

# EXPLORE!



## Family Canadian Adventure

From hot springs, emerald-green lakes and rushing waterfalls to the amazing cities of Vancouver and Calgary, this trip explores many of Canada's natural highlights with a number of walks in national parks. We discover the vast Athabasca Glacier and Falls, the Island of Victoria and Lake Louise. Along the way we have the chance to see whales and visit a bear sanctuary, hike through the numerous national parks, travel on an Ice Explorer vehicle and canoe along a stunning lake. **TRIPLE ROOMS** This trip allows the option for triple rooms to be included within the booking on a selected number of night stops within the holiday. If you would like this option, a discount may be applicable on the cost of the trip - please ask our Sales team for further information.

## Trip highlights

- ★ **Accommodation** - Stay in a yurt, a cowboy ranch and in various campsites
- ★ **Walks** - Discover Banff and Glacier National Park and Maligne Canyon on two feet
- ★ **Jasper National Park** - Drive along the Icefield Parkway which boasts impressive glaciers
- ★ **Lake Louise** - Visit one of Canada's most photographed settings
- ★ **Whistler** - Try out a tree top adventure on a series of suspension bridges
- ★ **Wells Gray Park** - Opportunity to try out an overnight canoe trip along Lake
- ★ **Wildlife** - Chance to watch grizzly bears and whales

#### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

##### Simple

These are often small, family run establishments or campsites which provide a no-frills experience with adequate amenities and service standards. Sleeping arrangements are simple, sometimes with en suite facilities.

#### TRIP PACE:

##### Moderate

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

#### GROUP SIZE:

##### 8 - 12

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

### DAY 1 - Tour starts in Vancouver

The trip begins in Vancouver where we transfer to the hotel to meet your Explore Leader.



**Accommodation: Ramada Inn Downtown Vancouver** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: None

### DAY 2 - Explore Vancouver and catch the ferry to Victoria

This morning, we explore the city of Vancouver on foot including visiting Granville Island and its public market which is famous for its seafood and fruit, Chinatown, the Gastown area of the city and Stanley Park. We enjoy a picnic in one of Vancouver's parks that overlook the Bay and catch the afternoon ferry to Victoria on Vancouver Island where we camp on the outskirts of the city. Although the island stretches almost 500km from north to south, it only has a population of 500,000 and with its numerous provincial parks, it is easy to escape into the wilderness.



**Accommodation: Goldstream Provincial Park Campground** (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 3 - Whale watching trip and discover Victoria and its totem poles

Vancouver Island is one of the best places in the world to spot marine wildlife, and we board a catamaran for a whale watching excursion around the surrounding islands. Upon returning to the island capital, we explore Victoria on foot including the Inner Harbour, Bastion Square, the impressive Empress Hotel on the harbour front and Thunderbird Park. The park is home to numerous Totem Poles that were carved by the island's Inuit native people. The rest of the day is left for optional visits including the Royal British Columbia Museum or Butchart's Gardens which is world renowned for its beauty.



**Accommodation: Goldstream Provincial Park Campground** (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 4 - Treetop adventure at the Capilano Suspension bridge and drive to Whistler

We take the morning ferry back to the mainland and stop off at Capilano Suspension bridge for a treetop adventure 70 metres above the Capilano River. Manoeuvre from one Douglas fir tree to another on a series of elevated suspension bridges, some reaching as high as 30m above the forest floor which offers a unique perspective of the forest from above. We continue on to Whistler and arrive in time to enjoy an evening meal cooked by your Explore leader!



**Accommodation: Whistler RV Park and Campground** (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 5 - Visit a First Nations cultural centre and make a traditional drum

We visit the Squamish Lil'Wat Cultural Centre and learn about the indigenous people of the region as well as trying your hand at making your own traditional mini drum during a craft workshop. In the afternoon, we head to Garibaldi Provincial Park for a walk to the beautiful Cheakamus Lake (roughly 8 km and 3 hours). There is the option of renting a bicycle for a ride along the Valley Trail, or to rent a canoe on the River of Golden Dreams later that day or simply explore Whistler Village.



**Accommodation: Whistler RV Park and Campground** (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 6 - Visit a ranch and travel to Clearwater and stay in rustic cowboy cabins

Today we spend the morning travelling north east to Clearwater, stopping at an historic ranch originally built during the Gold Rush era. After lunch, we continue towards Clearwater pausing en route at various places to soak up the wonderful views, notably Spahats Creek Falls. We reach our stop for the night, a ranch with rustic cabins and are treated to cowboy BBQ cooked by your Explore leader.



**Accommodation: Wells Gray Ranch** (or similar)



Standard Cabins



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 7 - Overnight canoe trip in Wells Gray Provincial Park

This morning we head out to the nearby Wells Gray Provincial Park, home to Helmcken Falls which is double the height of Niagara Falls. There are spectacular views from all along the park entrance road and great opportunities for wildlife spotting. In the afternoon, we depart for an overnight canoe and camping trip on Clearwater Lake. After about 3 hours of easy canoeing on the lake, we find a camping spot and set up our tent by the lake for the evening of real Canadian adventure. Full instruction is given and no previous experience required.



**Accommodation: Wells Gray Campground** (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 8 - Walk along the Fraser Canyon and overnight in Jasper

This morning we canoe back to our starting point and then head northeast towards Mount Robson Provincial Park. We also see Mount Robson itself which is the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies (3954m). It is tall enough to create its own weather patterns and if we're lucky we'll be able to view this photogenic monolith from top to bottom. From here, we enjoy a walk along Fraser Canyon to Overlander Falls (1km round trip, 45 minutes' walk) and then drive in the afternoon on to Jasper, our final destination for today and the largest of Canada's Rocky Mountain Parks. Look out for black bears, elks and eagles on the drive, many of which can usually be spotted from the road. We set up camp for the next two nights in the National Park.



**Accommodation: Whistler Campground** (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 9 - Visit Maligne Canyon and walk the Bald Hill Trail

Maligne Canyon where we visit today has a reputation as being one of the most spectacular gorges in the Canadian Rockies with sheer limestone walls that plunge some 50 metres down into the waters of the Maligne River. We take a short walk along the canyon passing by a number of springs, waterfalls, bridges and beautiful forests with dramatic views of the area. We then drive on to visit Maligne Lake, the largest lake in the Rockies. After enjoying a picnic lunch near the lake, the afternoon then sees us hiking along the Bald Hill Trail (approximately 13km and 4-5 hours of walking). There are a number of routes that can be taken and the Explore Leader will choose which trail is best depending upon the fitness of the group - there are three Bald Hills summits which vary in the steepness of the trail with all providing great viewpoints that overlook the Evelyn Creek. There are also opportunities to explore the lake by canoe and cruise boat (optional), before enjoying the drive back to Jasper through the Maligne Valley.



**Accommodation: Whistler Campground** (or similar)



Simple Camping

## DAY 10 - Drive along the Icefield Parkway, snow coach glacier tour and overnight in a yurt

Today's drive takes us along the celebrated Icefield Parkway to Golden. The road negotiates its way through a landscape of coniferous forests, towering mountain peaks, turquoise lakes and impressive glaciers. Possible scenic stops en route include Bow Lake, Peyto Lake and Athabasca Falls. Get on board the Ice Explorer, a vehicle designed especially for glacial travel, for an excursion on the surface of the Falls Glacier. We then drive in the afternoon to Golden with wildlife spotting as we go so be on the lookout for black bears, elk and eagles on the drive. Tonight we will be staying at the Golden Eco-Adventure Ranch in the heart of the Columbia Valley where we stay in a mixture of Yurts and tents! The Yurt is a rounded tent-like structure installed on a wooden deck, each with a double bed and a large futon which folds out into a bed.



**Accommodation: Golden Eco-Adventure Yurts** (or similar)



Simple Yurt

## DAY 11 - Visit a grizzly bear refuge and walk in Yoho National Park

This morning we head to the remarkable Kicking Horse Grizzly Bear Refuge, the world's largest enclosed grizzly bear habitat. It offers us a unique opportunity to watch a grizzly behaving exactly as it would in the wild. After a short hike to the reserve you'll have a chance to meet Boo, the refuge's very own orphan grizzly, and learn more about the life of these magnificent bears from one of the centre's resident naturalists. Next we head for Yoho National Park, to take a short walk up to Takkakaw Falls which is the second highest waterfall in Canada. You can either relax at our campsite or stretch your legs on nearby trails.



**Accommodation: Golden Eco-Adventure Yurts** (or similar)



Simple Yurt

## DAY 12 - Walk by Lake Louise and Moraine Lake and drive to Banff

This morning, we drive to Banff National Park - a landscape of mountains, meadows and crystal clear lakes. On our way, we stop for a walk around the picture postcard Lake Louise and Moraine Lake - the walk will be based upon the groups abilities with routes from 6km and 2 ½ hours to 14km and 5 hours (all are easy to moderate walks). You also have the option of going on a cruise on the lake, or taking a gondola up the mountain for spectacular views. We then continue on to Banff and visit the Cave and Basin Historic Site which is a natural thermal mineral springs which the town is famous for - their discovery in 1883 led to Canada's National Park system. Relaxing in these geothermal waters will be a wonderful way to relax.



**Accommodation: Tunnel Mountain Village Campsite** (or similar)



Simple Camping

## DAY 13 - Explore Banff before hiking in Banff National Park and drive to Calgary

This morning, we hike in Banff National Park which is rich in wildlife with over 60 species of mammals and some 280 species of birds being recorded here, including golden eagles, cougars and black bears. We then drive to Calgary and spend the afternoon exploring on foot. There is the option to climb Calgary Tower for a 360 degrees' panorama view over the city - all set against a backdrop of the Rockies.



**Accommodation: Ramada Downtown Calgary** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 14 - Trip Ends Calgary

There is free time in the town before we drive to the airport where the trip ends.



Meals Provided: None

# Family information

Minimum age

11

## Why book this trip

This adventure is designed for families who enjoy walking, being in the outdoors and camping. The itinerary is designed to capture the country's most beautiful landscapes and scenery with a range of activities to satisfy any adrenalin junkie including tree top adventures, canoeing and watching grizzly bears. A perfect holiday for families who enjoy the outdoors and the full camping experience, including setting up and breaking camp.



# What's included?



## Included meals

Breakfast: 11  
Lunch: 11  
Dinner: 11



## Transport

Maxiwagon



## Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader / Driver



## Accommodation

1 nights standard cabins  
8 nights simple camping  
2 nights standard hotel  
2 nights simple yurt

# Trip information

## Country information

### Canada Trips

#### Climate

May-Sep is the best time to visit, when the weather is usually warm, dry and pleasant. Temperatures can be a little cooler on the coast and in the mountains; rain can be expected at any time. Early in the season, there can be snow in some areas which may limit walking possibilities.

#### Time difference to GMT

-7

#### Plugs

2 Pin Flat

#### Religion

Roman Catholic, Protestant

#### Language

English and French

## Budgeting and packing

### Optional activities

There are a number of exciting optional excursions you can do on your trip. These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract. Jasper - bike rental CAN \$25-35 for a half day, Rafting trip CAN\$ 70-90, Jasper Tram \$37 Athabasca Glacier - Ice walk CAN\$ 95 Banff - Gondola CAN\$ 42; Canoeing on the Bow River CAD\$36 (1hr) CAD\$56 (2 hrs) Whistler - Gondola CAN\$ 50; Rafting CAN\$ 95 (\$ 65 for 6-16yr olds); Victoria - visit to Butchart Gardens 35\$ /adult Calgary - Climb on top of the Calgary Tower 18\$ Lake Louise - Canoe rental CAD\$30 per hour Kicking Horse - Rafting CAD\$115 (without barbecue) CAD\$125 (with barbecue) All optional excursion costs are subject to change at the discretion of the local supplier.

### Clothing

Include some loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts with tight-closing cuffs (insects). Warm clothing for cool nights beside water or at higher altitudes is essential as is a good waterproof jacket. Also bring swimwear, sunglasses and a sun hat.

## Footwear

Hiking boots are a must. Bring sandals or comfortable shoes for walking in the cities and at night at the camp.

## Luggage

20kg

## Luggage: On tour

A main luggage backpack, case or holdall plus a daypack for hikes and trips and for personal items carried with you inside the minibus. (Main luggage is stored in the closed trailer towed by the minibus). Bring plastic bags to keep things dry.

## Equipment

Bring a 3-season sleeping bag (see below), sleeping bag liner, a water bottle, biodegradable soap and shampoo, towel, sun block, and a small torch. Do not forget your camera. Binoculars are useful. Small flies and mosquitoes are part of the environment during forest evenings, so equip yourself with insect repellent. Please note: Sleeping bags can be provided locally. These must be reserved at the time of booking and paid directly to your Explore Leader on arrival at a cost of 50CAN\$ per sleeping bag hired for the duration of the trip.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Explore Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Local crew

In North America tipping 15%-20% is a recognised part of life across the service industry, including restaurants, activity suppliers, taxis and guides. Local staff will look to you for personal recognition of particular services provided. Unlike other Explore trips, during our trips in North America our Explore leaders will not operate a tips kitty. However, they will be more than happy to provide guidance throughout the trip on who to tip when and to suggest appropriate amounts.

## Country Information

### Canada Trips

#### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

##### Lunch price

£13.00

##### Dinner price

£20.00

##### Beer price

£3.00

##### Water price

£1.10

#### Foreign Exchange

##### Local currency

Canadian Dollars.

##### Recommended Currency For Exchange

Bring your money in Canadian Dollars or US Dollars cash or Travellers Cheques which can be used almost everywhere, although local stores are not keen to change anything over \$50.

##### Where To Exchange

Banks or 'Forex' offices in main towns/cities. Your tour leader will advise you on arrival.

##### ATM Availability



There are ATMs in the towns.

**Credit Card Acceptance**

Widely accepted just about everywhere.

**Travellers Cheques**

Canadian Travellers Cheques are the most convenient.

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

Maxiwagon

### Accommodation notes

**Booking a Single Room**

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

Accommodation on Day 6 is in a cowboy log style cabin in Wells Gray Park. There is also a Ranch House which was built by settlers to the area in 1912 which now serves as the ranch's kitchen and breakfast room. The rustic cabins are equipped with four to five bunk beds each with comfortable mattresses, tables and chairs, water containers and wash basins and double propane ceiling lights (Sleeping bags and pillows are available for rent). Accommodation on Days 10 and 11 are in Yurts which come with a double bed, futon (that can be used as a bed), a wooden floor, shelving unit, picnic table, lawn chairs and a BBQ fire pit. Facilities at the site include; washing machines, toilets and showers. If the family is larger than 4, an additional tent will be provided for this family as the yurt can only sleep up to 4 people. Please note that there are 3 yurts thus some families may need to stay in the tents provided. We stay in National Park Camp grounds throughout the trip where all camping equipment is provided except a sleeping bag. Like many adventures of this type, much of the team spirit and camaraderie is developed through mucking in and helping out with basic camp responsibilities which will include the setting up and taking down of camp and the loading and unloading of the trailer. At some points you may also be asked to help with meal preparation, washing and clearing up. Be prepared for some early starts and some long days - there is an enormous amount to see! Facilities include; toilets, showers, kitchen shelters where we have our meals, picnic tables and fire pits. Inflatable mats are provided when we camp with the tents able to be closed for mosquito protection. The tents are capable of sleeping three people although we normally have two people allocated to each tent.

### Family swimming

In rivers, lakes and natural hot springs

## Essential information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

**Under 18 immigration guidance**

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

## Visa Information

Canada: (Including those in transit) Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia and passport holders from several EU countries can enter Canada with an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA). An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required when flying into Canada or transiting via Canada. For more information and to apply see the official Canadian government website: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp>. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. Please note you must also ensure you get an entry stamp when going through immigration on arrival. In most cases the border agents will provide this stamp automatically but if for any reason they do not provide one, please ensure you request one to ensure a smooth exit on departure. USA: (including those in transit) Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done online - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be refused boarding. You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover. If you have visited Iraq, Syria, Iran or Sudan since 2011 or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA and instead you will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel. Please note for your ESTA application you will be required to supply Point of Contact information. Explore's USA contact information will be listed on your final documentation which you will receive approximately 3-4 weeks before departure. If you are leaving for the USA before this, please call the Explore team to get this information. (Not necessary if in transit) For further information please check out the US embassy website. Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html>

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

## Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

## Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

**Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore**

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

**Non refundable permits****Canada Trips****Vaccinations**

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

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