.

DAY 2 - VANCOUVER

Hire bikes and cycle Stanley Park and the sea wall. Visit Granville Island: a vibrant dining, shopping and entertainment district full of artisans creating unique gifts; a market where you can sample a host of interesting foods, and aspiring musicians perfecting

TRIP ITINERARY

Western Canada Highlights

Canada



their craft. Soak up the atmosphere in Chinatown with its quirky shops and markets, or take a guided walk around historic Gastown. Vancouver is a foodie's delight; evident from the mouth-watering lines at food trucks and the enticing aromas wafting from kitchens on nearly every block. Try the fresh pasta at Ask for Luigi in Gastown, the organic burgers at Templeton in Downtown- or try one of the many popular food trucks

Quirky Excursion: Explore Stanley Park's ancient rainforest with Indigenous guides – learn insights into how First Nations people managed the area's land, forest and ocean for millennia. The Guides are passionate about sustainability and being connected with their land.

DAY 3 - VANCOUVER

Visit the Capilano Suspension Bridge Park today and spend some time exploring the walkways and forest here. There are guided eco walks throughout the park and live seasonal music entertainment. Or take a whale watching trip, looking for porpoises, orca, sea lions, seals, bald eagles. Alternatively, visit the Museum of Anthropology for great totem pole carvings, the Art Gallery, Police Museum for a glimpse into the area's salacious history – or take the gondola up Grouse Mountain for superb views and alpine hiking trails. Let your nose lead you to the delightful smells emanating from one of the foodie trucks for some legendary street food, and quench thirst at Vancouver's best craft beer tavern, Alibi.

Quirky excursion: take a highly entertaining tour delving into Prohibition-era Vancouver, poking around the seedy underbelly of historic Gastown with Forbidden Vancouver.

Quirky Tour: Take the Mail Run Scenic Flight. Fly over rainforest clad islands to land at the main village on Salt Spring Island, where you can browse shops and coffee outlets. Scenic views of the stunning coastline make this a special experience.

DAY 4 – VANCOUVER TO WHISTLER (122km; 1 Hour 40 mins)

Collect a hire car this morning and drive to Whistler. This afternoon, perhaps rent a canoe at twilight, when the river comes alive with birds and animals ... look out for black bears, otters, beavers, raccoons, eagles and osprey, and marvel at the golden glow of the sunset against the snow capped mountain peaks. In the evening, dine on tapas, French bistro dishes, tacos – and don't miss Purebread for their salted caramel bars and gooey shortbread cookie bars

DAY 5 –WHISTLER

Take a 4WD Tour along mountain tracks to look for black bears, take a thrilling half day white water rafting trip; the Peak 2 Peak Gondola will whisk you up to dizzy heights for spectacular views, do the exhilarating Whistler zip lining experience: high over Fitzsimmons Creek, amongst rainforest by the Whistler and Blackcomb Mountains. Hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking opportunities abound. This evening, go local at the *Gone Village Eatery*, or dine well at *Red Door French Bistro*.

TRIP ITINERARY

Western Canada Highlights

Canada



DAY 6 –WHISTLER TO WELLS GRAY (423KM: 5.5 Hours)

A scenic drive to Wells Gray Provincial Park, where craggy mountains rise above evergreen forests, lakes and steaming waterfalls. Hike along one of the trails to one of the many waterfalls, looking out for moose, black and grizzly bears, elk and deer. Horse riding and boat trips are available.

DAY 7 –WELLS GRAY

The river creates some thrilling white water rafting sites, or take a gentle float along the Thompson river in an inflatable raft, watching for salmon, eagles and bears. Take a guided walk with a passionate and knowledgeable guide to really learn about the wildlife and the rich natural, human and geological history of the area, or hire a canoe or kayak.

DAY 8 – WELLS GRAY TO JASPER (318KM: 3.5 Hours)

Another scenic drive following the North Thompson River Valley and then Yellowhead Pass, with fabulous views of Mount Robson. This afternoon, stretch legs with a walk around Horseshoe Lake or ride the Jasper Skytram for more breathless scenery, or to the mind blowing Athabasca Canyon Falls - arrive here at the end of the day and you could be treated to a sunset alpen glow on the mountain backdrop. This evening, choose from wood-burning-stove pizzas, Bistros serving barbeque ribs or vegetarian bistros.

DAY 9 – JASPER

Take a drive to Maligne Lake for a cruise on the turquoise waters with stunning views of the mountains, take a short hike from Maligne Canyon, bathe in Miette Hot Springs. Whitewater rafting can be experienced on the Maligne, Sunwapta and Athabasca Rivers. This evening, choose from wood-burning-stove pizzas, Bistros serving barbeque ribs or vegetarian bistros. Don't miss Other Paw Bakery for pastries, muffins, soups, wraps and coffee.

Quirky Excursion: take a scenic float trip on the Athabasca River: easy rapids and calm stretches of water on an oar-powered raft, you keep an eye out for elk, mountain sheep, deer – and possibly bears and coyotes on the riverbank.

DAY 10 – JASPER TO BANFF (288 KM) Drive time 3.5 hours.

Drive the spectacular Icefields Parkway: photo opportunities at viewpoints of brilliantly coloured glacial lakes, gushing waterfalls, snow-topped mountains and wildlife. Ideas for stops include Lake Louise for gondola ride, canoeing or a hike, the spectacular teal waters of Moraine Lake, Herbert Lake, Bow Lake and Peyto Lake; Glacier Skywalk, the Sunwapta Falls with gorgeous mountain backdrop. Keep eyes peeled for mountain goats, elk, black and grizzly bears.

DAY 11 – BANFF

Banff National Park encompasses valleys, rugged mountains, enormous glaciers, deep forests, alpine meadows and glassy turquoise lakes. Through it wander wildlife such as bears, elks, wolves and bighorn sheep. The bustling town of Banff is a base for a multitude of outdoor activities. This afternoon, take to horseback for a trial ride, or take the gondola up Sulphur Mountain for

TRIP ITINERARY

Western Canada Highlights

Canada



hiking trails and viewing points. The high street offers a range of restaurants, including gastro pub, vegetarian bistros, upmarket burger bar ... don't miss the cheesecake and torte at Wild Flour.

DAY 12 – BANFF

Activities abound: enjoy a fantastic whitewater rafting experience – choose from exciting grade 3-4 rapids or gentler grade 2-3; bathe in the Upper Hot Springs; rent a canoe or bike on the Vermillion Lakes – a great place for wildlife spotting, or hike the Bow River Falls & Hoodoos Trail.

Quirky Excursion: Join indigenous guides to discover ancient survival skills. In summer see the boreal forest through the eyes of your Cree guides. Leave with a gift of their traditional knowledge.

DAY 13 – BANFF TO CALGARY & ONWARD FLIGHT (145km: 1.5 hours)

Spend a final morning in Banff, or visit Canmore, with its quirky cafes and art galleries, en route to the airport.

Special Places to Stay

If you are looking for somewhere special to stay that provides the ultimate in style and comfort, with attention to detail, superlative service and excellent cuisine, we would suggest including one of the following properties on this itinerary:

Fairmont Chateau, Whistler

- Eldorado Resort, Kelowna
- Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge
- Fairmont Hot Springs Resort, Banff
- Fairmont Banff Springs

Trip Extensions

We offer a range of trip extensions in Canada: including Bear Watching Lodges, Wilderness Resorts, Ranch Stays, Niagara Falls, Aurora Lights, and Polar Bears. See our Trip Extensions Document for more information. For extensions within British Columbia, see:

- Spirit Bear Lodge, Grizzly & Spirit Bear Viewing (3 nights)
- Tweeds,uir Park Lodge, Grizzly Bear Safari (3 nights)
- Black Bear Lodge, Grizzly & Black Bear Viewing (4 nights)
- Pyna-Tee-Ah Lodge: Walk with the Bears, Grizzly Viewing (3 nights)
- Knight Inlet Lodge, Grizzly Bear & Wildlife Viewing (2-4 nights)
- Farewell Harbour Lodge Wildlife Eco Tour: Grizzly & Black Bear Viewing, Whales & Wildlife watching (3 – 6 nights)

TRIP ITINERARY

Western Canada Highlights

Canada



GENERAL INFORMATION – PLEASE ENSURE YOU READ THE FOLLOWING

Passports: Please ensure these are valid for travel and that you are in possession of valid visas (if required see below). You are required to take out comprehensive travel insurance to safeguard against cancellation and curtailment, medical expenses, repatriation expenses, damage/theft/loss of personal baggage, money and personal belongings.

Visas: Not required for Canada for UK or EU nationals for stays of up to 90 days. An onward or return ticket is required, as well as sufficient funds and documents needed for further travel. Please note that visitors to Canada must have a MINIMUM of two blank/empty VISA pages in their passport each time entry is sought. Visitors to Canada with foreign passports who do not comply with these requirements will either be stopped from boarding their aircraft at their point of departure or risk deportation on arrival in Canada.

Health: All travellers should seek advice from their local GP or travel clinic for up-to-date advice on vaccinations and different malarial options. Travel insurance is part of the Terms and Conditions of your trip with Native Escapes it is essential that you purchase comprehensive travel insurance for your trip. Your insurance should be inclusive of full medical cover including costs of emergency repatriation, cancellation and travel delay.

Native Escapes complies with the UK Package & Travel Regulations 1992. Holidays with flights included are covered by the company's ATOL Bond (Air Travel Organisers' Licence) held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). This means that in the unfortunate event that our company should fail, the CAA will arrange any necessary repatriation and any refund of monies paid to Native Escapes in advance. Our ATOL number is 9709. We have testimonials on our website: visit www.nativeescapes.com/aboutus for more information.

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