Tour Code
AVUR

ADVENTURESABROAD

ULTIMATE WESTERN CANADA & ROCKIES

Vancouver, Victoria, Whistler, Jasper, Lake Louise & Banff

12 days

Created on: 28 Mar, 2024

Day 1 Arrival in Vancouver

Welcome to Vancouver!

A vibrant metropolitan city, Vancouver is nestled between the majestic Coast Mountains, the rugged Pacific coastline, and surrounded by a pristine wilderness of temperate rainforest, lakes, valleys and peaks. Its location and cosmopolitan culture makes Vancouver one of the most beautiful as well as highly live-able cities of the world. Its equitable climate and variety of indoor and outdoor attractions makes Vancouver a year-round sought after travel destination.

Overnight in Vancouver.

Included Meal(s): Dinner, if required.

Day 2 Vancouver: City Touring

Vancouver truly is one of the most captivating cities in Canada, and on our city tour today we will discover why Vancouver is considered by many to be one of the most interesting cities in North America. Our tour will takes us through Stanley Park. As Vancouver's first park, with its ever-blooming gardens, pristine coastal areas and roughly 500,000 cedar, fir and hemlock trees, Stanley Park has continued to live up to its "greenspace" designation for almost 130 years.

We will also see Vancouver's Chinatown – a part of the city that has been humming busily for more than a century with vivid colours, exotic cuisine and a vibrant culture. Vancouver's Chinese population originally made the journey to work in local mines and build the Trans-Canada railway. Rich in history and architecture, this area east of downtown boasts North America's third-largest Chinatown after New York and San Francisco. Gastown, past English Bay as well as some prestigious residential areas of the city. Nearby is Gastown, Vancouver's oldest neighbourhood. Gastown grew from a single tavern founded by John 'Gassy Jack' Deighton back in 1867, and today, the district retains its historic charm and independent spirit.

This afternoon we will experience the natural wonder of British Columbia's Pacific coastal rainforest and the thrill of standing 150 meters (450 ft) above the Capilano River at the Capilano Suspension Bridge Park.

Overnight in Vancouver.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 3 Vancouver - Ferry to Victoria

This morning we will enjoy a spectacular ferry trip across the Strait of Georgia to Vancouver Island.

Taking a ride on a BC Ferry is part of the whole Vancouver Island experience, and this beautiful inland sea is 220 km (135 miles) long and at its narrowest point, about 25 km (15 miles) wide. The larger BC ferries between the mainland and Vancouver Island are state of the art outfitted with gift shops, restaurants, multiple decks, coffee shops, lounges, wi-fi, and observation decks. The route takes us past some of the many Gulf Islands scattered over this part of Pacific. Along the journey we will witness the sleepy charm and slow pace of life on these small islands that makes them so attractive to the residents who choose to live here.

Once on Vancouver Island our first stop will be at the world-famous Butchart Gardens. These gardens have been designated a National Historic Site of Canada, and we will have plenty of time to soak in the delightful ambience amongst these 55 acres of floral display and photo opportunities. We then drive to Victoria, the capital of British Columbia and a city tied closely to both land and sea. We will wander the quaint downtown core with its British colonial architecture, heritage buildings, and stunning gardens.

Overnight in Victoria.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 4 Victoria - Ferry to Vancouver

Today we drive north along the eastern shores of Vancouver Island and head over the Malahat Pass. We will be treated to exceptional views of Discovery Passage as we take the ferry back to the mainland. This time we will cruise through the Gulf Islands to Horseshoe Bay. There are over 25 different ferry routes throughout the west coast of BC, and along these routes one can access over 45 different ports of call. Today's crossing will take about 2 hours.

From Horsehoe Bay it is a short and scenic drive back to Vancouver where you will have some free time to explore the city on your own this afternoon.

Overnight in Vancouver.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 5 Vancouver - Whistler

This morning we will drive from Vancouver to Whistler along the spectacular Sea-to-Sky Highway. With the ocean to our left and the steep mountains on our right we soak in the endless vistas.

Along our route we will pass by Britannia Beach, once home to the largest copper producing mine in the British Commonwealth. We will continue just north of Britannia Beach and soon arrive at the Sea to Sky Gondola, where we will enjoy a ride on the gondola, one of British Columbia's newest attractions, taking us steeply up alpine slopes with views of 2600 meter high snow-capped peaks on one side and the glacier cut fjord of Howe Sound on the other. At the top we will enjoy sweeping views of Howe Sound, and walk the many viewing platforms.

After our time here we will continue towards Whistler and make a short stop at the 3rd highest waterfalls in British Columbia, at Shannon Falls. From here we pass by Squamish. Billed as the "Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada," this is an outdoor enthusiast's paradise. A paradise for mountain bikers, windsurfers and hikers. We end the day with a walking tour of Whistler village built in an alpine style. Time=permitting we will visit the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre to discover the fascinating history of the Squamish and Lil'Wat indigenous people of the area.

Overnight in Whistler.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 6 Whistler - Kelowna

Today we travel through some spectacular mountain landscape of the Coast Range along the scenic Duffy Lake Road into the rugged British Columbia interior. Our destination today is Kelowna, known for beautiful lakes and world renowned for the wines produced in the area.

There's no shortage of incredible views, wildlife and adventure when taking a road trip like this through BC. Today's route takes us through the gorgeous interior of BC and offers endless photo opportunities featuring breathtaking scenery. Our route takes us past Lillooet, home to BC's newest wine region with their first winery opening in 2011. The town is situated along the Fraser River, and its varied terrain makes it a perfect area for outdoor activities such as biking, fishing, hiking and canoeing.

Today we also pass through Merritt, the gem of the Nicola Valley and the "Country Music Capital of Canada". Located in 'Gold Country' in the Thompson-Okanagan region of British Columbia. The Nicola Valley is hiking country, with its rolling hills, mountain meadows, endless trails, and breathtaking beauty.

At the end of our route we arrive in Kelowna, the true gateway to the Okanagan Valley. Located on the eastern shore of Okanagan Lake, Kelowna is surrounded by provincial parks, pine forest, vineyards, orchards and mountains.

Overnight in Kelowna.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 7 Kelowna - Jasper

Today's route is a must for all travellers, taking us into the heart of the great Canadian Rockies and ending in the town of Jasper.

A highlight of our jouney today is a river safari ride through Grizzly Bear Valley, right in the heart of the world's only inland temperate rainforest. We will hope to see bears and wildlife in their natural environment, without the constraints of gates and cages, from the safety of a boat mid river, presenting the best opportunities for the perfect photograph. As we travel through glacier-fed rivers and lakes seemingly going where no boat has gone before, you are sure to bear witness to a variety of wildlife seen on the riverbanks.

Today's journey ends the quaint mountain town of Jasper located at the heart of Jasper National Park. This is the commercial centre of the region, set amidst the snow-capped Canadian Rockies with glacier-fed lakes, forests and rivers. The park's shimmering glaciers, abundant wildlife, crystal-clear lakes, thundering waterfalls, deep canyons and evergreen forest — all surrounded by towering mountains — are some of the reasons the park was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Overnight in Jasper.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 8 Jasper: Area Touring

We start our day by boarding the longest and highest guided aerial tramway in Canada! Prepare to be amazed as you gain a brand new perspective of Jasper's stunning beauty. Our seven minute 'flight' aboard the Jasper Skytram takes us to an altitude of 2263 metres and into a whole new world.

A full day of sightseeing follows including a gentle walk down Maligne Canyon to see how the water has carved spectacular crevices out of the mountain. A short drive then takes us to Maligne Lake, the largest natural lake in the Canadian Rocky Mountains and perhaps one of the world's most photographed and iconic natural beauty spots.

This evening we enjoy a float down the Athabasca River to wrap up a day in a place of stunning natural beauty. The specially designed oar powered rafts offer a safe and comfortable ride. Don't worry, the guides do all the rowing; you sit back and enjoy while exploring all the spectacular scenery. There is always a chance of seeing various wildlife including elk, deer, moose, coyote, wolf, eagles, ospreys, mountain sheep and bears.
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The Athabasca River begins at the Columbia Glacier in Jasper National Park (headwaters) and travels about 1500 km northeast across Alberta and drains into Lake Athabasca in the north-east. Lake Athabasca flows into the Slave River and joins the McKenzie River, which eventually flows to the Arctic Ocean, travelling over 1230 km from start to glacier to mouth.

Overnight in Jasper.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 9 Jasper - Lake Louise

Today we continue to travel through the heart of the Canadian Rockies as we drive along the famous Icefields Parkway which has been voted one of the most spectacular drives in the world. You will see for yourself why this mountain road that boasts a unique landscape rich in history and natural beauty second to none is so famous. We will see the powerful Athabasca Falls before arriving at the famous Columbia Icefields whose waters feed three oceans. Here we will visit the Interpretive Centre before we have the experience of a lifetime -- a ride on the Ice Explorer vehicle for a close up look at the Athabasca Glacier.

A short distance later at 'The Crossing', one of a few stops along this spectacular highway, we take a short detour to the shores of Abraham

Lake to experience the Rockies from a completely different perspective with a thrilling helicopter ride over the Rocky Mountains.

At the summit of Bow Pass, we do a quick side tour to see the turquoise blue waters of Peyto Lake and the beauty of the Mistaya River Valley below before arriving at the charming town of Lake Louise, a jewel of the Rockies surrounded by glistening glaciers and towering mountain peaks.

Overnight at Lake Louise.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 10 Lake Louise - Banff

This morning we drive along the famous Bow Valley Parkway, where wildlife sightings of caribou, deer and bear, are common! We will stop at Johnston Canyon for a walk through the deep rugged canyon with several waterfalls. We then cross the Continental Divide to the western slopes of the Rocky Mountain range into Yoho National Park in British Columbia. The awe inspiring Takakkaw Falls and Emerald Lake, filled with glacial run-off water that makes it glisten with the blue-green hue of an emerald, are next on our itinerary for today.

We end the day in world famous Banff, at the centre of Canada's very first National Park.

Overnight in Banff (dinner on your own this evening).

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Lunch

Day 11 Banff: Area Touring

We start the day with a Banff sightseeing tour, including stops at Cascade Gardens and scenic Bow Falls, before riding the gondola up Sulphur Mountain for unparalleled view of the Rockies and the valley below. We also visit the Cave & Basin National Historic Site, which tells the story of the hot springs that drew the first visitors to Banff and led to the creation of the National Park.

Tonight we enjoy a farewell dinner to round off our experience through one of the most rugged and scenic parts of the world.

Overnight in Banff.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 12 Banff - Calgary - Depart

Transfer to Calgary (+/- 2 hours) for your journey home.

Please do not schedule flights departing before 4:00pm.

FOND FAREWELL!

Included Meal(s): Breakfast