Camping in the Banff Area

2023

Également offert en français
For information on things to do during your visit, view these guides online at parks.canada.ca/banff-brochures or pick up copies at a Parks Canada visitor centre.

While in the park ...

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**Winter camping**

Looking for a new experience? Tunnel Mountain Village II is open year-round for camping. Bring an RV, or pack a tent, and enjoy the park under a layer of fresh snow. The neighbouring campground, Tunnel Mountain Trailer Court, is a winter activity hub for cross-country skiing, fat-biking, snowshoeing and winter walking. Throughout the park, favourite summer trails become a wonderland of snow-covered pines and white-capped mountains waiting to be explored.

Visit parks.canada.ca/banff-winter or the Banff Visitor Centre for more information on winter activities.

**Campsite reservations**

Reservations are highly recommended for Banff area campgrounds. During the summer months, campgrounds are often fully booked. Reserve your site at reservation.pc.gc.ca or dial toll free 1-877-737-3783 (1-877-RESERVE).

**Dates of operation**

Dates of operation vary from campground to campground and are available at parks.canada.ca/banffcamping and on page 4 of this guide. Summer camping begins in early May, with all campgrounds open by late June. Demand is heaviest from June through September.

**Your pass to camping**

Campers must acquire the following permits to camp in Banff National Park:

- National park entry pass – available at the Banff East Gate, a Parks Canada visitor centre, or at campground kiosks. Also available online at banfflakeelouise.com
- Camping permit – available online (reservation.pc.gc.ca), over the phone (1-877-RESERVE) or at the campground kiosk.
- Fire permit – If you would like to have a fire, permits are available for a fee at the time of reservation or at the campground kiosk. Visit parks.canada.ca/banff-fire for wildfire and fire ban information.

**More camping opportunities**

Parks Canada operates 14 frontcountry campgrounds in Banff National Park, with 2,462 sites available during the summer season. In addition to the seven campgrounds in this guide, the Lake Louise area offers additional options for camping, including campgrounds in close proximity to the community of Lake Louise and along the scenic Icefields Parkway. Visit parks.canada.ca/banff-camping for more information.

**Backcountry camping**

For backcountry camping, visit parks.canada.ca/banff-backcountry for more information and to book a site. Numerous hike-in campgrounds are available throughout Banff National Park. All require a backcountry permit and a national park entry pass.
**Castle Mountain Campground**

This campground is small and intimate. It offers rustic, no-service camping in a beautiful wooded area along the Bow Valley Parkway (Hwy 1A). Just 32 km from the town of Banff, the campground is suitable for tents or small RVs up to 24 feet (7.3 metres). It is close to nearby attractions, such as Silverton Falls and Johnston Canyon. Sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis only. Self-register as you enter Castle Mountain Campground. Pay by leaving your credit card information or bring exact cash.

- Kiosk
- Self registration
- Notice board
- Tents
- RVs
- Trailers
- Parking
- Toilet
- Showers
- Cooking shelter
- Drinking water
- Dish washing station
- Food locker
- Recycling/Waste disposal
- Firewood
- Trailer dumping
- Accessible
- Theatre
- Accommodation
- Snack Bar
- No RVs
- Roam Public Transit stop
- Trail

**All sites have a firepit.**

**Where to Camp**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campgrounds</th>
<th>Open dates</th>
<th>Sites</th>
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<td>May 11 - Oct. 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tunnel Mtn. Village II</td>
<td>Open year-round</td>
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<td>Tunnel Mtn. Village II</td>
<td>eTNF Apr May  - Oct. 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two Jack Main</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two Jack Lakeside</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johnston Canyon</td>
<td>May 25 - Sep. 25</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Mountain</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Campground closed for construction. Visit [parks.canada.ca/banffcamping](http://parks.canada.ca/banffcamping) for the latest information and opening dates.

**Johnston Canyon Campground**

132 sites

reservation.pc.gc.ca

Only 25 km from the town of Banff, this campground is a good option for a more rustic and authentic camping experience. Sites are available for tents and small RVs up to 27 ft (8.2 metres). Its central location, along the Bow Valley Parkway (Hwy 1A), provides access to the popular Johnston Canyon Trail. Roam Public Transit is available to the town of Banff during summer.

Evening theatre programs

Join park interpreters as they share stories and interesting facts about Banff National Park’s natural and cultural heritage. All programs are for adults and kids alike! These programs are included in your national park entry fee.

Where: Bear’s Den Theatre at Johnston Canyon Campground (indoor theatre)

Visit the campground kiosk or [parks.canada.ca/banff-interpretation](http://parks.canada.ca/banff-interpretation) for more information.

**Bow Valley Parkway:**

Private motor vehicle access may be restricted on portions of the Bow Valley Parkway (Hwy 1A) to protect wildlife and offer visitors a cycling experience. The campground can be accessed from the Trans-Canada Highway (Hwy 1) and 93 South (Hwy 93S) intersection. Visit [parks.canada.ca/banff-bow-valley-parkway](http://parks.canada.ca/banff-bow-valley-parkway) for current information.

**Take public transit:**

Public transit is available within Banff National Park and from a few towns, most campgrounds. The following public transit service may be available:

- Town of Banff parking
- Roam Public Transit
- Town of Banff
- Parks Canada visitor centre
- Bear’s Den Theatre
- Johnston Canyon Campground

**Parks Canada visitor centre**

See page 4 for legend.

**Human food kills wildlife.**

Do not litter.
This is one of Banff’s most popular campgrounds. Located 10 km from the town of Banff and close to Lake Minnewanka, this rustic, no-service campground is beautifully situated on the shore of Two Jack Lake. It is perfect for tents or small RVs up to 27 feet (8.2 metres) and offers some lakeshore sites, 10 O’TENTik sites, mountain views and access to the lake for non-motorized recreation.

**Equipped camping**

Do you want to avoid the hassle of organizing and packing everything for your camping trip? No problem! Parks Canada offers Equipped Campsites at Two Jack Main Campground where tent and camping essentials are provided on site. All you need to bring is a sense of adventure and your personal items including sleeping bag, cookware, dishes and food.

Visit parks.canada.ca/banff-equipped for more information.

You can prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) are non-native plants, animals, and diseases that threaten Two Jack Lake and other freshwater ecosystems. Banff National Park is taking extra steps to protect park waters from harmful AIS, including invasive mussels and whirling disease.

It is mandatory that you CLEAN, DRAIN and DRY your watercraft and water-related gear before entering lakes and rivers. Visit parks.canada.ca/Banff-Clean-Drain-Dry for more information on permits and AIS.

See page 7 for legend.
Located just 2.5 km from the town of Banff, this campground is perfect for people wanting power without full hook-ups, and/or needing space for larger units. Some sites can accommodate RVs that are 40+ feet (12+ metres). It is close to local attractions, offers three-season camping in 21 oTENTiks and year-round camping for tents and RVs. From the campground, you can enjoy mountain views, a year-round bus service to town and access to hiking and biking trails.

**Evening theatre programs**
Join park interpreters as they share stories and interesting facts about Banff National Park’s natural and cultural heritage. All programs are for adults and kids alike! These programs are included in your national park entry fee.

Where: Wolf’s Den Theatre at Tunnel Mountain Village II Campground (indoor theatre)
Visit the campground kiosk or parks.canada.ca/banff-interpretation for more information.

**Campground**
Downtown Banff

**Campgrounds**
- **Tunnel Mountain Village II Campground**: 209 sites
- **Tunnel Mountain Trailer Court Campground**: 322 sites

**Kiosk**
- **Drink Dispenser**
- **Firewood**
- **Toilet**
- **Trash**
- **Water**

**Tents**
- **RVs**
- **Trailers**
- **oTENTiks**

**Maps**
- Town of Banff parking: parks.canada.ca/banff-parking.ca
- Transit/shuttle info: parks.canada.ca/banff-transit
- Parks Canada visitor centre or parks.canada.ca/banff

**Reserve Your Spot**
reservaiton.pc.gc.ca

**Hike or ride around**
Tunnel Campground Loop
6.4 km one way; elevation gain 70 m; 1.5 hour round trip
This is the perfect place for an easy stroll. This lightly forested trail can be joined from a number of points within the campground. Look on the map above to find the closest entry point from your campsite.

Visit a Parks Canada visitor centre or parks.canada.ca/banff for more ideas on what to do in Banff National Park.

**Give us space.**
**Do not approach wildlife.**
Tunnel Mountain Village I Campground

Located 4.5 km from the town of Banff, this campground offers a more traditional camping experience with mountain views, firepits for cooking, and access to hiking and biking trails. This campground has options to suit many camping preferences and has a limited number of large campsites.

Evening theatre programs

Where: Raven’s Nest Theatre at Tunnel Mountain Village I Campground (outdoor theatre)
Visit the campground kiosk or parks.canada.ca/banff-interpretation for more information.

618 sites
reservation.pc.gc.ca

Take public transit
Public transit is available to many top destinations and is free from most campgrounds. Leave your car or RV at your site and come explore!
Transit/shuttle info: parks.canada.ca/banff-transit or explorethepark.ca
Real-time Parks Canada info: parks.canada.ca/banffnow
Town of Banff parking: banffparking.ca
Maps: Parks Canada visitor centre

Wildlife and You
Your actions matter!
When you leave Banff National Park... leave it wild.

The chance to view wildlife in their natural environment is one of the most exciting things about visiting the mountain national parks. Help protect this special place by learning the #WildlifeRules.

Safety view wildlife

Whether you are exploring by foot, bike or vehicle, when you see wildlife, give them space:

- Remember small animals like rodents and birds need space too! If you make them move, you are too close.
- Slow down.
- Use your hazard lights to alert others.
- Only pull over where it is safe to do so.
- Observe, take photographs, and move on.
- If a traffic jam develops, move on. It is unsafe for people and wildlife.

Obey speed limits

While highway fencing and wildlife crossings have reduced wildlife-vehicle collisions in Banff National Park, wildlife deaths on the road still occur. If you see wildlife while driving, STAY IN YOUR VEHICLE.

- Slow down.
- Use your hazard lights to alert others.
- Only pull over where it is safe to do so.
- Observe, take photographs, and move on.
- If a traffic jam develops, move on. It is unsafe for people and wildlife.

Respect area closures

Together, we can make space for wildlife when they need it most. Obeying area closures and restrictions is the law. Area closures and restrictions in Banff National Park protect ecologically sensitive areas, important habitat for sensitive species or species at risk, and are at locations where the potential for conflict between humans and wildlife is high. If you come upon a closure, change your plans.
Visit parks.canada.ca/banff-bulletins for a list of closures, warnings and restrictions.
Dump dish water down outdoor sinks or at the sani-dump in campgrounds.

Do not leave pet food out even at night. Store food dishes – empty.

All food, food-related and scented items MUST be stored away.

Cooler, stove and dishes (dirty or clean) MUST be stored away.

Non-scented items may be left outside.

Never feed wildlife

Wildlife can quickly find any food, scented items, or garbage that is left unattended. When they eat these unnatural foods, wildlife learn to approach people for an easy meal. This can result in aggressive behaviour that puts both people and wildlife at risk of being hurt or killed.

Always keep your campsite and picnic area clean.

When you are done cooking or eating at your picnic table, all food, scented items and garbage MUST be properly stored. A clean campsite or picnic area does not have anything that will attract wildlife. Never leave these items unattended or in a tent or tent trailer for any amount of time:

- Coolers – full or empty
- Food – wrapped, unwrapped or in containers
- Garbage/wrappers
- Dishes/pots/cutlery – clean or dirty
- Beverage containers – full or empty
- Pet food/bowls – full or empty
- Bottles/cans – open or unopened
- Scented products – such as shampoo, toothpaste, candles, citronella, dish soap, sunscreen, lip balm, dish towels
- Barbecues, stoves – clean or dirty
- Any other items used for food preparation or that have a smell or scent

Dump dish water down outdoor sinks or at the sani-dump in campgrounds.

Dispose of all garbage

Ensure all garbage, recycling, and food waste (even organic waste, like banana peels and apple cores) are disposed of in a wildlife-proof garbage bin, never on the ground, in a fire pit or in the bed of your truck.

If you see garbage left outside in the town of Banff, call 403-762-1218 (8 a.m. to 6 p.m. seven days a week). For garbage left outside at other locations in Banff National Park, call Banff Dispatch, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at 403-762-1470.

Keep dogs on leash

Dogs cause stress for wildlife as they may be seen as a threat. Off-leash dogs can trigger aggressive behaviour from wildlife such as grizzly bears and elk. Be a responsible dog owner. In Banff National Park, it is your responsibility to:

- Ensure your dog is on a leash and under physical control at all times. It is the law.
- Pick up and dispose of your pet’s waste in a wildlife-proof garbage bin.
- Know which trails allow dogs: parks.canada.ca/banfftrails
- Consider leaving your dog at home if you plan to camp, hike or go into the backcountry.

Keep your children safe

Bears, cougars, wolves and coyotes may be curious about children and can attack them:

- Keep children in immediate sight and within close reach at all times.
- Children should avoid playing in or near areas with tall grass or dense bushes.
- Never allow children to pet, feed or pose with wildlife.

Parks Canada staff may enter open and plainly visible areas of an unattended campsite to remove and secure plainly visible wildlife attractants. Keep your campsite clean to reduce the risks to your personal safety and to wildlife.

It is illegal to feed, entice or disturb any wildlife in a national park. Violators will be charged, be required to appear in court, and could pay fines up to $25 000.
General
In addition to keeping a clean campsite, a number of regulations are in effect to ensure campers have a safe and enjoyable experience.

Campgrounds and campsite sizes have been designed to reduce our impact on the ecosystem. Exceeding the maximum occupancy of a campsite places stress on campgrounds and the natural environment.

- A maximum of six people (including children) are permitted on each site.
- Check out or re-register by 11 a.m.
- Maximum stay – 14 nights.
- Camping is only permitted in a designated campground and site.
- Vehicles and tents must be within your designated site and on the gravel pad, not on vegetation.
- Tarps should be secured using poles and not cause any damage to trees.

Respect your neighbours
People love to camp because of the opportunity it provides to escape the noise of the city and enter the peace and quiet of nature. Even quiet conversations can carry through a forested area. Excessive noise is not permitted at any time. Any disturbance should be reported immediately to campground staff.

Quiet hours – In effect from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. daily. During quiet hours, music, campfires, alcohol and cannabis are prohibited.

Alcohol and cannabis – Open alcohol and cannabis are not permitted between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. daily. During summer long weekends, a complete ban on the possession of alcohol and cannabis is in effect at all campgrounds. See page 15.

Generator use – Only permitted between the hours of 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. daily.

Visitors – Only site occupants are permitted on a campsite after 11 p.m.

Campfires
Having a campfire is one of the most enjoyable things to do when camping. In order to keep your campfire safe for you and for the environment, adhere to the following regulations:

- Permit – Each registered party wanting to have a campfire must purchase a fire permit. Permits are available when reserving your site, at the campground or at self-registration kiosks.
- Fire size – Fires must be contained within the metal fire ring provided. It is illegal to have a fire outside of a designated ring. Rock rings are prohibited but portable gas burning fire pits are allowed. To reduce the negative impact of campfires on the environment, keep your fires to a reasonable size – stack the firewood no higher than the top of the ring.
- Wood – Only burn wood obtained from the campground woodlot. Take what you need, leave what you don’t burn.
- Do not burn food or garbage or collect deadfall from the surrounding forest for burning. Use an axe to make your own kindling from the firewood provided.
- Times – Campfires are permitted from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily. Fires must be attended at all times, and completely extinguished before leaving the area. Refer to the Alcohol, Cannabis and Fire Bans section on page 15 for more information.

Visit parks.canada.ca/banff-fire for wildfire and fire ban information.

Fishing
A national park fishing permit is required. Permits are available at Parks Canada visitor centres, the Lake Minnewanka boat dock or various retail outlets in the area. Pick up a copy of the Fishing Regulations Summary or visit parks.canada.ca/banff-fishing to learn about special rules related to fishing in a national park.

Failure to comply
Parks Canada staff are here to help and may enter your site to remind you of these regulations. Campers who fail to comply with keeping a clean site and other regulations may have their camping permit revoked without a refund. Campers may be charged under the Canada National Parks Act and/or other national parks of Canada regulations, be required to appear in court, and could pay fines up to $25,000. The permit holder is responsible for ensuring their campsite is maintained in a satisfactory condition.

You can ensure you are a good neighbour and contribute to a good camping experience for all, by respecting and adhering to the following guidelines:

- Washing dishes – Use outdoor sinks or a personal basin for washing dishes. Do not use the sinks inside the bathrooms.
- Washing laundry – Please use your own tub and dump water down the outdoor sink or sani-dump in campgrounds.

Alcohol, cannabis and fire bans
From May to September, a number of policies are in place to ensure visitors get a good night’s sleep. An alcohol and cannabis consumption ban and a fire ban are in effect daily at campgrounds during quiet hours from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. During summer long weekends, a complete ban on the possession of alcohol and cannabis is in effect at all campgrounds. In periods of elevated fire danger, the fire ban may be expanded to all areas of the national park, 24 hours a day.

Please note: there is a difference between a ban on the consumption of alcohol/cannabis and a ban on possession.

Park wardens
Park wardens are the primary peace officers in national park campgrounds. They are responsible for protecting Banff National Park and ensuring you have a safe and enjoyable experience. Campers are legally required to comply with requests by park wardens. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Visit parks.canada.ca/banffregulations for more information on park regulations.
Respect Your Neighbours and Wildlife

Quiet hours
11 p.m.—7 a.m.

Generator use
9 a.m.—10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.—7 p.m.

No campfires
11 p.m.—7 a.m.

No alcohol and no cannabis consumption*
11 p.m.—7 a.m.

Do not litter. Keep a clean campsite at all times.

Do not feed any wildlife.

Do not approach wildlife. Give them space.

Pets must be on a leash and under physical control at all times.

Violators will be charged, be required to appear in court, and could pay fines up to $25,000.

* During summer long weekends, a complete ban on the possession of alcohol and cannabis is in effect at all campgrounds. See page 15.

Parks Canada visitor centres in the Banff area
Banff Visitor Centre: 224 Banff Avenue
Banff Visitor Centre – Train Station: 327 Railway Avenue
403-762-1550 / parks.canada.ca/banff
Visit parks.canada.ca/banff-hours for current hours.

Report all bear, cougar, wolf and coyote sightings to Parks Canada staff immediately or call Banff Dispatch, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at 403-762-1470.

To report campground noise after-hours complaints or other Canada National Parks Act offences, call 1-888-WARDENS (1-888-927-3367), toll-free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In case of EMERGENCY, call 911 or satellite phone: 403-762-4506.
Cell phones are not reliable throughout the national park.