

ON THE ROAD

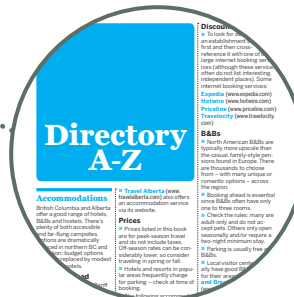
YOUR COMPLETE DESTINATION GUIDE
In-depth reviews, detailed listings
and insider tips



SURVIVAL GUIDE

VITAL PRACTICAL INFORMATION TO
HELP YOU HAVE A SMOOTH TRIP

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THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

John Lee

Brendan Sainsbury, Ryan Ver Berkmoes



Look out for these icons:



Our author's recommendation



A green or sustainable option



No payment required

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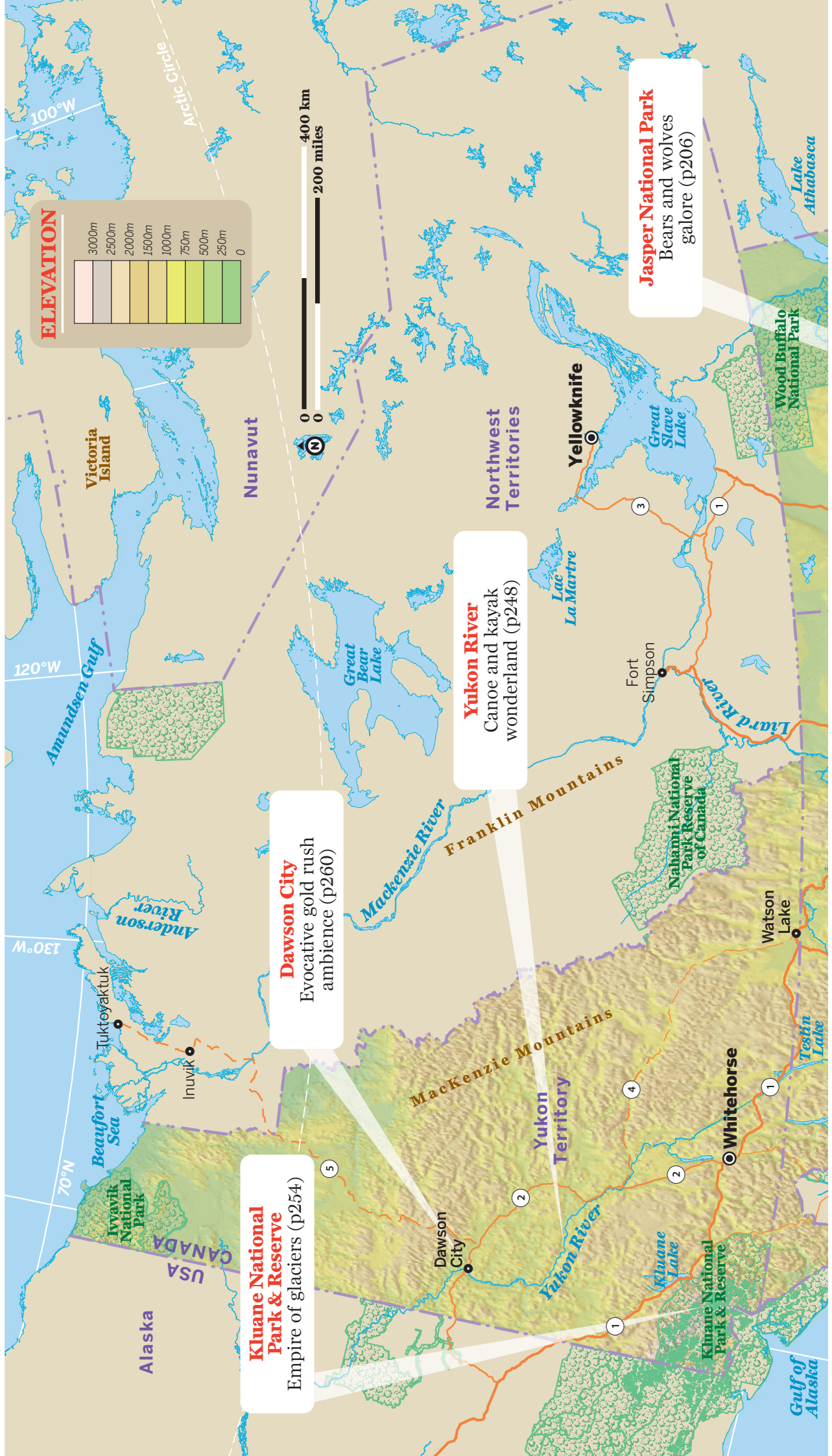
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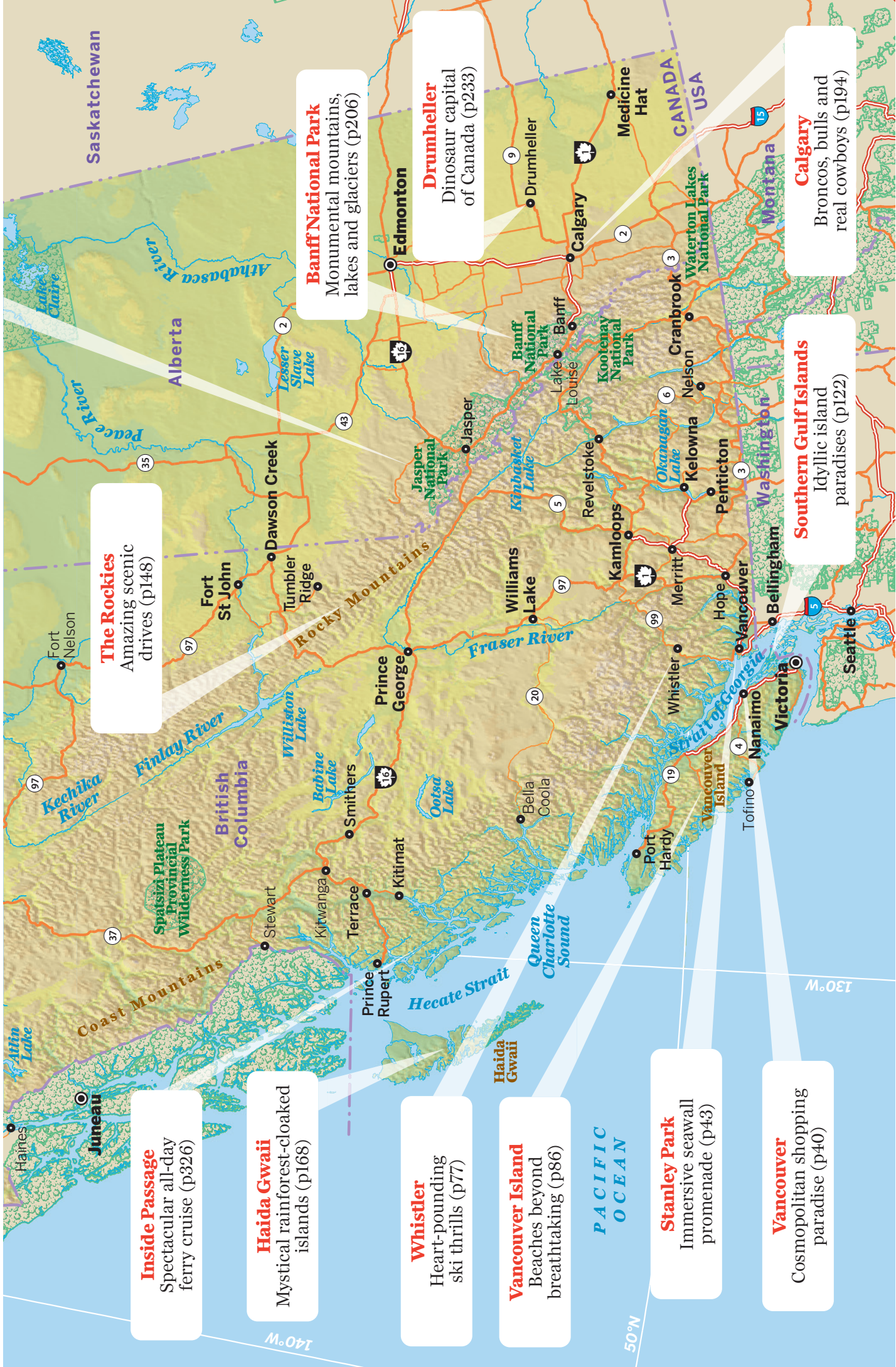
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itineraries

Whether you've got six days or 60, these itineraries can provide a starting point for the trip of a lifetime. Want more inspiration? Head online to lonelyplanet.com/thorntree to chat with other travelers.



10 Days

The Epic Rockies Roll

➤ Kick off your Canadian Rockies road trip in the gateway city of **Edmonton**, spending a couple of days shopping, perusing museums and puttering around Old Strathcona. Then hit Hwy 16 westward for your first big drive: a half-day weave to **Jasper**. Check in for three nights, grab a beer at the Jasper Brewing Co and plan your wildlife watching around the region's lakes and mountains. Next up, it's time to move on southwards via the **Icefields Parkway**, Canada's most scenic drive. It's shadowed by looming crags and studded with inquisitive bighorn sheep peering at you from the clifftops. Stop off en route at the **Columbia Icefield** and take a hike or truck tour on the **Athabasca Glacier**. After lunch at the nearby **Icefield Centre**, continue southwards to **Lake Louise**: take photos and wander the shoreline, saving time for a visit to the equally dazzling **Moraine Lake** a short drive away. Back in the car, you'll soon be in **Banff**. Treat yourself to a few nights at a fancy hotel here and spend the rest of your visit hiking flower-covered alpine trails and marveling at the epic Unesco-listed landscapes.



Two Weeks

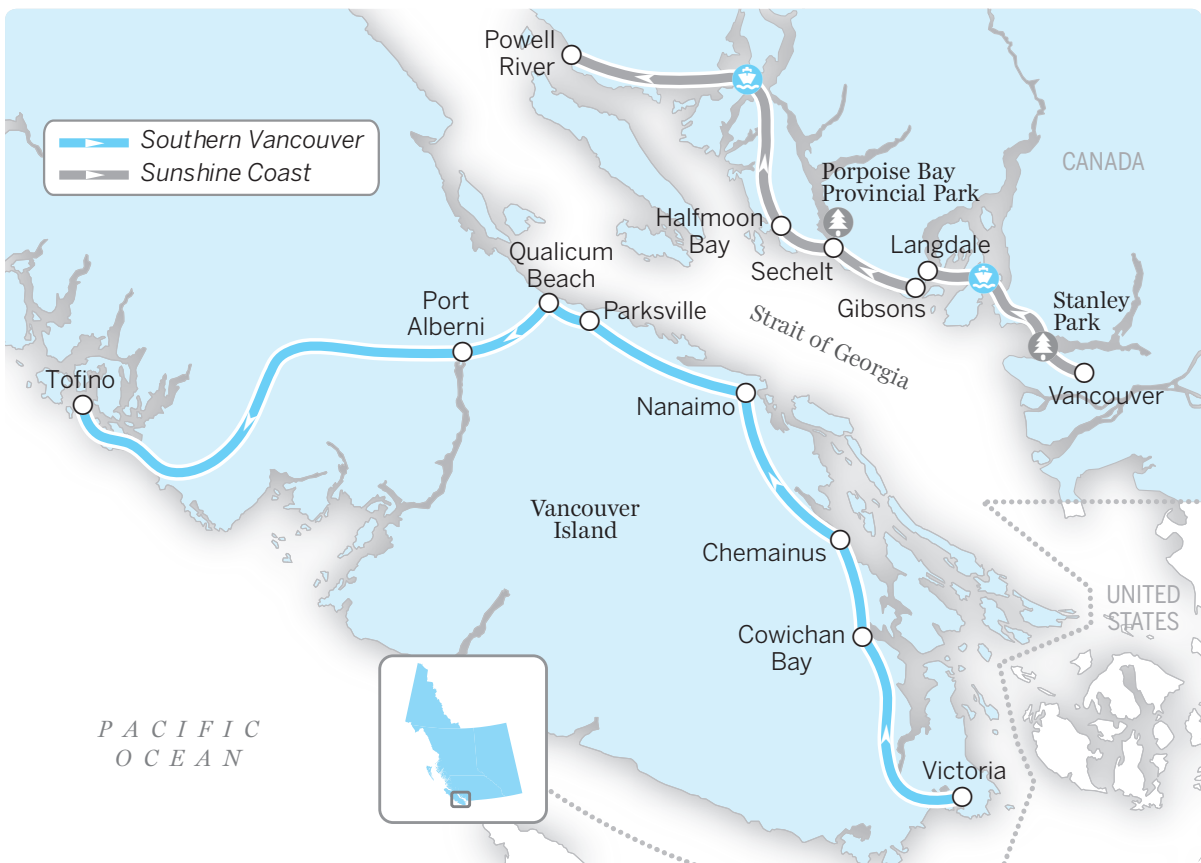
Circling BC – Vancouver to Vancouver

Start your journey of discovery in **Vancouver**. Catch the BC Ferries vessel from Horseshoe Bay for the short ride to **Nanaimo**, where you can sink into ‘island time’ and start to enjoy Vancouver Island’s laid-back culture – it’s distinctly more independent and small-town than the Lower Mainland. After spending the night, head north on Hwy 19, taking an eastward detour to waterfront **Telegraph Cove**. Take a whale-watching tour here – a taste of what’s to come – and check in for a night in one of the restored telegraph station buildings.

Continue north on Hwy 16 the next morning and check in to **Port Hardy** for the night: if it’s still daylight, consider an oceanfront hike. You’ll have an early start to catch the **Discovery Coast Ferry** here the next morning (summer only) but it’s well worth it: a languid 12 hours of coastline gazing with the ever-present promise of spotting whales, seals and more from your sun-dappled deck perch.

Arriving in tiny **Bella Coola**, which sits at the end of a long fjord, find rustic retreat for a few nights in the **Bella Coola Valley**. Spend your days exploring trails past huge old cedars and make the hike to pounding **Odegaard Falls**. Go for a river float and lose count of the grizzlies wandering the shores. When you leave, tackle The Hill, a thrill-ride for cars, and head east through the lonely **Chilcotin**. Stop at the alpine waters of **Nimpo Lake** or just take any little tributary road and lose civilization – what little there is – altogether. At **Williams Lake** say yee-ha to cowboy country.

Turn south on the **Cariboo Hwy** (Hwy 97), 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** go white-water rafting on the Fraser and Thompson Rivers. After these chilly waters, warm up with a soak in **Harrison Hot Springs**. From here it is an easy drive back to Vancouver on Hwy 1.



One Week Southern Vancouver

Start with two nights in **Victoria**, BC's provincial capital, giving yourself plenty of time to explore the museums, galleries and historic streets before departing northwards on day three via Hwy 1. Take your time weaving through the Malahat mountain region but save time for a long lunch in the idyllic waterfront community of **Cowichan Bay**. It'll be hard to tear yourself away (there are B&Bs in the area if you can't manage it) but worth it to continue north and reach **Chemainus**, a former logging town that's now adorned with dozens of murals. It's not far to your sleepover in **Nanaimo**, the island's second city, where there are some good restaurants and a popular museum. Next morning, you'll be off to check out the friendly oceanfront communities of **Parksville** and **Qualicum Beach** – ideal for beachcombing fans – before veering inland via Hwy 4 towards the dramatic west coast. **Port Alberni** is a handy en route lunch stop, but you'll likely be eager to thread through the winding mountain roads to **Tofino**. Spend at least three nights here soaking up BC's wild and wave-licked Pacific Ocean coastline.

Four Days Sunshine Coast

Head north from **Vancouver** on Hwy 99 through **Stanley Park** and make for West Van's Horseshoe Bay ferry terminal. Take the Sunshine Coast vessel to **Langdale** and roll off onto Hwy 101, the region's main artery. After a few minutes you'll be in artist-studded **Gibsons**, an ideal lunch stop – fish and chips at Molly's Reach is recommended. Check into your local B&B here, then take an early evening kayak tour on the glassy ocean. Rejoining Hwy 101 the next morning, continue on to **Sechelt**, where **Porpoise Bay Provincial Park** offers some lovely short hikes. If you're lucky, you'll also catch Saturday's Farmers & Artisans Market, a great way to hang with the locals and stuff your face. Drive past the town for tonight's accommodation: a luxury cliffside tent suite at Rockwater Secret Cove Resort in **Halfmoon Bay**. On the road again the next morning, you'll have a short ferry hop before arriving in the area's top town. **Powell River** combines old-school heritage, a funky young population and tons of outdoor activities. Stick around for a day or two of kayaking, hiking and mountain biking.



Six Days Due North

From downtown **Vancouver**, drive through Stanley Park on Hwy 1 then join Hwy 99 northwards to **Whistler**. Spend the afternoon hiking or biking the summer trails and sleep over at one of the resort's grand hotels. Next morning, continue north via **Pemberton** – keep your eyes peeled for towering Mt Currie. You're now in the heart of Cariboo cowboy country but it's probably too late to swap your car for a horse. After a five-hour drive, stop for a night in a **Williams Lake** motel: time your visit for the June–July rodeo and you'll have a blast, or book a white-water rafting tour with a local operator. On Hwy 97 the next morning, you'll be en route to **Prince George**: the heart of northern BC's logging country is about three hours away but stop off – via Hwy 26 – at **Barkerville**, an evocative re-creation of an old pioneer town. After a Prince George layover, you'll need an early start for the four-hour Yellowhead Hwy drive to **Smithers**, an arsty little frontier town with plenty of good places to stay. Your final four-hour drive the next day delivers you eastward to lovely **Prince Rupert**, northern BC's best town.

Two Weeks Yukon Bound

Spend a couple of days exploring **Prince Rupert** – the Museum of Northern BC and the North Pacific Historic Fishing Museum are must-sees – before rolling onto an Alaska Marine Highway ferry to **Haines, AK**. It's a two-day odyssey that the region's cruise ships will charge you a comparative arm and a leg for. Once you're back on dry land, spend a night in one of the many hotels in Haines. From here, you'll be (almost) on the doorstep of one of the world's largest protected wildernesses. Accessed 249km away via the BC town of **Haines Junction**, **Kluane National Park** is a vast Unesco-recognized realm of glaciers and mountains. Weave through the park and cross over again into Alaska briefly to access the **Top of the World Hwy**. Continue on your merry way and you'll reach **Dawson City**, the Yukon's coolest old-school town and center of gold-rush heritage. Stick around for a couple of nights to enjoy the heritage ambience, then continue southwards on the Klondike Hwy for 538km to **Whitehorse**, the territory's capital. There are enough museums and galleries here to keep you occupied for another Yukon night.



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and

Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



John Lee

National & Regional Parks; BC & the Canadian Rockies Today; History; Outdoor Activities; People, Arts & Culture; Regional Cuisine; Wine & Beer; Wildlife Born in southeast England, John moved to British Columbia to study at the University of Victoria in the 1990s, relocating to Vancouver and launching a full-time freelance travel writing career in 1999. Since then, he's been covering the region (and beyond) for major newspapers and magazines throughout the world. Becoming

a Lonely Planet author in 2005, he has contributed to 20 titles, including writing the most recent edition of the *Vancouver City Guide*. To read his latest stories and see what he's up to next, visit www.johnleewriter.com.



Brendan Sainsbury

Alberta An expat Brit from Hampshire, England, Brendan is a former fitness instructor, volunteer teacher, wannabe musician and travel guide who now writes about travel full-time. In 2003 he met a Canadian girl from Saskatoon in Spain. After romancing in Cuba and getting married in Mexico, they now live (with their son, Kieran) in White Rock, BC. Brendan is a long time lover of Alberta's national parks and is the co-author of Lonely Planet's current *Banff, Jasper &*

Glacier National Parks guide.



Ryan Ver Berkmoes

British Columbia, Yukon Territory Ryan's been bouncing around BC and the Yukon for more than two decades and doing more critter-spotting than he'd ever imagined possible. But it's fitting given Ryan's background with moose. At his first newspaper job he was tasked with placing random moose jokes in the classifieds to pique reader interest (eg What's a moose's favorite philosopher? Cam-moose). For better jokes than that, surf over to ryanverberkmoes.com.

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