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Travel to the Kootenay Rockies, the region that borders Banff to the west and south, for the day or a multi-day vacation. Get a thrill from motorized adventures restricted in the national parks like ATV riding and lift-assisted downhill mountain biking; or visit unique sites like the Burgess Shale fossil beds, Columbia River Wetlands and Fort Steele Heritage Town.

Maximize your summer fun; whitewater rafting on the Kicking Horse and Elk rivers is popular, as are the area's many excellent golf courses. Relax in the soothing waters of Radium and Fairmont hot springs, and wander quaint towns that extend a warm welcome to visitors.



BANFF TO GOLDEN 139 km/86 mi

YOHO NATIONAL PARK Take the Trans-Canada Hwy west of Lake Louise. Crest the Continental Divide and descend into the Yoho National Park wilderness (1-250-343-6783).

Sights & Hikes

- **Lake O'Hara**, 11 km/6.8 mi from Hwy 1, offers stunning hikes; try Lake Oesa day hike. Access is only by bus (June 19-Oct 4); call 250-343-6433 (camping only) or 1-877-737-3783 (day use only) early to reserve an 8:30 or 10:30 am ride.
- **Spiral Tunnels** roadside stop offers a look at the spiraling railway cut into Mount Ogden and Cathedral Mountain; the reduced rail gradient lets trains ease into the valley.
- **Takakkaw Falls** is one of Canada's highest at 384 m/1,260 ft. Access is via Yoho Valley Rd.
- **Town of Field**, 30 km/19 mi from Lake Louise, offers food, lodging and the Parks Canada Visitor Centre with a small fossil display.
- **Burgess Shale World Heritage Site** quarries contain 500-million-year-old invertebrate fossils. Access is by tour only, 1-800-343-3006.
- **Emerald Lake** is reached via Emerald Lake Rd; see the Natural Rock Bridge en route. A 5-km/3-mi trail circles the lake; also take the short walk to Hamilton Falls. Dine or rent boats at Emerald Lake Lodge, 1-800-663-6336.
- **Wapta Falls**, 23 km/14 mi west of Field, is worth the 30-minute access hike for its impressive

30-m/98-ft height, 150-m/490-ft width and impressive Ottortail Range backdrop.

- **Red Adirondack Chairs** are at viewpoints including Takakkaw Falls and Yoho Lake (access is via a moderate 4-km hike starting at the south end of the Takakkaw Falls parking lot).

TOWN OF GOLDEN Surrounded by the Canadian Rockies, Selkirk and Purcell mountain ranges, and sitting at the confluence of the Kicking Horse and Columbia rivers, Golden (1-800-622-4653) is 83 km/52 mi west of Lake Louise. Discover a history steeped in the railway, logging and the Swiss Guides who pioneered tourist forays into the Rockies. With full amenities, and close to Yoho and Glacier national parks, Golden is a great staging area for rafting, hiking, biking, sightseeing, backcountry adventure and family activities.

Sights to See

- **Kicking Horse Pedestrian Bridge**, downtown, is North America's longest freestanding timber-frame river crossing. Watch for free summer concerts and the farmers' market Wednesdays and Saturdays at adjacent Spirit Square.
- **Golden Museum & Archives** (1-250-344-5169) interprets early days through exhibits on Swiss Guides, the first Sikh people, geographer David Thompson and Columbia River riverboats.
- **Northern Lights Wildlife Wolf Centre** promotes

awareness and conservation. See (and photograph) nine resident wolves. Tours are offered year-round; the Walk with the Wolves photo tour is a favourite.

- **Kicking Horse Mountain Resort** (1-866-754-5425), 14 km/8 mi from town, offers the world's largest grizzly bear refuge for resident 'Boo' (with interpretive tours), and a sightseeing gondola that rises to Eagle Eye restaurant (Canada's highest).
- **The World's Largest Paddle** (1-888-244-7117), 26 km south of town, is proportionally correct, scaled up 13 times and stands over 60 feet.

Outdoor Activities

- **Columbia Wetlands** connects Golden with Invermere, and at 15,070 hectares is one of North America's longest and most biologically rich wetlands. Eco-tours introduce visitors to its diverse population of plants, birds, fish and mammals; or rent a boat for a self-guided paddle trip.
- **Kicking Horse Mountain Resort** (1-866-754-5425) has lift-assisted downhill mountain biking and summit hiking trails. There are interpretive tours of the Grizzly Bear Refuge where 'Boo' resides. New this summer is guided Via Ferrata climbing. All abilities can tackle Terminator Peak's north face on two fixed anchor custom courses and a suspension bridge.
- **Mount 7** at 1,200 m/3,937 ft is accessible by road. Enjoy the Columbia Valley view and watch paragliders and mountain bikers.
- **Fishing** at local lakes and streams offers cut-throat, brook and rainbow trout, kokanee salmon

and smallmouth bass. At the Municipal Campground (1-866-538-6625) you can buy permits and lures; they recommend fishing guides.

- **The Rotary Trails** for pedestrians and cyclists run parallel to the Kicking Horse River, then through residential areas and past Reflection Lake.
- **Moonraker Bike Trails** and Mountain Shadows Trail System offer over 100 km of maintained cross-country cycling routes that can be accessed from downtown (rent at local stores).
- **Thompson Falls** on the Blaeberry River is 28 km/17 mi northwest of Golden along gravel roads. Find its crystal waters on the 1.4-km/.9-mi Thompson Falls Trail hiking loop.
- **Kicking Horse Whitewater Rafting** (outfitters p 76) ranges from scenic family-friendly Upper Canyon tours to maximum thrills on famous class four rapids during Lower Canyon runs. You can also tackle the Kicking Horse and other rivers on a guided SUP or inflatable kayak tour.
- **ATV Quad Tours** (outfitters p 65) are an adrenaline-charged way to get into the backcountry.
- **Climbing and Mountaineering** options range from hiring an ACMG certified local guide and getting into the famous mountains of Rogers Pass or Bugaboo National Park, or starting with a learn-to-climb course at the Dogtooth indoor climbing gym (1-250-344-6444).
- **Tandem Paragliding and Skydiving** (250-272-9384) boasts a spectacular bird's eye view.
- **Golden Golf Club** (1-866-727-7222) offers two layouts (Newis front 9/Les Furber back 9) situated

PHOTOS: ANDREW PENNER



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along the Columbia River, between the Rocky and Purcell mountain ranges.

Golden Events

Delbert Johnson Memorial Barrel Jackpot (May 30-31), Summer Kicks (June-Aug), Kicking Horse Cup Bike Race (June 20-21), Canada Day Celebrations (July 1), Canadian National Hang Gliding Championships (July 12-18), Willi Muller Hang Gliding & Paragliding Championships (July 24-Aug 3), Western Open BC Cup Bike Race (July 26), Golden Sound Festival (Aug 21-22), Ultra 3 Stage Running Race (Sept 18-20).

GLACIER NATIONAL PARK Continue west on Hwy 1 to Glacier National Park and Rogers Pass, named for Albert Bowman Rogers' expedition to find passage through "impenetrable peaks" of the Selkirk Mountains.

Sights & Activities

- **Rogers Pass Discovery Centre** (1-250-837-7500) offers interpretation, hikes and picnics.
- **A.O. Wheeler Hut** and Asulkan Cabin are back-country cabins operated by the Alpine Club of Canada (403-678-3200 ext 0).

BANFF TO CRANBROOK 278 km/173 mi

KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK South off Hwy 1 between Banff and Lake Louise, the Banff-Windermere Hwy 93S rises to the BC border, descends into Kootenay National Park and ends at Radium Hot Springs. Amongst the mountain scenery and between the fast flowing Vermilion and Kootenay rivers are backpacking routes and several short hikes (250-347-9505).

Sights & Activities

- **A Driving Tour App** called Kootenay Explora is new this year, available on iTunes and Google Play. Augmented reality and stories from Parks Canada staff allow visitors to hear from fire specialists, and park wardens and biologists.
- **Red Adirondack Chairs** are at viewpoints including Marble Canyon Trail near the fourth bridge (details below) and Juniper Trail (p 34).
- **Burgess Shale** fossils in the Stanley Glacier area can be viewed on a guided Parks Canada hike; reserve at 1-877-737-3783.
- **Kootenay Valley Viewpoint** at the height-of-land south of Settler Rd has impressive vistas.
- **Fireweed Loop** (.8 km/.5 mi) explores a 1968 fire and regenerating forest.
- **Marble Canyon** (.8 km/.5 mi) boasts unique polished rock formations and seven footbridges over the 40-m/131-ft deep gorge where raging Tokumm Creek flows.



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- **Paint Pots** (1.5 km/.9 mi) trail leads to colourful springs and ochre beds used by First Nations.
- **Redstreak Campground** offers oTENTik tent-cabins to Oct 12. Each oTENTik sleeps six and provides a getaway with comforts like a real bed. Reserve at reservation.parkscanada.gc.ca.

RADIUM & INVERMERE Exit Kootenay National Park through the red rocks of Sinclair Canyon to reach the Village of Radium Hot Springs (Visitor Centre 1-888-347-9331), 139 km/86 mi from Banff at the crossroads of Hwys 93 and 93/95. Various accommodation styles, shops and restaurants line Radium's streets where bighorn sheep often wander. Fourteen km/9 mi south of Radium via Hwy 93/95 is Invermere on the Lake (1-250-342-2844), situated on Lake Windermere. Invermere has a vibrant arts scene with several galleries.

Outdoor Activities

- **Radium Hot Springs** Mineral Pools are set amongst cliffs with a huge hot pool, 25-metre cool pool, plunge pool and spa.
- **Golfing Options (Radium)** include the Radium and Springs courses (1-800-667-6444) in the village. Eight championship courses line the Columbia Valley Golf Trail, plus there are many nine-hole par three courses in the valley.
- **Golfing Options (Invermere)** include Eagle Ranch (1-877-877-3889), 18 holes perched along bluffs overlooking the Columbia River and Rocky and Purcell mountains; enjoy Rustica Steakhouse or Trader's Lounge after your round. Copper Point and the Ridge Courses (1-877-418-4653) also offer championship golf.
- **Backcountry Activities** near Radium include fishing, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, camping, canoeing and kayaking. Backcountry travel by horse is permitted. ATV/dirt bike riders should contact recreation sites and Trails BC at trailsbc.ca.
- **Hiking** trails are abundant; some require Kootenay National Park passes. Olive Lake (.5 km/.3 mi) boardwalk has bronze bear paw, tree bark and fish displays. Valley View (1.8 km /1.1 mi) is a Douglas fir-lined trail from Redstreak Campground. Juniper Trail (3.2 km/2 mi) along swift flowing Sinclair Creek connects the town to the hot springs.
- **Biking** trails (including cross-country and single-track) are diverse for cyclists of all abilities. Tricks and air are found at Radium Pump & Jump Track. Get the Columbia Valley Cycling Society's map at the Radium Visitor Centre.
- **Kinsmen Beach** and James Chabot Park in Invermere have sand beaches and shallow swimming areas ideal for kids. Boat rental options include jet ski, water ski and wakeboard boats, fishing and peddle boats, kayaks and canoes.

PANORAMA MOUNTAIN RESORT

(1-800-663-2929) is 18 km/11 mi west of Invermere. Mile 1 sightseeing chairlift accesses hiking and downhill mountain biking trails. Greywolf Golf Course is a scenic 18-hole course; enjoy mini golf at Panorama's Fun Zone in the Upper Village. Paved hiking and bike trails run alongside Toby Creek, popular for whitewater rafting and kayaking. ATV tours are offered nearby.

FAIRMONT HOT SPRINGS

is home to Canada's largest natural mineral hot springs complex and located 20 km/12 mi south of Invermere. Golf at the 18-hole Mountainside and Riverside golf courses, or family-friendly Creekside Par 3 golf course (1-800-663-4979).

CITY OF KIMBERLEY

Bustling with activity during summer, the resort community of Kimberley (1-866-431-7669) is 84 km/52 mi south of Fairmont via Hwy 93/95 and 95A; a four-hour drive from Calgary. Kimberley has eight golf courses within a half-hour drive from downtown, hiking and biking trails, river rafting, sightseeing and dining.

Sights to See

- **The Platzl** outdoor pedestrian area has shops, cafes, a museum, an indoor climbing wall, water fountains and Canada's largest freestanding cuckoo clock.
- **Cominco Gardens** boasts 45,000 flowers and trees; it's popular for a picnic or stroll.
- **Kimberley's Underground Mining Railway** (1-250-427-0022) travels through Mark Creek valley and into the mine. Learn about miners' life and the history of Kimberley and the Sullivan Mine.
- **St. Mary's 100-Foot Waterfall** is a 10-minute walk from the road. Start at the wooden bridge over Mark Creek in Marysville.

Outdoor Activities

- **Hike and Bike** within city limits at the Kimberley Nature Park and Lois Creek Trails. Hiking in the Purcell and Rocky mountains includes easy strolls, walks to waterfalls and multi-day treks. The Northstar Rails to Trails 25-km paved multi-use trail that runs from Kimberley to Cranbrook offers gentle grades (and superb cycling) in both directions.
- **Swimming, Kayaking and Waterskiing** are popular at Wasa Lake (kayak rentals available from Kimberley Rafting Co., 1-250-427-7728). The Kimberley Aquatic Centre has a 25-metre lap pool, leisure pool and competition diving boards. There's also a lazy river, T-cup spray and vortex. Enjoy the hot tub, steam room and poolside viewing terrace.
- **Fishing** is prime at nearby Premier Lake; local rivers also offer fly-fishing for cutthroat, rainbow and bull trout. Guided trips are available (1-800-667-2311).
- **Golf** includes 18-hole and 9-hole Bootleg Gap



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Golf Course (1-877-427-7077), 18-hole Kimberley Golf Course (1-877-427-4161) and 18-hole Trickle Creek Golf Resort (1-800-258-7669). Try 18-hole wheelchair accessible putting at the Riverside Campground (1-877-999-2929).

- **Kimberley Skate Park** offers skateboarding, rollerblading, BMXing and mountain biking.

Kimberley Events

Round the Mountain (June 21), *Symphony on the Mountain* (July 4), *Julyfest* (July 17-19), *Kimberley Kaleidoscope* (Aug 1-8). Daylong celebrations downtown are the first Sat of each month, June to Oct.

CITY OF CRANBROOK The Kootenay Rockies' largest city, Cranbrook (1-800-728-2726) is 30 km/19 mi south of Kimberley and was founded over a century ago following the arrival of the Crownsnest Railway.

Sights & Activities

- **St. Eugene Golf Resort & Casino** features an 18-hole course (1-877-417-3133) and the only casino in the Kootenays. Its history as a residential school for Aboriginal children is honoured at the resort's Interpretive Centre with Ktunaxa Nation stories, artifacts and handcrafts.
- **Fort Steele Heritage Town** (1-250-426-7352) recreates pioneer life as it was during the late 1800s gold rush, railway and lumbering days. See the Wild Horse Theatre, steam train and horse drawn carriage rides, and blacksmith and gold panning demonstrations.
- **The Cranbrook History Centre** – Featuring the Canadian Museum of Rail Travel (1-250-489-3918) showcases restored historic train cars and the beautiful 1906 Royal Alexandra Hall.
- **Kootenay Trout Hatchery** (1-250-429-3214) has exhibits and a kids' fishing pond and moat with trophy-size trout. Open year-round, guided tours plus activities run May to Aug.

- **Paved Cycling** routes (over 40 km) include the North Star Trail that connects Cranbrook and Kimberley along a former rail line.
- **Outdoor Activities** in the area include hiking, boating, hunting, cycling and fishing.

CRANBROOK TO FERNIE

CITY OF FERNIE (1-877-933-7643) is a beautiful drive along Hwy 3, 87 km/54 mi east of Cranbrook. This picturesque mountain town draws visitors with its scenery, outdoor adventures for the whole family and charming historic downtown. Founded in 1898, Fernie was established by mining and forestry interests. This town is full of character; stroll its park trails along the Elk River and visit the grand 1909 courthouse.

Sights to See

- **Clawhammer Letterpress & Gallery** (1-778-519-5010) is a working downtown Fernie letterpress studio and retail fine art gallery that employs century-old equipment for design and printing.
- **Fernie's Heritage Buildings & Walking Tour** (1-250-423-7016) showcases the courthouse, city hall, heritage library, and historic downtown.
- **Fernie Brewing Company** (1-250-423-7797) offers tours of their microbrewery with mill room, mash tun, brew kettle and fermentation tanks. Learn about the brewing process, and taste the delicious finished product.
- **Beanpod Artisan Chocolate** (1-778-519-5008) is one of the few places in the world where you can watch as chocolate is made from rare fine flavoured cacao beans on century-old machines.
- **Fernie Museum** (1-250-423-7016) interprets the city's hardships and achievements over a century. The exhibit *This Is Our Fernie* explores events that have shaped Fernie, including the legend of a curse, fires that destroyed the town and mining disasters that took fathers and sons.

PHOTOS: DAVE HEATH



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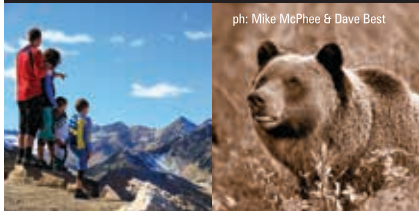


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Outdoor Activities

- **Fernie Alpine Resort** (1-877-333-2339) summer activities run late June to early Sept. Ride the Lift Access Mountain Bike Park, take a scenic chairlift trip to Lost Boys Café for lunch, challenge the family at the Aerial Playground and Rippin' Zipline, or join Nature Bob on a guided hike.
- **Island Lake Lodge** (1-888-422-8754) boasts towering peaks, pristine old growth forests, a lovely lake and three beautiful log lodges. Enjoy easy to advanced hiking, fine dining in the lodge or on the deck, a day at the spa or a canoe around the lake. Visit for the day or stay the night.
- **Fernie Golf & Country Club** (1-250-423-7773) par-70 features strategically placed water and sand hazards, along with spectacular views.
- **Ancient Cottonwood Trail**, along a short Elk River trail 15 minutes west of Fernie, boasts 400-year old black Cottonwood trees (the world's biggest) and stunning old-growth western red cedars. Watch for wildlife like endangered western screech owls and songbirds while you walk.
- **Fly Fishing** is world-class in this renowned 'dry-fly' fishing destination. The Elk River is full of westlope cutthroat trout and bull trout; use a drift boat or walk and wade this spectacular river. Guide services are available.
- **Hiking Trails** range from city riverside paths to alpine routes above treeline and everything in between. Over 60 trails offer choices for all ages and fitness levels.
- **Whitewater Rafting** companies offer full day adrenaline-charged trips on the lower Elk River or Bull River, and half day family friendly floats.
- **Mountain Biking** options abound on over 92 trails with a range of big descents, flowy downhill, endurance uphill, cross-country routes and family friendly loops. Start from town.

Fernie Events

Yoga Retreat at Island Lake Lodge (June 16-19), Fernie Alpine Resort Summer Season (June 27-Sept 6), Roll & Sole Trails Festival (June 27-28), Fernie 3 Mountain Bike Race (June 27-29), Canada Day Party (July 1), Lungbuster Hill Climb - Bike or Run (July 11), Highline 100 Road Ride (Aug 8), Wapiti Indie Music Festival (Aug 7-8), BC Cup Downhill Mountain Bike Race (Aug 28-30), WAM BAM Dirt Jump Jam (Sept 5), Tears & Gears Run & Bike Race (Sept 5), Lion's Demo Derby (Sept 6).



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