

8 GREAT CANADIAN ROAD TRIPS



Sure, you can drive California's Pacific Coast Highway; sure, you can follow the old Route 66 through the scenic Southwest; sure, you can take Florida's Route 1 from Key Largo through Key West — but if you are an experienced road tripper, you've probably already been there, done that. Instead of trying to find an untouched route in the U.S., you'd likely find more fun on one of the wide-open treks in the Great White North. Canada is crisscrossed with highways and byways ripe for exploration, and for most of the year, there is more to the scenery than snow. Here are eight Canadian road trip ideas for your next vacation.

British Columbia

Perhaps the shortest road trip in Canada, the route from Vancouver to Tofino still offers some outstanding sights. The most notable is undoubtedly MacMillan Provincial Park, which contains groves of mossy Douglas firs that are over 800 years old. You can walk the footpaths, have a pleasant picnic, and be back on the road to Tofino, where you can enjoy surfing and learn about the region's First Nations.

Chatham-Kent Corridor

Perhaps the top motorcycle route in all North America, Chatham-Kent is a historic and scenic region that includes Lake Erie, Lake St. Clair, and the Thames River. On your journey, you can learn about and see sites where Canadians and Americans clashed during the War of 1812 (and other skirmishes), visit the destinations of runaway slaves on the Underground Railroad, and enjoy a few natural landscapes while hiking and picnicking.

Icefields

The Icefields Parkway in Alberta takes you through some of the wildest, most magnificent woods in all of Canada. More than 230 kilometers long, the route cuts through the Rocky Mountains in two world-renowned national parks: Banff and Jasper. You can explore the length of the Icefields in a few hours, but it is far more fun to spend an overnight at one of Jasper's campsites, where you can enjoy one of the world's largest dark sky reserves and take a sky full of stars.

Kelowna

Few Americans know any more about Canadian cuisine than maple syrup and poutine, but in fact, Canada claims some outstanding culinary achievements. Kelowna, British Columbia is particularly well-endowed with foodie fun, and road tripping through this region will see you surfeit with amazing food and wine experiences. Some stand-out gastronomic options include Tantalus Vineyards, Arlo's Honey Farm, and Okanagan Lavender and Herb Farm.

Niagara Falls

Niagara Falls proper, which is riddled with amazing attractions and views of a natural world wonder — not to mention well-appointed Niagara Falls hotels — is just one feature in a valley full of beauty

and splendor. You can spend a day or two venturing into the Niagara valley to explore the area's prominent wine country or hike around the Niagara Escarpment, which contains the Bruce Trail, Canada's oldest and longest footpath.

Nova Scotia

The Cabot Trail is a near-300-kilometer loop around the north of Cape Breton Island. Most of the road hugs the coast, providing dramatic views of the Atlantic and Cape Breton Highlands National Park. There are plenty of walking trails to give you a chance to stretch your legs — and spot moose, whales, seals, and other fauna. Plus, you can experience the unique culture of the island, which is a mixture of French, Acadian, and Celtic, in any local pub with live music.

Quebec

To celebrate Montreal's 375th year, you can plan a road trip from Montreal to the Gaspé Peninsula. The Chemin du Roy route takes you along the St. Lawrence River, past dozens of small villages with their own history of heritage. You'll also pass through Quebec City, which boasts a glorious historic district ripe for exploration — especially the Citadelle of Quebec. On Gaspé Peninsula, you can enjoy a well-deserved rest with other city dwellers, who escape to fishing camps for whale or bird watching.

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan has a bad reputation for being flat and boring — but that's only if you take the Trans-Canada Highway. In truth, the trip from Regina to Saskatoon is riddled with exciting side adventures that reveal the thrilling history of the region. For example, you can visit the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Heritage Center and see Mounties on parade during the late summer. In Moose Jaw, you can learn about Canadian prohibition. Farther west, you can spy colorful barns, scenic lakes, and similar views from the road. There is adventure everywhere in Canada, even in Saskatchewan.

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