Jasper National Park

Backcountry

Welcome

Jasper National Park is the largest and most northerly of Canada’s mountain national parks. It protects over 11,000 square kilometres of the Rocky Mountains, a beautiful and dramatic landscape supporting a rich variety of plants and animals. Many of the park’s 100 km of trails were established by early people, on foot and horseback, including Indigenous Peoples, fur traders, explorers and adventurers. This guide serves as an orientation to Jasper’s backcountry trails and will help you start a planning trip that is exciting and safe with a low environmental impact.

I Itinerary

Two-Day/One-Night Trips

Saturday Night Lake Loop

24.2 km loop; elevation gain/loss over entire loop: 380 m/360 m; maximum elevation: 1982 m

Trailhead • Jasper townsite on the Icefields Parkway (93N).

Campsites • Available at the Slide Campground.

Trip summary

This loop trail follows the Slide Creek drainage, which is a good starting point for some of the trail conditions. The Slide Creek drainage is a part of the same range as the Slide Campground, and is a great place to camp in Slide Creek. It’s an easy hike, with some moderate climbs, and the lake provides good fishing opportunities.

Big Bend

13.2 km return trip to Slide Campground; 16 km round-trip; elevation gain/loss over entire loop: 1280 m

Trailhead • Jasper townsite on the Icefields Parkway (93N).

Campsites • None

Trip summary

This hike follows a wide, well-paved trail that ends in a picturesque view of the Slide Creek drainage.

Whirlpool

13.2 km return trip to Slide Campground; 16 km round-trip; maximum elevation: 1200 m

Trailhead • Near the Slide Campground.

Campsites • None

Trip summary

This hike follows a wide, well-paved trail that ends in a picturesque view of the Slide Creek drainage.

Jacques Lake

24.4 km return trip; elevation gain/loss over entire loop: 340 m/370 m; maximum elevation: 1758 m

Trailhead • Near the Slide Campground.

Campsites • None

Trip summary

This hike follows a wide, well-paved trail that ends in a picturesque view of the Slide Creek drainage.

Utopia

12.2 km return trip to Slide Campground; 24 km round-trip; maximum elevation: 1830 m

Trailhead • On the Utopia Road.

Campsites • None

Trip summary

This hike follows a wide, well-paved trail that ends in a picturesque view of the Slide Creek drainage.

Hidden Cove

4.0 km round trip; elevation gain/loss over entire loop: 180 m

Trailhead • Parking lot at the end of the Slide Creek drainage.

Campsites • Hidden Cove

Trip summary

This hike follows a wide, well-paved trail that ends in a picturesque view of the Slide Creek drainage.

Poboktan Creek and Jonas Pass

56 km one way; elevation gain/loss from Sunwapta Station: 1850 m/2044 m; maximum elevation: 2462 m

Trailhead • Sunwapta Station, 7 km from the Jasper townsite on the Icefields Parkway (93N).

Campsites • None

Trip summary

This hike follows a wide, well-paved trail that ends in a picturesque view of the Slide Creek drainage.

Brainless Loop

40 km return trip; elevation gain/loss over entire loop: 2100 m/2244 m; maximum elevation: 2462 m

Trailhead • Backcountry Basecamp on the Icefields Parkway.

Campsites • None

Trip summary

This hike follows a wide, well-paved trail that ends in a picturesque view of the Slide Creek drainage.

Three-Day/Two-Night Trips

Skyline

44 km through Slide Creek; elevation gain/loss from Slide Campground: 1344 m/2190 m; maximum elevation: 2492 m

Trailhead • Parking lot at the end of the Slide Creek drainage.

Campsites • None

Trip summary

This hike follows a wide, well-paved trail that ends in a picturesque view of the Slide Creek drainage.

Recommended direction is from Slide Campground to Slide Campground.

Jonas Pass

35.4 km return trip; elevation gain/loss to Brussels: 1595 m/-2123 m; maximum elevation: 2534 m

Trailhead • Along the Geraldine Road, off Highway 93 North.

Campsites • Jonas Pass Campground

Trip summary

This hike follows a wide, well-paved trail that ends in a picturesque view of the Slide Creek drainage.

Jonas Pass • Jonas Pass Campground

Notes

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Other Ways to Explore

Backcountry Etiquette

• Wildlife.
• Yield to horses.
• Don’t tune out.

Headphones prevent you from hearing approaching wildlife on the trail.

Many backcountry trails in Jasper are natural hot springs before continuing upward through the Paradise Valley. This route passes the old hot spring building and three passes.

Notes

This hike follows a wide, well-paved trail that ends in a picturesque view of the Slide Creek drainage.

Weather

Fishing

A national park fishing license is required. Visit a Parks Canada office for more information.

Backcountry bylaws and lodges

Backcountry shelters and lodges are available to book through Parks Canada.

Random camping

Random camping is permitted in designated areas. Visit a Parks Canada office for more information.

Climbing, mountaineering and glacial travel

Mountaineering permits are required at a Parks Canada information centre for a permit to descend in non-protected areas. Special restrictions may apply. Visit parkscanada.ca for more information.

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