Pacific Rockies, USA & Canada





From **Vancouver**, head for **Whistler** and then the **Canadian & American Rockies**. After the national parks of **Yoho**, **Banff** and **Waterton Lakes**, you cross **Glacier** National Park in **Montana** via the stunning **Going-to-the-Sun Rd**, before reaching **Idaho**. After the charming small towns of **Washington State** (**Winthrop**, **La Conner**, **Poulsbo**...), **North Cascades National Park**, **Seattle** and its **Space Needle**, then **Olympic National Park** on the **Pacific Coast**, take a break in **Victoria** on **Vancouver Island**. Return to Vancouver. Departure also possible from **Seattle**.



Day 1

Flight to Vancouver. Time difference is 9 hours behind.

Transfer to your downtown hotel. Vancouver sits on the shores of the Strait of Georgia, between the Pacific Ocean and the mountains...

Stanley Park is the city's green lung and a favorite spot for locals, who come here to stroll or jog. You can explore it along the Seawall. You'll admire your first totem poles.

Wandering around Downtown is also enjoyable. Head to the historic district of Gastown, with its cobblestone streets, Victorian buildings, and the famous 'Steam Clock', a steam-powered clock that chimes every 15 minutes. Robson Street is the place for shopping. Yaletown is the city's trendy neighborhood, with lots of bars and restaurants.

Overnight in Vancouver.

Day 2

Free program in Vancouver. Enjoy the day to explore the city, stroll around and do a bit of shopping.



We especially like the West End, near Stanley Park, for its laid-back vibe, seaside walks along the bay, and bars and restaurants popular with locals... You can take the ferry to Granville Island, home to the huge public market.

Just a few minutes' walk away, Kits Point is home to the Vancouver Maritime Museum, among other attractions. Kitsilano Beach and Elsje Point, offering a great view of Vancouver's skyline, are right next door. You can take the ferry back to the Aquatic Centre.

For a bird's-eye view, go up to the top of the Lookout Tower downtown. Finally, just outside the city, there are the impressive suspension bridges of Capilano and Lynn Canyon (not for the faint-hearted...).

Overnight in Vancouver.



Day 3

Drive to Whistler, one of the most renowned ski resorts in North America.

The aptly named 'Sea-to-Sky' Highway runs along Howe Sound to Squamish, for a suggested stop at Jack's Bar, known to fans of the series Virgin River (even if the story is supposed to take place on the northern California coast...).

A few miles before Whistler, those who wish can detour to beautiful Garibaldi Provincial Park to walk along the lakeshore (often snow-covered until late in the season).

Arrive in Whistler and check in at the hotel.

Free time to discover this charming (and upscale) resort.

Overnight in Whistler.



Day 4

Head east along the beautiful Sea-to-Sky Highway. Stretch your legs at Joffre Lakes Provincial Park, home to three stunning glacier-fed lakes with intensely turquoise-green water. The last one is reached after about 1,500 m of hiking and past the lovely Holloway Falls.

The road then follows Duffey Lake before heading up to the small town of Lillooet, an ideal lunch stop. The views over the gorges of the Fraser River upstream are worth the detour.

After Pavilion Lake and the historic old ranch of Hat Creek, you join Trans-Canada Highway 1 near Cache Creek.

The route follows Kamloops Lake and ends a few miles later in the city of the same name. Check in at the hotel. Go for a stroll along the Thompson River, around Riverside Park, for a beautiful sunset...

Overnight in Kamloops.



Day 5

Head north to Clearwater, the gateway to beautiful Wells Gray Provincial Park. The dead-end road follows the Clearwater River, offering scenic viewpoints and a few lovely waterfalls, including Dawson Falls on the Murtle River.

While this large park with its impressive density of conifer forests is a hiking paradise, the highlight is at the very end of the road: the viewpoint over Helmcken Falls. It's stunning!

Back in Clearwater, continue north. A must-stop near Blue River at Mud Lake, where the River Safari floating restaurant also serves as the departure point for boat trips in search of bears (plentiful in the area). Your final stop is Valemount, a small town with a couple of good addresses...

Overnight in Valemount, or a bit further, in Tête Jaune Cache.



Day 6

On paper, today's stage is short. Take the opportunity to enjoy breakfast or coffee with a view of impressive Mount Robson, at the café of the same name next to the visitor centre. A great spot with an unbeatable view of Mt Robson...

Hikers can go deeper into the park to walk along Kinney Lake. The more adventurous can continue all the way to Berg Lake.

The road then follows Moose Lake before entering Alberta shortly before the town of Jasper, in the heart of the magnificent national park of the same name. The town was badly hit by the 2024 wildfires but is recovering at an astonishing pace.

There are plenty of activities starting from town, such as the aerial tramway to Whistlers Peak, or pretty lakes with evocative names: Patricia, Pyramid, Edith & Annette... Or Emerald Pond along the Athabasca River...

Overnight in Jasper.



Day 7

Head to Maligne Canyon, about ten km from town... The Maligne River drops 23 m into an impressive limestone gorge, visible from several footbridges. About fifteen km further on, Medicine Lake is a strange place: the Maligne River flows into it but doesn't flow out (it resurfaces at Maligne Canyon).

Further still along Maligne Rd, Maligne Lake is a great walking destination. You can take a beautiful 1h30 cruise that goes almost to the end of the lake. You can also rent a canoe at the very photogenic 'boat house' (there's also a restaurant...).

Hiking fans can go as far as Mount Edith Cavell, about 30 km south of Jasper. The view is earned: after the parking lot you'll walk about half an hour to reach the small glacial lake at the foot of Mt Edith Cavell.

Overnight in Jasper.



Day 8

Leave Jasper and take the extraordinary Icefields Parkway, named after the glaciers lining its route. There are numerous viewpoints along the way. First stop to admire Athabasca Falls, then Sunwapta Falls.

The 'Skywalk' footbridge overlooks the lower part of the Columbia Glacier, similar to the one at Grand Canyon West over the Colorado.

Further on, the giant Athabasca Glacier can be admired after a walk to the end of its tongue (which is inevitably retreating). The Ice Explorer gets you as close as possible.

Many lakes dot the Icefields Parkway, but our favorite is sublime Peyto Lake. The view from the lookout rivals those at Lake Louise or Lake Moraine, with fewer crowds!

Further south, Bow Lake offers lovely views of the peaks from its north shore.

Overnight in Banff.



Day 9

Lake Louise and Lake Moraine are the two stars of the Canadian Rockies. They are unmissable for their emerald color and the surrounding nature, but they are also victims of their popularity: it's mandatory (Moraine) or strongly recommended (Lake Louise) to take the shuttle to

get there.

Other gems around Banff: Johnston Canyon and its waterfalls, Lake Minnewanka, and Mt Sulphur, reached by gondola. The panorama is superb.

Our favorites are Emerald Lake and O'Hara Lake in Yoho National Park, less than 40 km from Lake Louise. While O'Hara is more demanding (summits and views), Emerald Lake is easier to access.

A bit further, don't miss the impressive Takakkaw Falls, 254 m high (five times higher than at Niagara). You might get soaked at their base... And best of all: not many people...

Overnight in Banff.



Day 10

Today's drive takes you to Waterton Lakes National Park, on the border with the USA. The first part follows the Bow River valley, then the scenic Kananaskis Trail.

The route then reaches Longview, about fifty miles from Calgary, the 'capital of the Canadian Rockies '. We'll point you to a great (and original...) lunch spot.

Head south to Pincher Creek via Chain Lakes Reservoir and a few lovely vistas before reaching your stop for the day: Waterton Lakes National Park, bordering Montana.

The natural setting is magnificent, with the iconic Prince of Wales Hotel and its breathtaking view over the lake. Keep your eyes open: it's not uncommon to spot local wildlife near the lake, including bears!

Overnight in Waterton Park.



Day 11

Leave Canada and enter the United States. Your U.S. roadtrip begins with Glacier National Park, a true masterpiece crafted by Mother Nature.

Cross it from east to west on the legendary 'Going-to-the-Sun' Road, 80 km long. It's one of the country's most beautiful roads! A delight, even if it's busy in season.

Straddling the famous Continental Divide, the park features glaciers, rugged peaks, spectacular waterfalls, rivers for white-water sports enthusiasts, and postcard-perfect lakes such as Lake McDonald, Lake

Sherburne, and Saint Mary Lake.

Exit the park via West Glacier and reach Whitefish, a charming small town (and ski resort) near the lake of the same name. One of our favorites—especially pleasant to stroll around (notably during the summer markets held every Tuesday).

Overnight in Whitefish.



Day 12

After one last walk through Downtown Whitefish, head north to Eureka, near the Canada border.

On to Lake Koocanusa, then follow the Kootenay River and the lovely Kootenay Falls near Libby.

The route crosses the Kootenai and Kaniksu forests.

Enter Idaho before Bonners Ferry, where today's route turns due south toward Sandpoint, on the shores of the large Lake Pend Oreille.

Sandpoint is a pleasant small town. Stroll along the main street and around Beach Park, a green oasis with marina, beach and a restaurant almost on the water. There's even a miniature replica of the Statue of Liberty...

Overnight in Sandpoint.



Day 13

This is the longest stage. It's all about scenic roads and wide-open spaces in northern Idaho and eastern Washington.

The route follows the Pend Oreille River, then climbs toward the Little Pend Oreille wildlife area and Chewelah Mountain. After Flowery Trail Pass (1,233 m), descend to Chewelah, then reach the Columbia River, crossing it at Kettle Falls.

The scenic road to Sherman Pass (1,699 m) offers lovely views. Suggested stop in Republic. You'll see many 'Espresso Shacks' in Washington State: small roadside stands serving (good) coffee.

The route follows the Okanagan River, then climbs toward North Cascades National Park, reaching the adorable and very typical town of Winthrop, with an atmosphere somewhere between Route 66 and the 'Far West'.

Overnight in Winthrop.



Day 14

Start your day with a visit to the fascinating Shafer Museum, an Ali Baba's cave retracing the life of the region's pioneers. It's free (donations appreciated).

Head for the Pacific via North Cascades National Park, crossing it on the North Cascades Scenic Byway, a magnificent road that reaches Washington Pass at 1,669 m. Stop to enjoy the views. A bit further on, there are also superb views over the turquoise waters of Diablo Lake.

Arrive on the Pacific at Skagit Bay in La Conner, one of the prettiest towns in the state, with its Main Street and waterfront boardwalk.

Then cross Deception Pass, linking the bay to the ocean. Arrive on Whidbey Island in the charming village of Langley. Several nice little museums, including one dedicated to whales.

Overnight in Langley (or nearby).



Day 15

Enjoy the peace and quiet of Langley before getting back on the road.

After a ferry crossing between Clinton (Whidbey Island) and Mulkiteo, aviation enthusiasts can stop in Everett, home to Boeing headquarters, to visit the Boeing Future of Flight (book in advance). You'll see part of the assembly lines.

Depending on your wishes and timing, we suggest a small detour to the charming town of Snohomish, on the river of the same name, before continuing to Seattle.

Arrive in Seattle and start discovering the city—perhaps around Pioneer Square or the famous covered market at Pike Place. For an amazing view of the Seattle skyline and the Space Needle, head to Kerry Park in the (upscale) Queen Anne neighborhood. It gets crowded at sunset...

Overnight in Seattle.



Day 16

Birthplace of Grunge (Nirvana, Soundgarden, Pearl Jam...), this vibrant port city is surrounded by water, with Puget Sound and Lake Washington.

Besides North Cascades, two other national parks surround the city: Olympic National Park to the west, and Mount Rainier to the southeast, the snowy sentinel that seems to watch over Seattle!

The city is built on hills, like San Francisco. In addition to the green outer neighborhoods (Capitol Hill, Queen Anne...), there is Downtown Seattle, with Pike Place Market and the aquarium.

Nearby, the famous Space Needle offers an outstanding view of the region. Right next door, the Chihuly Garden & Glass Museum is a favorite for its splendid glass sculptures. The Museum of Pop Culture and the Public Library are two magnificent architectural achievements. Soccer fans can head to the stadium of the famous Seahawks.

Overnight in Seattle.



Day 17

Short ferry ride from Seattle to Bainbridge Island.

Stop in Poulsbo on Liberty Bay. A coastal town, Poulsbo is nicknamed 'Little Norway'.

For good reason... It was founded by Scandinavian pioneers from the Midwest, who followed the Native American Suquamish Nation. Its waterfront is lovely.

The route follows the Hood Canal via Sunset Beach, then crosses a vast wetland dotted with lakes, rivers and ponds.

Enter Olympic National Park from the south, near the Quinault Indian Reservation. Arrive at Lake Quinault for a suggested coffee stop in its beautiful wooden lodge (you may stay there).

Overnight at Lake Quinault (or on the coast near Kalaloch).



Day 18

We recommend leaving early. Reach the Pacific coast near Queets and Kalaloch Lodge. The region is rich in vast beaches covered with driftwood.

The road follows the ocean to the beautiful Ruby Beach, then heads inland along the Hoh River.

Detour to the Hoh Rain Forest for a walk in another world. The shorter trail, the 'Hall of Mosses Trail', offers a great introduction to the country's largest temperate-zone rainforest.

It is famous for its exceptional ferns and mosses, as well as its diverse wildlife and flora.

Back to Highway 101. After Forks and Beaver, follow Lake Crescent (stop at the lodge, or across the road, go see Marymere Falls). Arrive in Port Angeles to catch the ferry to the Canadian side, to Victoria on Vancouver Island.

Overnight in Victoria.



Day 19

Nicknamed the “Garden City”, Victoria is a charming town with a very British feel. The mild climate in the south of Vancouver Island encourages lush nature, as shown by the magnificent Butchart Gardens, home to more than 1 million different species!

The Royal BC Museum is fascinating, in particular for the exhibitions dedicated to the First Nations and the superb totem hall.

Don’t hesitate to stroll around Beacon Hill Park, the Victorian mansions of Craigdarroch and Hatley, head to the Fisgard Lighthouse, or wander near the harbour to spot the houseboats...

If you feel like driving, head towards the charming little fishing village of Port Renfrew, via the beautiful Pacific Marine Circle Route. Nature lovers can hop on a whale & orca watching cruise (and discover many other species that live here). Or why not try a guided outing in a canoe or kayak.

Overnight in Victoria.



Day 20

Short drive to Swartz Bay and boarding the ferry to Tsawwassen.

Final kilometres to reach the airport and return your rental vehicle, before taking your return flight to Europe (if your flight is in the morning, you will need to plan an additional night in Vancouver).

Extension or itinerary change: please contact us

Accommodation