

Destination British Columbia & the Yukon

Like a nervous teen in the hours before prom night, British Columbia spent the better part of the nascent 21st century preparing for its date with the world: the 2010 Olympic & Paralympic Winter Games in Vancouver. The joy of winning the games in 2003 spawned a euphoria that lasted for several years, at least until the global economy tanked late in the decade. Then tough economic times conspired with a bad case of nerves to spawn Olympic-sized worries that weren't that much different from those of the teen contemplating her big night: Was too much spent? What would everybody else think? What would happen after?

It was an uncharacteristic bit of doubt for a province that has been on a roll for years. Vancouver goes from one strength to the next, a beautiful city of glass reflecting the surrounding mountains and water. A destination for hopeful immigrants who want to join a progressive population that takes good food, good living and good times for granted.

Reality Bites

But just like the complexion of our prom date, all is never perfect. Seemingly intractable poverty in downtrodden neighborhoods like downtown's Eastside and outbreaks of gang violence more typical of South Central LA are proof that the dream hasn't been shared by all.

After being teased by gold rushes in the 19th century, British Columbia found its real wealth all around it. The millions of spruce, cedar, fir and other trees growing in profusion from the stormy Pacific edge of Vancouver Island right across to the flanks of the Rocky Mountains found ready buyers around the world. Later, BC's underground riches of lead, zinc and more brought further wealth. Even the wild rivers that cleave the province were dammed, creating vast inland oceans of water for generating hydropower.

During the last half of the 20th century, BC could bring the modern age to almost every corner and citizen because it could feed upon itself. But in a worldwide depression there's not much need for raw materials and BC has had to deal with the collapse of its previously core industries of logging, mining and water. Towns in rural enclaves from the Kootenays right through the north have struggled.

Natural Wealth

If British Columbia was built by exploiting itself to exhaustion, its future may just come from cherishing itself. Instead of realizing wealth through destruction, it is realizing wealth through *tasteful* construction. The Powder Hwy is the marketing name coined recently for a series of roads already winding up and around the mountain ranges of the Kootenays. The name's genesis is easy: 12m of the most perfect skiing and boarding snow falls on average each year on the ranges of saw-toothed peaks across the region. Enthusiasts unblushingly call it 'champagne powder.'

Still in the Kootenays and near the American border, Rossland has found its natural wealth during the summer when the world's best mountain-bikers crash along its steep, granite slopes on trails that can best be described as sick. Just up the hill from Trail, a town living with the legacy

FAST FACTS

BC population: 4.51 million

BC area: 944,735 sq km

BC sq km per person: 0.21

Cost of 1976 Montréal Olympics: \$1.5 billion

Final estimated cost of 2010 Olympics: \$6 billion

Yukon population: 30,600

Yukon area: 483,450 sq km

Yukon sq km per person: 15.8

Yukon sq km per moose: 8.1

of years of destructive mining, Rossland is merrily moving forward by getting folks to go downhill.

Elsewhere in BC, the Okanagan Valley has literally uncorked a fortune by shifting some of its fertile, sun-drenched hillsides from orchards to vineyards, supplying more than 100 wineries – many world-class.

In the north, even Prince George is shaking off its image as the pulp mill of the west by discovering the natural beauty long ignored in the surrounding hills. Out in the Pacific, the Queen Charlotte Islands are perfect symbols of the renaissance of BC's rich First Nations cultures. Official prejudices and discrimination are fading as the native Haida people flex their artistic muscles and again show the world what you can carve from a huge cedar log.

Finding Balance

Of course finding a future based on environmental stewardship is as complex as BC's very environment. Competing budget pressures on the provincial government (above and beyond Olympics budget blowouts) for critical needs like health care and education mean that niceties such as the parks system remain critically underfunded.

And it's hard to tell communities that made their living off the land to wait patiently through hardship for a new future based on green pursuits. Pipeline and exploration schemes tied to the insatiable demand for energy offer the promise of billions despite their potential to muck up whole swaths of the north.

The very charms that make BC such a good date also make it potentially too hot a date, with growing crowds and traffic jams. Still, in an era when the magnificent and pristine coastal Great Bear Rainforest can at least receive partial protection, there's cause for hope that BC will find a way to become a dream date while preserving a modicum of virtue.

Meanwhile in the Yukon

Although British Columbia and the Yukon Territory share a long border, they really share little else. The history of the Yukon has always been more closely linked to that of neighboring Alaska than to its sibling to the south. Until the Alaska Hwy was built, you had to travel through the Alaskan ports of Haines and Skagway to reach the Yukon. Even today those are the preferred routes for travelers who want to combine a trip north with the exquisite joy of sailing the stunning Inside Passage.

The Yukon remains in many ways as it was 200 years ago: a forbidding wilderness that bursts into life during a brief summer that offers unparalleled opportunities for the adventurous. Most people today live in Whitehorse, the agreeable and low-key capital. Their politics lean towards the conservative, an outgrowth of the popular image of self-reliance promoted in both bluster and reality. But you can't escape the irony of trying to square a philosophy of small government with a territory that receives far more from Ottawa than it gives. The arts budget alone would be the envy of cities with many more zeros after the citizen count.

Few doubt that enormous energy and mineral riches lie under the Yukon – despite the best efforts of the Klondike gold miners and their successors. The territory's remoteness – for now – limits efforts to explore further. A worrisome glimpse of future challenges can be found in the far north where even the ancient and magnificent herds of caribou don't tread. Herschel Island, just off the coast, is threatened by the warming waters of the Arctic Ocean. In the meantime, however, this storied territory returns exponential rewards for every effort you invest in enjoying it.

Getting Started

Spend your time dreaming and planning a fabulous trip; don't spend it sweating the question of how you're going to get there or other nitty gritty details. BC and the Yukon are easy. Spur of the moment trips are a breeze, it's easy to get around and there are offerings for every budget. Visitor Centers (VCs), which can help with details big and small, abound.

See Climate Charts (p421) for more information.

WHEN TO GO

There's never really a bad time to visit BC. Vancouver is definitely a year-round destination – you can partake of its urban pleasures at any time. Other major areas in the south, such as Victoria and the Okanagan Valley, are good for most of the year when the weather is temperate. And all that rain you've heard about? Just assume it can rain at any time and get on with it.

Lots of the most beautiful parts of BC are year-round destinations in that you hike, bike and explore in the summer and ski in the winter. Whistler and the ski resorts of the Okanagan, the Kootenays and the parks of the Rockies have split personalities – both appealing. The fabulous BC coast is really most enjoyable when the harsh winter storms are not pounding though, and the Yukon is best enjoyed during the short summer from mid-June until early September. During the summer especially, you'll find festivals and events across the region (p26).

COSTS & MONEY

You can enjoy BC and the Yukon on any budget. With the freedom of your own vehicle, count on \$225 to \$300 per day, which will allow for comfortable rooms, activities, good meals and fuel. Traveling on a budget, you can do it for \$100 a day or a bit less staying in hostels or camping and riding the bus. A group can pool their resources to enjoy the freedom of a cheap rental car.

In Vancouver, Victoria and the resorts of Whistler and the Rockies, prices for activities include skiing (average lift ticket \$65) and white-water rafting (\$100 or more). Families can save as there are often group prices and deals letting kids stay for free in their parents' rooms are common.

The Yukon is generally a bit more expensive, say 20%.

HOW MUCH?

A pint of a Vancouver microbrew \$5

One-day lift ticket for Whistler \$90

Day ferry on BC's Inside Passage (driver and car) \$500

Spotting wildlife on land and sea \$0

Yukon Territorial Parks admission \$0

TRAVELING RESPONSIBLY

BC and the Yukon already have a pretty good vibe when it comes to green issues. A few points to consider:

- Travel in a high-mileage car; SUVs *might* only be needed for the most ambitious backcountry travel.

DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT...

- Fully broken-in hiking shoes
- A corkscrew for your Okanagan Valley (p244) explorations
- Bug repellent for backcountry and Yukon summer nights
- Something for staying dry on rainy days
- Extra memory for the camera

TOP PICKS



Part of the fun of traveling the region is making your own 'Best of...' lists of the extraordinary things you've seen and done. Here are some of ours.

WATCHING WILDLIFE

You'll see whales, moose, spawning salmon, bears, orcas, mountain goats and dozens more species on land and in the water of BC and the Yukon.

- The Inside Passage of the BC coast teems with every kind of iconic sea creature. The best way to see the spectacle is by boat (see p431)
- The Icefields Parkway isn't just about glaciers, it's about the myriad of protected species blithely ignoring you by the side of the road (p322)
- Kluane National Park & Reserve has it all, including Dall sheep performing amazing cliffside feats (p400)
- Saturna Island is the place to see passing whales (p224)
- The Bella Coola Valley has untouched rivers you can float down while viewing bears on shore (p343)

SMALL TOWNS

Scores of idiosyncratic small towns in BC and the Yukon are the cure for a homogenous age.

- Nelson, where marching to the beat of a different drummer is reality (p283)
- Fernie, with ski bums still awed by the ring of peaks (p292)
- Dawson City, a classic end-of-the-road town that avoids cliché through creativity (p407)
- Cowichan Bay, with polychromatic buildings on stilts over the water and plenty of funky characters (p184)
- Armstrong, the gloss-free northern outpost of the Okanagan Valley (p270)

SCENIC ROUTES

BC and the Yukon are a scenic route. But some roads are more equal than others.

- The sublime Sea to Sky Hwy from Vancouver to Whistler (p137)
- It doesn't get any more dramatic than the glacial canyons of the monumental Fraser Canyon (p231)
- On the road to Rossland, Hwy 3B surmounts Strawberry Pass amidst gorgeous alpine scenery (p291)
- Glaciers that will stop you in your tracks line the road to Stewart and Hyder (p382)
- More bald eagles than you can count plus scenery that changes from high alpine to lush forest in a just a few kilometers are among the highlights of the Haines Hwy (p402)

- Offset your carbon emissions with groups such as Vancouver-based Offsetters Carbon Neutral Society (www.offsetters.ca).
- Bus links between major towns are good. Biking is popular from Vancouver year-round to Dawson City in the summer. Environmentally friendly slow ferries link destinations up and down the coast.
- If you see a hotel with a 'green key' rating, it's a property that has gone through the Hotel Association of Canada's voluntary audit to assess

sustainability practices. But bear in mind it is based on self-reporting by the hotels. See www.hacgreenhotels.com for listings.

- BC is home of the *100 Mile Diet* craze (a book that details a Vancouver couple's attempt to eat only local ingredients for one year); restaurants serving locally grown, organic, in-season food are common, as are farmers markets (detailed throughout this book).
- Seafood is a popular menu item, but make sure the species you're ordering is one that's sustainably harvested; check Seafood Watch (www.mbayaq.org/cr/seafoodwatch.asp) for details.
- Check out the GreenDex (p462), which indexes listings in this book that can be a part of traveling sustainability.

For more on protecting the environment in BC and the Yukon, see p80.

TRAVEL LITERATURE

Reading books about your destination can be a great way to get a feel for a place before you go. BC and the Yukon have inspired many books (including some classics) so you can delve right in.

Souvenir of Canada and the sequel, *Souvenir of Canada 2*, are books of essays by renowned Vancouver author Douglas Coupland. Canadian topics and icons such as the Yukon, moose and hockey are explored.

The Golden Spruce by John Vaillant is an award-winning page-turner that chronicles the bizarre, true tale of a logger who cuts down a sacred tree in the Queen Charlotte Islands to protest against logging.

Robert Service: Under the Spell of the Yukon by Enid Mallory is the definitive book on one of the region's greatest writers. Once a shy bank clerk, Service gained fame in his life and continues to wow with works such as *The Spell of the Yukon*.

A Land Gone Lonesome, An Inland Voyage Along the Yukon River by Dan O'Neil is an excellent work by the noted Alaskan author. Characters who cling to strangeness along the deserted banks of the vast Yukon River are featured.

Writing the West Coast is a collection of essays – serious and humorous – by a variety of writers about life on BC's coast.

The Klondike Fever by Pierre Berton is the most readable account of the enormous yet futile efforts of thousands to rush to Dawson City and get rich during the gold rush.

Following the Curve of Time by Cathy Converse traces the life and voyages of skipper and mother M Wylie Blanchet. Her 1925 *The Curve of Time* remains a classic.

INTERNET RESOURCES

You'll find many good special-interest websites listed in the front chapters of this book. Here are some general-purpose ones:

BC Parks (www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/explore.html) The official site to BC's 830 provincial parks (!) is loaded with info on every one.

Go BC (www.gobc.ca) Travel planner for the province with an emphasis on culture and history.

Lonely Planet (www.lonelyplanet.com) Book travel, exchange information with other travelers and much more.

Parks Canada (www.parkscanada.ca) The official site for national parks has information on all facets of the parks in BC and the Yukon.

Tourism British Columbia (www.hellobc.com) The official site for Tourism BC; has lots of good trip-planning ideas.

The Yukon (<http://travelyukon.com>) The official site for Yukon tourism is a Kluane-sized resource. The maps section is comprehensive.

Events Calendar

Summer may be the time of plenty but events worth your while can be found year-round in BC and the Yukon.

JANUARY-FEBRUARY

BANFF/LAKE LOUISE WINTER FESTIVAL

late Jan-early Feb

Annual town-wide party held in late January and early February since 1919, offering much mirth and merriment.

YUKON QUEST

Feb

This legendary 1600km dog sled race goes from Whitehorse to Fairbanks, Alaska through darkness and -50°C temperatures.

APRIL

TELUS WORLD SKI & SNOWBOARD FESTIVAL

mid-Apr

Whistler's giant nine-day showcase of pro ski and snowboard competitions, plus live music concerts.

MAY

VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL

mid-May

Storytelling, performances and activities in a delightful multi-tented, family-friendly site in Vanier Park.

JUNE

BARD ON THE BEACH

Jun-Sep

Up to four Shakespeare productions performed per season in tented pavilions in Vancouver's Vanier Park.

VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL

mid-Jun

Mammoth music celebration, staged in Gastown, Yaletown and around Vancouver over 10 days. Superstar performers plus free outdoor shows.

ELVIS FESTIVAL

late Jun

Dozens of impersonators of The King invade Penticton. It could be your idea of heaven or hound dog hell, especially the ersatz Elvises at the pub-based karaoke.

MIDSUMMER MUSIC FESTIVAL

late Jun

More than 75 bands, including 45 from the Smithers area, enliven the river town with folk music and more.

WILLIAMS LAKE STAMPEDE

late Jun-early Jul

Annual four-day hoedown at the venerable Williams Lake Stampede Grounds: rodeo stunts, country crooners and various pageants.

JULY

VICTORIA SKA FEST

mid-Jul

Canada's largest nothing-but-ska festival brings the BC capital to life every summer.

KELOWNA MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL

late Jul

Performers of all types, artists and general entertainers and spectacle-makers take to Kelowna's streets and venues.

CELEBRATION OF LIGHT

late Jul & early Aug

Four-day international fireworks showcase crowd-pleaser, staged on barges in Vancouver's English Bay.

AUGUST

PEACH FESTIVAL

early Aug

Penticton's premier event is basically a week-long party in early August that has taken place since 1947, loosely centered on crowning a Peach Queen. The Saturday parade is a local fave.

PRIDE WEEK

early Aug

Vancouver's multi-day fiesta of gay-, lesbian- and bisexual-friendly fashion shows, gala parties, concerts and the city's largest street parade.

UDDERFEST

early Aug

Prince Rupert enjoys five days of captivating fringe theater performed by local groups and national performers.

KOKANEE CRANKWORX

mid-Aug

Whistler's nine-day mud-splattered showcase of bike stunts, speed events and world-leading two-wheel legends.

PACIFIC NATIONAL EXHIBITION mid-Aug
BC's biggest country fair is staged in Vancouver and includes two weeks of live shows, music concerts, farm animals and a fairground with great rollercoaster.

DISCOVERY DAYS mid-Aug
The Yukon celebrates the discovery of gold in 1896. Dawson City is party central with a week-long event.

SEPTEMBER

VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FRINGE FESTIVAL mid-Sep
Eleven days of eclectic performances at theaters and unconventional venues dotted around Granville Island.

OCTOBER

OKANAGAN FALL WINE FESTIVAL early Oct
The valley's largest wine festival. For details on others, see p252.

VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL early Oct
Sixteen days of screenings, workshops and galas celebrating Canadian and international movie-making.

NOVEMBER

CORNUCOPIA mid-Nov
An indulgent Whistler showcase of fine wining and dining, with seminars, gala parties and tasting opportunities.

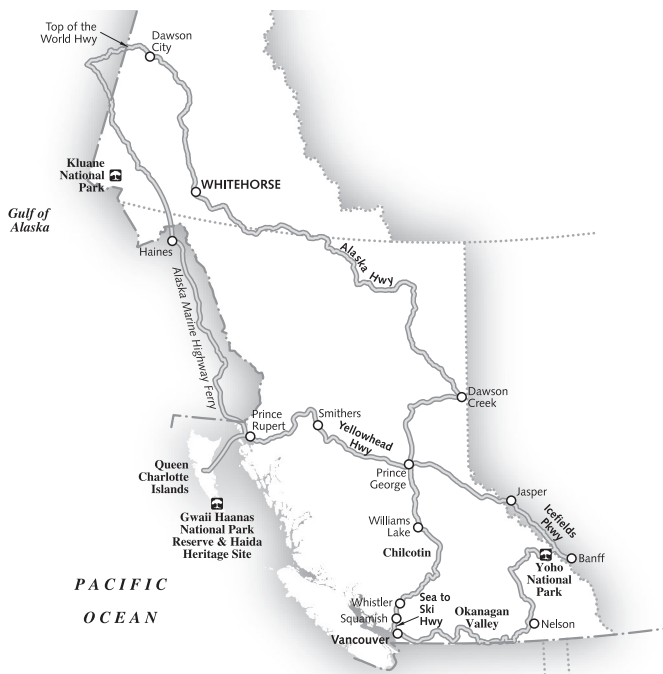
Itineraries

CLASSIC ROUTES

NORTH TO THE YUKON & BACK One Month / Vancouver to Vancouver

From **Vancouver** (p81), take the **Sea to Ski Hwy** (p137) to the natural beauty of **Squamish** (p137). Then go for the gold in **Whistler** (p141) and head up through cowboy country in the **Chilcotin** (p341) to **Williams Lake** (p335). Then it's up to **Prince George** (p350). Yellowhead it on Hwy 16 west through **Smithers** (p361) and on to **Prince Rupert** (p367). Catch a ferry to the **Queen Charlotte Islands** (p372) and plunge into **Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site** (p380). Catch the ferry back to Prince Rupert and get an **Alaska Marine Highway ferry** (p431) to **Haines, AK** (p403). From here enjoy **Kluane National Park** (p400) in the Yukon before crossing into Alaska briefly for the **Top of the World Highway** (p415) to **Dawson City** (p407) in the Yukon. Now you head south, passing through **Whitehorse** (p390) before joining the **Alaska Highway** (p397) all the way to **Dawson Creek** (p355). Jog through Prince George and east on Hwy 16 to **Jasper** (p324) and the Canadian Rockies. Head south on the **Icefields Parkway** (p322) to **Banff** (p308) and then out via **Yoho National Park** (p303) and south via Hwys 23 and 6 to funky **Nelson** (p283). Then go straight west on Hwy 3 for an **Okanagan Valley** (p244) romp and you're back in Vancouver.

This 7900km route has everything you could hope for: the best of the Olympics sites, the storied Yukon, long and beautiful ferry rides and drives, and the Rockies. What makes BC, the Rockies and the Yukon such a jaw-dropping destination can be found along this route.



A LONG WEEKEND

Three to Four Days / Vancouver to Vancouver

Head north from **Vancouver** (p81) on Hwy 99 through **Stanley Park** (p97) and make for West Van's Horseshoe Bay ferry terminal. Take the **Sunshine Coast** (p153) vessel to Langdale and hit Hwy 101, the region's main artery. After a few minutes, you'll be in **Gibsons** (p153), an ideal stop for lunch and a stroll. Rejoining Hwy 101, continue past **Sechelt** (p155), take the short ferry hop from Saltery Bay to Earls Cove and drive on to historic **Powell River** (p157). Wander around the old part of town and find a quaint spot for dinner, then consider a guided sunset kayaking trip.

Up early the next day, take the 15-minute ferry trip to **Comox** (p207) on **Vancouver Island** (p160), then weave south on Hwy 19. Be sure to drop by little **Cumberland** (p207), where the pioneer buildings now house cool eateries and colorful hangouts, then continue on to **Qualicum Beach** (p193). It's not hard to find great fish and chips here, as well as a smattering of quirky attractions. Continue southwards to **Nanaimo** (p186), the island's second city. Wander around the Old City Quarter, lined with enticing shops and restaurants.

Back on the road the next day, continue southwards on Hwy 1 and stop off at **Chemainus** (p186), an old logging town that's now covered with a kaleidoscope of painted murals. Heading towards the southern tip of the island, allow yourself plenty of time to enjoy **Victoria** (p161), the provincial capital. Check in to your hotel then wander the Inner Harbour and maybe hit a brewpub or two.

Weave northwards from the city on Hwy 17 the next morning and take the Swartz Bay ferry back to the mainland. It's a one-hour drive from where the ferry lands at Tsawwassen to Vancouver.



Vancouver, Victoria and Vancouver Island are your palette on this 500km trip that's perfect for a long weekend. The Sunshine Coast is an added pleasure in an itinerary that gives you time to explore local charms and natural beauty.

CIRCLE OF DISCOVERY

Two Weeks / Vancouver to Vancouver

Start your journey of discovery in **Vancouver** (p81). Catch the ferry for the short ride to **Nanaimo** (p186), where you can start to enjoy the Vancouver Island culture, which is distinctly more independent and small-town than the Lower Mainland. After spending the night, meander up Hwy 19 to **Port Hardy** (p213), stopping at villages that catch your fancy. Time your journey so that you make one of the daytime sailings (in summer only) of a BC Ferries **Discovery Coast Ferry** (p345). Spend a full 12 hours spotting whales and more from the deck. Arriving in tiny **Bella Coola** (p344), which sits at the end of a long fjord, find rustic retreat for a few nights in the **Bella Coola Valley** (p343). Spend your days exploring trails past huge old cedars and make the hike to pounding **Odegaard Falls** (p344). Go for a river float and lose count of the grizzlies wandering the shores. When you leave, tackle the thrill-ride for cars called **The Hill** (p342) and head east through the lonely **Chilcotin** (p341). Stop at the alpine waters of **Nimpo Lake** (p342) or just take any little tributary road and lose civilization – what little there is – altogether. At **Williams Lake** (p335) say yee-ha! to cowboy country. Turn south on the **Cariboo Hwy** (Hwy 97; p335). Otherwise known as the Gold Rush Trail, the road follows the route of the first pioneers and gold-seekers who settled in the hardy conditions of BC's unforgiving interior. At **Lytton** (p236) go white-water rafting on the Fraser and Thompson Rivers. After these chilly waters, warm up with a soak in **Harrison Hot Springs** (p231). From here it is a short drive back to Vancouver on the Trans-Canada Hwy.

Over 2400km, you'll enjoy BC's isolated coast while you sail the vaunted Inside Passage. The Bella Coola Valley combines First Nations culture, fearsome natural beauty and oodles of bears. Go cowboy in BC's interior and get wet and silly in waters hot and cold.



TAILORED TRIPS

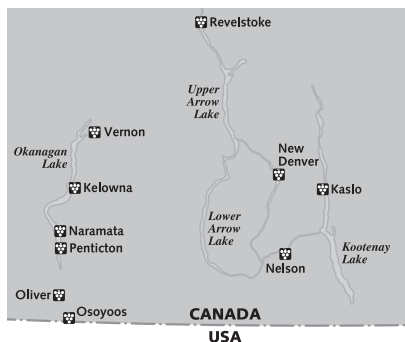
FOODIE BC

With a full menu of lip-smacking treats, it's hard to go hungry on the road in BC. And you don't even have to drive far for your first meal: **Vancouver** (p81) is one of Canada's top dining cities and is lined with restaurants specializing in authentic ethnic cuisine as well as regional, seasonal nosh. You can follow this food to the source with a taste trip around the friendly, family-owned farms of nearby **Abbotsford** (p134) or the small farmsteads and inviting wineries of Vancouver Island's verdant **Cowichan Valley** (p184). And even among the undeniable surfeit of **Okanagan Valley** (p244) wineries, you'll find plenty of foodie farm stops – think artisan cheese and fruit stands piled high with cherries and peaches. Of course, seafood is also one of the province's favorite culinary lures: check out the local fish and shellfish (salmon, halibut or scallops are never a mistake) at chatty, homestyle restaurants on the coastline and beyond, including the rustic **Queen Charlotte Islands** (p372). And if you're finally stuffed, consider a restorative cuppa in **Victoria** (p161), where afternoon tea experiences range from the traditional to fusion international. Alternatively, just continue scoffing in **Richmond** (p132), where some of BC's best contemporary Asian dining awaits.



MORE WINE!

The **Okanagan Valley** (p244) has dozens of world-class wineries, with new ones opening every year. **Osoyoos** (p245) is a good place to start and there are farm stands on the way to **Oliver** (p248), which is surrounded by a veritable moat of wineries. **Penticton** (p249) honors both its peaches and its excellent vintages. **Naramata** (p256) is at the end of a scenic lake-side drive and is protected from the valley's bustle. **Kelowna** (p258) is the fun-filled center of the action, with a great culture, excellent local organic foods and literally intoxicating nightlife. **Vernon** (p266) has more outstanding farms you can visit. Crossing out of the valley, **Revelstoke** (p273) is the heart of BC's best ski country and a cozy place for après-ski. **New Denver** (p281) is a base for wilderness camping (and campfire wine-drinking) at nearby Valhalla Provincial Park. **Kaslo** (p283) has wine-sipping overlooking Kootenay Lake. Finally, you can bring it all together in fun and funky **Nelson** (p283), where you can drink up the atmosphere – and wine – in a bevy of cute bistros and bars.



UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES

BC, the Rockies and the Yukon contain three of Canada's 13 World Heritage Sites. **Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks** (p301) is the Unesco-recognized place where Canadian tourism began. Covering 23,000 sq km it consists of **Banff** (p308), **Jasper** (p324), **Kootenay** (p306) and **Yoho** (p303) National Parks, **Mt Robson** (p331) and **Mt Assiniboine** (p307) Provincial Parks in BC and Humber Provincial Park in Alberta. Kluane/Wrangell-St Elias/Glacier Bay/Tatshenshini-Alsek is the mouthful of a designated name for a region teeming with glaciers and raw landscape spanning two countries. **Kluane National Park** (p400) is solidly in the Yukon, abutting **Tatshenshini-Alsek Provincial Wilderness Park** (p385) in BC, while **Glacier Bay** (p385) and Wrangell-St Elias National Parks are found in adjoining Alaska. **SGaang Gwaii** (p380) is the

island home to the abandoned Haida village of Ninstints in Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve in the Queen Charlotte Islands. In addition to these, Canada is working towards Unesco designation for the following places: the **Klondike** (p404), which covers the gold-rush area from the **Chilkoot Trail** (p405) area near **Skagway** (p404) to **Dawson City** (p407); remote – and melting – **Herschel Island** (p418) and its companion Arctic National Parks, **Ivvavik** (p417) and **Vuntut** (p417). World Heritage Site status is also being sought for all of **Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site** (p380) beyond the already listed SGaang Gwaii.



GET LOST

Stewart, BC and Hyder, AK (p383) sit at the end of a long fjord and are within earshot of vast glaciers slowly grinding along. With no ferry service in, you enter via long, glacier-lined Hwy 37A. This road is a branch of the **Stewart-Cassiar Highway** (Hwy 37; p381), the 727km-long road linking BC and the Yukon. Most people think of the **Alaska Highway** (p397) when they think of driving north, but Hwy 37 in many ways beats the more famous route. Along its mostly paved route, you pass through some of the north's most unspoiled lands. Take a detour to ghostly **Telegraph Creek** (p384). Another excellent drive is the **Klondike Highway** (p404) from **Skagway** (p404) through **Carcross** (p406) and on to **Dawson City** (p407). Follow the route of the gold-mad prospectors in 1897–98, many of whom simply ended up mad. For real adventure, take the all-gravel **Dempster Highway** (p416) to **Inuvik** (p416) in the Northwest Territories and arrange a trip to one of the Yukon's **Arctic parks** (p417).



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