Canadian Contrasts
16 Day Guided Tour – 3-4V

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

Toronto • Niagara Falls • Ottawa/Gatineau Region • Québec City • Montréal • Calgary • Banff National Park • Whistler • Vancouver

ITINERARY

Day 1: UK – Toronto
Fly from the UK to Toronto. Arrive at Toronto’s Pearson International Airport and transfer independently to your downtown hotel. After checking in with your tour director, the remainder of the day is free to explore the streets of this dynamic city. Discover the delights of Toronto’s colourful neighbourhoods, take a ride to the top of the CN Tower, experience the lively theatre district and indulge in one of the numerous restaurants. Overnight in Toronto. Accommodation stay – 2 Nights at the Courtyard by Marriott or similar.

Day 2: Toronto/Niagara Falls Excursion
This morning we meet our fellow travellers at breakfast before setting out to discover the many identities of the Canada’s most cosmopolitan city. After seeing the provincial parliament buildings, the waterfront, the imposing CN Tower and lively Chinatown, we leave the city and head for the Niagara Peninsula. We pass through outlying communities and towns along the shores of Lake Ontario en route to Niagara Falls. Time is allocated to admire the falls and take part in some of Niagara Falls numerous activities. B Included.

Day 3: Toronto – Ottawa/Gatineau Region
We leave the Toronto skyline behind and drive east towards Ottawa. Our route then winds through rolling farmland, following the rivers and lakes of the Rideau Waterway. Upon arrival in Ottawa, we enjoy a sightseeing tour of the national capital. Defined by the Rideau Canal (designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site) and the government buildings on Parliament Hill, the city offers many great sights including the public gardens, the Byward Market and City Hall. B Included. Accommodation stay – 1 Night at the Four Points Gatineau or Capital Hill Hotel & Suites or Holiday Inn Ottawa East or similar.

Day 4: Ottawa – Quebec City
This morning we travel along the scenic Ottawa River to the French-speaking province of Quebec. We skirt the magnificent Laurentians and follow the Chemin du Roy past Quebecois villages and historic shrines. Today’s journey ends in Quebec’s cultural heartland, Quebec City. We tour within the walls of the old city and view the ornate city gates, Lower Town, the Citadel and Battlefields Park. B Included. Accommodation stay – 2 Nights at the Hotel Clarion Quebec or Hotel Lindbergh or Hotel Ambassadeur or similar.

Day 5: Quebec City
The day is at your leisure to further explore the sights of this charming World Heritage Site. You can enjoy an optional full day excursion to Tadoussac including 3-hours of whale watching on the St. Lawrence River at the mouth of the Saguenay River. Step aboard a regular boat and go in search of the world’s largest mammals. You will also visit the spectacular Montmorency Falls that are 30 metres higher than the world-famous Niagara Falls. The rest of the day is at your leisure to explore this historic French-Canadian city with narrow streets and unique boutiques. B Included.

Day 6: Quebec City – Montreal
Departing from Quebec City we drive along the St.-Lawrence River in the footsteps of the early settlers. Upon arrival in Montreal, we tour the second-largest French-speaking city in the world. The dynamic city of Montreal encapsulates the two founding cultures of Canada and boasts a curious blend of history and modernity. Touring the downtown area we view the Olympic Complex, charming Old Montreal, McGill University, the residential streets of Mount Royal and the bustling shopping streets. This evening, perhaps embark on an optional dining excursion and experience ‘Montreal by Night’ – a scenic trip out on the town to one of the city’s traditional restaurants. B Included. Accommodation stay – 1 Nights at the Hotel Lord Berri or Hotel Espresso or Hotel Faubourg or similar.

Day 7: Montreal – Toronto
Today’s route takes us back to Toronto, where you will have time to explore colourful neighbourhoods and to sample some of the city’s great restaurants and wonderful entertainment. In Rockport you have an option of enjoying an entertaining and relaxing cruise through the beautiful 1000 islands. B Included. Accommodation stay – 1 Night at the Courtyard by Marriott Toronto or similar.
Day 8: Toronto – Calgary (Flight)
A transfer brings us to Toronto’s Pearson International Airport for a flight over the prairie grainfields of central Canada to Calgary. Upon arrival in Calgary, we make our way to our downtown hotel. B Included. Accommodation stay – 1 Night at the Sandman Hotel Calgary City Centre or similar.

Day 9: Calgary – Banff National Park – Canmore
We set out early this morning to tour the sights of Calgary. We admire such modern and historic landmarks as the Calgary Tower, Fort Calgary and the skyscrapers of the commercial district. Leaving Calgary behind we set our sights on the Rocky Mountains, which can already be seen, far off in the distance. Experience the majesty of the mountains as we first travel through the foothills and then enter Banff National Park. We tour the region around Banff amidst snow-capped peaks, sparkling glaciers and emerald green lakes and see landmark Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel, Bow Falls and Tunnel Mountain. B Included. Accommodation stay – 2 Nights at the Coast Canmore Hotel & Conference Centre or similar.

Day 10: Canmore/Banff National Park
The entire day is at leisure to tour Banff and browse through the many boutiques and specialty shops along Banff Avenue. An optional full-day tour is offered to the Columbia Icefield. The tour starts with a visit to the turquoise waters and spectacular glacier of Lake Louise, the jewel of the Rockies. From the unsurpassed beauty of Lake Louise we enter a rugged wilderness as we travel up the world famous Icefields Parkway. At the spectacular Columbia Icefield we board an Ice Explorer that will take us onto the surface of the ancient Athabasca Glacier. We return to Banff late in the afternoon. You may also take an optional helicopter tour of the world famous Three Sisters Mountains. B Included.

Day 11: Canmore – Kamloops
Our drive today is on the famed Trans-Canada Highway, following a route charted by the railroad engineers and fur traders of the mid 1800s. We continue our tour of the Canadian parks system as we cross the jagged Kicking Horse Pass into British Columbia's Yoho National Park. From the highway, we are treated to a dazzling display of vast icefields, deep canyons, dense forests and glacier-fed streams. One awe-inspiring landscape follows another en route to Glacier National Park. We continue through the Monashee mountain ranges to the rugged interior town of Kamloops. B Included. Accommodation stay – 1 Night at the Ramada Kamloops or similar.

Day 12: Kamloops- Whistler
We can expect a day of dramatic scenery changes when we drive through the ranch lands and head for the coastal mountains. An optional Floatplane Sightseeing Tour* over Garibaldi Park gives you an inspiring view of a natural preserve of volcanic peaks, alpine lakes and meadows. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure. B Included. Accommodation stay – 1 Night at the Whistler Village Inn & Suites or Whistler Peak Lodge or Aava Hotel or similar.

Day 13: Whistler – Vancouver
We drive south along the spectacular Sea-to-Sky Highway through a dramatic landscape of jagged fjords and glaciated mountain peaks. We leave the countryside behind and explore the metropolis of Vancouver on a sightseeing tour. Highlights include Stanley Park, Prospect Point, English Bay, historic Gastown, bustling Chinatown and much more. The afternoon is free to discover more of this coastal gem. B Included. Accommodation stay – 2 Nights at the Sandman Hotel Vancouver City Centre or similar.

Day 14: Vancouver
The Pacific Ocean and the Coast Mountains form the backdrop to your day at leisure in Vancouver. You might want to do some shopping down on Robson Street, relax in Vancouver’s playground Stanley Park or stroll through the markets of Granville Island. If you prefer to explore the outdoors, take a gondola ride to the summit of Grouse Mountain. You can also go on an optional full-day tour to Victoria, the charming provincial capital that is proud of her maritime heritage. See the beautiful 19th century landmarks and enjoy its lively atmosphere. Before taking the ferry back to Vancouver, you will visit Butchart Gardens, one of the world’s great floral displays set in a reclaimed stone quarry. B Included.

Days 15-16: Vancouver – UK
The time has come for some last minute shopping and to say farewell to Canada. B Included. Individual transfer to Vancouver’s International Airport in time to check in for your overnight return flight back to the UK.

Meals: This tour is based on a Continental breakfast basis

B ~ Breakfast Included

*Denotes local charge – Optional trips and excursions listed on the itinerary are bookable and payable locally. Passengers must pay by Visa or MasterCard credit card only. Cash or other methods of payment cannot be processed by our Tour Directors.

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

Authorization.

Visa requirements

under Canada’s new ETA program, British citizens WILL need to obtain an online authorization before flying to Canada.

Tour inclusions

Private air conditioned motorcoach transportation throughout
Toronto to Calgary flight (Day 8) on WestJet Airlines
Transfers between hotel and airport in Toronto and Calgary
Accommodation and sightseeing as listed above
Service of an English Speaking guide.

Tour exclusions

International flight in economy class, including all UK and overseas airport taxes and applicable fuel surcharges
Flight upgrades and airport transfers in the UK
Baggage on internal WestJet flight – checked bags will cost between CAD$25 - $29.50 per bag
Insurance
Airport transfer
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

Continental breakfast included.

Included activities

Tours listed in the itinerary.

Accommodation

Accommodation listed on the itinerary 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.

Journey times

Please note due to long distances covered on some of the tours, there will be some days when the majority of the day will be spent on the coach, so just sit back and enjoy the view.

Group size

Minimum 20 passengers, maximum approximately 50 passengers (full coach).

Language

This tour will operate as English guaranteed however Dutch passengers may join the tour therefore English and Dutch will be both spoken.

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.

Electronic travel authorization is valid for a period of five years from the day on which it is issued to the applicant or until the earliest of the following days, if they occur before the end of that period:
(a) The day on which the applicant’s passport or other travel document expires,
(b) The day on which the electronic travel authorization is cancelled, or
(c) The day on which a new electronic travel authorization is issued to the applicant.

Visit: http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta-start.asp to arrange the eTA.

Currency

The official unit of currency in Canada is the Canadian dollar. Optional excursions will need to be paid locally by cash to the tour guide. 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.
Bar tenders: $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.
Tour guide: $5 per person, per day in your party.

What to pack

Lightweight, cotton clothes. Smart casual is acceptable in hotels.
A light sweater or fleece for early mornings and evenings and air-conditioning can be cool in restaurants.
Comfortable, enclosed and sturdy footwear.
Casual clothing and sandals for dinner and relaxing at your hotel.
Sun cream, sunglasses and hat.
Camera and/or video camera with spare batteries and memory cards.
Swimwear for an occasional swim.
Binoculars.
Mosquito repellent and spray.
Handy wipes, antiseptic hand gel and bottled water where possible.
Low denominations of local currency or CAD – handy for ad-hoc tipping.

What to expect

We recommend you are of a reasonable fitness as touring often involves long walks and uneven surfaces; this tour is not suitable for those who require special assistance.

Recommended vaccinations

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

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 a 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. Simply tell us what you’d like and we can arrange it.

Time Difference

GMT - 5 hours Eastern Canada
GMT - 8 hours Western Canada

Tour inclusions:

- Private air conditioned motorcoach transportation throughout
- Toronto to Calgary flight (Day 8) on WestJet Airlines
- Transfers between hotel and airport in Toronto and Calgary
- Accommodation and sightseeing as listed above
- Service of an English Speaking guide.

Tour exclusions:

- International flight in economy class, including all UK and overseas airport taxes and applicable fuel surcharges
- Flight upgrades and airport transfers in the UK
- Baggage on internal WestJet flight – checked bags will cost between CAD$25 - 29.50 per bag
- Insurance
- Airport transfer
- 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:

- Continental breakfast included.

Included activities:

- Tours listed in the itinerary.

Accommodation:

- Accommodation listed on the itinerary 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.

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Group size:

- Minimum 20 passengers, maximum approximately 50 passengers (full coach).

Language:

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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 not mandatory until March 15, 2016. However, beginning on August 1, 2015, eligible 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.

Recommended vaccinations:

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

Tour exclusions:

- International flight in economy class, including all UK and overseas airport taxes and applicable fuel surcharges
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