



Waterton Lakes National Park

Includes ➔

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Day Hikes..... | 217 |
| Driving..... | 220 |
| Cycling..... | 222 |
| Other Activities..... | 223 |
| Sights..... | 225 |
| Tours..... | 227 |
| Sleeping..... | 227 |
| Eating..... | 230 |
| Drinking & Entertainment..... | 230 |
| Shopping..... | 230 |

Best Local Haunts

- ➔ Mexican Restaurant (p230)
- ➔ Grizz Cafe & Steakhouse (p230)
- ➔ Thirsty Bear Saloon (p230)
- ➔ Wieners of Waterton (p230)

Best Views

- ➔ Prince of Wales Hotel (p229)
- ➔ Cameron Lake (p225)
- ➔ Carthew-Alderson Trail (p219)
- ➔ Lineham Ridge (p224)

Why Go?

Small and obscure, at least compared to its neighbors to the north and south, Waterton is unrivaled in North America for offering almost instant access to rugged stretches of high alpine terrain well above the treeline. The equal of any of the parks in terms of flora and fauna, Waterton is a sanctuary for numerous iconic animals – including grizzlies, elk and cougar – along with 800-odd wildflower species.

Inaugurated in 1895 and part of a Unesco World Heritage site, Unesco Biosphere Reserve and International Peace Park, 505-sq-km (195-sq-mile) Waterton is geographically almost identical to Glacier, with which it shares a unique frontier border. The eponymous town, compact and quaint with modern hotels, sits prettily on the west side of Upper Waterton Lake, which is essentially the centerpiece of the park, with boat tours and shuttles to distant shoreline trailheads.

Road Distance (KM)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|-----------------------|--------|---------|
| Chief Mountain Border | 385 | | | |
| Jasper | 290 | 670 | | |
| St Mary | 410 | 45 | 700 | |
| Waterton Townsite | 370 | 35 | 660 | 75 |
| | Banff | Chief Mountain Border | Jasper | St Mary |

Note: Distances are approximate

DAY HIKES

There are around 200km (125 miles) of trails in Waterton, and a number of them are multi-purpose routes, accommodating hikers, horseback riders, cross-country skiers and cyclists. Short, easy hikes lie in the vicinity of the townsite, while further afield, day hikes such as the much-lauded Carthew-Alderson Trail can rival anything in Glacier or Banff National Parks for variety of scenery.

Rowe Lakes

Duration Three hours round-trip (Lower Lake), five hours (Upper Lake), four hours (Rowe Meadow)

Distance 8km/5 miles round-trip (Lower Lake), 12.6km/7.9 miles (Upper Lake), 10.4km/6.5 miles (Rowe Meadow)

Difficulty Easy-moderate

Start/Finish Akamina Parkway

Elevation Change 250m (820ft)

Nearest Town Waterton Townsite

Transportation Tamarack hiker shuttle, car

Summary A tempting foray to the cusp of Waterton's easily accessible backcountry that may have you coming back for more. This hike starts innocuously enough on the Akamina Pkwy approximately halfway

between Waterton Townsite and Cameron Lake. The first section to Lower Rowe Lake is moderately easy. Beyond this, you can hike further up to Rowe Meadow and Upper Rowe Lake. For backcountry hikers this is the start and end point of the multiday Tamarack Trail (p224).

From the Akamina Pkwy, follow a sinuous but well-defined trail through a mix of larch and evergreen trees alongside Rowe Creek. The path can be muddy after rain, but with only 250m (820ft) of elevation gain spread over the first 4km (2.5 miles) to Lower Rowe Lake, the ascent is only gradual.

After 3.8km (2.4 miles) a trail branches off to the left. Follow this side trail 200m (220yd) to reach **Lower Rowe Lake**, a small, beautifully clear body of water laid out in a natural amphitheater. A 150m (492ft) waterfall links it with Upper Rowe Lake, which sits in a hanging valley above.

Back at the main trail you have a choice. Turn right and retrace your steps to the parkway or turn left toward **Rowe Meadow**, a wonderful array of wildflowers situated on the edge of the timberline. After crossing a creek at the far end of the meadow, you'll encounter another junction. The Tamarack Trail goes right here up to Lineham Ridge. A left turn offers a last steep climb to **Upper Rowe Lake**, actually two alpine lakes backed by the

Waterton Lakes – Day Hikes

