Visitor Guide
2020 – 2021

Roam the Lake Minnewanka Loop

Public transit and shuttle information:
See pages 4 & 5
Canada’s First National Park

Encompassing over 6,500 km², Banff National Park is an important historical and contemporary place for Indigenous peoples and others to connect with history and nature. The lands and waters of Banff National Park have been used by Indigenous peoples for millennia; for sustenance, ceremony, trade and travel. Starting in 1885 as 26 km² of federally protected lands around the Cave and Basin Hot Springs, the protected area was quickly expanded to 674 km², becoming the core of Canada’s first national park. More than a century later, the park draws millions of people each year to experience the natural beauty, seven national historic sites and iconic wildlife, from grizzly bears to the Banff Springs Snail. Providing opportunities for learning and adventure, Canada’s oldest national park offers mountains of possibilities.

A UNESCO World Heritage Site

Four of the mountain national parks – Banff, Jasper, Yoho and Kootenay – are recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as part of the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site, for the benefit and enjoyment of all nations. Among the attributes that warranted this designation were vast wilderness, diversity of flora and fauna, outstanding natural beauty and features such as Lake Louise, Maligne Lake, the Columbia Icefield and the Burgess Shale.
Guidebooks, topographic maps and bear spray are available at Parks Canada visitor centres and retail outlets in the town of Banff and the village of Lake Louise.

Brochures are available online at: parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-brochures or at a Parks Canada visitor centre.

Visit facebook.com/BanffNP
twitter.com/BanffNP
instagram.com/parks.canada
Significant traffic congestion can occur in Banff National Park during the summer months. Johnston Canyon, Lake Minnewanka, Lake Louise and Moraine Lake are extremely popular. Parking is limited and fills quickly, so it is important to plan ahead. For the best experience, take Roam Public Transit or reserve your seat in advance on a Parks Canada shuttle.

**Take Roam Public Transit**
Roam Public Transit offers service between Banff and many destinations in the park—look for the bus symbol 🚌 on the maps. Visit roamtransit.com for routes, schedules and fares.

**Reserve your Parks Canada shuttle**
Reservations are required to ride a Parks Canada shuttle from the Park and Ride to Lake Louise and Moraine Lake. Visit reservation.pc.gc.ca to book your spot. Reservations are available starting on April 1, 2020 with a limited number of seats released daily at 6 a.m., 2 days in advance of scheduled departures. Visit pc.gc.ca/banff-transit for more information.

**Banff (see pages 12-13)**
**Surprise Corner**
Admire sweeping views, and get that perfect picture. From Central Park downtown, walk or ride a bike east along the Bow River to this viewpoint.

- Walk – 25 minutes from downtown
- Bike – 1.7 km ride from downtown
- Roam Route #7 – 10 minutes from downtown

**Bow River Trail to the Fenland Trail**
Nature is moments away from Banff Avenue. Start at Central Park downtown and follow this river trail upstream past the canoe docks to Fenland Trail.

- Walk – 1 hour/4.5 km round trip

**Bow Falls**
Visit a waterfall within the town of Banff. From Central Park downtown, walk downstream and over the pedestrian bridge. Follow the river on the south shore trail, up and down some stairs to the Bow Falls.

- Walk – 25 minutes/1.6 km one way
Lake Louise Lakeshore

Lake Louise (see pages 16-17)

Take Roam Route 8X for access to Lake Louise

Tramline Trail
Skip the traffic and enjoy this moderately challenging hike or bike up to the Lake Louise lakeshore from the village. A century ago, this was the trolley route to the Chateau Lake Louise.

Walk – 1.5 hour one way  
Bike – 4.5 km one way

Elevation gain 195 m

Louise Creek Trail
Take this trail to create a loop back to the village from the lakeshore. This trail follows the entire length of Louise Creek as it rushes from Lake Louise to the Bow River.

Walk – 1 hour/2.8 km one way

Elevation gain 195 m

How to use Parks Canada shuttles in the Lake Louise area:

1. Visit reservation.pc.gc.ca to make a reservation.
2. With proof of reservation, arrive at the Park and Ride 15 to 30 minutes prior to your scheduled departure. No refund or rescheduling is available for missed departures.

✓ Note, if you are staying in the Lake Louise Village or Campground, or transferring from Roam Public Transit, use the free Park and Ride Connector shuttle to the Park and Ride.

3. Check in with Parks Canada staff and take your shuttle.
4. Use the Lake Connector shuttle on a first-come first-serve basis to ride in between Lake Louise and Moraine Lake. Expect delays during peak hours.
5. Plan your return trip before the last return shuttle. On your return, you can get off at the Lake Louise Village or at the Park and Ride.

Parks Canada Shuttles routes and schedules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>May 15 – October 12</th>
<th>$ - Reservations required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lake Louise Lakeshore</td>
<td>May 15 – October 12 Last return shuttle 7:45 p.m.</td>
<td>$ - Reservations required</td>
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<td>Moraine Lake</td>
<td>May 22 – October 12 Last return shuttle 7:35 p.m.</td>
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<td>Lake Connector</td>
<td>May 22 – October 12 Runs every 20 minutes from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.</td>
<td>Reservation holders only</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park and Ride Connector</td>
<td>May 15 – October 12 Runs every 30 minutes from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.</td>
<td>Free - No reservations required</td>
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Lake Louise (see pages 16-17)
1 Visit the Cave and Basin National Historic Site
   Roam Route 4 (summer service)
   See interactive exhibits and bubbling thermal waters in an underground cave that gave rise to the birthplace of Canada’s national parks. Visit pc.gc.ca/cave for hours and fees.

2 Discover the Banff Park Museum National Historic Site
   From downtown Banff: Roam Routes 1, 2, 7 (year-round) and 4 (summer service)
   Take a wild trip back in time with vintage natural history specimens from bears to bees. Visit pc.gc.ca/banffparkmuseum for hours and fees.

3 Wander through the Cascades of Time Garden
   Roam Route 1 (year-round)
   10 minute walk from downtown Banff
   Take a stroll through a flower-filled heritage garden with water features, pathways and pavilions.

4 Soak in the Banff Upper Hot Springs
   Roam Route 1 (year-round)
   Relax in Canada’s highest elevation operational hot spring. This accessible site includes a café and gift shop. Towels and swimsuit rentals are available. Visit hotsprings.ca for hours and fees.

5 Summit Tunnel Mountain
   Roam Route 7 (year-round)
   The 2.4 km trail to this summit provides views across the town and Bow Valley. The trailhead is a 15 minute walk (1 km) from downtown Banff.

6 Meander along Vermilion Lakes
   Bike or walk the Vermilion Drive, relax on the docks and benches beside the lakes, learn about the area, snap a picture of Mount Rundle or go for a paddle.

7 Bike the Banff Legacy Trail
   Roam Route 3 (year-round)
   Cyclists, strollers and runners can enjoy mountain views, picnic areas and Vermilion Lakes along this 29 km of paved paths and roadways from Canmore to the Bow Valley Parkway. This trail is not maintained in winter.

8 Explore the Lake Minnewanka area
   Roam Route 6 (summer service)
   In the summer, ride the Lake Minnewanka bus to visit picturesque lakes including Johnson Lake and Two Jack Lake. Enjoy hiking, picnicking and being on or by the water. In the winter, it is a great destination for cross-country skiing, winter walking or snowshoeing.

9 Roam the Bow Valley Parkway
   Roam Route 8S (summer service)
   Take the scenic bus from Banff to Lake Louise in the summer and sightsee the Bow Valley Parkway, including Castle Mountain and Johnston Canyon.

10 Hike Johnston Canyon
    Roam Route 9 (summer service)
    Follow wide trails and narrow bridges with railings through a canyon to waterfalls. Take Roam public transit to this popular location in summer. In other seasons, be sure to bring ice cleats.

11 Visit the Lake Louise Lakeshore
    Roam Routes 8X (year-round) and 8S (summer service)
    For the best experience, take Roam public transit or reserve your seat in advance on the Parks Canada shuttles. See pages 4-5.

12 Drive the Icefields Parkway
    This 230 km drive winds through glaciers, emerald lakes, and broad sweeping valleys. Snow may be present any time of the year—review driving safety on page 31.
**Explore the culture and history of Banff**

**Cave and Basin National Historic Site**
Roam Route 4 (summer service)
30 minute walk or 8 minute bus ride from downtown Banff

**Banff Park Museum National Historic Site**
Roam Routes 1, 2, 7 (year-round) and 4 (summer service)
6 minute walk or 4 minute bus ride from downtown Banff

**Cascades of Time Garden**
Roam Route 1 (year-round)
10 minute walk from downtown Banff

**Ride the bus to the top spots**

Lake Minnewanka, Two Jack Lake and Johnson Lake
Roam Route 6 (summer service)

Lake Louise and the Bow Valley Parkway
Roam Routes 8X (year-round) and 8S (summer service)

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**Experience the great outdoors**

**Hike up Tunnel Mountain**
Roam Route 7 (year-round)
Trailhead is 15 minute walk from downtown Banff

**Paddle on the Vermilion Lakes**
30 minute walk from downtown Banff

**Bike the Banff Legacy Trail**
Roam Route 3 (year-round)

**Book one of our many camping options:**
tent sites, serviced sites, Equipped Campsites or oTENTiks.
Roam Route 2 (year-round), Route 6 (summer service) or Route 8s (summer service)
Free service from campgrounds

**Take a dip in the Banff Upper Hot Springs**
Roam Route 1 (year-round)

**Take the scenic route**
Drive the 230 km Icefields Parkway (93N) past glaciers, waterfalls and turquoise lakes on your way from Lake Louise to Jasper.

❤️ **Highlights:**
Herbert Lake, Crowfoot Glacier and Bow Lake.

⭐ **Recommended hiking trails:**
Bow Glacier Falls and Parker Ridge.

⭐ **Unique adventure:**
From the Icefields Parkway, take the David Thompson Highway and drive 175 km to Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site. Explore the archeological remains of four fur-trade forts during the day. Experience the life of a fur trader and camp on the banks of the North Saskatchewan river in a tipi or Métis trapper tent or bring your RV.
## Planning to camp in a national park?

Many campsites can be reserved and most fill up quickly. Book online or call ahead for information and reservations. *Camping is permitted in designated campgrounds only. A valid camping permit and national park entry pass are required.*

**1-877-RESERVE (1-877-737-3783) or reservation.pc.gc.ca**

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<th>Sani Dump</th>
<th>Flush Toilets</th>
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<td>Call 250-347-2218 for non-profit group camping reservations and fees.</td>
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- Reservation needed for all sites in the campground.
- Campground has first-come, first-served sites only. Self-register at the campground. In summer months, arrive before mid-day for the best chance of getting a site.
- Campground has a mix of reservable sites and first-come, first-served sites.
- Campground is undergoing upgrades.
- Check online for the latest information and opening dates: [pc.gc.ca/banffcamping](http://pc.gc.ca/banffcamping)
Banff’s backcountry offers spectacular destinations for those new to backcountry camping and to experienced travellers. No matter your level of adventure, be prepared and plan ahead. Pick up your brochure at a Parks Canada visitor centre, and visit parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-backcountry for trip ideas, planning and permit information.
Tunnel Mountain
1,692 m

First Vermilion Lake

Cascade Ponds

Bow River

Spray River

Forty Mile Creek

Cascade River

Second Vermilion Lake

Fenland Trail

Spray River East 5.7 km

Tunnel Campground Loop 6.4 km

Tunnel Technical Trails

Top Notch 3.9 km

Legacy Trail 29 km

Coastline Teddy Bear’s Picnic

Hoodoo Super G Wolf Scat Alley

Don’s By-pass 2.1 km

Legacy Trail Marsh Loop 2.8 km

Spray River West 5.6 km

Sulphur Mountain 2.4 km

Surprise Corner to Hoodoos Viewpoint 4.8 km

The Spine 3.2 km

Banff Avenue Trail 3.3 km

Sundance Canyon 4.5 km

Mount Norquay Road

Trans-Canada Highway Vernilion Lakes Drive

Buffalo Otter Wolf Grizzly Caribou St. Julien Golf Course Road

Railway LynxBear Banff Avenue Tunnel Mountain Road

Marten Squirrel Rabbit Moose Cougar Mountain Avenue Cave Avenue

Gopher Elk Kootenay Spray Avenue

Rainbow Jasper Glacier Springs

Rundle Compound Road

Fox Marmot Antelope Deer Beaver Muskrat Bow Lake Minnewanka

Details page 14

Closed from November 1 to May 1

Golf Course Road

Closed to vehicles from the first major snow fall to spring melt.

Enjoy the road by foot, fat bike, snowshoes or cross-country ski.

Legacy Trail

Not maintained in winter

pc.gc.ca/banffnp-closures

Trail maps available at a Parks Canada visitor centre or at:

parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-brochures

Golf Course Road

Closed from November 1 to May 1

pc.gc.ca/banffnp-closures

Visitor Centre

Parking

Roam Public Transit
Schedules: roamtransit.com

RV Parking

Washroom

Hostel

Picnic Area

Picnic Shelter

Train Station

Bus Station

Gas Station

Police

Hospital

Viewpoint

Interpretation

Gondola

Hot Springs

Canoe Docks

Skating

Skatepark

Golf Course

Dog Park

Horse Riding

Playground

Sani Dump

Expect bikes on trail

Bucket List

Details page 6

Reservable Campground
Details page 8

Trans-Canada Highway
Road

Road closed in winter

Easy trail

Moderate trail

Difficult trail

Other Trail
Lake Minnewanka Loop Map

- Parking
  - Only park in designated lots, not along the road.
  - Parking
    - Popular area: Check pc.gc.ca/BanffNow for real-time parking status and transit or shuttle options.
- Roam Public Transit
  - Schedules: roamtransit.com
- Accessible Parking
  - RV Parking
  - Washroom
  - Picnic Area
  - Picnic Shelter
  - Viewpoint
  - Exhibit
  - Boat Launch
  - Boat Tours
  - Snack Bar
    - Summer only
- Expect bikes on trail
- Bucket List
  - Details Page 6
- Reservable Campground
  - Details page 8

- Easy trail
- Moderate trail
- Difficult trail
- Trans-Canada Highway
- Road
- Road closed in winter

Trail maps available at a Parks Canada visitor centre or at:
parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-brochures

Prevent the transport of aquatic invasive species between waterways by using the boat wash station at Johnson Lake.
parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-whirling
Boating restrictions:
parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-boating

CLEAN
DRY
DRAIN

Find your Red Chairs
parkscanada.gc.ca/redbanff
Meet Parks Canada’s Interpreters
Want to discover more about the uniqueness of the area’s natural and cultural heritage? Friendly and knowledgeable interpreters are here to share the stories of Parks Canada’s protected places.

Look for interpreters at campgrounds, popular day-use areas and downtown Banff throughout the summer and at national historic sites during various times of the year.

Visit parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-interpretation for more information on interpretive programs and activities in Banff National Park and national historic sites.

Visit parkscanada.gc.ca/bnp-events for event listings.

Explore with your preschooler
Parka is eagerly waiting to introduce your child to the wonders of Parks Canada places. Parka encourages kids to explore the world around them, whether on a hike along wilderness trails or a step back in history at a site.

Are you 6-11 years old?
Check out Parks Canada’s Xplorers booklets filled with fun activities to do while visiting. In Banff National Park there are five different booklets to complete: Banff National Park, Lake Louise, Icefields Parkway, Cave and Basin and Banff Park Museum national historic sites. Don’t forget to ask for Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site’s Xplorers booklet when you are there.

Award-winning storybook
A Beary, Berry Good Day is a 48-page bilingual children’s book that shares important messages with the next generation of national park visitors. Find out how to help protect Canada’s national parks and the wildlife that call these special places home. A Beary, Berry Good Day is available for purchase at Parks Canada visitor centres and select locations around town. First place winner of the 2019 Book Interpretive Media Award from the National Association for Interpretation, the 2018 Silver Non-Personal Interpretation Award of Excellence from Interpretation Canada and the 2018 Tourism Content ALTO Alberta Tourism Awards. Visit parkscanada.gc.ca/Banff-BearBook for more information.

Hidden Lake – A mosaic unveiled
Moderate hike, Lake Louise area, ages 5+
This guided experience begins with a shuttle ride that trims the hike down to a family-friendly 10 km. Hike through wildflowers and larches as you learn about the restoration project protecting westslope cutthroat trout, a species at risk.

Visit reservation.pc.gc.ca to book your spot.
**Pika**

**Characteristics**
The smallest member of the rabbit family. Has a piercing call that sounds like a high-pitched “eep.”

**Where to find**
Rock slides and talus slopes.

**Hoary Marmot**

**Characteristics**
A larger member of the rodent family. Silver-brown in colour with longer hair. Has a high-pitched call that sounds like a whistle.

**Where to find**
Alpine and subalpine meadows, rock piles and scree slopes.

**Red Squirrel**

**Characteristics**
Red body, white underside and very large, bushy tail.

**Where to find**
Coniferous forests, scampering up trees.

**Columbian Ground Squirrel**

**Characteristics**
Tan-coloured. Longer body. Has a high-pitched “squeak.”

**Where to find**
Meadows, roadsides and townsites in underground colonies.

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**Grizzly or Black Bear?**

- **Grizzly Bear**
  - Long claws
  - Tall ears
  - Large head
  - Distinctive shoulder hump

- **Black Bear**
  - Short rounded ears
  - Small head
  - No shoulder hump

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**You are in bear country!**

- Be aware, bears can be anywhere at any time. Watch for fresh scat, tracks or large diggings.
- Make noise! Sing, yell, talk loudly and travel in groups of 4 or more when possible.
- Dogs must be on a leash and under control at all times—It is the law.
- Always keep children nearby and in sight.
- Never approach or feed a bear. Stay 10 bus lengths or 100 metres away.
- Always carry bear spray, ensure it is accessible and know how to use it.

Visit: parkscanada.gc.ca/bears-and-people
**Characteristics**
Tan colour, tail has white underside and is held erect like a flag when alarmed.

**Where to find**
Mostly valley bottoms.

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**Characteristics**
Built like a large German Shepherd, with longer legs. Colour can vary from white to black.

**Where to find**
Mainly valley bottoms.

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**Characteristics**
Brown body, darker neck and large tan rump patch. Backwards slanting antlers.

**Where to find**
Valley bottoms and open areas. Commonly seen around townsites.

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**Characteristics**
Black tip on tail, large ears, white rump, grey colour.

**Where to find**
Mostly valley bottoms.

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**Characteristics**
Narrow black horns, beard, long white hair.

**Where to find**
Near steep rocky terrain.

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**Characteristics**

**Where to find**
Near steep rocky terrain.

---

**Characteristics**
Built like a large German Shepherd, with longer legs. Colour can vary from white to black.

**Where to find**
Valley bottoms.

---

**Characteristics**

**Where to find**
Valley bottoms.
#WildlifeRules in Banff National Park

Banff National Park is a gateway to nature, adventure and discovery. The chance to observe wildlife as they go about their natural lives is a fascinating experience that draws millions of people to the park each year. Along with this opportunity, however, comes the responsibility to treat wildlife with the respect they deserve. Follow these #WildlifeRules to protect wildlife and keep Banff National Park a special place. Learn more at parkscanada.gc.ca/WildlifeRules and throughout this guide.

Wildlife Rule #1: Help keep animals away from human food.

Human food kills wildlife.

Wildlife quickly find any food, scented items or garbage that is left unattended. Eating these unnatural foods teaches the wildlife to approach people for an easy meal.

Once wildlife develop a taste for human food, they often become aggressive in their search for more. This places you and others in danger as they search for food or garbage that is not properly stored.

Properly store all food and scented items.

A clean campsite or picnic area does not have anything that will attract wildlife (food, garbage, food-related or scented items). Never leave these items unattended:

- Coolers – full or empty
- Food – wrapped, unwrapped or in containers
- Garbage/wrappers
- Dishes/pots/cutlery – clean or dirty
- Beverage containers – full or empty
- Pet food/bowls – full or empty
- Bottles/cans – open or unopened
- Scented products – such as shampoo, toothpaste, candles, citronella, dish soap, sunscreen, lip balm, dish towels
- Barbecues – clean or dirty
- Any other items used for food preparation or that have a smell or scent

Never leave food or scented items unattended or in a tent for even a minute.
Always keep your campsite and picnic area clean.

When you are done cooking or eating at your picnic table, all food, food-related and scented items MUST be stored:

- In a hard-sided vehicle, trailer or motor home, NOT in tents or tent trailers
- In campground food storage lockers

Non-food items such as lawn chairs, tables or lanterns may be left outside. Items such as coolers, cook stoves, dish towels and toothpaste must be properly stored.

Dump dish water down outdoor sinks or at the sani-dump in campgrounds.

Wildlife will feed on garbage: littering means feeding wildlife. Ensure all garbage and recycling are disposed in wildlife-proof bins immediately.

- If you see garbage or recycling left outside in the town of Banff, call Bylaw Services at 403-762-1218 (8 a.m. to 6 p.m. seven days a week).
- After hours, call Parks Canada Banff Dispatch at 403-762-1470.

Wildlife Rule #2: Put garbage in the wildlife-proof garbage bins.

Wildlife will feed on garbage: littering means feeding wildlife. Ensure all garbage and recycling are disposed in wildlife-proof bins immediately.

- If you see garbage or recycling left outside in the town of Banff, call Bylaw Services at 403-762-1218 (8 a.m. to 6 p.m. seven days a week).
- After hours, call Parks Canada Banff Dispatch at 403-762-1470.

How to use the wildlife-proof garbage bins.

Place your hand inside the handle and push it to the very back to release the latch.

Raise your arm to open the lid. Dispose of garbage.

Lower the lid. Ensure the lid is closed tight before leaving.
Photograph wildlife from a vehicle or safe distance:
• 30 metres for deer, elk, moose and bighorn sheep
• 100 metres for cougars, bears, coyotes and wolves

**Do not startle wildlife. If you make them move, you are too close.**
*Give them space.*

**Dogs stress wildlife.**

Dogs cause stress for wildlife. Dogs, like wolves and coyotes, may be seen as a threat. Off-leash dogs can trigger aggressive behaviour from wildlife such as grizzly bears and elk. To prevent unsafe situations, it is your responsibility to:

- Ensure your dog is on a leash and under control at all times.
- Pick up and dispose of your pet’s waste in a wildlife-proof garbage bin.
- Do not leave pet food out. If you walk away, store food dishes – empty or full. Always store food dishes at night.

Dogs are not allowed on some trails: [parkscanada.gc.ca/banfftrails](http://parkscanada.gc.ca/banfftrails)

Consider leaving your dog at home if you plan to camp, hike or go into the backcountry.

**Wildlife Rule #3: Give wildlife the space they need.**

**Wildlife Rule #4: Slow down. Obey speed limits.**

If you see wildlife by the road, **slow down**, stay in your vehicle and move on.

- Be aware of the traffic around you.
- Pull over where safe to do so.
- Turn on hazard lights.
- **Stay in your vehicle.**
- Watch for a few moments, take a quick photo, and then move on.
- If a traffic jam develops, move on. It is unsafe for people and wildlife.
Keeping Your Children Safe.

Bears, cougars, wolves and coyotes may be curious about children and can attack them:

- Keep children in immediate sight and within close reach at all times.
- Children should avoid playing in or near areas with tall grass or dense bushes.
- Never allow children to pet, feed or pose with wildlife.

To Learn More About Wildlife and Safety

Pick up a copy of Keep the Wild in Wildlife and Bears and People at a Parks Canada visitor centre or visit parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-brochures.

Information available in French, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish and German.

Report bear, cougar, wolf and coyote sightings and encounters to Parks Canada Banff Dispatch when it is safe to do so: 403-762-1470

It is illegal to feed, entice or disturb any wildlife in a national park. Violators will be charged, be required to appear in court, and could pay fines up to $25 000.

Bison Return to Banff

Bison once roamed Banff National Park, but until recently, they had not been seen in the wild for over 140 years.

In 2017, Parks Canada reintroduced a small herd of plains bison into Banff’s eastern slopes and held them in a pasture for 1.5 years to prepare them for life in the mountains. In summer 2018, the herd was released into the wild and now roams a large area in Banff’s backcountry.

Bringing bison back benefits a range of plants and animals. Their return reconnects cultural links between people and bison, and creates opportunities for Canadians and visitors to learn about this iconic creature.

Follow the journey of returning North America’s largest land mammal to Canada’s first national park:

Follow the herd: #BanffBison @BanffNP Twitter Facebook

To experience bison up close at other Parks Canada locations in Alberta, visit Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site or Elk Island National Park.

Volunteering in Banff National Park

Are you looking for a unique experience during your trip to Banff National Park? Volunteers play an important part in keeping the park healthy and safe for people and wildlife.

Anyone can volunteer—learn more and sign up:

parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-volunteer
Unpredictable mountain weather can change road and trail conditions quickly and wildlife can be anywhere, at any time. These simple precautions will help ensure a safe and enjoyable visit:

Before heading out, check trail conditions at parkscanada.gc.ca/banfftrails, and road conditions. Visit 511.alberta.ca, call 511 in Alberta or 1-855-391-9743.

Obey speed limits and watch for wildlife on the roadside, even on fenced portions of a highway. Sometimes wildlife (bears, cougars) get through or over the fence.

Stay on designated roads, trails and other hardened surfaces.

Make noise on the trails and let wildlife know you are coming.

Be aware of your surroundings. Earbuds or headphones prevent you from hearing wildlife and increase your risk of a dangerous encounter.

Carry bear spray, ensure it is accessible, and know how to use it. Animals are active in the park at all times of the year—even bears can wake up during the winter. Watch a video here: parkscanada.gc.ca/bearspray. Bear spray and more information are available at Parks Canada visitor centres.

Keep clear of cliffs, ledges and fast-moving water.

Research and plan overnight trips including potential trail restrictions and closures, avalanche conditions and mandatory backcountry permits. Visit avalanche.pc.gc.ca and parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-backcountry for more information.

Cell phone coverage is not reliable in many areas of the park. Always let someone know your travel plans.
Conservation Stories

Giving Safe Passage to Wildlife

Parks Canada began twinning the Trans-Canada Highway in the early 1980s. This allowed testing innovative ways to reduce vehicle collisions with wildlife while allowing animals to move safely from one side of the Bow River Valley to the other. Highway fencing and wildlife crossing structures were largely untested ideas until Banff National Park installed fencing and 44 wildlife crossing structures: six overpasses and 38 underpasses.

A variety of wildlife now cross the highway safely. Black bears and cougars prefer underpasses; grizzly bears prefer overpasses. Parks Canada proved that roads can be made safer for people and wildlife. Many other highways across North America now have fences and crossing structures like those pioneered here in Banff National Park.

To learn more, visit the wildlife crossing exhibit just west of Redearth on the Trans-Canada Highway (accessible westbound only). See map on page 9.

Managing Fire in the Park

In addition to prescribed fires and FireSmart work in the Bow Valley, Parks Canada is expanding an existing fire guard on the west side of Sulphur Mountain. The project reduces the risk of wildfires to the town of Banff and also improves grizzly bear habitat. Decades of fire suppression created dense forests with significant amounts of woody debris, increasing the risk of wildfire. Through this multi-year project, Parks Canada will selectively remove trees and deadfall and prune branches from approximately 300 hectares of forest. Keeping the public safe is a top priority, and the West Sulphur project contributes to that goal.

Creating New Fish Habitat

During 2018 and 2019, Parks Canada completed channel restoration works in Cascade Creek, including construction of fish habitat features like riffles, pools and boulders runs. Parks Canada staff and contractors, supported by members of Banff National Park’s volunteer program, are continuing work to restore native riparian plant communities which stabilize soils, shade the stream to maintain cooler water temperatures and provide a source of insects for fish. All of this work is in preparation for the re-introduction of native fish species back into their historic home, including Westslope Cutthroat Trout (a species at risk), scheduled for 2021.
National Park Regulations

Stay Safe and Enjoy

Following park regulations while enjoying the national parks helps protect people, landscapes, and wildlife:

Camping is permitted in designated campgrounds only. A valid camping permit and national park entry pass are required. Do not sleep in your vehicle or RV roadside, at pull-outs, or pitch a tent in an area that is not a campground.

Be considerate of others.

In campgrounds, alcohol and cannabis cannot be consumed beyond your registered campsite. There is a daily ban on alcohol and cannabis consumption during quiet hours, between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. During summer long weekends (May – September), the possession and consumption of alcohol and cannabis are not permitted in any campground.

Drones/Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) are prohibited for personal use anywhere in the national parks.

Pets must be on a leash and under control at all times. Collect and discard feces in wildlife-proof garbage bins.

Do not feed any wildlife. It is illegal to feed wildlife—this includes littering and leaving food or scented items unattended.

Do not litter. Use the wildlife-proof garbage bins for all unwanted items.

Take only photographs. It is illegal to pick flowers, mushrooms, cut down trees, branches, remove rocks, cultural artifacts or otherwise cause damage to natural objects or living things.

Give us space.

Do not approach wildlife.
Stay out of closed areas. Area closures or activity restrictions are implemented when visitors are at risk or when wildlife require additional protection. Signs indicate the areas impacted.

Be careful with fire. Fires are permitted only where designated metal fire boxes and cook stoves are provided by Parks Canada. Never leave fires unattended, and extinguish them completely. Do not use deadwood, bark or branches for fuel.

Buy fishing permits. Anglers require a national park fishing permit, available at Parks Canada visitor centres. Provincial licenses are not valid in national parks. National Park Fishing Regulations prohibit lead tackle under 50g and all bait, natural or chemical. For more information, see the Fishing Regulations Summary brochure, available at Parks Canada visitor centres.

Going boating? Motors of all kinds are prohibited on all lakes except Lake Minnewanka: parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-boating

CLEAN off watercraft and all equipment after every use.
DRAIN onto land all water from your watercraft, including buckets or coolers.
DRY watercraft and all gear completely.

Motorized off-road travel is not permitted.

Firearms are prohibited in national parks. Firearms include pellet guns, bear bangers, bows, slingshots and similar items.

E-bikes (pedal-electric power-assisted bicycles) are only permitted on roads and selected trails in Banff National Park. Visit parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-mountain-biking for more information.

E-bikes are not permitted on any other trails in the national park.

The Canada National Parks Act
Park Wardens are responsible for enforcing park regulations as required by the Canada National Parks Act (parkscanada.gc.ca/banffregulations). To report park violations, call 24 hours, 7 days per week:
1-888-927-3367 Banff, Yoho, Kootenay and Waterton Lakes
1-877-852-3100 Jasper, Mount Revelstoke and Glacier

Violators will be charged, be required to appear in court, and could pay fines of up to $25 000.

Human food kills wildlife.

Do not litter.
Summer trails become a winter wonderland with the turn of the seasons in Banff National Park. Snow covered pines, white-capped mountains, and wildlife tracks are just a few of the discoveries waiting for you. Come outside and play!

Near the Town of Banff
Grab your hiking poles and ice cleats and hike Tunnel Mountain for a beautiful view of the townsite and valley—trailhead is accessible by Roam public transit route 7. On a day with fresh snow, enjoy the views of Cascade and Rundle mountains by snowshoe around frozen Johnson Lake. From the over-sized tires of a fat bike, ride to the Cave and Basin National Historic Site and enjoy the Banff Winter Carnival. After your visit, continue on to find views of the river and mountains along the beginner-friendly Marsh Loop. Enjoy the rolling terrain and groomed cross-country ski trails along Spray River West in the tree-lined river valley. Camp year-round at Tunnel Mountain Village II—bring your RV or enjoy the season from a tent.

Near the Village of Lake Louise
Hop on Roam Public Transit Route 8X to visit Lake Louise. At the lake, walk, ski or ice skate and enjoy the picturesque view of Victoria Glacier. From the village, view the beautiful frozen river from the seat of a fat bike along the Bow River Loop. Experience the charm of the Fairview Loop from a track-set cross-country ski trail that runs through open clearings and snow-draped woods. Bring your RV and camp year-round in the Lake Louise Trailer campground. For a spectacular winter view, snowshoe to the Fairview Lookout and feast your eyes on the striking peaks that surround the lake.

Ask Us About Winter
Parks Canada staff are here to help. Stop by a Parks Canada visitor centre and plan your winter adventure.
• Trip and winter activity planning
• Winter camping
• Trail and road conditions
• Weather updates
• Avalanche safety
• Winter packing list
Safe Winter Driving

Ensure your vehicle has snow tires—look for the snowflake or “M+S” symbol. Snow tires are mandatory from November 1 to April 1 on mountain roads including the Icefields Parkway (Lake Louise to Jasper).

Cell phone coverage is not reliable in the mountains, and there is no cell coverage along the Icefields Parkway. Tell someone your route, when you are leaving and when you plan on arriving.

Plan to start early and complete your drive—with time for exploration and stops along the way—during daylight hours.

Have a safety kit in your vehicle that includes a cell phone, charger, water, energy bars, first aid kit, flashlight, extra batteries, warm clothing and blankets.

Always check road conditions and the weather forecast before leaving. Visit 511.alberta.ca, call 511 in Alberta, or 1-855-391-9743.

You are in Avalanche Terrain

Avalanche season in the mountains extends from November to June, and even a short walk from downtown Banff or Lake Louise can take you into avalanche terrain.

Check the trail report online or at a Parks Canada visitor centre to see if your trail requires avalanche training and equipment. Avalanche risk changes daily—check online for current information.

Trail report: parkscanada.gc.ca/banfftrails

Safety information: parksmountainsafety.ca

Avalanche forecast: avalanche.ca

Winter Closures, Restrictions and Warnings

See maps or pc.gc.ca/banffnp-closures for more information.

- Tunnel Mountain Drive: page 13
- Golf Course Road: page 13
- Legacy Trail: page 13
- West side of the Lake Minnewanka Road: page 14
- Moraine Lake Road: pages 10 and 17
- Bow Valley Parkway: page 11

Top Tips for Winter

• Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.
• Always check the trail report and local weather forecast before you venture out.
• Mountain weather changes quickly. Make sure you are prepared with warm clothing and supplies.
• Wear proper winter footwear. Snow-covered trails can be icy and slippery.
• Bring a headlamp—you never know when you might be delayed.
• Expect winter driving conditions. Drivers should travel based on comfort level and experience.
• Park your vehicle and take Roam public transit: roamtransit.com

Use Ice Cleats

Trails can be icy in the winter. Hiking poles and ice cleats are recommended. Cleats are designed to fit over shoes or boots and can be purchased at the Banff Visitor Centre, 224 Banff Avenue, and most outdoor stores in the town of Banff.
Stopping in the park? You require a national park entry pass.

Entry fees are charged at most national parks and national historic sites, where revenues support visitor services and facilities. This means that every time you visit a park or site you are investing in its future and in a legacy for future generations. Purchase your national park entry pass at any park gate, Parks Canada visitor centre or staffed campground kiosk.

In case of EMERGENCY, call 911 or satellite phone: 403-762-4506.

Cell phone coverage is not reliable throughout the national park.

Alberta Road Report: 511 or 1-855-391-9743 / 511.alberta.ca

British Columbia Road Report: 1-800-550-4997 / drivebc.ca