



# CANADA SPECIALIST PROGRAM



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## Alberta Cities & Mountains Loop

Kick up your heels in Wild West-flavoured Calgary, head for the hills and explore the wilderness, chateau resorts and hot springs of the Rocky Mountains' national parks. Then shop and get cultural in Edmonton before learning about pioneer history in the Alberta hinterland.



### Start: DAY 1-2

#### Calgary, Alberta

##### The Cultural District

Calgary's "postcard to the world" in the heart of the city is home to dozens of arts and culture hotspots like galleries, museums, theatres, concert halls and outdoor festival space, plus excellent shopping, dining and nightlife, all within a few city blocks.

##### Glenbow Museum

View over 31,000 works of art including an Asian gallery showcasing Buddhist and Hindu sculptures and the award-winning Blackfoot First Nations Aboriginal gallery. Check out diverse temporary exhibitions from other leading galleries.

##### Calgary Stampede

Billed the "Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth", in July North America's premier rodeo and western festivals is a rollicking time when residents don cowboy hats, boots and western wear. Pancake breakfasts are served in city streets from chuckwagons.

#### Canada Olympic Park - WinSport Canada

Site of several 1988 Olympic Winter Games events, this is an athlete training centre where you can ski, snowboard and bobsleigh in winter. In summer, hit the slopes of this urban playground on a rented mountain bike, or soar from the top of Canada Olympic Park's ski jump tower on North America's fastest zipline.

#### Heritage Park Historical Village

Discover "How the West was Once" at Canada's largest living history museum. Play on an antique midway, ride an authentic steam train and visit a working blacksmith shop and one room schoolhouse. Guides costumed as pioneers bring the history of the old west to life.

#### Two-steppin' Calgary-style!

Ride a mechanical bull and order a plate of rib-stickin' ribs at the Ranchman's Cookhouse and Dancehall. Learn to line dance or start two-steppin' at free drop-in dance lessons every Friday. *Travel west Highway #1 for 78 mi (126 km) to Banff. Overnight in Banff.*

## DAY 3-4

### Banff, Alberta

#### Banff National Park

Canada's first national park in 1883 and the world's third is 2,564 sq mi (6,641 square km) of valleys, mountains, glaciers, forests, meadows and rivers where elk graze on lawns in the mountain village of Banff.

#### The Fairmont Banff Springs

A hotel that thinks it's a Scottish Baronial Castle in the heart of Banff National Park, this luxury resort has been a Canadian icon for over a century. Guests and non-guests can access the championship golf course, spa services and fine dining restaurants.

#### Minnewanka Lake Cruises

Step aboard a boat and cruise a mountain lake amid dramatic landscapes. Learn about the area's early explorer history, native folklore and geology. Be on the watch for sightings of elk, deer, wolves, eagles and bears.

#### Banff Summer Arts Festival

Perched above the town of Banff, the Banff Centre hosts an annual arts festival where world-class artists present their art on stages, meadows, galleries and studio spaces throughout summer. From May to August, music, dance, opera, film and theatre are showcased with a mountain backdrop.

#### Banff Upper Hot Springs

Dip your toes in steaming hot water, fill your lungs with fresh mountain air and relax year round in the hot mineral springs of a restored 1930s era bathhouse.

#### The Banff Gondola Ride

Climb 2,292 ft (698 m) to an elevation of 7,486 ft (2,281 m) in a gondola for a bird's eye view of six mountain ranges from the top of Sulphur Mountain.

## DAY 5

*Travel north on Highways 1 and 93 for 37 mi (59 km) to Lake Louise*

### Lake Louise, Alberta

#### Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise

Nestled on the banks of Canada's most-famous lake, Chateau Lake Louise is a luxury hotel with views across emerald lake of the Victoria Glacier nestled between jagged peaks. Guests and non-guests can book spa treatment or indulge in High Tea with a view from the hotel lounge.

#### The Plain of the Six Glaciers

After a 3.4 mi (5.5 km) (5 – 6 hrs round trip) moderately difficult hike with dramatic mountain and lake views, you've earned a cup of tea at the historic teahouse at the end of the trail. At 6890 ft (2100 m), sip while you admire six hanging glaciers. Or, consider joining a group for a horseback trek up the trail. *Travel north on Highway 93 for 145 mi (234 km) to Jasper, Alberta. Overnight in Jasper.*



## DAY 6-7

### Jasper, Alberta

#### The Icefields Parkway

Explore six massive glaciers between Jasper and Lake Louise on the Columbia Icefield and drink from its pure water run-off. These colossal monoliths are unique in that their melt waters feed into three different oceans.

#### The Columbia Icefield Glacier Experience

Massive Brewster Ice Explorers, custom-designed glacial travel vehicles, take passengers on a 90-minute excursion onto the surface of the Athabasca Glacier. Learn about glaciers, icefields and their impact on the environment, then step out and stand onto ancient ice formed from a snowfall as much as 400 years ago.

#### Jasper National Park

The largest Canadian Rocky Mountain National Park and a UNSECO World Heritage Site, Jasper is a rugged mountain ecosystem with thundering waterfalls like Sunwapta Falls and the serene heights of Mount Edith Cavell. Relax in Miette Hot Springs and drop into the luxury log cabins of the Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge for a round of golf, fishing or fine dining.

#### Maligne Lake

A one-and-a-half hour boat cruise will take you past glacier-studded peaks to photogenic Spirit Island on the turquoise waters of the second biggest glacier-fed lake in the world.

#### Maligne Canyon

Sheer limestone walls plunge over 165 ft (50 m) on an interpretive trail winding across six bridges over the whitewater Maligne River.

#### Whistler's Mountain

Whisk to the 7496 ft (2285 m) summit on the Jasper Tramway for vistas across 50 mi (80 km) of mountain ranges. On a clear day, look for the white pyramid of Mt. Robson, the highest peak in the Rockies, in nearby British Columbia.



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## DAY 8-9

Travel east on Highway 16 for 226 mi (364 km) to Edmonton.

Overnight in Edmonton

### Edmonton, Alberta

#### West Edmonton Mall

The world's largest shopping and entertainment centre covers 48 square blocks with 800 shops, 100 eateries, and nine attractions including 21 movie theatres - all under one roof. Play in a giant water park, skate on the ice rink, putt on two mini-golf courses, visit a Vegas-style casino and an amusement park with more than 26 rides and attractions.

#### Edmonton Festival City

Canada's Festival City hosts more than 30 annual festivals. The August International Fringe Theatre Festival is the world's second biggest with often quirky theatre and performances featuring almost every form of art and entertainment. In July, Jazz and Shakespeare are celebrated, and in August it's Blues and Bluegrass.

#### Edmonton River Valley

The longest stretch of urban parkland in North America – 22 times bigger than New York's Central Park. Explore it on foot with the Westin Hotel Edmonton's running concierge or take a jet boat tour and learn how to pan for gold along the way.

## Day 10

Travel south on Highway 2 for 184 mi (296 km) to Calgary.

### Wetaskiwin, Alberta

#### Historic Wetaskiwin

Step back in time in a small town with 13 restored turn-of-the-century buildings including a 1907 courthouse and a distinctive water tower that is the town's landmark.

#### The Reynolds-Alberta Museum

Honouring the "spirit of the machine", the museum explains how the move since the 1890s to cars, airplanes and mechanized farm equipment changed the lives of Albertans. See vintage automobiles, motorcycles, trucks, agricultural implements and aircraft. *Return to Calgary to check-in at the Calgary International Airport for your return flight or extend your stay in Calgary*

### End of tour!

