

From Grizzly Country to the Rockies | Canada's Great Adventure

Holiday Duration: 15 Nights



Canada's Great Adventure

Discover the wild beauty of Western Canada on an unforgettable 15-night self-drive adventure, combining vibrant cities, spectacular mountain scenery and extraordinary wildlife encounters. Begin in cosmopolitan Vancouver before following the breathtaking Sea-to-Sky Highway to Whistler, then venture deep into British Columbia's wilderness for an incredible stay at the heart of grizzly bear country. With guided wildlife experiences and time to immerse yourself in the remote landscapes of the Cariboo Mountains, this is a rare opportunity to discover Canada's wild side. Continue through the spectacular waterfalls of Wells Gray Provincial Park to the majestic Canadian Rockies, where Jasper, the legendary Icefields Parkway and the turquoise lakes of Banff provide a succession of breathtaking highlights. With time to explore charming mountain towns, discover pristine wilderness and take in some of Canada's most iconic scenery, this remarkable journey combines the freedom of the open road with unforgettable encounters in nature. From the Pacific coast to the heart of the Rockies, experience a side of Canada that will stay with you long after you return home.

This itinerary is flexible and can be tailor-made to suit you; if you want to add extra days in one area, extend your winter holiday in Canada or maybe change the direction of travel. Talk to one of our experts about how to make this holiday the perfect one for you.

Here's a day-by-day guide to your itinerary. Feel free to ask us to add other days or ideas and excursions by contacting us directly, so we can give you the best price.

Day 1-2



Vancouver

Arrive in Vancouver and settle into this vibrant waterfront city, beautifully positioned between the Pacific Ocean and the Coast Mountains. Spend your first two nights exploring at a relaxed pace, from the leafy trails of Stanley Park to the historic streets of Gastown and the bustling waterfront of Canada Place.

Wander through Granville Island Public Market, enjoy the city's excellent restaurants or hire bicycles to follow the seawall. These first two nights offer the perfect introduction to Canada before collecting your hire car and heading into the wilderness.

2 nights Vancouver

Day 3-4



Vancouver to Whistler

Collect your hire car and set off along the spectacular Sea-to-Sky Highway towards Whistler. This is a wonderful drive in its own right, with dramatic coastal views, deep fjords, forested mountains and waterfalls along the way. Stop at Shannon Falls or Squamish to enjoy the scenery before continuing into the mountains. With two nights in Whistler, there is time to explore the pedestrian-friendly village, ride a gondola for panoramic mountain views, walk beside alpine lakes or enjoy one of the many outdoor activities available. In summer, the surrounding trails are particularly rewarding, while the village offers plenty of restaurants and shops to enjoy.

2 nights Whistler

Day 5



Whistler to Williams Lake

Travel deeper into British Columbia, following a scenic inland route through the mountains and towards the vast ranchlands and forests of the Cariboo region. The journey will include the dramatic landscapes around Pemberton and Lillooet before continuing north towards Williams Lake. This is a day to enjoy the changing scenery as the coastal mountains give way to a more rugged, open landscape rich in Gold Rush history and wildlife. Arrive in Williams Lake, a welcoming regional town and a convenient base before continuing towards your remote grizzly bear experience. Keep the evening relaxed, ready for the wilderness adventure ahead.

1 night Williams Lake

Day 6-8



Williams Lake to Likely

The journey's wildlife highlight begins as you travel into the remote Cariboo Mountains to stay with Ecotours-BC, close to the southern shore of Quesnel Lake. Far removed from the busy tourist routes, this is an opportunity to experience British Columbia's wilderness at its most authentic. Over the next few days, join an experienced local guide in search of grizzly bears in their natural habitat. Depending on the season, excursions may involve travelling by jetboat along wilderness rivers, exploring forest trails or reaching alpine meadows by 4×4 and ATV. Watch these magnificent animals foraging, fishing for salmon or roaming their territory, while keeping a respectful distance and learning about their behaviour.

The surrounding wilderness is also home to an abundance of other wildlife, potentially including black bears, moose, deer and numerous bird

species. Between excursions, return to the lodge to relax, enjoy home-cooked meals and share the day's sightings.

Autumn, particularly September and early October, is a special time to visit as salmon runs can draw grizzlies to the rivers. Spring and summer offer different wildlife and alpine experiences, making this a memorable stay at almost any point in the viewing season.

Note from Eco-tours

"On all of our wildlife viewing trips safety is first and foremost for both the wildlife and our guests. We are especially vigilant and safety conscious on our bear viewing excursions. Our guides are experienced, qualified professionals. Knowing and recognizing bear body language plays an important role in safe viewing. The bears we view are wild bears in their natural habitat. They are not habituated bears used to being around people. We keep in mind at all times that we are visitors and guests in their homes and we do everything possible to avoid stressing and impacting them as they go about the usual business of their daily lives and foraging for food. They are intelligent, often playful and very entertaining."

3 to 5 nights with Eco-Tours

Day 9



Likely to Clearwater

Bid farewell to your wilderness hosts and begin the drive east towards Clearwater, the gateway to Wells Gray Provincial Park. After several days immersed in bear country, the journey provides a change of pace as you pass through forested valleys, riverside communities and the landscapes of British Columbia's interior.

Arrive in Clearwater and settle into your accommodation, ready to explore the surrounding wilderness the next day.

2 nights Clearwater

Day 10



Clearwater

Spend a full day exploring Wells Gray Provincial Park, one of British Columbia's great natural treasures. Often known as Canada's waterfall park, it boasts dramatic volcanic landscapes, pristine lakes and a remarkable collection of waterfalls hidden among its vast forests. Begin with a visit to Helmcken Falls, the park's most famous waterfall, where the Murtle River plunges 141 metres into a spectacular canyon. Continue to Spahats Creek Falls, another impressive cascade surrounded by rugged rock formations and woodland scenery. Several viewpoints are accessible by relatively short walks, making it easy to enjoy the scenery without committing to a full day of hiking.

If you prefer a more active adventure, explore one of the park's walking trails, look out for wildlife or take a scenic drive deeper into the wilderness. During the warmer months, you could also consider a visit to Clearwater Lake, where the beautiful turquoise water and forested shoreline provide a peaceful setting for a picnic or lakeside stroll. Boat trips and other activities depend on seasonal availability.

Day 11-12



Clearwater to Jasper

Leaving Clearwater, continue north and east towards Jasper National Park, where the scenery gradually transforms into the towering peaks, broad valleys and glacial landscapes of the Canadian Rockies. Keep an eye out for wildlife along the way and, if time permits, pause for views of Mount Robson, the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies.

Spend two nights in Jasper, giving you time to explore this relaxed mountain town and its extraordinary surroundings. Take a scenic drive, enjoy the walking trails around the lakes or head out in search of elk, deer and other wildlife. We recommend taking a boat cruise on Maligne Lake, a guided wildlife excursion or heading up the Jasper Skytram.

2 nights Jasper

Day 13



Jasper to Banff

Today brings one of the great highlights of any Canadian self-drive holiday: the Icefields Parkway. Linking Jasper with the Lake Louise and Banff area, this spectacular mountain highway winds past immense glaciers, turquoise lakes, waterfalls and rugged peaks.

Allow plenty of time to stop along the way. Highlights may include Athabasca Falls, viewpoints over the Columbia Icefield and the striking blue waters of Peyto Lake, subject to access and conditions. You could also consider an excursion at the Columbia Icefield. Rather than rushing straight through, make the journey part of the holiday itself. Arrive in Banff in the late afternoon or evening and settle into your hotel surrounded by mountain scenery.

3 nights Banff

Day 14



Banff

Dedicate a day to the iconic lakes and mountain scenery of Banff National Park. Travel to Lake Louise, where brilliant turquoise water sits beneath the dramatic face of Victoria Glacier. Walk along the lakeshore, enjoy a coffee with a view or choose a longer trail if you fancy exploring on foot. Continue to Moraine Lake, where the famous Valley of the Ten Peaks creates one of Canada's most recognisable landscapes. Moraine Lake is only accessible on a prearranged tour, so please ask us for details. Return to Banff for a relaxed evening, perhaps enjoying a delicious dinner in town or taking a stroll along the Bow River.

Day 15



Banff

Enjoy a full day to discover Banff and its surrounding mountains at your own pace. Ride the Banff Gondola up Sulphur Mountain for sweeping views across the Bow Valley, explore the shops and cafés of Banff Avenue or take a scenic drive to Lake Minnewanka. For those who prefer a more active day, there are numerous hiking trails, cycling routes and opportunities for guided outdoor adventures. Alternatively, simply take in the views, relax at a mountain spa or enjoy a leisurely lunch overlooking the Rockies.

Day 16



Banff to Calgary

Enjoy a final Canadian breakfast before driving east across the foothills to Calgary. The mountain scenery gradually gives way to the open landscapes of Alberta as you make your way towards the city. Return your hire car at Calgary International Airport and check in for your flight home to the UK, bringing an extraordinary journey to a close.

If you are interested in a holiday to Canada please contact us on 020 8776 8709 to discuss your plans with a Canada expert, or send an email to canada@frontier-travel.co.uk with your requirements and we will put together your ideal itinerary and quotation. Let us take you there.