

# welcome to Banff, Jasper & Glacier



## Mountain Vistas

'No scene has ever given me an equal impression of inspiring solitude and rugged grandeur.' So said the explorer Walter Wilcox when he first laid eyes on the Valley of the Ten Peaks, near Lake Louise, in 1899, and it's a maxim that could happily apply to any of these three national parks. They might not be quite the same untouched landscape experienced by pioneers such as David Thompson, Tom Wilson and Mary Schäffer at the end of the 19th century, but these mountain parks are still among the best places to see the raw machinery of Mother Nature in action. These precious regions harbor some of the world's grandest landscapes: vistas of stunning and of-

ten savage beauty, where for once human meddling has been kept to a minimum, and there's still a whiff of wildness on the mountain breeze.

## The Great Outdoors

Whether it's hiking along a snow-dusted ridgeline or trekking through the spray of a thundering waterfall, Banff, Jasper and Glacier collectively boast some of the finest outdoor activities that North America has to offer. Getting out and about in the great outdoors is an essential part of experiencing the national parks, and there are activities to suit all ages and abilities – even if that just means a gentle stroll along a lakeshore or a soak in one of the region's



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*From snowcapped mountains and pristine valleys to shimmering lakes and glittering glaciers, few places on Earth can match Banff, Jasper and Glacier when it comes to sky-topping scenery.*

(left) Moraine Lake (p68), Banff National Park  
(below) Mountain goat at Glacier National Park (p176)



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natural hot springs. For more active types, there's no end of ways to get your adrenaline racing – from exploring the endless network of backcountry trails to kayaking the restless white-water rapids of the Kicking Horse River.

## Wonderful Wildlife

There's nothing quite like glimpsing animals in their natural habitat, and the Rocky Mountains has some of the best wildlife watching in North America. Shaggy mountain goats, curly-horned mountain sheep, hooting marmots and majestic moose are just some of the inhabitants you're likely to encounter, and if you're really fortunate, you might glimpse a wild

black or grizzly bear moseying down the avalanche slopes, perhaps with a couple of fuzzy cubs in tow. Seeing a bear in the wild is the holy grail for wildlife watchers, and as long as you remember to keep your distance, it'll be an experience that will remain with you long after the Rockies have faded from view.