Parks Parcs
Canada Canada

Many of the park's 1000 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 planning a trip that is exciting and safe with a low environmental impact

Trail Etiquette



What can you expect?

- Wildlife. Trails in Jasper are frequently used by animals. Always make noise in the backcountry to avoid surprising wildlife on the trail.
- Horses. Many backcountry trails in Jasper are historical horse routes and still see frequent horse traffic. Always yield to horses.

What is your responsibility?

- Share the trail. Hike in single file as a group OR take up no more than half the trail width.
- **Don't tune out.** Headphones prevent you from hearing approaching trail users and wildlife.
- Always keep pets on a leash while passing (or being passed by) other users. Other users may be frightened by dogs or unsure how to pass safely.
- Yield to horses. Stay downhill. Greet the rider and the horse. Ask the rider how to proceed.

Two-Day/One-Night Trips



24.3 km loop; elevation gain/loss over entire loop: 990 m/-990 m; maximum elevation: 1652 m

Trailhead • (P2) Southwest end of the Jasper townsite.

Backcountry trails in Jasper

This well-marked trail begins and ends in the Jasper townsite and follows a plateau below treeline. This is a good selection for the novice or early-season hiker.

Campgrounds • (39) Saturday Night Lake (40) Minnow Lake

Big Bend (126) 🦄 🏍



12.6 km return; elevation gain/loss to campground: 94 m/-162 m; maximum elevation: 1404 m

Trailhead • Sunwapta Falls, 54.5 km south of the Jasper townsite on the Icefields Parkway.

Campground • (49) Big Bend

This route follows a wide, well-packed fire road that ends with spectacular views of Dragon Peak and the Athabasca River.

Notes • The suspension bridge after Athabasca Crossing Campground (50) is washed out, and the Athabasca River is impassable.

Whirlpool (115) 🦙 🍇

Canadä



13.2 km return; elevation gain/loss to campground: 162 m/-157; maximum elevation: 1269 m

Trailhead • Km 6.4 at end of Moab Lake Road, off of Highway 93A South.

Campground • (55) Whirlpool

This portion of the historic Athabasca Pass Trail is a wellpacked fire road that passes Moab Lake and follows the Whirlpool River through a burn area from the 2000 Moab Lake Fire.

Notes • The Simon Creek Bridge beyond Tie Camp Campground (56) is washed out. Travel to Middleforks Campground (58) and beyond is not recommended until October.

Jacques Lake (139) 🦄 🏍



24.4 km return; elevation gain/loss to campground: 345 m/-271 m; maximum elevation: 1588 m

Trailhead • 28 km from the Jasper townsite on Maligne Lake Road at the south end of Medicine Lake.

Campground • (38) Jacques Lake

This trail travels through a narrow valley, skirts four lakes, and crosses a watershed in less than 13 km, with little change in elevation. This is a great trip for novice hikers.

Notes • The Jacques Lake trail can flood heavily in the spring. Please check the trail report before starting your hike. No fishing permitted in Jacques Lake.

Utopia (140)



12.6 km return; elevation gain/loss to campground: 312 m/-350 m; maximum elevation: 1688 m

Trailhead • Miette Hot Springs

Campground • (51) Utopia

This route passes the old hot spring building and three natural hot springs before continuing upward through Utopia Pass and down to Utopia Campground.

Hidden Cove



Trailhead • Parking lot at the end of Maligne Lake Road.

Campground • (12) Hidden Cove

Hidden Cove is a paddle-in campground designed to provide an introductory paddle and camping opportunity for beginner canoeists and kayakers.





Three-Day/Two-Night Trips

Skyline 100 M (S)



44 km through hike; elevation gain/loss from Maligne Lake: 1595 m/-2123 m; maximum elevation: 2534 m

Trailhead • Parking lot at the end of Maligne Lake Road.

Campgrounds • Night One: (28) Little Shovel, (29) Snowbowl; Night Two: (30) Currator, (31) Tekarra

A classic Rockies trail that is mostly above treeline. The elevation allows for panoramic views that extend over much of the park, and encompass vast alpine meadows and windswept ridges.

Recommended direction is from Maligne Lake to Maligne Canyon (north west).

Notes • *Campfires are not permitted. Use of a stove is* mandatory. Snow may hinder travel until mid-July. Recommended travel between July 1 and mid-September.

Tonquin Valley 105 🕅 🔀 🔇





43 km through hike; elevation gain/loss from Astoria Trail: 1437 m/-1635 m: maximum elevation: 2232 m

Trailheads • Km 12.7 on Cavell Road (Astoria Trailhead) and km 6.3 on Marmot Basin Road (Portal Creek Trailhead).

Campgrounds • Night One: (44) Clitheroe, (46) Amethyst Lake, (45) Surprise Point; Night Two: (47) Maccarib, (48) Portal

The Tonguin Valley's scenery is unrivalled. This area is one of Canada's premiere alpine regions. The valley offers a unique combination of rugged peaks, ghostly ice and fertile lakes. There are several excellent day hikes in the area.

Recommended direction is from Astoria Trailhead to Portal Creek Trailhead.

Notes • Campfires are not permitted. Use of a stove is mandatory. Snow may hinder travel until July. Recommended travel between July 1 and September. Regular horse use and rain during July and August may make trails muddy and challenging for hikers.

Fryatt Valley to Brussels (122)



35.4 km return; elevation gain/loss to Brussels: 302 m/-158 m: maximum elevation: 1677 m Trailhead • Km 2 of the Geraldine Road, off Highway 93A

North just north of Athabasca Falls. Campgrounds • (34) Lower Fryatt (bikes allowed),

This alpine valley tucked into one of Jasper's great mountain ranges is a jewel that rewards all your effort. Camp at Brussels and explore the upper valley and beautiful Fryatt Lake on day two, or tackle the infamous headwall and the small hanging valley beyond.

Notes • Biking is permitted to Lower Fryatt Campground.

Four-Day/Three-Night Trips

Poboktan Creek and Jonas Pass









54 km one way; elevation gain/loss from Sunwapta Station: 1695 m/-2044 m; maximum elevation: 2492 m

Trailhead • Sunwapta Station, 72 km south of the Jasper townsite on the Icefields Parkway (93N).

Campgrounds • Night one: (26) Poboktan, (25) Waterfalls; Night two: (23) Jonas Cutoff; Night three: (16) Four Point, (15) Boulder Creek

A shorter alternative to the Brazeau Loop, this is an impressive hike with over 13 km of travel above treeline. Good views and prime habitat for park wildlife, including hoary marmot and woodland caribou.

Notes • No fires at Jonas Cutoff (23). Snow levels may hinder travel until mid-July. Campsites are located at the beginning and end of Jonas Pass. Horse use is prohibited in Jonas Pass. Dogs are prohibited at Poboktan Creek, Jonas Pass and Poboktan Pass.

Brazeau Loop (130) (131) (132) 🕅





2145 m/-2145 m: maximum elevation: 2492 m Trailhead • Nigel Creek, 112 km South of Jasper townsite on the Icefields Parkway

Campgrounds • Night one: (16) Four Point, (19) Brazeau River, (21) Brazeau Lake; Night two: (22) John-John, (23) Jonas Cutoff; Night three: (16) Four Point, (15) Boulder Creek

The "grand tour" of the southern ranges, this circuit includes one of the park's largest backcountry lakes and an extraordinary alpine traverse with glaciated peaks, lush wildflowers, and a variety of wildlife. The trail winds through extensive alpine meadows and three passes.

Recommended direction is counter clockwise to Brazeau Lake, through Poboktan pass, and finally through Jonas Pass.

Notes • *No fires at Jonas Cutoff (23). Snow levels may* hinder travel until mid-July. Campsites are located at the beginning and end of Jonas Pass. Horse use is prohibited in Jonas Pass. Dogs are prohibited in Pokoktan Pass, Jonas Pass and along Poboktan Creek.

Planning Your Trip

When and where to go

Early May to late June: Spring in the mountains means snow in the alpine, and sometimes muddy trails in the valleys. During

this time of year, valley bottom hikes are the best option. Early July to mid-September: Alpine trails are typically snow free at this time of year, although snow can persist much later in the summer in some places. This is a good time of year to explore alpine trails. Be aware of changing weather conditions. Freezing temperatures and snow are not uncommon above 1500 m. Mid-September to late October: Autumn in the mountains brings shorter days, fewer bugs and cooler temperatures. The option to explore alpine trails still exists, but weather is

Backcountry camping permits

unpredictable, nights are cold and snow is likely.

A backcountry camping permit is required for all overnight trips. It can be obtained online at parkscanada.ca/ bookjasperbackcountry or by calling the Parks Canada Reservation Service (PCRS) at 1-877-737-3783. A non-refundable reservation fee applies. Jasper backcountry bookings typically open up in late January. Visit parkscanada.ca/jasperbackcountry for more information.

Backcountry campgrounds can be booked for a maximum of 3 nights in a row (some 2 nights). Plan your route and layover's accordingly.

Refunds and cancellations

Backcountry Etiquette

Campfires

move on.

Garbage

Camping

Food storage

lockers after use

If you cancel your backcountry reservation at least three days prior to your start date, you will receive a full refund of your camping fee less the original, non-refundable reservation fee and cancellation fee. If your plans change please take advantage of our refund policy and make your space available to others. To cancel, contact the Parks Canada Reservation Service (PCRS) at 1-877-737-3783.

All backcountry travellers should carry a portable stove for

cooking. Campfires are not permitted in some areas (see map).

If you choose to have a fire, you must use the metal fireboxes

provided, keep your fire small and use only deadfall. Tend to

your fire at all times and extinguish it completely before you

backcountry and this includes garbage. Do not dispose of

garbage in pit toilets or bear lockers—it attracts animals.

Please camp only at the campsites indicated on your

To reduce your campsite's attractiveness to bears and other

wildlife, all food, garbage, toiletries and cooking equipment

lockers provided at designated campsites. When no food

must be hung from the food storage cables, or locked in food

storage options are available (see trail directory), bear-resistant

containers are recommended to store food. Please clean food

backcountry camping permit, and use the tent pads

(where provided) to minimize impact on vegetation.

You are responsible for everything you take into the

Self-serve backcountry guides

Rain or snow can fall any time of year in the mountains. Pack for all weather conditions and be aware that daily weather in the mountains often differs from the forecast. Always check the Environment Canada weather forecast at weather.gc.ca before embarking on your trip.

Visit parkscanada.ca/jasperbackcountryguides to view and download detailed guides on Jasper's backcountry trails. These guides provide information that goes well beyond what is offered in this brochure. It is highly recommended that you consult these guides before leaving for your trip.

Some of the information you can find in these guides are:

To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 70 m away from

soap. Strain out those last bits of food waste and pack them

Use the facilities provided. When there are no facilities nearby,

water sources. Dig a hole 15 cm deep to the dark, biologically

active soil layer. Loosely fill the hole with soil afterward. Use as

Short cutting between trail switchbacks damages both the

soil and plant life. This ruins the look of the area and makes it

Rocks, fossils, horns, antlers, wildflowers, nests and all other

natural or historical objects in national parks are protected by

little toilet paper as possible and carry it out or burn it.

Collecting natural or cultural objects

law. Leave them as you found them for others to enjoy.

susceptible to further damage by erosion.

select a spot away from trails, campsites, and at least 70 m from

streams or lakes and use a small amount of biodegradable

- More suggested itineraries
- Detailed trail maps • Distances between major trail

Weather

- junctions and campgrounds
- Elevation profiles for the trail Campground information
- Safety considerations specific to the trail
- In-depth backcountry etiquette and best practices

out. Disperse strained water on land.

Human/Dog waste

Stay on the trail

Equipment checklists

Washing



restrictions on special use.

Managing Our Use

Humans have an impact in all areas of the park. The

backcountry is especially vulnerable to our use. Park

management regulations are in place to minimize our

environmental impact, including quota restrictions on trails

and campsites, a limit on group size, a permit system, and

• Uniformed Parks staff you encounter in the backcountry

- Select a trip that best suits your party's abilities and experience, interests, equipment and the time you have
- Familiarize yourself with the trail you have selected. This includes using additional reference guides, our self-service guides and topographical maps
- Obtain a backcountry permit online at parkscanada.ca/
- Check trail conditions and weather prior to departure
- Be prepared to be self-sufficient during inclement and rapidly changing mountain conditions by packing the right clothing and camping gear
- Check the trailhead kiosk prior to your hike; it contains valuable information about closures and warnings

Plan Ahead and Prepare

Remember, you are responsible for your own safety.

Rapidly changing weather, steep, rugged or unfamiliar terrain, canyons, rapids and waterfalls, glacial crevasses, falling rocks and wild animals are all hazards visitors may encounter in the

Giardia lamblia is a water-borne parasite that can be present in any surface water. Boil, filter or chemically treat all water

Ticks carrying lyme disease may be present in the park. Visit health.alberta.ca for more information.

provoke confrontations with wildlife and affect your safety. Dogs must be kept on a leash while in a national park. Please note that dogs are not allowed in some backcountry areas to protect caribou and ground-nesting birds.

Both black and grizzly bears are of special concern to backcountry travellers. Carry bear spray with you in the backcountry and note that it is safer to travel in groups of three or more. Learn more by visiting a parks information centre or parkscanada.ca/bears-and-people.

If travelling into the backcountry for extended periods of time, it is recommended to carry a personal locator such as a SPOT

Other Ways to Explore

Horseback riding

Park information centres have information about guided day or overnight horse trips in the park. For overnight trips, a backcountry permit and grazing permit are required. Please visit or call the Jasper Information Centre (780-852-6177, Ext. 2) to obtain your permits. Visit parkscanada.gc.ca/horse-user**guide** for more information.

Mountain biking

Mountain biking is allowed on select backcountry trails (see map). If planning an overnight trip, you must have a backcountry permit. Bikers can more easily startle wildlife, horses and other trail users. Please be respectful of all other users while biking in the backcountry.

Climbing, mountaineering and glacial travel

Mountaineering parties can apply at a Parks Canada information centre for a permit to bivouac in non-vegetated areas. Special restrictions may apply. Visit parksmountainsafety.ca for more

Random camping

Random camping is permitted in designated areas only. Visit or call an information centre (780-852-6177, Ext. 2) for more information and to reserve. Special rules and conditions apply to random camping.

Fishing

A national park fishing license is required. Visit a Parks Canada information centre or local outdoor shop to purchase a permit and review the mountain parks fishing regulations. See parkscanada.gc.ca/jasperfishing for more information.

Backcountry huts and lodges

Backcountry shelters and lodges are available to book through various third parties within Jasper National Park.

A backcountry permit is required. Alpine huts maintained by the Alpine Club of Canada are available to club members and non-members. Reservations can be made at alpineclubofcanada.ca or by calling

- Skyline Trail Rides skylinetrail.com or (780) 852-4215 / 1-888-852-7787
- Tonquin Valley Adventures tonquinadventures.com or (780) 852-1188
- Tonquin Valley Backcountry Lodge tonguinvalley.com or (780) 852-3909

- JASPER INFORMATION CENTRE: 780-852-6177 Ext. 2 pc.sentiersjasper-jaspertrails.pc@canada.ca
- open early may end of September
- **WEATHER:** weather.gc.ca
- MAPS AND GUIDE BOOKS: Friends of Jasper National Park at 780-852-4767 or www.friendsofjasper.com

Call 911 or, if using a satellite phone, call the park dispatch

office at (780) 852-3100. Cell phone reception is unreliable.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

FOLLOW US ON:

facebook.com/Jaspernp

@JasperNP

DONE WITH THIS BROCHURE?

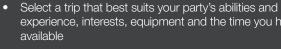
Please return it or share it with others.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER.

PRINTED IN CASCAL

may ask to see your backcountry camping permit.

Checklist



- bookjasperbackcountry or by phone at 1-877-737-3783
- Let a friend or family member know about your travel plans.

avalanches (at any time of year), cold, swift-flowing streams, backcountry. Caution and self-reliance are essential.

before drinking.

Wild animals see dogs as either prey or predator. They can

Park animals are wild and can be dangerous. Any animal can become aggressive if it feels threatened. Keep your distance; 30 m from most animals and 100 m from carnivores. Moose and elk can be especially dangerous in the fall during the rut, and when calves are young in the spring.

More Information

- ICEFIELD CENTRE: 780-852-6288,
 - WEBSITE: parkscanada.gc.ca/jasper
 - JASPER TRAIL CONDITIONS REPORT: parkscanada.ca/jaspertrails
- AVALANCHE INFORMATION: parksmountainsafety.ca • BEAR INFORMATION: parkscanada.ca/bears-and-people

