

Western Explorer Self-Drive Tour

15 Day Self-Drive Tour – 3-4V

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

• Calgary • Banff • Jasper • Port Hardy • Campbell River • Victoria • Vancouver

ITINERARY

Day 1: Calgary

Fly to Calgary from the UK and on arrival pick up your hire car, upon check in; you'll be handed your road book at reception, which you can familiarise yourself with at leisure. The remainder of the day is at your leisure to discover how this modern, chic city at the foothills of the Rockies has not forgotten its cowboy frontier heritage! **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Calgary**

Day 2: Calgary – Banff

The road westward to Banff leaves the towers of glass and steel behind, replaced with the rolling grasslands of Kananaskis horse country on the way to the mountains. The journey through the valley offers beautiful vista after vista as you make your way to the Bow Valley and the iconic parkland town of Banff. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Banff**

Day 3: Banff National Park

The Rockies most famous town deserves its grand reputation! Nestled in protected lands of Banff National Park, magnificent elk casually walk the local pathways and parks to the delight of visitors. Shoppes and restaurants boast menus from around the world, while offerings of outdoor adventure are around every corner. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Banff**

Day 4: Banff - Jasper

Today you drive to Jasper via the spectacular Icefields Parkway. We suggest a stop at Peyto Lake en route for a stretch and a short walk. Dozens of incredible photo opportunities of ancient forests and crisply outlined mountain peaks present themselves around every bend of the road. Abundant small roadside waterfalls and alpine meadows delight travellers along this route, considered one of the most scenic drives in the world. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Jasper**

Day 5: Jasper – 100 Mile House

Today embark on your journey westward over the provincial border into the wilds of the British Columbia interior enroute to the Cariboo Region – an area famous for its bountiful precious mineral deposits. This rugged land drew prospectors and adventurers alike during the Gold Rush period, many who stayed on to found the small communities that flourish there today

Accommodation stay – 1 Night in 100 Mile House

Day 6: 100 Mile House – Kleena Kleene

Today you continue westward through the pristine wilderness of the British Columbia interior. Travelling along the Chilcotin – Bella Coola Highway you arrive at the Terra Nostra Guest Ranch, just west of the clear waters of Tatla Lake boasting some of the most stunning scenery in Canada. Set in the rugged wilderness of the Chilcotin plateau, the Terra Nostra offers stunning mountain views, adventurous horseback riding and hiking trails along a scenic lake. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Kleena Kleene (L,D)**

Day 7: Kleena Kleene

Today is yours to explore the trails and backwoods of the Terra Nostra Guest Ranch, set in the idyllic lands on the border of the majestic Coast Mountains. The ranch's rustic setting gives an impression of what mountain village life is like. All your exquisite meals are prepared in and served in a nicely appointed log cabin dining room. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Kleena Kleene (B,L,D)**

Day 8: Kleena Kleene - Hagensborg

Today after breakfast you depart Kleena Kleene and travel further north through the British Columbia mountain ranges before turning west and journeying into the southern arm of Tweedsmuir National Park. The largest protected park in the province, this area boasts a near untouched wilderness where visitors can observe the rugged landscape as it has been for hundreds of centuries. Leaving the park, you travel into the peaceful Bella Coola valley, home to the Nuxalt First Nations people and situated at the headwaters of a 100 km inlet leading to the Pacific Ocean. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Hagensborg (B)**

Day 9: Hagensborg (Bella Coola Area to Port Hardy (Cruise)

Enjoy a full day ocean cruise on board BC Ferries through a long and winding inlet waterway carved into the mountainous landscape. This placid, meandering cruise comes to an end in Port Hardy. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Port Hardy**

Day 10: Port Hardy – Campbell River

Today you travel south along the eastern shore of Vancouver Island. After following the shores of Nimpkish Lake the road turns inland, giving you a roadside view of the rugged landscape of the island's interior. You arrive at Campbell River, known as a centre for some of the world's best sport fishing. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Campbell River**

Day 11: Campbell River to Victoria

Following the Strait of Georgia separating the island from the British Columbia mainland, you continue along the coast past quaint villages of Parksville, Nanaimo, and Chemainus. Proceeding along the scenic Malahat Drive, you arrive in beautiful colonial Victoria. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Victoria**

Day 12: Victoria

Today, explore this elegant capital city. We suggest a visit to Beacon Hill Park and the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. You may decide to drop in for afternoon tea at the Fairmont Empress Hotel and experience a taste of British charm. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Victoria**

Day 13: Victoria to Vancouver

Traverse the charming landscape of Victoria one last time before enjoying a mini-cruise on BC Ferries back to Vancouver through the Strait of Georgia. Arriving in Vancouver, take advantage of one of the many fine eateries available in this cosmopolitan jewel on the Pacific. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Vancouver**

Day 14: Vancouver

You will have the entire day to tour Vancouver and the surrounding area. Some suggestions: MacMillan Planetarium, Chinatown, Gastown, Granville Island, Grouse Mountain and Stanley Park. **Accommodation stay – 1 Night in Vancouver**

Days 15: Vancouver

Today is the end of your programme. Please make sure to depart your hotel and leave ample time to check in at Vancouver International Airport for your departure flight or continue to your next destination.

Meals: 2 Breakfasts, 2 lunches, 2 dinners at Terra Nostra Guest House

***Denotes local charge** – Optional trips and excursions suggested on the itinerary can be added at the time of booking.

This is a set tour itinerary, if you have booked any pre/post or optional tour arrangements please refer to your separate vouchers and final documents.

TOUR NOTES

For current departure dates and prices please check our website

Pre/Post Tour information

If you would like to extend your trip or make the tour part of a longer holiday, we can easily add on pre or post night stays for you. Our Sales Team will work with you to arrange the best connecting flights and book any additional hotel stays or experiences. Simply tell us what you'd like and we can arrange it.

Time difference

Eastern Time Zone: GMT -5 hours

Western Time Zone: GMT -8 hours

Tour inclusions

- Accommodation listed above
- Day 9 BC Ferries - Bella Coola to Port Hardy/Discovery Coast (depart: 07:30, arrive: 17:30, 10 hours)
- Day 13 BC Ferries - Swartz Bay to Tsawwassen (1 hour 35 minutes)
- A personalised Jonview Canada Roadbook, containing essential travel information featuring overview notes of the area, local sightseeing and attractions, daily itinerary highlights provincial maps with city guides, hotel vouchers and customised day-to-day routing maps.

Tour exclusions

- All Flights and airport transfers in the UK
- Travel Insurance
- Car hire and insurance unless this has been booked by the sales consultant
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, laundry, tips & gratuities, video camera fees at monuments
- The required Canada Electronic Authorization (eTA)
- Anything not detailed on the itinerary.

Dining inclusions

2 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 2 dinners at Terra Nostra Guest House

Accommodation

Accommodation is a mix of 3-4V graded properties. Please note some tours are up to 3 weeks in duration and there may be some nights when staying in remote locations e.g. the National Parks, when the 'V' rating may vary. Hotels are subject to change up until 30 days prior to departure, but you will be advised of any changes.

Car Parking

Please note parking charges may be applicable at individual hotels

Visa requirements

Under Canada's new eTA program, British citizens WILL need to obtain an online authorization before flying to Canada. This new entry requirement is mandatory. Travellers will have the opportunity to go online and apply for their eTA. The earlier travellers get their eTA, the sooner they will benefit from knowing they have been pre-screened to enter Canada. A fee of \$7 is payable for processing an application for an electronic travel authorization. An application for an electronic travel authorization must be made by means of an electronic system that is made available by

the Department (Citizenship and Immigration Canada) for that purpose.

Alternatively you can apply for your eTA through our partners CIBT visas who make the process as easy as possible and will apply for the eTA on your behalf. Contact them on www.cibtvisas.co.uk/virginholidays for more information.

Currency

The official unit of currency in Canada is the Canadian dollar. Major credit cards and debit cards will be accepted within the Canada.

Electricity

If you bring any electrical appliance to Canada, you may need an adaptor to fit the Canadian electrical receptacles. You may also need a converter to change the voltage from 110 volts to 220 volts.

Tipping

Tipping is a big part of Canada's service economy and their taxation system, all visitors should understand that this is a part of the local culture; please see below a list of useful suggestions for tipping:

- Waiters/Waitresses: 15% - 20% for average - good service, more for exceptional service.
- Bartenders: \$1 - \$2 a round -or- 15% to 20% of the tab, with a minimum of 50 cents per soft drink, \$1 per alcoholic drink.
- Room Service: 15% - 20%
- Taxi driver: Varies depending on locality. Assume 15% will be enough; an extra \$1 to \$2 for help with bags.
- Hotel doorman: \$1 per bag for help with luggage; \$1 per person for hailing a cab.

Recommended vaccinations

We advise you to discuss your individual requirements for Canada with your GP at least 6-8 weeks prior to travel.