



TRIP IDEAS

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES IN NORTHERN BC

Northern BC takes outdoor adventure to a whole new level. Try everything from a guided interpretive hike over a lava bed to mixing yoga and wildlife spotting at the Elisi Spa & Wilderness Resort. Other options? Rafting the legendary Tatshenshini-Alsek River, kayaking to ancient village sites on Haida Gwaii or fishing for prize salmon in the Skeena River.

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Prince George and the Yellowhead Highway

Prince George, known as BC's northern capital, is a great base for exploring the wild. Fish for salmon in the Nass River, or explore caves at Evanoff Provincial Park (for experienced cavers only). Immerse yourself in the city's forest industry with a visit to the Central BC Railway and Forestry Museum, or take a walk in the nearby Ancient Forest.

Prince-George-based River Jet Boat Safaris offers single- and multi-day guided trips that allow visitors to explore the wilderness and scenery while relaxing on a jet boat.

Follow the Yellowhead Highway to Smithers, a small town with stunning views and a plethora of outdoor opportunities. Grab a coffee and European-style pastry made from scratch and meet the locals at Schimmels Fine Pastries. Once fuelled up, explore mountain lakes and sub-alpine meadows in Babine Mountains Provincial Park – watch for mountain goats, moose, marmots and birdlife.

Drive beneath the jagged peaks of the Seven Sisters Mountains to Terrace. From here, fish for Skeena River salmon, hike mountain trails (often with more wildlife than people) or bike the single-track at Thornhill Mountain.

All three northern towns have plenty of overnight options. Try the Sandman Inn in Prince George, Smithers or Terrace, or the Hudson Bay Lodge in Smithers.

Tatshenshini-Alsek River Rafting

For a truly epic adventure, fly north for an amazing rafting journey that often showcases local wildlife along the Tatshenshini-Alsek River in BC's remote northwest. Flowing past hundreds of glaciers and some of North America's highest peaks, this river system is on many a rafter's must-do list.

Prince Rupert

Highway 16 meets the sea at friendly Prince Rupert. Kayak to surrounding fjords, fish for legendary salmon or travel north to spot grizzlies in the wild at the Khutzeymateen Grizzly Bear Sanctuary. Enjoy harbour views from the Crest Hotel and try the global fare at the tiny waterside Cow Bay Café.

Queen Charlotte Islands/Haida Gwaii

From Prince Rupert, journey by ferry or floatplane to the remote islands of Haida Gwaii. The islands have been called the "Canadian Galapagos" because they

support species of flora and fauna found nowhere else in the world.

Kayak among the islands and abandoned village sites of the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, and Haida Heritage Site on the southern part of the archipelago. Visitor numbers are limited to protect this fragile area, so visitors need to travel with a licensed tour operator (Parks Canada has a list) or obtain a permit and attend an orientation session.

At Naikoon Provincial Park on the islands' northeast coast, trek for hours along the almost 100-km/60-mi stretch of broad beach.

Alaska Highway

Before embarking along the storied Alaska Highway from Mile Zero at Dawson Creek to the Yukon border, consider a detour south to the hiking trails of Monkman Provincial Park and a series of spectacular waterfalls.

North of Dawson Creek, while driving past forests, wetlands and snowy peaks, watch for black bears, Stone's sheep, bison and mountain goats. The highway passes through the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area, 6.4 million ha/16 million ac of wilderness so rich in wildlife it's been dubbed the Serengeti of the North.

Fish for northern pike in Charlie Lake (near Fort St. John), or hike the Summit Peak trail in Stone Mountain Provincial Park for sweeping views of the Rockies. At jade green Muncho Lake, drop a line for trout, Arctic grayling or whitefish. One required stop? Soaking in Liard River Hot Springs Provincial Park. The natural hot springs create a micro-climate so warm and moist that plants that bloom around the spring-fed pool have a tropical look.

Elisi Spa & Wilderness Resort

Combine wilderness with luxury at the Elisi Spa & Wilderness Resort, a fly-in lodge on the Muskwa River. The resort offers yoga classes and massages, along with the chance to explore the wilderness by foot, horseback or jet boat. There's even a wilderness photo safari to snap moose, elk and bears.

Northern BC Transportation

Cruise along BC's Inside Passage from Port Hardy to Prince Rupert on BC Ferries' Northern Adventure, then continue by ferry to Haida Gwaii, or follow the Yellowhead Highway east. In a hurry? Prince George is about an hour by air from Vancouver.