

GO GREEN! Rather than printing these notes, we suggest saving this PDF file on your smartphone. Not only is it more environmentally friendly, but it also means these notes are always at hand!

Big West Accommodated

10 days/9 nights

Hold onto your toques for the Big West tour, a 10 day journey into some of the most beautiful scenery in Western Canada! We'll explore the stunning Canadian Rockies and the alpine beauty of Whistler, hiking and swimming at lakes, rivers, and waterfalls and much more! Of course, there's plenty of wildlife around for animal lovers, some great activities for thrill seekers, and Indigenous cultures to learn about! Experience Banff and Jasper National Parks as we travel the Icefields Parkway, one of the most scenic roads in the world.



Note: The Big West is a combination of our Sea to Sky and Caribou tours. Some of your fellow travellers will have already travelled together on one of our longer combination tours.

Highlights

- Hear the story of Brandywine Falls
- Explore the pedestrian-friendly, Disney-esque Whistler Village
- Go for a paddle on Skaha Lake in the Okanagan Valley
- See the majestic Peyto Lake (our hands down favourite)!
- Hike to the toe of the Athabasca Glacier at the Columbia Icefield
- Experience Indigenous history and culture at the Tuckkwiowhum Village heritage site

What's Included

- 9 nights mixed gender, hostel dormitory style accommodation
- Moose Bus transportation
- Services of a professional & fun tour guide/driver
- Guided tours of Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre and Tuckkwiowhum Village Indigenous heritage site
- Paddleboarding on Skaha Lake
- 3 dinners, including an Indigenous cuisine meal
- 4 breakfasts
- National Park fees

Itinerary

Day 1: Vancouver to Whistler

Have your camera ready for an amazing journey today! We'll travel the breath-taking Sea to Sky Highway, past mountain peaks, glaciers, and stunning lakes, stopping off at two waterfalls, Shannon Falls and Brandywine Falls. Upon our arrival in Whistler, we'll take a guided tour of the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre including a forest walk with a Cultural Ambassador, to learn about the Indigenous cultures of the Whistler Valley. We bet you'll be hungry after this jam-packed day, so we'll be dining together this evening. After that, check out Whistler's nightlife scene or give axe throwing a go! (And yes, Canada hosts a World Axe Throwing League.)

Activity Inclusions: Guided tour of Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre

Meal Inclusions: Dinner

Moose Accommodation: HI Whistler

Day 2: Whistler to Vancouver

Ziplining, bungee jumping, mountain biking and hiking; these are just some of the things you could be doing today! We don't leave until the afternoon, giving you plenty of time to explore Whistler village or the mountains. Alternatively, find a quiet spot in one of the beautiful parks and take in some raw unadulterated nature, before we head back to Vancouver, stopping en route for another photo opportunity!

Moose Accommodation: HI Vancouver - Jericho Beach

Day 3: Vancouver to Kelowna

The desert is calling! Today we're going east through the Fraser Valley, where we'll take a short walk through a West Coast rainforest to Bridal Veil Falls. Then, we'll traverse the Coastal Mountains, stopping at Lightning Lake in Manning Park at lunchtime. The semi-arid desert grasslands of the Okanagan are next on our itinerary, where we'll go paddle boarding on the beautiful Skaha Lake. We'll be replenishing ourselves with a special dinner at Kekuli Café in Westbank, where you'll get to try Indigenous cuisine, before settling in for the night on Lake Okanagan in Kelowna.

Activity Inclusions: Paddle boarding on Skaha Lake

Meal inclusions: Indigenous cuisine dinner

Moose Accommodation: Samesun Kelowna

Day 4: Kelowna to Banff

Being a little greedy with mountain ranges today, crossing not one, not two - but three of them, as we travel through four National Parks towards Banff! We'll stop in Revelstoke where you can go lake kayaking or simply enjoy the beautiful mountain scenery. Finally we'll enter the Rocky Mountains and cross over the Kicking Horse Pass into Alberta and Banff National Park, spending the night in the historic town of Banff itself, right in the heart of the mountains.

Note: during April/May and from mid-September onwards, we will cross over the Vermillion Pass to enter Alberta and Banff National Park.

Meal Inclusions: Breakfast at Samesun Kelowna

Moose Accommodation: HI Banff

Day 5: Banff to Rampart Creek

It's time to visit those famous blue lakes! Lake Louise is calling, as is Moraine Lake (seasonal) before heading onto the Icefields Parkway for breath-taking views of jagged mountain peaks, glaciers, raging rivers and more turquoise lakes. Keep your eyes peeled for large furry animals as we make stops at the Crowfoot Glacier, Peyto Lake (our favourite) and Mistaya Canyon before arriving at our rustic wilderness hostel alongside Rampart Creek. We invite you to really take in your surroundings with a dip and a sauna, and perhaps a campfire under the stars.

Moose Accommodation: HI Rampart Creek. Please note: there are no alternative accommodation options at this location, but we know you'll love having a true taste of Canada at Rampart Creek's rustic wilderness hostel.

Day 6: Rampart Creek to Jasper

Jasper National Park today! But first we'll stop at Big Bend lookout for a great view of the U-shaped North Saskatchewan River Valley. Get your legs ready because next up is the Columbia Icefield, the largest ice field in the Rocky Mountains at 325 square kilometres, where we'll hike to the toe of the Athabasca Glacier (conditions permitting.) Then on to Maligne Canyon, the deepest canyon in Jasper National Park, for a hike that crosses several bridges over the canyon with jaw-dropping views. Jasper townsite is our destination, and if you're seeking an adrenaline rush, there is an option to take a guided mountain bike tour on arrival.

Moose Accommodation: HI Jasper

Day 7: Jasper to Banff

Our first stop: Athabasca Falls, one of the most powerful and picturesque in the Rockies! This is followed by a bit of mountain goat spotting (we're still amazed at how they hold on) at the Goats and Glaciers viewpoint. Then on to Waterfowl Lakes to soak in the backdrop of Mount Chephren, which was named after the 4th Dynasty Egyptian Pharaoh. After this, we'll return to Banff for a group dinner, and once our bellies are full, the night is yours! See what Banff nightlife has to offer or take a relaxing dip in the Banff Upper Hot Springs. Who doesn't love a giant bathtub?

Meal inclusions: Dinner at Samesun Banff

Moose Accommodation: Samesun Banff

Day 8: Banff Free Day

Today is yours to do as you please! And where better to have a free day than in the heart of the Rocky Mountains! Go hiking, enjoy the sites of Banff or for an optional extra cost, go whitewater rafting, canoeing or mountain biking. Enjoy!

Meal inclusions: Breakfast at Samesun Banff

Moose Accommodation: Samesun Banff

Day 9: Banff to Kelowna

Sadly, we leave the Rockies today, but we'll go out with a bang, stopping at some of the most breathtaking scenic points in Western Canada. We will visit the Takakkaw Falls (seasonal), the pristine Emerald Lake and the Natural Bridge, as well as stopping for a photo at the stunning Kalamalka Lake viewpoint once we reach the Okanagan Valley. Here you will find beautiful sandy beaches on crystal clear lakes and plenty of sun-filled activities! Night time it's downtown Kelowna for a plethora of bars and nightclubs in this university city!

Note: during April/May and from mid-September onwards, we will visit Kootenay National Park instead of seeing Takakkaw Falls, Emerald Lake and the Natural Bridge.

Meal Inclusions: Breakfast at Samesun Banff

Moose Accommodation: Samesun Kelowna

Day 10: Kelowna to Vancouver

On our final day, we'll climb over a high mountain pass, travel along the Nicola Valley and enter the Fraser Canyon. Our main destination of the day is Tuckkwiowhum Village, an Indigenous heritage site, where we'll enjoy a guided tour and interact with a Traditional Knowledge Keeper. We'll then continue down the canyon to Hope, where we'll explore the Othello Tunnels on a magical walk across bridges and through old train tunnels that cut through solid granite walls! The finale is near – we'll finish in Vancouver where it's all hugs and Insta handle swapping as you say goodbye to your Moose mates and head home – but armed with a whole bunch of amazing adventures to talk about!

Activity Inclusions: Guided tour of Tuckkwiowhum Village

Meal Inclusions: Breakfast at Samesun Kelowna

Moose Accommodation: There is no accommodation included tonight. You will need to make your own arrangements.

Joining Your Trip

Vancouver

We pick up from the following hostel locations in Vancouver on Day 1 of this tour. Please be ready and waiting in the hostel lobby 15 minutes prior to your scheduled pick up time.

Hostel Name	Pick Up Time	Hostel Address
HI Vancouver - Jericho Beach	7:45am	1515 Discovery St, Vancouver
HI Vancouver - Downtown	8:05am	1114 Burnaby St, Vancouver
Cambie Hostel on Seymour	8:20am	515 Seymour St, Vancouver

HI Vancouver - Central	8:30am	1025 Granville St, Vancouver
NOTE: if staying at HI Central, please check-in at the Moose desk across the street in the Samesun		
Samesun Vancouver	8:30am	1018 Granville St, Vancouver

NOTE: if you are staying anywhere else in Vancouver, you will need to make your own way to one of these locations. We recommend joining the tour at the Samesun where the Moose office is located.

Finishing Your Trip

Vancouver

On the final day of the tour, we drop off at all of the hostel locations in Vancouver listed in the Pick Up section above. If you are staying elsewhere, you will need to make your own way there from one of the above locations. Under normal circumstances, expect to be dropped off in Vancouver around 6:30pm.

NOTE: we strongly recommend that you DO NOT book onward travel on the final day of the tour, since traffic or other unexpected circumstances may cause delays.

Accommodation

We know that a good night's sleep is important, especially after a busy day of travelling with lots of fun activities. We choose hostels and backpacker properties that offer budget value, as well as great facilities, and a welcoming atmosphere.

You have purchased our accommodated tour, which means all your accommodation is included for the standard nights of the trip, at a Moose discounted rate. You'll be staying in mixed gender hostel dorm rooms. By staying in shared rooms you get a chance to meet more people, hang out with other Moose travellers, and have paid less than you would booking a private room or hotel.

NOTE: if you wish to stay in gender-specific dorm rooms, you can request this at the time of booking. Our hostel partners will try to accommodate your request, but we cannot guarantee it will be possible.

Accommodation Locations

Day & Location	Hostel Name	Address	Phone Number
Day 1: Whistler	HI Whistler	1035 Legacy Way, Whistler	+1 604 962 0025
Day 2: Vancouver	HI Vancouver - Jericho	1515 Discovery Street, Vancouver	+1 604 224 3208
Day 3: Kelowna	Samesun Kelowna	245 Harvey Ave, Kelowna	+1 250 763 9814
Day 4: Banff	HI Banff Alpine Centre	801 Hidden Ridge Way, Banff	+1 403 762 4123

Day 5: Rampart Creek	HI Rampart Creek ^{1,2}	Highway 93 N, Banff National Park	+1 778 328 2220
Day 6: Jasper	HI Jasper	708 Sleepy Hollow Rd, Jasper	+1 778 328 2220
Days 7 & 8: Banff	Samesun Banff	433 Banff Ave, Banff	+1 403 762 4499
Day 9: Kelowna	Samesun Kelowna	245 Harvey Ave, Kelowna	+1 250 763 9814
Day 10: Vancouver	none ³		

Notes:

1. Rampart Creek is a rustic, wilderness hostel with no running water, and solar & propane generated power. It features a cozy fireplace, outdoor fire pit, and a wood-burning sauna! Please note there are no alternative accommodation options nearby, but we think you're going to love this truly Canadian experience!
2. Moose groups will stay at HI Athabasca Falls (also a rustic, wilderness hostel), instead of HI Rampart Creek, on the following dates: 22-May-2021, 13-Oct-2021
3. You will need to make your own reservation for the final night of the tour.

Do I Ever Need To Book My Own Accommodation?

You ONLY need to make your own reservation for your pre & post tour nights in Vancouver.

Daily Departure Times

We depart from the included accommodation at the following times on each day of the tour:

Day & Location	Hostel Name	Departure Time
Day 1: Vancouver	See Joining Your Trip section above	
Day 2: Whistler	HI Whistler	4:00pm
Day 3: Vancouver	HI Vancouver - Jericho	7:30am
Day 4: Kelowna	Samesun Kelowna	8:00am
Day 5: Banff	HI Banff Alpine Centre	8:00am
Day 6: Rampart Creek	HI Rampart Creek	8:30am
Day 7: Jasper	HI Jasper	8:30am
Day 8: Banff	N/A - Free Day	
Day 9: Banff	Samesun Banff	8:15am
Day 10: Kelowna	Samesun Kelowna	8:00am

Optional Activities

Why not enhance your trip by participating in one of the below adventure activities during your tour? No need to book ahead. Your Moose guide will give you more information during the tour. But please budget for them if you are interested!

The optional activities listed below are not operated by Moose, except for the free hiking, swimming and wildlife spotting activities. Moose arranges the activity as an agent of the local supplier. If you choose to participate in an optional activity, your contract will be with the activity provider and their conditions will apply. Some activities are seasonal, weather dependent, or require minimum numbers to participate.

NOTE: the prices and activities listed below are approximate and subject to change.

ACTIVITY	APPROX. COST (CAD)	LOCATION
Hiking, swimming, wildlife spotting	Free	Various locations
Sea to Sky sightseeing flight (15 min flight)	\$50	Squamish (en route to Whistler)
Bungee jumping	\$115	Whistler
Ziplining	from \$116	Whistler
Axe throwing	\$40	Whistler
TreeTrek canopy walk	\$53	Whistler
Mountain Bike Intro to Park (lesson, rental & lift pass, 3 hrs)	\$185	Whistler
Peak 2 Peak gondola ticket	\$64	Whistler
Stand Up Paddleboarding	Included	Penticton (en route to Kelowna)
Lake kayaking (2 hrs)	\$60	Revelstoke (en route to Banff)
Guided mountain biking (1.5 hrs)	\$89	Jasper
White water rafting (4 hrs, includes BBQ lunch)	\$135	Banff
Horseback riding (from 1 - 3 hrs)	from \$61	Banff
Banff Gondola	from \$64	Banff
Banff Upper Hot Springs Pool	\$8	Banff
Bike rentals	from \$28	Banff
Helicopter flight - Rockies (from 12 - 30 min)	from \$143	Banff
Big Canoe tour (1.5 hrs)	\$46	Banff
Via Ferrata (from 2.5 - 6 hrs)	from \$161	Banff