



CANADIAN ROCKIES WINTER WONDERLAND

See the landscape in a whole-new light, from frozen waterfalls to ice caves, sweeping white canyons to the ghostly greens of the Northern Lights.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries



North America, Canada



10 days from AU\$20,395 pp



Private

Journey Overview

There is nothing more magical than the Canadian Rockies in winter. See the landscape in a whole-new light, from frozen waterfalls to ice caves, sweeping white canyons to the ghostly greens of the Northern Lights. Journey from UNESCO-listed Banff and Jasper national parks via the famed Highway 93 to iconic Lake Louise. You'll experience snowshoeing, dog sledding and ice walks, and seek out elk, deer, bear and more, with possible sightings of lynx, cougar and caribou. Look for bird species adapted to the winter, such as bald eagle, raven and waterfowl, then finish with three nights at the Chateau Lake Louise in an unparalleled winter wonderland.

Journey highlights:

- Experience a magical First Nations Winter Medicine Walk in Banff National Park
- Travel the famous Highway 93 (Icefield Parkway), named as one of the top drives in the world by *Condé Nast Traveller*
- Walk through the base of Maligne Canyon, only accessible during winter. exploring frozen waterfalls and ice caves
- Search for snow-dusted wildlife in UNESCO-listed Jasper National Park
- Embark on a dog-sledding adventure through Banff National Park
- Strap on traditional wooden snowshoes for a nature walk through the un-skiable terrain in the Banff mountains



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Calgary - Banff

Arrive in Calgary where you are met by your A&K representative and driven to your luxury resort in Banff National Park. Depending on your arrival time, stretch your legs around nearby Banff, or take to the Rundle Lounge for a cocktail by the fire.

Fairmont Banff Springs

Day 2: Banff

This morning, step aboard the Sulphur Mountain Gondola and be treated to sweeping views of Bow Valley and the surrounding peaks of the Canadian Rockies. Once at the summit, walk the boardwalk to historic Cosmic Ray weather station for a scenic panorama of the UNESCO-listed Banff National Park.

This afternoon, set out on an inspiring First Nations Medicine Walk. Stroll through mountain meadows and Banff National Park learning with an Indigenous guide who points out key plants and trees traditionally used for healing, food or starting a fire. This experience invites you to open your heart to the landscape in a more conscious way, with an opportunity to appreciate the sophisticated, ancient knowledge of the area's First Peoples.

Fairmont Banff Springs | Meals: BL

Day 3: Banff

The Continental Divide, also known as the Great Divide, is one of the most iconic and essential mountain ranges in the Americas, dividing the continent in half and extending all the way from Alaska to the tip of South America. Today you'll have the opportunity to traverse and explore the divide by snowshoe and winter walks. Explore the winter wilderness and discover how the divide plays a pivotal role in the water resources of the region and the broader American West.

After the sun sets, night rise brings the Sulphur Mountain Gondola summit to life in unexpected ways. Explore four multi-sensory art installations — an inspiring experience that invites you to look, listen and connect with the mountain in an entirely new way. As the gondola ascends, listen for music, narration and original soundscapes that honour the Indigenous Stoney Nakoda People (Îyârhe Îethka), and at the summit continue the experience in immersive stations of light.

Fairmont Banff Springs / Meals: BL

Day 4: Banff - Jasper National Park

Journey along the famous Icefield Parkway from Banff to Jasper National Park. Rated as one of the top drives in the world by Condé Nast Traveller, the Icefield Parkway is a 232 km road winding along the Continental Divide through soaring snowy peaks, dozens of glaciers, frozen waterfalls and sweeping white canyons. Look out for bighorn sheep, mountain goat, elk and deer along the way, while you learn about the geology intrinsic to the changing landscape. Look for ice climbers on 'The Weeping Wall' and explore the Athabasca Glacier en route.

Arrive at your Jasper accommodation on the shore of Lac Beauvert. Completely surrounded by the park, this luxurious lodge is the perfect base from which to explore the Jasper National Park.

Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge / Meals: BL

Day 5: Jasper

This morning, join a small group for the Maligne Canyon Ice-walk — a rocky maze of sculptures, ice caves and fossils, along with spectacular waterfalls naturally frozen in time. Along the way your knowledgeable guide will share fascinating insights into the karst topography, valley and the mysterious story of Medicine Lake.

After your ice-walk continue to Maligne Lake, where you will explore the area with a winter walk or snowshoe. Nestled among towering white peaks, the frozen and snow covered Maligne Lake is nothing short of spectacular. An expansive forest of snow-dusted pine and spruce trees flank the lake, which is a wonderful habitat for wildlife including mule deer, elk, bear and moose. In the middle of the lake you'll see Spirit Island, a spiritual place for the Stoney Nakoda First Nation's people.

Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge | Meals: B

Day 6: Jasper

Head out into Jasper National Park on a wildlife adventure. Winter is a unique time of year for wildlife, with elk, deer, big horned sheep, coyote, wolf, moose, fox and lynx roaming around foraging for food or moving through the snow-covered terrain. You may get quite close to a wolf, cougar, lynx or grizzly; however, most Canadian wildlife is not dangerous or even remotely interested in humans. Birdlife is also abundant. Look for bird species adapted to the winter, such as bald eagle, raven, chickadee, and various waterfowl near unfrozen water bodies.

This afternoon, explore Jasper's growing culinary scene. Your expert local guide will take you to some of the best restaurants where you'll taste different specialties paired with wine, to expand your knowledge of local produce. Wine and dine your way through the afternoon and into the evening, while your guide relays stories of local folklore and the bewildering history of this spectacular mountain town.

Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge | Meals: BL

Day 7: Jasper - Lake Louise

Head south on the Icefield Parkway on what seems like an entirely new drive based on the views. Stop along the way at Athabasca Falls, which offers a scenic stroll into one of the most breathtaking frozen falls in the Rockies. Ever-changing ice formations and the roar of water behind the ice make for an amazing winter experience. If you arrive before it's fully frozen over, you can see the turquoise water popping out below the icicles.

Continue along the Icefield Parkway to the village of Lake Louise, in the heart of Banff National Park. The mountain scenery and the Victoria Glacier that surrounds the lake make Lake Louise essential on any Rockies adventure. Whether your idea of being immersed in the Canadian Rockies is cozying up by a fire with a decadent hot chocolate, snowshoeing through thick blankets of snow, or taking a dog sled around the mountain — the area is truly enchanting. Arrive at your chateau adjacent to the frozen lake, surrounded by soaring mountains and the majestic Victoria Glacier.

Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise / Meals: BL

Day 8: Lake Louise

Today you'll experience Banff National Park in an entirely new and thrilling way — by dog sled. Both the Inuit people and the early settlers travelled around using dog sleds, and this is known as an essential Canadian experience. Meet your team of dogs and sled guide at the trailhead and spend some time bonding with them. On your dog-mushing adventure, spot cascading glaciers and mountain top cornices as well as animal tracks in the snow. Your sled driver will share stories about their lives with the sled dogs, and depending on the conditions, you may even have the opportunity to drive your very own team.

The remainder of your afternoon and evening is at leisure. Perhaps try a Canadian tradition and go ice skating on the frozen lake (payable locally). Lake Louise is one of the best places in the Rockies to see the Aurora Borealis. Cross your fingers for a clear black sky (preferably with a new moon), pack your warmest layers and head out into the dark. While sightings are never guaranteed, with the right conditions, Banff is one of the best places to spot them.

Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise / Meals: B

Day 9: Lake Louise

Lake Louise is magnificent when the sun rises. Perhaps rise early and watch the sun bask Victoria Glacier in pink and tangerine. This morning, head out on a snowshoeing adventure. Take in the panoramic winter views and explore a hidden part of the mountains, untouched by ski tracks, but likely scattered with animal tracks. Smell the evergreens and the snowflakes as you experience the joy of walking on clouds.

This afternoon, stay warm beneath blankets and admire Lake Louise from the cozy comfort of a traditional horse-drawn sleigh. Soak in the romantic sound of jingling sleigh bells and the steady rhythm of hooves padding along the snow as you glide through what feels like your very own fairytale.

Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise | Meals: B

Day 10: Depart Lake Louise/Calgary

Meet your A&K representative and transfer to Calgary for your departing flight.

Meals: B

Map



Accommodation

Fairmont Banff Springs



The Fairmont Banff Springs is another member of the famous 'Grand Railway Hotels'. These hotels were conceived in the 19th century as a way for the Canadian railway companies to entice visitors into the interior. Today they are national landmarks featuring in photographs, postcards and brochures. The Fairmont Banff Springs was supposedly modelled on a Scottish Baronial castle. You can debate how much they succeeded with this when you arrive, but you will certainly agree that it is grand.

Why we like it

- Situated just above the famous Bow Falls and close to the thermal springs
- Views across the valley to the spectacular Mount Rundle
- The hotel's golf course has been awarded the best in Canada so perfect for a relaxing morning
- Wonderful 'castle' style property in the heart of the Rockies
- Classical Fairmont service and style

Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge



Apparently the Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge was set up as something of a rival to the Banff Springs. Now both hotels are part of the Fairmont Group many guests stay in both to experience their history and luxury. The lodge is 'cabin style' and serves as a jumping off point for the countless outdoor activities in the nearby area. The views from the lodge are stunning, so much so the area has been protected with UNESCO World Heritage status.

Why we like it

- A year round resort destination
- The rooms form a 'village' of chalets and original log cabins
- Make sure you take a cruise on Lac Beauvert
- Visitors can compare whether the lodge or the Fairmont Banff Springs has the best golf course in Canada. A source of much debate
- Lake front location perfect for an afternoon picnic

Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise



The Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise appears in thousands of visitors' photographs each year with its signature location on the shores of this dazzling lake – only a 90 minute drive from Calgary, along the famous Sea to Sky highway, one of the most picturesque drives in North America. Or if you fancy arriving in style then we can arrange a helicopter transfer – the views are magnificent.

Once at the hotel we recommend the Deluxe Lake View Room or the Gold Rooms. There is nothing better than relaxing in bed sipping a glass of champagne as you take in the amazing view of the Victoria Glacier. Fairmont Chateau is a hotel with two distinct seasons: a cold winter full of snow, and a warm summer with clear blue skies, melting the ice to reveal picturesque scenery and places to explore by foot or bike. One of North America's top ski resort destinations, a stay here will be a highlight of your journey to this beautiful part of the world.

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