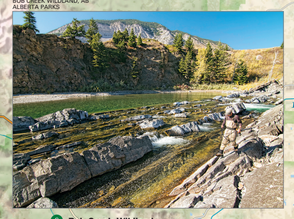
Quiet Seasons

Alpine wonders draw summer multitudes, but amateur naturalists and wanderers may find sweeter serenity in the spring, fall, or winter. Marvel at giant larch trees as they golden in Seeley Lake during the Alpine Artisans Tour of the Arts in October. On her day in May, take mother to spy harlequin ducks and ouzels diving into the froth of McDonald Creek. The best party of the year, or at least the snowiest, would either be the Whitefish Winter Carnival in February or the Fernie Griz Days Festival in March. Fort Macleod welcomes Santa and his reindeer, alongside horse-drawn carriages, at Alberta's largest Santa Claus parade.



BOB CREEK WILDLAND, AB ALBERTA PARKS

2 Bob Creek Wildland
Bob Creek Wildland protects Whaleback Ridge and one of Alberta's most important elk ranges. At the southern limit of this backcountry preserve, which has no visitor facilities, the Oldman River breaks free of the mountains through a narrow slot locals call "The Gap."

1 Lussier Hot Springs
From steamy hot to merely tepid, find your comfort level among the cascade of primitive rock pools alongside the bubbling, frigid Lussier River, just inside Whiteswan Lake Provincial Park.

3 Kimberley
Hike, cross-country ski, or ride your bike in the Kimberley Nature Park, one of Canada's largest municipal parks at 800 hectares (1,800 acres). Visit the Old Bauernhaus Restaurant, a German farm building first registered in 1640 and moved to Canada in 1987. Plug a coin in the country's largest freestanding cuckoo clock and enjoy boutiques, cafes, and Kimberley Farmers' Market at the Downtown Platzl.

4 Marysville Falls & Eco Park
Follow a forested trail, cross a beautiful (and brand new) timber frame bridge and follow a lovely boardwalk to a viewpoint overlooking the impressive, 30-metre (98-foot) Marysville Falls. Opposite the trailhead is the Eco Park, with picnic tables, flower gardens, and a sculpture of a westslope cutthroat trout.

SCOTT NIEDERMAYER WITH STANLEY CUP ATOP FISHER PEAK, BC ALAN MAUDE PHOTOGRAPHY

5 Fisher Peak
A vigorous hike to the spire of Fisher Peak offers a stunning view of two provinces and three states. National Hockey League's local hero Scott Niedermayer used his champion's right to a day with the Stanley Cup and hoisted the trophy at the top of the peak.

6 Trans Canada Trail
For 260 kilometres (162 miles), this national network of multi-use trails is one with the NorthStar Rails to Trails—a paved, former railway bed with the Purcell and Steeples Mountain Ranges as its backdrop. It then links to the Isadore Canyon Trail, Wardner to Elko Trail and Elk Community Trail traveling through meadows, marshes, rolling hills, and forests, north to Fernie, Elk Lakes Provincial Park, and beyond to Banff, Alberta.

7 Historic Cranbrook
Pick up an Explore Historic Cranbrook map (available at the Cranbrook Visitor Centre) and tour 98 storied landmarks in three distinct areas: the Railway Heritage Area, Baker Hill Residential Heritage Area, and downtown core. Take in some live theatre, local music, or an art exhibition.

8 Wardner-Fort Steele Road
Take the Wardner-Fort Steele byway for intimate close-ups of mountains rising sharply from flat ranchlands, herds of foraging elk, sand cliffs densely colonized by swallows, and the chance of finding a gold nugget in Wild Horse Creek.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN FERNIE, BC TOURISM FERNIE

9 Historic Downtown Fernie
A stunning alpine backdrop frames the view of Canada's best preserved mountain-style railway station and a slate-roofed courthouse. The Brickhouse, in a century-old bank building, and Nevados will serve you offbeat food. Work those calories off with mountain sports, which now challenge mining and timber cutting as economic mainstays.

10 Communities of Crowsnest Pass
Squeezed into a steep, narrow valley, a string of small mining towns merged into the municipality of Crowsnest Pass in 1979. Though linked by disasters, a railroad, and a river, they retain their distinctions: Coleman, Blairmore, Frank, Bellevue, and Hillcrest.

11 Head-Smashed-in Buffalo Jump
World-reknowned archaeological site where you can bear witness a buffalo jump used for nearly 6,000 years by native people. Remarkable interpretive centre tucked in the hill side offers the best opportunity to learn about the North American Plains Native Tribes culture.

12 Beauvais Lake Provincial Park
Climb Mount Albert or Piney Point. Launch your kayak on the lake. Go bird-watching in the wetlands. Hike or cross-country ski more than 18 kilometres (11 miles) of trails (notice the rare white bog orchid or mountain lady's slipper along the way). You can take your pick of outdoor pursuits year-round in this diverse, nearly 1,215-hectare (3,000-acre) protected area.

13 Castle Parks
Offering front-country, back-country and wilderness experiences across 105,500 hectares. Alberta's Castle Parks protect diverse habitat and major wildlife movement corridors for wide-ranging species such as grizzly bears and westslope cutthroat trout.

14 Old Growth Trail
A nature walk through lush ancient 800 year old Cedars, Douglas Fir and Spruce finishes at Island Lake Lodge. The Old Growth Trail starts at the Old Growth parking lot approximately 4km up the Island Lake access road.

15 Castle Falls

16 West Castle River Valley
Spring wildflowers draw botanists and photographers to West Castle Wetlands Ecological Reserve. Late summer attracts trout stalkers. Winter beckons cross-country skiers.

17 Waterton Lakes National Park
Rugged, windswept mountains rise abruptly out of gentle prairie grassland and a glaciated series of Waterton lakes. Wild bouquets and bears spill across overlapping ecological zones and multihued rocks.

18 Ten Lakes Wilderness Study Area
Located east of Eureka, in the northern Whitefish Range, the area's namesake network of crystalline alpine lakes are best explored on foot or horseback, or, with fishing rod and berry-picking bucket in hand. Here you'll find yourself atop a craggy peak by noon, and gazing at the Milky Way after midnight.

19 Eureka
Snowcapped peaks of the Galton Range tower above the rolling plains of the Tobacco Valley, where Kutenai Indians wintered for thousands of years. Stroll the Riverwalk Trail along the Tobacco River, then take your hunger uptown to Café Jax.

20 Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park
Local Rotary Clubs on each side of the 49th parallel inspired the U.S. Congress and Canada's Parliament to establish the world's first international peace park in 1932. Rotarians, park managers, and school children reaffirm the peace with an annual hands across the border pledge. The conjoined park is now a United Nations World Heritage site.

21 Glacier National Park
Lace up your boots and explore this backcountry wilderness woven with 734 miles (1,181 kilometers) of hiking trails. While just a few glaciers remain, the park's majestic landscape is the product of massive ice sheets sculpting ancient sea beds into rugged mountains and emerald valleys starting two million years ago.

22 Polebridge
Discover the W.L. Adair General Mercantile Historic District or stroll along the Transboundary Flathead River Interpretive Trail while tasting Polebridge Mercantile & Bakery's hefty sandwiches on freshly baked bread or sample cold brew from the Northern Lights Saloon. Off-the-grid and a long haul from asphalt, Polebridge shows you a favorite haunt of the backcountry set and a little-used portal to Glacier National Park.

23 Going-to-the-Sun Road
An engineering marvel completed in 1932, the cliff-hugging Going-to-the-Sun Road traverses the Continental Divide. If you're there in spring, when snowplows clear the higher passes, cycle or walk the traffic-free lower sections. See harlequin ducks ride the riffles of McDonald Creek, and spot grizzly bears emerging amid the avalanche chutes.

24 West Glacier
Change is glacial in this gateway village, where you can enjoy the same general store, saloon, restaurant, and service station that have served park visitors since 1938.

25 Red Buses of Glacier National Park
Board one of Glacier National Park's fleet of 33 soft-top tour buses introduced in the 1930s to shuttle sightseers over the Continental Divide. The original red buses built by White Motor Company were restored as a gift by Ford Motor Company, which fitted them with stronger chassis and clean burning propane engines.

26 Browning
Warrior sculptures welcome you to the Blackfeet Reservation. Unfurl your bedroll beside a crackling campfire, eat a traditional meal of roast buffalo, and arrange a cultural tour at Lodgepole Gallery and Tipi Village. Compare early and modern Indian art at the Museum of the Plains Indian and Blackfeet Heritage Center.

27 Downtown Whitefish
Inhale the sweet perfume of craft beer and gourmet coffee in this railroad frontier town transformed into a ski and recreation hub with nightlife, performing arts, and an array of top restaurants serving locally grown foods.

28 Kalispell Historic Walking Tour
Step into early 20th-century Main Street. The optimism of Kalispell's pioneer boosters endures in the grand architecture of Hockaday Museum of Art, Conrad Mansion Museum at Central School, and the Grand Hotel.

29 Kalispell
Sweet Peaks Ice Cream

30 Bigfork
Check out the artists and actors in Bigfork—a walker's delight of galleries, eateries, and Bigfork Summer Playhouse on the north shore of Flathead Lake. Stroll the Swan River Nature Corridor on your own or in a group guided by local naturalists.

31 Flathead Lake
Preserving the clarity of Flathead Lake from contamination by industry, agriculture, or careless recreation is a Montana obsession. The state maintains 12 parks and anglers' access points to the largest body of fresh water in the contiguous western United States.

32 The People's Center
The People's Center offers a place to discover the history and culture of the Salish, Pend d'Oreille, and Kootenai People. The museum draws in guests from around the globe as does the gift shop and rotating exhibits. Visiting guests often stop for craft displays, traditional games demonstrations, and extended histories of the people that lived in this area for thousands of years.

33 Hot Springs
The 1950s were its heyday, but the silky mineral waters of Hot Springs still attract globe-trotters from afar. Symes Hotel and Alameda's Retreat provide hot baths and vintage comforts. Rose's Plunge and Big Medicine Hot Springs offer day soaks near ancient Indian pools.

34 Elk Country Visitor Center
The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation's visitor center celebrates the conservation of public wildlands, working ranches, and forests where elk herds can thrive. The autumn bugling of lustful bulls is a call to arms for hunters seeking winter meat and trophy antlers.

35 Eagle Circle
Located in the center of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' headquarters in Pablo, Montana, these carved granite stones and ribbon-topped giant tepee poles welcome home and offer a thank you to all veterans who served in defense of this country. Take a short walk across the gorgeous pedestrian bridge to Salish Kootenai College, one of the best known tribal colleges in North America.

36 Bigfork
Check out the artists and actors in Bigfork—a walker's delight of galleries, eateries, and Bigfork Summer Playhouse on the north shore of Flathead Lake. Stroll the Swan River Nature Corridor on your own or in a group guided by local naturalists.

37 Central Montana Birding Trails
Twelve birding routes in north-central Montana offer incredible diversity in geography and bird species. East and West mix here offering bird watchers a special place to view an array of species, in the Rocky Mountains, grasslands, prairies, dramatic cliffs, island mountain ranges, lakes, prairie marshes, fens, and rivers.

38 Augusta
The Old West lingers in cow country saloons such as the Buckhorn Bar, where backcountry wranglers swap tales with cowboys and visitors. Mosey over to the Latigo & Lace cappuccino bar and art gallery, and you're in a different era, pardner. Sunsets over Sawtooth Ridge are best admired from the balcony of the downtown 1912 Bunkouse Inn.

39 Swan Valley Connections
The Swan River Valley preserves its uncommon beauty thanks in part to Swan Valley Connections in Condon, where residents support public agencies and private property owners in sustainable management of their lands. Accredited college courses, youth programs, and natural history experiences are offered. Trail maps and wildlife information are available at the visitor center.

40 Holland Lake Lodge
Since 1924, this log resort has been a scenic base for nature hikes to Holland Falls.

41 Missoula Carousel and Caras Park
Ride one of 38 wooden ponies carved to restore this 1918 carousel, while hearing a 400-pipe organ play notes directed by perforations in continuous paper rolls. From here, explore funky downtown Missoula or stroll trails along the Clark Fork River.

42 Blackfoot Challenge
Visit this interpretive center in tiny Ovando to learn how ranchers, anglers, and public agencies allied to save 80,000 acres (32,000 hectares) from exurban sprawl in the Blackfoot watershed. Next door, learn about the old days at the Brand Bar Museum.

43 Lincoln
Gateway to the Scapegoat Wilderness, Lincoln is nestled among stately old pines in the upper Blackfoot Valley. View a stuffed 830-pound (376-kilogram) grizzly bear at the Lincoln Ranger Station or stroll through Blackfoot Pathways: Sculpture in the Wild International Sculpture Park. Then calm your pulse at the Lincoln Log Hotel, a refuge favored by participants in winter's Race to the Sky sled dog race.

Map Key

- Community
- Museum
- Natural or scenic area
- Other point of interest
- Outdoor experience
- World Heritage site
- Scenic route
- National Wild and Scenic River
- Urban area

Protected Areas
- Indian or First Nation reserve
- National forest or reserve
- National park
- Other protected area

Administered by UNESCO, the World Heritage List recognizes the most significant cultural and natural treasures on the planet.

Albers Conic Equal-Area Projection Standard Parallels 47° and 50°

SCALE 1:500,000

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MAP DATA DERIVED FROM: DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA; MISTAKIS INSTITUTE FOR THE ROCKIES; MODIS/TERRA VEGETATION CONTINUOUS FIELDS; NASA; NASA EARTH OBSERVATORY; NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA; CANADIAN FOREST SERVICE - PACIFIC FORESTRY CENTRE; OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY LANDSCAN 2004™/UT-BATTELLE, LLC; SRTM DATA; INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR TROPICAL AGRICULTURE (CIAT); UMD GLOBAL LAND COVER CLASSIFICATION, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

What Is Geotourism All About?
According to National Geographic, geotourism "sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents." Geotravelers, then, are people who like that idea, who enjoy authentic sense of place and care about maintaining it. They find that relaxing and having fun gets better—provides a richer experience—when they get involved in the place and learn about what goes on there.

Geotravelers soak up local culture, hire local guides, buy local foods, protect the environment, and take pride in discovering and observing local customs. Travel-spending choices can help or hurt, so geotravelers patronize establishments that care about conservation, preservation, beautification, and benefits to local people.

Learn more at **crownofthecontinent.natgeotourism.com**.

Geotraveler Tips:

Buy Local
Patronize businesses that support the community and its conservation and preservation efforts. Seek out local products, foods, services, and shops. When you support the people who support the place, they'll usually reward you with a richer, more memorable trip.

Volunteer
A great way to get to know a place—and the people who work to protect it—is to lend a hand. Options abound: Repair hiking trails, pull invasive weeds, restore streamside habitat, catalog historical artifacts. Roll up your sleeves with the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation or the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

Take a Hike
The region features thousands of miles of hiking, biking, and horse trails. Local volunteers lead various nature groups on educational day hikes to watch birds, identify wildflowers, and explore public wildlands. Outings are free, but your donation will support conservation.

Visit First Nation and Tribal Lands
On First Nation land or an American Indian reservation, you are a guest where people live and work. Taking photos and video can be a sensitive issue, so ask permission first. A great time to visit is during traditional powwows.

Dirt Roads
Many of the roads between towns and public recreational lands are not paved. Take it slow, keep the dust down, and give the wildlife a brake. Don't drive off road, and please respect private property.

Bears, Cougars, and Wolves
As a visitor, you're sharing one of North America's wildest places with these majestic creatures. Hike in groups, make noise, and stay at least ten bus lengths away.

Step Away from Your Car
Travel options abound so you may better appreciate the scenery and meet others. Glacier National Park provides a free shuttle service across the Going-to-the-Sun Road. Drivers double as cultural guides on the Blackfeet-run Sun Tours, or try the elegant convertible-top red buses. Amtrak provides passenger service along Glacier's southern border. For muscle-powered transport, pedal the unpaved Great Divide Mountain Bike Route on both sides of the border.

Leave No Trace
Take only photographs and leave only footprints. Travel on existing trails and camp on hard surfaces. Keep campfires small in established fire pits. Pack out garbage if no trash receptacles are nearby. Let animals eat natural foods rather than yours.

Thinking of Moving Here?
If you plan to relocate, live in town or close by. The fragmentation of working farms and forests into rural subdivisions and small ranchettes harms water quality, wildlife habitat, native plants, and traditional livelihood. With global warming, the risk of dangerous forest fires has soared along the valley fringes and forested foothills.

Crossing the Border
Enhance your adventure by exploring both countries. We value our cross-border visitors. Please check for current border crossing requirements.

Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers
Recreational activities such as boating, angling, waterfowl hunting, and diving can spread aquatic invasive species. Protect our waters by remembering to Clean, Drain, Dry recreational equipment every time.

BARING CREEK AT GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, MT CHUCKHANEY.COM

Crown of the Continent

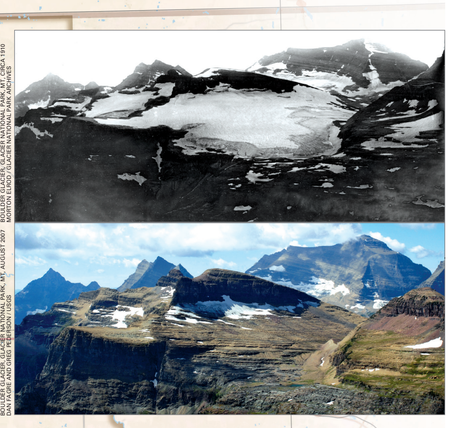
NORTH AMERICA'S ROCKY MOUNTAIN MAJESTY

The Crown of the Continent—spanning corners of Alberta, British Columbia, and Montana—provides visitors with 73,000 square kilometres (28,000 square miles) of spellbinding scenery and a good chance to spy bighorn sheep, mountain goats, elk, or, with luck, the monarch of the Crown—the grizzly bear. The region includes two United Nations World Heritage sites. One, Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, protects headwaters of three continental river systems, and affirms the wisdom of transcending political boundaries in the management of shared ecosystems. The second, Alberta's Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, attests to the region's 6,000 years of human economy derived from the diversity of the landscape and its wildlife.

Not long ago, visitors to remote mountain valleys were likely to be horse-mounted hunters seeking hides and heads as trophies. Today's backcountry trekkers are most often birders, fly casters, photographers, or snowshoers. Many of today's year-round residents first came as tourists who, smitten by the mountain vistas, returned with their professions or savings—and their urban tastes and expectations. While ranching and woodcutting continue to define some small communities, demographics are changing rapidly as builders cater to migrants and weekenders who may not be aware of how their choices impact the ecosystems they came to enjoy. Along timbered valleys and across open foothills, landowners, conservationists, and many of the newcomers themselves, are joining to sustain working ranchlands, clear streams, and free-ranging wildlife. Increasingly, those fortunate enough to visit or live in the Crown of the Continent are seeking less to dominate the landscape than to find a personal harmony with it.

— David Thomas, writer, Crowsnest Pass, AB

HANDS ACROSS THE BORDER EVENT, AB AND MT CHRIS PETERSON



BOULDER GLACIER, GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, MT, CIRCA 1910 MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY RESEARCH CENTER

Climate Change, Climate Solutions

Catch melting ice fields while you can by taking a day climb to the receding Grinnell Glacier in Glacier National Park. Once home to 150 glaciers, the park's 25 remnants are expected to be gone in a couple of decades. Drier woodlands fuel increasingly intense forest fires, as evident in Waterton and Glacier National Parks, Marias Pass, and Swan Valley. Lower summer streamflows and warmer rivers require occasional fishing closures on the Blackfoot and Dearborn Rivers, less irrigation water for ranchers in the heat of summer.

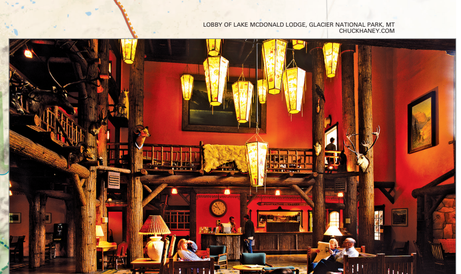
The region has taken steps to curb carbon pollution, including bans on oil drilling on the Rocky Mountain Front and a binational agreement to leave massive coal seams underground in the transboundary North Fork of the Flathead. Wind turbines spin by the hundreds in southwestern Alberta. Biological fuels are produced by Kyoto Fuels in Lethbridge and Algae AquaCulture Technologies in Columbia Falls.

ALBERTA WIND FARM, PINCHER CREEK, AB GARTH LENZ

High Country Lodging

Afternoon tea, British style, and a dream view greet you at the Prince of Wales Hotel at the foot of Waterton Lake. Grandiose and cozy, Many Glacier Hotel provides Swiss-style respite after a day hiking slope-side trails, or cruising by wooden boat, red bus, or horseback. Jiggle the piano amidst hand-hewn pillars at Lake McDonald Lodge. Grand hotels of the railway tradition are strung across 60 miles along Glacier National Park's southern boundary: Belton Chalet, Izaak Walton Inn, and Glacier Park Lodge in East Glacier Park.

Visit an ancient cedar rain forest for rigorous hiking, cross-country skiing, and refined dining at Island Lake Lodge in Fernie. In the Porcupine Hills surrounded by prairie, Dames on the Range wrangle horses and wildflowers along Alberta's Cowboy Trail at Lucasia Ranch, Oxley Ranch, Sierra West Cabins, and Chimney Rock Bed and Breakfast. Settle downtown Whitefish as a small-town sophisticate at the Garden Wall Inn.



LOBBY OF LAKE MCDONALD LODGE, GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, MT CHUCKHANEY.COM

Eating Local

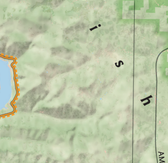
Refined tastes of residents and visitors are fueling a robust local-food movement. Farmers markets are found throughout the region, integral to downtown summers in Fernie, Whitefish, Cranbrook, Invermere, Crowsnest Pass, Missoula, and many more communities. Busy producer networks hustle to meet popular demand at community-minded restaurants. Inspired by foodie groups like Nourish the Flathead and PEAS Farm, young volunteers invest sweat equity in community gardens and greenhouses. Perennial favorites include Flathead Lake cherries, Dixon melons, Hutterite chickens, grass-fed beef, and Taber corn. Residents are borderline obsessed by wild treasures: huckleberries, saskatoons, morel mushrooms, freshly caught trout, and venison.

Community slice of life is served up daily at Chris' Restaurant in Crowsnest Pass and Two Medicine Café in East Glacier Park. Locals take their guests to Nina's Hillside Garden in Kimberley and the Curry Bowl in Fernie. With an ethnic twist in Whitefish, Pescado Blanco serves locally grown food from several farms. In Whitefish and Kalispell, Sweet Peaks concocts strange, wonderful ice creams with local ingredients and milk from Hutterite dairy farms.

FARMERS MARKET, WHITEFISH, MT BRIAN SCHOTT

RED BUSES ON GOING-TO-THE-SUN ROAD, MT CAROL POUCH

DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH, MT CHUCKHANEY.COM

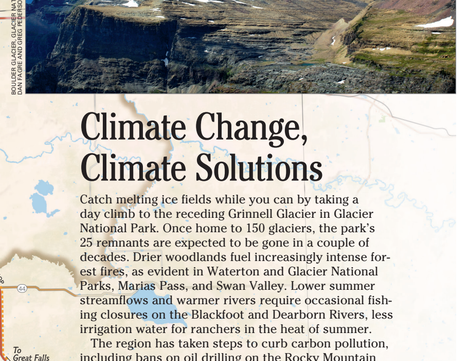


EAGLE CIRCLE VETERANS WALL OF REMEMBERANCE, PABLO, MT DILLON TABISH

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN FERNIE, BC TOURISM FERNIE

WEST SHORE STATE PARK, FLATHEAD LAKE, MT CHUCKHANEY.COM

BLACKFEET WARRIORS SCULPTURE, BLACKFEET RESERVATION, BROWNING, MT CHUCKHANEY.COM



LOBBY OF LAKE MCDONALD LODGE, GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, MT CHUCKHANEY.COM

National Geographic and the people of Alberta, British Columbia, and Montana present this Geotourism MapGuide to the Crown of the Continent region.

Lead project partners include National Geographic Maps and the Crown of the Continent Geotourism Council, with regional coordination provided by Alberta SouthWest Regional Alliance and the Whitefish Convention and Visitors Bureau.

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Text by Steve Thompson and Sheena Pate; map notes by Angela Burnford, David Thomas, Steve Thompson, and Sheena Pate

What is Geotourism All About?
The people of the Crown of the Continent helped build this MapGuide by nominating the places and telling the stories of this region. A diverse regional alliance, the Crown of the Continent Geotourism Council, has formed to engage visitors and residents in strategies that sustain and enhance the special qualities of this transboundary region. #crownofthecontinent

Visit **crownofthecontinent.natgeotourism.com** to learn more about the Crown of the Continent and this spectacular landscape.

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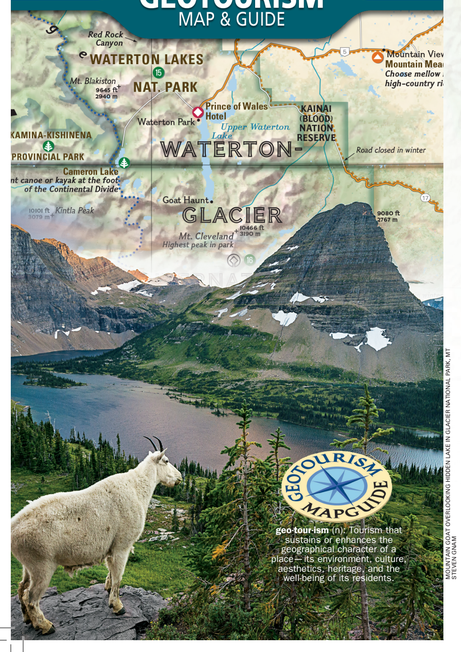
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Alberta
British Columbia
Montana

Crown of the Continent

GEOTOURISM MAP & GUIDE



MOUNTAIN GOAT OVERLOOKING HIDDEN LAKE IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, MT TOM MURPHY

GEOTOURISM MAPGUIDE

geo-tour-ism (n): Tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.