

# rattling round THE ROCKIES



Moraine Lake



*Just 130 years ago the windswept peaks and glimmering lakes of Canada's Rocky Mountains were only experienced by aboriginal communities and itinerant trappers. In 1885 the Canadian Pacific Railway opened up this wonderful wilderness to a wider world and Canada's greatest secret was out. Jane Robinson says that some highlights just can't be missed but also suggests other, less visited attractions.*

## Banff

Banff National Park has it all. You can ride the cable car to the top of Sulphur Mountain for a 360 degree view of the surrounding landscape or you can descend to the depths to soak in natural hot springs. Take time to visit Johnstone Canyon where the rushing water crashes down two stunning waterfalls: a recently upgraded hiking trail tracks fascinating rock formations.

## Jasper

Jasper buzzes with energy, a real centre for outdoor activities. Rent bicycles for easy rides amongst mountain streams and meadows, or take a hike to catch glimpses of elk and bighorn sheep. The cable car up Whistler Mountain gives an easy overview of this splendid park while Mount Edith Cavell has tremendous views of Angel Glacier. Here, I love taking a picnic to explore Maligne Canyon, where torrents of water churn between magnificent limestone walls.

## Lake Louise

In Canada's oldest National Park, Lake Louise is the undisputed gem. The turquoise blue waters are simply stunning. Take a canoe on to the lake to view Victoria Glacier at close quarters or hike to Lake Agnes Teahouse: their chocolate cakes are the best in Canada. For the more adventurous, the hike to the Plain of Six Glaciers – with its beehive rock formations – is unforgettable.

## Fernie

Tucked away in a narrow valley in the southeast corner of the Canadian Rockies, the mountain community of Fernie has a long and colourful history manifested in abandoned mines and community museums. In the winter it is packed with savvy skiers but the summer months open up excellent hikes along the Elk Valley, with its old-growth cedar forests, alpine meadows and high mountain peaks. Back in town, museums and abandoned mines let you step back in time through this frontier town's unique and colourful history.



Flight-seeing over the Kootenay Rockies



Grizzly bear viewing in the mountains



Canoes at Emerald Lake, Yoho National Park

## Yoho National Park

In the shadow of the Great Divide, this National Park is named after the Cree expression meaning 'place of awe and wonder'. Here the UNESCO World Heritage site of the Burgess Shales comprises some of the oldest fossil beds in the world, a place where ancient sealife, flora and fauna is immortalized in stone. Takakkaw Falls is the third highest waterfall in Canada with wonderful hikes all the way down to its base; the Kicking Horse River provides excellent whitewater rafting whilst beautiful trails reach around Emerald Lake to a rocky amphitheatre of hanging glaciers and avalanche paths.

## Kootenay National Park

Kootenay National Park contains glacier-clad peaks in the north and dry, cactus-bearing slopes to the south. Follow logging trails into the heart of this reserve to the Cross River Cabins, where cosy heritage cabins and teepees give easy access to some of the world's most spectacular alpine hikes. There are trails for all ages and abilities, the crystal-clear waters of the Kootenay River offer world-class canoeing and rafting and a resident First Nations Elder, Sequoyah Trueblood, enriches the experience with tales of Canada's Aboriginal heritage.

## And for something a little different...

Heli-hiking is a spectacular way to explore the Rockies. Accommodation in a remote Alpine lodge is comfortable and fun, with tasty food, roaring fires at night and great company, but the main adventures are through the day. Thrilling helicopter flights reach lush and inaccessible hanging valleys and windswept mountain ridges, allowing you to pack an unimaginable variety of scenery and terrain into just a three-day stay. Walking routes are tailored to match your specific age and ability, with professional walking guides sharing their in-depth knowledge of your surroundings.

In my experience, the best way to visit the Rockies is to strike the right balance. You have to see the established favourites, but do take the time to explore the lesser-known gems, and there are plenty of them just waiting to be discovered.

**Jane Robinson**  
Canada Specialist



A Heli-hiking Lodge

## FACT FILE

A two week trip to the Rocky Mountains, driving from Calgary to Vancouver, starts from £2,500 per person including return flights and car hire. For further details please contact our Canada specialists on 01993 838 700.



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