Banff National Park of Canada

Banff National Park is the birthplace of Canada’s national park system, created around the warm mineral springs near Banff townsite. Visit the Cave and Basin National Historic Site for the full story. Established in 1885
Size: 6 641 km² (2 564 sq. mi.)

1 The Town of Banff
ALL SERVICES
Explore Canada’s first national park community. Population 8,352

2 The Village of Lake Louise
MOST SERVICES
Experience the hospitality of this hiker’s haven. Population 1,500

3 Johnston Canyon
25 km (30 min) from Banff
A paved trail and exciting catwalks cling to the canyon walls.
• 1.1 km (20 min) to the Lower Falls
• 2.7 km (1 hr) to the Upper Falls
For safety’s sake, stay on the trail and away from the edge.

4 Crowfoot Glacier
34 km (25 min) from Lake Louise
A century ago, the ‘crowfoot’ had three ‘toes’ of ice. Since then the glacier has melted back and the lower toe has been lost. These days the middle toe is disappearing, too.

5 Bow Pass (“Bow Summit”) and Peyto Lake Viewpoint
40 km (30 min) from Lake Louise
This is the highest road pass in the four mountain parks at 2 088 m (6 849’) above sea level. A short, uphill walk from the parking area leads to a view of Peyto Lake, glacially fed and brilliantly turquoise.

6 Mistaya Canyon
72 km (50 min) from Lake Louise
Only 10 minutes by trail from the road. Look for rounded potholes and a natural arch on the canyon walls.

7 Saskatchewan Crossing
77 km (55 min) from Lake Louise
In a place where three rivers converge—fuel, food and accommodation are available from April to late October.

8 Columbia Icefield
130 km (1.5 hr) from Lake Louise
There is much to see and do here. Plan to spend at least an hour. Please turn to the Jasper National Park information, pages 12 and 13.
To improve safety for people and wildlife, the Trans-Canada Highway is being upgraded in stages through Banff National Park. The most recent upgrade from a two-lane to four-lane divided highway is underway east of Lake Louise.

Highway fencing will help reduce vehicle-wildlife collisions, while new wildlife crossings will help maintain or restore wildlife movements vital to sustain healthy wildlife populations. The 24 existing crossings, monitored since 1996, have been used by 11 species of large mammals. There is no other location in the world with as many different types and number of wildlife crossings.

For details on highway twinning and wildlife crossings in the park: www.pc.gc.ca/transcanada
Banff Townsite

The town of Banff was named after the Banffshire area of Scotland, ancestral home of two major financiers of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). Built east to west, the steel rails of the CPR linked Banff with Calgary, and the rest of Canada, in 1883. Elevation: 1 384 m (4 540’)

1 Banff Information Centre
2 Cave and Basin National Historic Site
3 Banff Park Museum National Historic Site
4 Canada Place & Cascades of Time Gardens
5 Bow Falls & Banff Springs Hotel Banff National Historic Site
6 Upper Hot Springs Pool
7 Sulphur Mountain
8 Buffalo Nations Museum
9 Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies
10 Vermilion Lakes
11 Cascade Ponds
12 Bankhead
13 Lake Minnewanka

Banff Information Centre

224 Banff Avenue 403-762-1550
Check out our Wildlife Crossings exhibit and Welcome to Banff video.
• Parks Canada information 403-762-1550
• Banff/Lake Louise Tourism 403-762-8421
• Friends of Banff gift shop

SPRING
May 18 - June 20, 9 am - 7 pm
SUMMER
June 21 - Sept. 3, 8 am - 8 pm
FALL
Sept. 4 - Sept. 19, 9 am - 7 pm
WINTER
Sept. 20 - May 17, 9 am - 5 pm

Cave and Basin National Historic Site

1 km from town, Cave Avenue 403-762-1566
The birthplace of Canada’s national park system
• Explore exhibits, boardwalks and trails
• See a real cave!
• Tours at 11 am daily in summer, weekends in winter
• Café open in the summer

SUMMER
May 15 - Sept. 30, 9 am - 6 pm
WINTER
weekends, 9:30 am - 5 pm
weekdays, 11 am - 4 pm

Banff Park Museum National Historic Site

Banff Avenue by the Bow River Bridge 403-762-1558
Your must-see 3-D field guide to Banff’s wildlife, birds and insects in grand Edwardian style
• We guarantee bear sightings!
• Tours daily in summer at 3 pm, weekends in winter at 2:30 pm

SUMMER
May 15 - Sept. 30, 10 am - 6 pm
WINTER
Oct. 1 - May 14, 1 pm - 5 pm

Canada Place & Cascades of Time Gardens

Park Administration Building and Grounds at the head of Banff Avenue 403-760-1338
Rediscover Canada - FREE ADMISSION
• Interactive exhibits about this nation’s land and people
• Garden tours daily in summer at 2 pm
• Visit the Siksika Nation tipi July to September, with drumming and dancing demonstrations on Tuesdays

SUMMER
May 19 - Sept. 30, 10 am - 6 pm

Bow Falls & Banff Springs Hotel Banff National Historic Site

Magnificent views from either side of the Bow River

Upper Hot Springs Pool

4 km from town, Mountain Ave 1-800-767-1611
Enjoy the splendid heritage bath house and pool.
• towels, bathing suits, lockers for rent
• Day Spa 403-760-2500, café, and gift shop on site

SUMMER
May 17 - September 9, daily, 9 am - 11 pm
WINTER
September 10, 2007 - May 14, 2008
Sunday - Thursday, 10 am - 10 pm
Friday - Saturday, 10 am - 11 pm

Sulphur Mountain

4 km from town, Mountain Ave
• Take the gondola (call 403-762-5438 for hours and fees), or hike the trail (visit the Banff Information Centre for trail details and conditions).
• From the upper gondola terminal, a one-km (20 min) boardwalk trail leads to the summit and Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station National Historic Site.

Buffalo Nations Museum

1 Birch Avenue 403-762-2388
Native history, art and culture

Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

111 Bear Street 403-762-2291
Mountain history, art and culture

Vermilion Lakes

The Bow Valley’s biggest wetland, brimming with life and beauty
• Guided nature strolls are offered here in summer; register in advance at Friends of Banff stores, 403-762-8911.
• Connects with Fenland Interpretive Trail, a 2-km loop where art and nature live in harmony.

Cascade Ponds

A great place to relax and unwind amid grassy meadows, clear shallow ponds and a small beach

Bankhead

8 km (12 min) from Banff
Once the site of a huge coal-mining operation
• Lower Bankhead: now a quiet 1.1-km (30 min) interpretive trail loops among the ruins.
• Upper Bankhead: a popular picnic area and trailhead.
• Not accessible by car November 15 to April 15.

Lake Minnewanka

10 km (15 min) from Banff
A place once known as Lake of the Water Spirits
• Enjoy a leisurely lakeside stroll to Stewart Canyon (1.4 km, 30 min return).
• Boat tours of the lake are available mid-May to September, call 403-762-3473 for times and fees.
• Enjoy, but please do not feed the bighorn sheep.
**Johnson Lake**

14 km (20 min) from Banff

Known locally as Banff’s summer watering hole, you can explore its easy lakeside trail year round.

**The Hoodoos**

A short interpretive trail unlocks the mystery of these bizarre natural pillars and leads to a superb view of the Bow Valley.

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**Hungry for history?**

Plot your cultural path using Banff’s Heritage Passport, available at the Cave and Basin, Banff Park Museum, Whyte Museum and Banff Information Centre.

Avoid parking hassles - take Banff PUBLIC TRANSIT. Transit schedules available at Town Hall, Banff Information Centre or by calling 403-762-1215.
Known to the Stoney people as “Lake of the Little Fishes,” Lake Louise was given its present name in 1884. It honors Princess Louise Caroline Alberta, sixth child of Queen Victoria.

Elevations: Village: 1 540 m (5052’) Lake: 1731 m (5680’)

1 Lake Louise Visitor Centre by Samson Mall

Parks Canada information: 403-522-3833. Banff/Lake Louise Tourism: 403-762-8421. Exhibits explain the geology and history of the Canadian Rockies.

April 1 to April 29, 9 am - 4 pm
April 30 to June 21, 9 am - 5 pm
June 22 to September 8, 9 am - 7 pm
September 9 to September 15, 9 am - 5 pm
September 16 to September 22, 9 am - 6 pm
September 23, 2007 to March 31, 2008, 9 am - 4 pm

2 Lake Louise - the Lake

5 min from the village of Lake Louise

The view from the lakeshore is known the world over. Prepare for crowds! But walk half a kilometer along the shore to leave the crowds behind. Public parking: keep left at the Chateau Lake Louise junction.

3 Moraine Lake and Valley of the Ten Peaks

Go before 10 am or after 5 pm to avoid the crowds. Road closed early October to late May.

Check Ahead: Hikers must be in a tight group of four or more when grizzly bears are using habitat in Larch, Consolation and Paradise valleys.

4 Lake Louise Sightseeing Gondola

4.5 km from the village
403-522-3555. Gondola runs June to September.

If there’s no parking...

During July and August, the lots at Lake Louise and Moraine Lake can be full from 11 am - 4 pm any day of the week. There is congestion as drivers search for vacant spaces. Our advice? Go before ten or after five.
8th Annual Summer Sulphur Stroll with Sanson
July 21. Celebrate Parks Day with Parks Canada staff on a stroll up Sulphur Mountain in the footsteps of Norman B. Sanson. Register at the Banff Information Centre. FREE

ROVING INTERPRETERS
Parks Canada staff are ready to answer your questions and share stories at major points of interest throughout the park.

EVENTS
Blackfoot Nation Interpretive Teepee
July to September. Experience the vibrant culture of the Blackfoot people by visiting their traditional teepee set amid the beautiful Cascades of Time Gardens of the park administration grounds. Native interpreters are on-hand daily to share stories, with spectacular dancing and drumming demonstrations every Tuesday at noon. FREE

Banff Canada Day
Celebrate our nation’s 140th birthday in the heart of its first park! A fun-filled, family-focused day complete with a pancake breakfast, a parade and fireworks. Event information available at park information centres, Banff Town Hall, Canada Place and throughout the communities of Banff and Lake Louise on July 1st!

GUIDED WALKS
Cascades of Time Gardens
(Park Administration Grounds)
Daily garden tours at 2 pm, June through September. Register inside Canada Place. FREE

The Friends of Banff offer many guided walks throughout the summer. Check with them in the Bear and the Butterfly, or in their store in the Banff Park Information Centre for times and locations. FREE

Cave and Basin National Historic Site
Daily site tours at 11 am, mid-May to end of September. Saturday and Sunday site tours at 11 am, October to mid-May. Tours free with cost of admission.

Banff Park Museum National Historic Site
Daily site tours at 3 pm, mid-May to end of September. Saturday and Sunday site tours at 2:30 pm, October to mid-May. Tours free with cost of admission

Evening Programs
Relax, laugh and learn as Banff—its wildlife, peaks and people—come to life at our family-friendly programs.

Tunnel Mountain Campground Theatre
Nightly interpretive programs, late June to early September. FREE

Banff Information Centre Theatre
Park films shown nightly, late June to early September. FREE

Lake Louise Campground Theatre
Interpretive programs, July and August. FREE

Mountain World Heritage Interpretive Theatre
Danger! Romance! Small furry animals! Experience Faces of Fire—a hilarious hour for all ages with Parks Canada’s Mountain World Heritage Interpretive Theatre. Check at any Parks Canada Information Centre for ticket info and show times.

BEAR GUARDIANS
Look for Banff National Park’s Bear Guardians patrolling roadways and day use areas, working to keep both bears and people safe. Ask them how YOU can be a Bear Guardian, too!