

# Tour the Kootenay Rockies – British Columbia's Mountain Playground

## Golden Triangle Approx 315 km/195 mi

This three-legged tour is often powered by just two legs. The Golden Triangle is well known in the cycling world. But cars also negotiate these mountain passes along a highway. Until the ore gave out, Kootenay, Banff and Yoho National Parks (park pass required). Explore the huge expanse of wetlands at the upper Columbia Valley and at the end of the day, enjoy the friendly hospitality of Golden or the steaming hot springs at Radium.



Let's begin this tour near the northern area of the region in Yoho National Park—Yoho is a stunning 1,310 sq km (507 sq mi) park. The scale of this landscape is simply awesome, which coincidentally, is the meaning of the Cree word 'Yoho'. Sightings include the *Spiral Tunnels*, *Takakkaw Falls*—Canada's second highest, the *Natural Bridge*, *Emerald Lake* and the over 500-million-year-old fossils of the Burgess Shale. The quaint village of Field features an excellent Visitor Centre just off the TransCanada Highway and is also home to artisans whose works can be found in local shops.

Midway between Yoho and Glacier National Park, you're in the heart of Kicking Horse Country. The mountainous town of Golden is situated at the confluence of the Kicking Horse and Columbia Rivers, and offers endless recreational possibilities. Year-round activities can be accessed such as whitewater rafting excitement, serene backcountry lodging, tandem paragliding off Mount 7—Canada's premier launch site, renowned dining—including at the top of a 1,219 metre (4,000 ft) gondola and 50 kilometres (30 mi) of cross-country mountain bike trails on the Moonraker network are available for the adventurous. Wildlife viewing opportunities also abound—the Golden area offers a wolf centre, grizzly bear refuge and the 150 km (90 mi) long Columbia Wetland habitat paralleling Highway #95 south from Golden.

Once you reach the junction of Highway #93 and #95, you will have arrived in the village of Radium Hot Springs. Be sure to watch for the resident herd of highland sheep! Turn northeast to enter *Kootenay National Park* and the *Sindair Canyon*, where the *Radium Hot Springs* mineral pools are nestled. Stop over here for a while to enjoy a therapeutic soak, visit the spa or have lunch—Radium Hot Springs also offers a huge selection of overnight accommodation options.

Continue your travels north on Highway #93 through *Kootenay National Park* there are several points of interest and short hikes from the highway. A few include, *Kootenay Valley Vineyard*, *Vernilion Crossing*, the *Paint Pots* and the *Fireweed Trail* at the *Continental Divide*. Continue on Highway #93 through *Vernilion Pass*, into Alberta and back to Banff National Park and the *TransCanada Highway* #1.



Yoho National Park and Emerald-Triangle hike

## Mountains & Vineyards Approx 1,250 km/775 mi

Discover the extraordinary diversity of southern British Columbia. In a matter of hours, you drive from interior rain forest to true desert and pass through multiple climatic zones in between. Vineyards flourish on warm dry slopes, with the majority located in the Okanagan Valley, which forms the western boundary of this robust and full-bodied tour. The spectacular Rocky Mountain Trench defines the eastern boundary.

Begin your journey in Golden. Set on the banks of the Columbia River, this tranquil town offers endless outdoor adventures. Travel south on Highway #93/995 through the beautiful Columbia Valley to the communities of Invermere, Kimberley and Cranbrook.

The streets of Invermere are lined with quaint shops, arts and craft exhibits, outdoor cafés and restaurants. Just a short walk from downtown is Lake Windermere offering a beach and warm swimming water, parks and picnic areas and various water sports with rentals.

The centre of Kimberley is the cobblestone *Platz*, an open air shopping and dining area, surrounded by flower baskets. Kimberley's mining heritage is a prominent focal point in the community—the *Sullivan Mining Railway* takes visitors to the restored and still functional powerhouse and to an Interpretive Centre through a 227 metre (750 ft) underground tunnel. Kimberley also boasts three fine golf courses, *Cominor Gardens* and many festivals such as the famous *Jollyfest* and *International Old Time Accordion Championships*.

Cranbrook's heritage lies in the romantic age of railroading, which is celebrated in the *Canadian Museum of Rail Travel—Trains Deluxe*. The centrepiece of the train displays is the restored complete set of the *TransCanada Limited*, a million dollar train set built in 1929. The newest addition is the 1906 oak-paneled *Royal Alexandra Hall*. Cranbrook is the commercial centre for the area, enjoy a performance at the *Key City Theatre*, try your luck at the *Casino of the Rockies* or tour heritage homes of historic 'Baker Hill'.

Continue southwest on Crownstee Highway #3, to the town of Creston. Orchard and farm tours are offered, as well as tours of the Columbia Brewing Company, brewers of Kokanee Beer and home of the *Sasquatch*. The Skimmerhorn Winery is locally owned and offers tasting rooms, wine for sale and a bistro for lunch inside or on the patio. Try their speciality—cheese made at the Creston Cheese Company. The *Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area* offers 17,000 acres of wetland habitat complete with viewing towers and guided canoe tours. And, the historical *Creston Museum* will fill out the rest of the story of this charming small town.

Continue west on Highway #3 and pass through *Staglap Provincial Park* before you reach *Salmo*. Drive north on Highway #6 to historic Nelson and be sure to take the self-guided walking tour of 350 restored heritage buildings. Ride *Streetcar #23* along the waterfront or stroll down *Baker Street* and tour the studios and galleries of Canada's finest small art town.

Highway #3A will bring you to *Castlegar*, at the confluence of the Columbia and Kootenay Rivers. Rich in history and Doukhobor culture, enjoy some quiet time at *Zuckerberg Heritage Park* and learn about some local history at the *Doukhobor Discovery Centre* and the *Station Museum*. Castlegar also offers superb recreation facilities such as boating and fly-fishing, golfing and mountain biking. The now abandoned Columbia

## Silvery Slocan Approx 450 km/280 mi

South of Revelstoke the region's largest river, the Columbia, flows into the Arrow Lakes. Today, this sparsely populated area is best known for its numerous hot springs and quaint unique towns. But in the 19th century, the river was the star attraction. Like many waterways in the Kootenay Rockies, the Columbia functioned like a highway. Until the ore gave out, sternwheelers and hastily constructed railways carried miners and supplies from Revelstoke to the rich boomtowns of the Silvery Slocan. The mining boom is long gone, but the boomtowns are still there.

This tour can begin with a beautiful 30 minute ferry ride to Galena Bay. From here, *Halcyon Hot Springs* is just a short distance along Highway #23 and the Upper Arrow Lake. Halcyon offers a place of recreation and wellness in a spectacular setting with four pools, accommodation, RV park, gift shop, restaurant, spa and adventure packages.

Also on the shores of the Arrow Lakes is the village of Nakusp. High in the Selkirk Mountains, *Nakusp Hot Springs* occupies a beautiful setting, with hot and warm pools, cabins and camping, and several nearby hiking trails—trail maps available at the downtown Visitor Centre. Learn about the town's history at the *Nakusp Museum* or attend the largest classic rock festival in the interior of British Columbia, the *Nakusp Music Fest*.

If you are interested in a side-trip, follow Highway #6 west along the Lower Arrow Lake to *Ensignville*. Here are lovely campgrounds along the way, and the tiny village of *Fauquier* is a fun place to fish and golf.

Across from the magnificent *Valhalla* mountain range and New Denver glacier, the small towns of *New Denver* and *Silverton* sit on the unspoiled shore of *Slocan Lake*. You can experience nature's beauty and aspects of the area's history during an ATV tour, or visit the *Nikei Interpretive Memorial Centre* in New Denver to learn the story of the interment of thousands of Canadians of Japanese descent during World War II. The *Silvery Slocan Museum* in New Denver and the *Silverton Historical Society Interpretive Centre*, Silverton's outdoor mining museum, display an interesting selection of memorabilia. Enjoy exploring Silverton's artisan shops, too.

A short drive (or cycle on the Galena Trail) from New Denver, discover *Sandon*, British Columbia's legendary ghost city, and experience the silver paralleling Highway #95 south from Golden.



Kokanee Creek Provincial Park

rush of the 1800s. Historical treasures include the City Hall and Interpretive Centre, Generating Station, Prospector's Pick gift shop and much more. And, no trip to Sandon is complete without a visit to the *Sandon Historical Society's Museum*. The road to the wonderful *Idaho Peak* hiking trail begins at Sandon, as does the *Kaslo & Slocan Railway Historic Trail*—a 3 km (3 mi) trail that takes you by historic mine shafts and artifacts of the past.

The spectacularly beautiful *Slocan Valley* was once a magnet for thousands of hopeful prospectors and miners. Today, the charming towns and villages,

nestled in this valley, enjoy a quiet serenity.

Travel south along Highway #6 towards *Valhalla Provincial Park* and *Slocan Lake* where public boat launches can be found along the way.

At the village of *Slocan*, Highway #6 gives access to *Valhalla Provincial Park*. The park has opportunities for a number of recreational activities including hiking, fishing and wildlife viewing.

*Winlaw* is probably the funkiest little town in the valley. It was named after John B. Winlaw who built a sawmill there around 1990 and like other communities in the valley, Winlaw has a railway heritage. Those traditional roots have nourished an eclectic community which celebrates its diverse lifestyles.

Continue following Highway #6 to the 'Queen City' *Nelson*. Nelson's boom came when two prospectors accidentally discovered a rich silver outcrop. They 'find' attracted a number of miners to the area increasing its population and making *Nelson* the oldest city on the west side of the Kootenay Rockies region. *Nelson* is home to many fine heritage buildings, from elegant mansions to elaborate commercial structures and offers more than just its great heritage. The community's annual *Art Walk* (July & August) showcases the local artisan's incredible work. And, *Tuchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History* celebrates the creativity, the history, the vibe that is *Nelson—Canada's Best Small Art Town*.



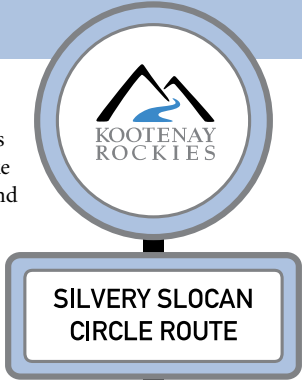
Kaslo's SS Moyie

Carry-on in a northerly direction on Highway #3A along the west arm of *Kootenay Lake* to *Ainsworth Hot Springs* where you'll want to rejuvenate in the hot, natural, mineral springs water. The resort also offers dining options, a lounge, overnight accommodation and massage therapy. Just minutes away, discover the *Coby Caves Provincial Park* by spelunking on a guided underground tour—view a spectacular array of formations such as stalactites, soda straws and waterfalls.

The village of *Kaslo* is set at the highway junction of #31/#31A. The restored *SS Moyie*, the world's oldest intact passenger sternwheeler and proud symbol of *Kaslo's* heritage, sits on the shores of *Kootenay Lake*. *Kaslo's* 19th century buildings have also benefited from this community's commitment to its heritage. If you like music, visit during the  *Jazz Festival* that showcases the world's best on a floating stage each August holiday weekend.

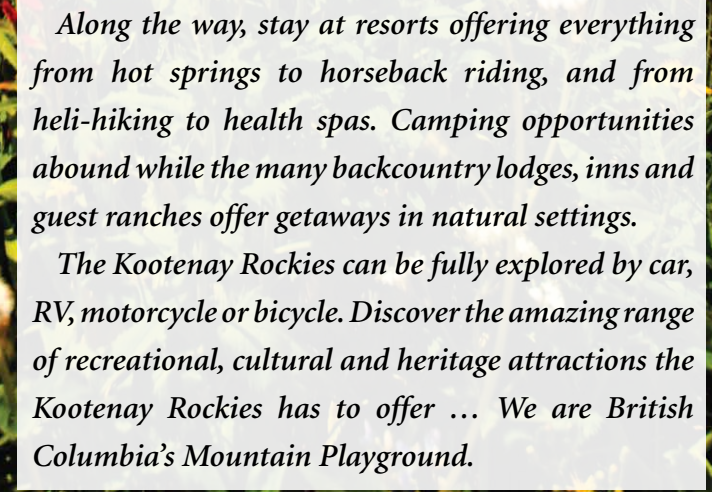
Continue travelling north on Highway #31 along *Kootenay Lake*. *Pass the village of Howser*, and along *Troun Lake* and the *Gar Range Park*, Highway #31 turns onto a gravel road. In the village of *Troun Lake*, check out the *Windsor Hotel* that was established in 1892 for a historical adventure.

Venture into this wilderness area and explore the friendly, small communities for a while before you conclude the *Silvery Slocan* tour.



Whether touring the area is your vacation or you're headed to a specific destination, jump into a suggested Driving Route to make the most of your Kootenay Rockies experience. Expect to be awed! The region features 4 stunning national parks, fascinating Victorian towns and the engaging heritage of a railroad carved out of a wilderness. You'll discover wild rivers that beg to be fished or rafted, and serene lakes that perfectly reflect the exquisite scenery that is all around them. The region is also one of Canada's pre-eminent destinations for golfing and mountain biking.

Along the way, stay at resorts offering everything from hot springs to horseback riding, and from heli-hiking to health spas. Camping opportunities abound while the many backcountry lodges, inns and guest ranches offer getaways in natural settings. The Kootenay Rockies can be fully explored by car, RV, motorcycle or bicycle. Discover the amazing range of recreational, cultural and heritage attractions the Kootenay Rockies has to offer ... We are British Columbia's Mountain Playground.



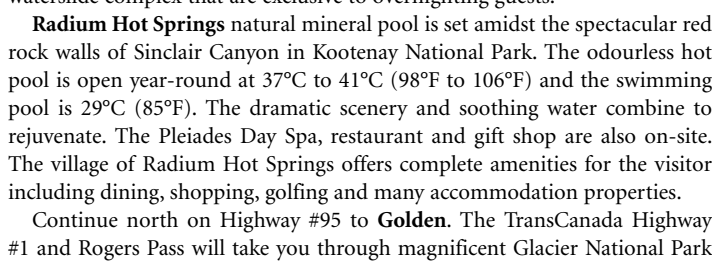
## Hot Springs Approx 800 km/500 mi

Hot springs occur naturally in the Kootenay Rockies and the region boasts six hot springs resorts—Ainsworth, Canyon, Fairmont, Halcyon, Nakusp and Radium Hot Springs—each located in the midst of beautiful mountainous scenery. If you prefer a wilderness setting, the region also includes a number of backcountry pools, such as *Lussier Hot Springs*. Enjoy the calm and rejuvenating waters.

The beautiful city of *Kelowna*, set alongside the grand *Okanagan Lake*, plays host to numerous outdoor activities and events, entertainment and the Arts. The city also has a number of beautiful lakeside resorts and plenty of sandy public beaches!

Continue north on Highway #97 towards *Vernon*. The beautiful landscape surrounding *Vernon* is complemented by the wide range of activities it offers. Check out the *O'Reilly Historical Ranch*—home to the first pioneer families to the valley and highlights the beginning of ranching in the area. While *Armstrong* is famous for its cheese, vast farmlands, fresh produce and their weekly farmers market held April to October, *Enderby* offers great golf and numerous lakes, including *Mara Lake* that offers terrific canoeing and camping opportunities. Highway #97A will bring you to the town of *Siemans* and the *Shuswap Lake* area. You might enjoy a houseboating cruise here on *Shuswap Lake*. It offers 1,000 km (620 mi) of shoreline which also provides a vast area to swim, camp, fish, hike and bike.

The *TransCanada Highway* #1 will lead you to historic *Craigellachie* famous for the point where the 'last spike' was driven, joining the western part of the Canadian Pacific Railway to the segment built from the east. And, just moments further east on Highway #1 is *The Enchanted Forest*, *Skytrek Adventure Park* and *Crazy Creek Waterfalls and Suspension Bridge*—all are excellent attractions and worthwhile stops.



Rogers Pass Discovery Centre

Before you reach the city of *Revelstoke*, the unique community of *Three Valley* combines a large modern resort with a historic ghost town, which allows visitors to step back in history to relive the colourful pioneer days of the late 1800s.

The railway city of *Revelstoke* is situated at the highway junction #1 and #23. With *Mount Revelstoke National Park* at its city limits, *Revelstoke* enjoys a truly dramatic mountain setting. Downtown, heritage buildings are clustered around *Griszly Plaza*, a venue for live music on summer evenings. Pick up a *Heritage Tour* brochure from the Visitor Centre and learn about its fascinating history. Visit *Revelstoke's* excellent museums, take a tour of *BC Hydro's* colossal *Revelstoke Dam* or play a round of golf at the beautiful riverside course.

You may like to spend some extra time exploring *Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks*. Watch for signs to the *Mauldros in the Sky* Parkway and drive to within 2 kilometres (1 mi) of the summit. Here, you find rare old-growth rainforest, containing cedar trees that are 800 years old in *Mount Revelstoke National Park*, with easy access on interpretive boardwalk trails. With over 400 glaciers covering one-tenth of its area, *Glacier National Park* is a stunning setting for some fascinating mountaineering history. The *Rogers Pass Discovery Centre* is filled with memorabilia and photographs from this romantic era.

One of British Columbia's great mountain crossings, *Rogers Pass*, takes you back to the town of *Golden*.

## Rockies & Ranchlands Approx 1,025 km/635 mi

This tour reveals the character of both sides of the famous Canadian Rockies. Tour the cowboy country of the Alberta foothills and experience the subtle beauty of the great Canadian prairies. Cross the Great Divide and you are in a different world...forests, towering peaks and glaciers.

Starting in *Calgary*, head south on Highway #22 which is known as the *Cowboy Trail* and is the path for western vacations and adventures as you travel through the high ranching country of the Alberta prairie. En route is *Spruce Meadows*, voted the #1 Horse Show Jumping facility in the world and the communities of *Black Diamond* and *Turner Valley*. *Turner Valley* is the birthplace of Alberta's oil and gas industry—the site of the 1914 *Dingman #1 Well* that began *Calgary's* first oil boom.

Continue south from *Black Diamond* to *Longview* and the *Bar U Ranch National Historic Site* (13 km/8 mi south of Longview). The drive through the south is through rolling ranchlands to the south end of the *Chain Lakes*. Turn east on Road #533 to Highway #2 and the community of *Nanton*, which is well known for its antique, gift and specialty shops. En route to *Fort Macleod* (west on Highway #785) is a fascinating Native heritage site, *Head-Smashed-in-Buffalo-Jump*. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is one of the oldest, largest and best-preserved buffalo jumps across the Western Plains. Prior to departing *Fort Macleod*, be sure to visit the *Fort Museum*. Then continue south to *Cardston* where the *Remington Game Museum* is located—North America's largest museum of horse-drawn transportation. From *Cardston*, it's a short 45-minute drive to *Waterton Lakes National Park*. This beautiful park is a nature enthusiast's and photographer's paradise. There's a variety of activities to enjoy such as the *Waterton Shoreline Cruise*, *Red Rock Canyon* and *Cameron Falls*.

Another perfect place to stop along the way is *Invermere*—browse the quaint downtown, play a round of golf, enjoy lunch by the lake and take in a concert or theatrical performance at the *Pynelegs Cultural Centre*. And, *Panorama Mountain Village* offers the ultimate in outdoor recreation, from guided nature walks to ATV tours, along with a complete selection of accommodation properties, just a short distance from *Invermere*.



Fort Steele Heritage Town

Highway #6 north from *Waterton Lakes* takes you to *Pincher Creek* and the *Kootenai Bown Pioneer Village*—a turn of the 19th century historic village. Then head west on Highway #3. Be sure to stop at the *Frank Slide Interpretive Centre* in the *Crowsnest Pass* where visitors can explore ruins of the original coal mining industry that was once the lifeblood of the valley and discover the stories behind the *Frank Slide*.

As you enter the province of British Columbia and *Sparwood*, it's impossible to miss the town's most famous visitor attraction, *Painted in Industrial Green* is the world's largest tandem axle dump truck, the *Texas Titan*. This, the ultimate in monster trucks, was formerly used in the large open pit mine about the town. Tours of this active mine are available throughout the summer. A quick side trip north on Highway #43 will take you to *Elkford* which is 'Wild at heart'. This area has one of the largest bighorn sheep populations on the continent and is also home to *Tecx Coal*—offering free tours of the open pit mine operations on Saturdays during the summer. Close to town, enjoy the easy 45-minute hike to a lookout above *Josphine Falls* or a round of golf. For the more adventurous, travel further north to the *Elk Lakes Provincial Park*. *Fernie* has a beautiful mountainous setting and Victorian architecture.

Pick up a *Heritage Walking Tour* brochure at the Visitor Centre and take a stroll around town. *Fernie* is also famous for its world-class fly-fishing, mountain biking and hiking in the stunning *Lizard Range*. Take a side trip from the highway village of *Elko* to *Lake Kooamus* where sandy beaches are the hallmark of this large lake and houseboating is very popular. Along route to *Fort Steele*, the *Ball River* turnoff will lead you to the *Kootenay Trout Hatchery*. Take a self-guided tour of the extensive interpretive area, view trophy sized trout in the moat and watch turtles, fish and water insects in the pond.

**Fort Steele Heritage Town** is a restored boomtown of the 1890s, where colourful characters from the past entertain visitors on the street and period tradesman present fascinating demonstrations in their shops. Tour the town by horse drawn wagon, catch a ride on the steam train, do a little golf punning and enjoy hilarious comedy shows at the *Wild Horse Theatre*. Spring and fall *Gossip Tours* are also a hit, as are their many year-round special events. Continue your travels north toward *Radium Hot Springs*—Highway #93/995 will lead you by *Wasu Lake* where sandy beaches and warm water awaits you. You also have the option of visiting the *Lussier Hot Springs* in *Whiteswan Lake Provincial Park* and *Fairmont Hot Springs*.

Another perfect place to stop along the way is *Invermere*—browse the quaint downtown, play a round of golf, enjoy lunch by the lake and take in a concert or theatrical performance at the *Pynelegs Cultural Centre*. And, *Panorama Mountain Village* offers the ultimate in outdoor recreation, from guided nature walks to ATV tours, along with a complete selection of accommodation properties, just a short distance from *Invermere*.



Mountain Goats

Once you're back on Highway #93/995, the village of *Radium Hot Springs* Visitor Centre offers a *Cultures in Contact Exhibit*. It provides a historical overview of the *Ktunaxa Nation people's* past, present and future.

At *Pincher Creek*, take Highway #6 south to *Waterton*, *Waterton Village* in the heart of *Waterton Lakes National Park* and a vibrant centre offering activities, lodging and dining. The park is all about beauty and adventure; it's a rare gem tucked in the Rocky Mountains. Discover the lakes, hikes, wildlife, heritage and culture. *Waterton* will grab hold of your memory and never let go.

This Loop may continue along Highway #5 to *Cardston* or south along Highway #17 and #89, and across the international border again to the village of *Saint Mary*.

The *Going-to-the-Sun Road* is a spectacular 84 km (52 mi) paved two-lane highway that bisects *Glacier National Park* east and west. It spans the width of the park, crossing the *Continental Divide* at 2,000 m (6,646 ft) high *Logan Pass*. Scenic viewpoints line the road and it's well worth travelling this road in each direction—the views are very different and equally stunning. Season of operation for this road is June to early-fall and there are vehicle size restrictions.

The route along the perimeter of the park on Highway #2 through *East and West Glacier Park* is also a great way to wrap up this tour. Located about half way in between these villages is *Goat Lick Crossings* an exposed riverbank where mountain goats come to lick the mineral-laden cliffs.

Waterfront-Elk Peak Park Loop

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## Waterton-Glacier Loop Approx 725 km/450 mi

A grand loop drive or bicycle ride will take you to two national parks, over the Continental Divide and into some great communities in Alberta, British Columbia and Idaho. Year-round, experience a tremendous diversity of scenery, wildlife and history. And during the summer months, you have the option of exploring the *Going-to-the-Sun Road* in *Glacier National Park* (U.S.).

If you are a U.S. visitor travelling from the south, you can begin your tour at *Columbia Falls* with a stop at *Montana Free Traders* for a cup of their famous coffee. Then travel on to *Whitefish*. Heading north along Highway #93, pass through the *Flathead and Kootenai National Forests*, *Stillwater State Forest*, then by two beautiful lakes—*Dickey* and *Murphy*.

Nearing *Canada*, the community of *Eureka* in the *Tobacco River Valley* offers wonderful walks by the river and *Café Jay*—stop for a delicious old-time milkshake. Highway #93 continues across the U.S./Canada border. Remember that you need a passport card or book to travel between countries.

Once in *Canada*, drive through the *Ktunaxa Nation Tabacco Plains Reserve* and over the deep *Elk River* canyon. At the Highway #3/993 junction is the tiny community of *Elko*. Turn east onto Highway #3 toward *Fernie*. As you approach *Fernie*, watch for *Morrison Road* and head south across a bridge over the *Elk River*. Here, find a short and lovely nature hike into an old-growth forest of black cottonwoods and western red cedar.

The city of *Fernie* is a multi-faceted community that's part mining town, part ski resort. *Fernie* is in the middle of North America's most productive grizzly bear habitat. In the downtown, discover the historical, architectural and commercial charms of a vibrant community. The town of *Sparwood* is a short drive north of *Fernie*. On display at *Sparwood* is the world's largest tandem axle dump truck, a larger-than-life mural tour depicting life as it used to be and underground mining artifacts.

Tours of *Elk Valley Coal's* *Fording River* and *Elkview* coal mines take place throughout the summer from the Visitor Centres in *Elkford* and *Sparwood*. The area's mining heritage continues as you drive east across the *Crowsnest Pass*. Stretch your legs at *Summit Lake* before entering the province of *Alberta*.

At *Pincher Creek*, take Highway #6 south to *Waterton*, *Waterton Village* in the heart of *Waterton Lakes National Park* and a vibrant centre offering activities, lodging and dining. The park is all about beauty and adventure; it's a rare gem tucked in the Rocky Mountains. Discover the lakes, hikes, wildlife, heritage and culture. *Waterton* will grab hold of your memory and never let go.

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