

# JASPER NATIONAL PARK Day Hiking Guide

**Elk, bighorn sheep, mountain goats and caribou must have established their own pathways through Jasper National Park long before humans arrived in the Canadian Rockies about 11 000 years ago. Aboriginal peoples, followed by explorers, fur-company employees, railway surveyors and settlers discovered and used these hoofed-animal trails. Since the park was established in 1907, its natural trail network has been expanded and maintained for the benefit of everyone wanting to experience Jasper's wilderness. Whether you are strolling along the shores of Maligne Lake or hiking all day in the alpine, this guide will help you plan a trip that is safe, exciting and low impact.**

**While we aim to achieve high standards, inclement mountain weather and events can considerably change trail conditions instantly. Self reliance is important.**

● Easy   
   Moderate   
   Difficult

**Note:** Distances given in the trail descriptions are approximate. Times given are on-trail times for hikers.

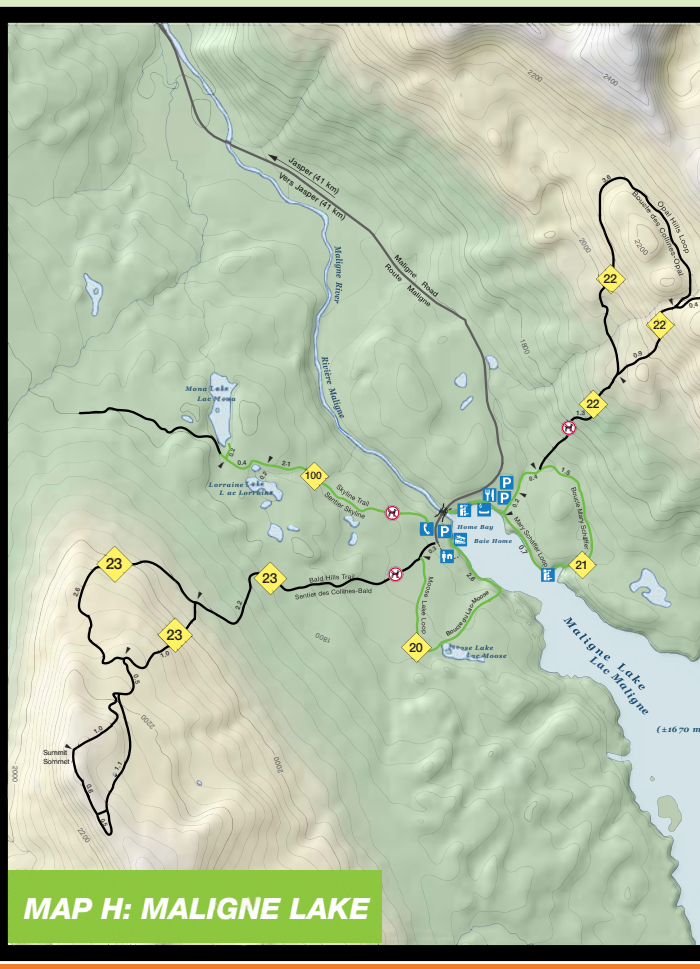
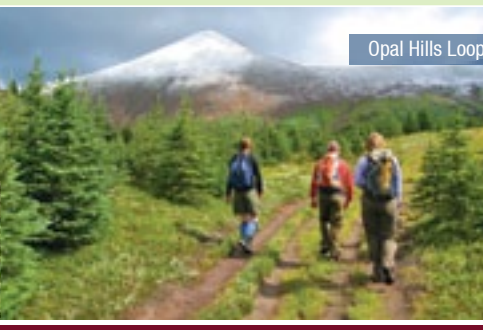


## Maligne Lake Area

At Maligne Lake, you can walk the lakeshore, enjoy a forest trail or hike to the top of an easy peak.

- 20 Moose Lake Loop**  
2.7 km loop; 59 m elevation gain; 1-2 hours  
**Trailhead:** The parking lot at the end of the Maligne Lake Road, starting at the Bald Hills Kiosk.
- This trail stays in the woods, but the landscape is fascinating with little hills and hollows among the overgrown debris of a large landslide. Thousands of years ago, half a billion cubic metres of rock fell from the ridge on the other side of Maligne Lake, blocking the valley and enlarging the lake to its present size.
- 21 Mary Schäffer Loop**  
3.2 km loop; no elevation gain; 1-2 hours  
**Trailhead:** Turn in at the first parking lot at Maligne Lake. Take any path down to the shore and follow the paved trail left.
- This trail is an easy stroll. Passing Curly Phillip's historic boathouse, the trail reaches a viewpoint that features a set of interpretive panels. Leaving the shoreline, the trail passes through lichen-rich stands of pine, spruce and fragrant subalpine fir as it loops back to the parking lot.

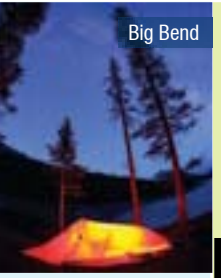
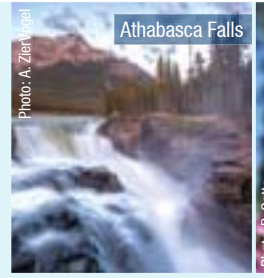
- 100 Lorraine Lake and Mona Lake**  
5.2 km return; 80 m elevation gain; 2-3 hours  
**Trailhead:** The parking lot at the end of the Maligne Lake Road, starting at the Skyline Kiosk.
- The trail climbs gently through a lodgepole pine forest. Both these lakes lie in hollows in landslide debris (see #20, Moose Lake Loop). If you are after a longer walk, continue on to Little Shovel Pass (10.3 km one way; 548 m elevation gain).
- 22 Opal Hills Loop**  
8.2 km loop; 460 m elevation gain; 4-6 hours  
**Trailhead:** The trail begins at the northeast corner of the farthest of the three lots to the left of the chalet.
- Hiking one of the steepest trails in Jasper rewards you with an alpine flower meadow and mountain vistas. This trail often has warnings or is closed during July and early August for bear activity.
- 23 Bald Hills**  
10.4 km return; 500 m elevation gain; 4-6 hours  
**Trailhead:** The parking lot at the end of the Maligne Lake Road.
- This moderately steep trail travels along the old fire road up to treeline beside an alpine heather meadow. There are great views of the mountains and Maligne Lake.



## Icefields Parkway

For these hikes, travel south from Jasper townsite along Highway 93, the Icefields Parkway. The Icefield Centre is 103 km from Jasper.

- 50 Wilcox Pass**  
2.4 km return to the first viewpoint; 1 hour  
8 km return to the pass; elevation gain/loss: 390 m; 2-3 hours  
**Trailhead:** 3.1 km south of the Icefield Centre at the entrance to the Wilcox campground.
- Rise quickly above treeline to the expansive meadows of this glacier-carved landscape. Bighorn sheep are sometimes seen in this area.
- 51 Parker Ridge**  
5.4 km return; 250 m elevation gain/loss; 3 hours  
**Trailhead:** 9 km south of the Icefield Centre.
- After a series of switchbacks you'll be rewarded with dramatic views of the Saskatchewan Glacier – headwaters of the North Saskatchewan River.
- 130 Nigel Pass**  
14.4 km return; 365 m elevation gain/loss; 5 hours  
**Trailhead:** 13 km south of the Icefield Centre.
- A consistent and gentle grade ensures that it doesn't take long to reach treeline as you head towards the wide-open scenery of the Banff / Jasper park boundary.



## Mount Edith Cavell Area

The Cavell area offers fragrant subalpine forest, new growth where a glacier recently retreated from the valley, flowery alpine meadows and spectacular views of Mt. Edith Cavell and the Angel Glacier.



- 41 Path of the Glacier Trail**  
1.6 km return; 70 m elevation gain/loss; 1 hour  
**Trailhead:** The end of the Cavell Road.
- This short, well-used trail takes you toward the great north face of Mt. Edith Cavell, across a rocky landscape recently covered with glacial ice.
- 42 Cavell Meadows Trail**  
6 to 7 km return; 500 m elevation gain/loss; 3-5 hours  
**Trailhead:** The end of the Cavell Road.
- Take this moderately steep but well-graded trail through upper-subalpine forest, treeline vegetation and the alpine region beyond. Summer opening of the Cavell Meadows Trail may be delayed until conditions are dry enough to prevent trail and vegetation damage (usually around mid-July).



## Geraldine Lakes Area

To access this beautiful area, follow Hwy 93 to Athabasca Falls. Travel north on Hwy 93a for 1.1 km to the Geraldine Fire Road. The trailhead is located 6 km up this gravel road.

- 120 First Geraldine Lake**  
3.6 km return; Elevation gain/loss: 200 m; 1-2 hours  
**Trailhead:** Geraldine Lakes parking lot.
- Sandwiched between the steep slopes of Mount Fryatt and Whirlpool Peak, First Geraldine Lake is a scenic lake set amongst the spruce forest.
- 120 Second Geraldine Lake**  
12.4 km return; Elevation gain/loss: 608 m; 5-6 hours  
**Trailhead:** Geraldine Lakes parking lot.
- Beyond First Geraldine Lake, the trail becomes difficult, crossing boulder fields and ascending steep slopes. Your efforts are rewarded by the scenic waterfalls along the way. Note, boulders are very slippery after rain or snowfall.
- 121 Geraldine Lookout**  
5 km return; Elevation gain/loss: 283 m; 2 hours  
**Trailhead:** Geraldine Lakes parking lot.
- A 2.5 km stroll or bike up the old fire road brings you to a viewpoint overlooking the Whirlpool River Valley and Moab Lake.

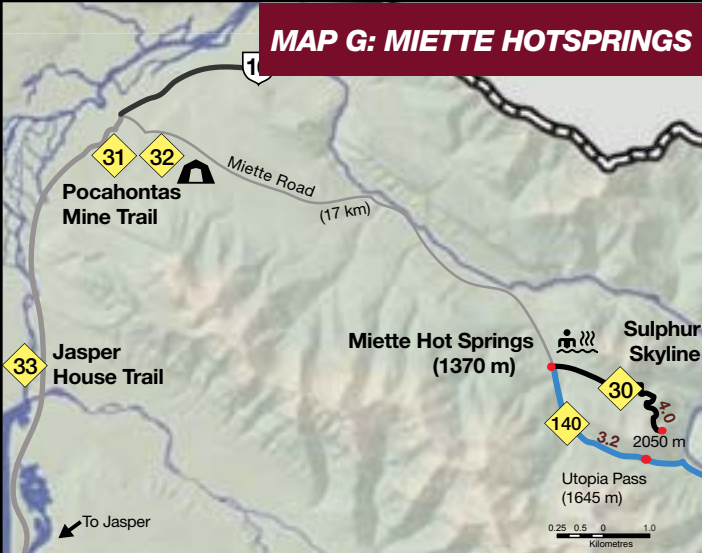


## Miette Hot Springs Area



If you like to hike in the park's high country, you normally have to wait until mid-June for the snow to go – except in the Miette Hot Springs area, where the trails are usually clear by late May.

- 31 Pocahontas Mine Trail**  
Lower loop: 800 m 20 minutes  
Upper Loop 1.7 km, 45 minutes  
Step back in time as you stroll through the old Pocahontas Mine site.
- 33 Jasper House Trail**  
700 m return, 20 minutes  
A short walk to a viewpoint looking beyond the Athabasca River towards the Jasper House historic site.
- 140 Utopia Pass**  
6 km return; Elevation gain/loss: 482 m; 2-3 hours  
**Trailhead:** Miette Hot Springs parking lot.
- The trail begins with a walk through the ruins of the old pool building and continues up the creek to the hot springs themselves, where the sulphurous water comes out of the rock. Farther on, the trail crosses the creek to Utopia Pass, which offers a break in the forest and a fine wildflower display.
- 30 Sulphur Skyline**  
8 km return; 700 m elevation gain; 4-6 hours  
**Trailhead:** Miette Hot Springs parking lot.
- If you would like to reach the summit of a peak, choose this challenging trail. At the summit, the views of the Fiddle River Valley, Utopia Mountain and Ashlar Ridge are spectacular.
- Caution:** This area is well-known for afternoon thunderstorms. Start early, and stay below the treeline if the weather looks threatening.



## Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Remember, you are responsible for your own safety.**
- Before heading out, get trail and weather conditions at a Parks Canada Information Centre.
  - Travel with a friend or group. Choose a trail suitable for the least experienced member in your group.
  - Pack adequate food, water, clothing, first aid kit, bear spray and maps. Be prepared for emergencies and changes in weather.
  - Tell somebody where you are going, when you will be back and who to call if you do not return.

**Stay on Maintained Trails**

- To prevent trail damage, stay on the trail and avoid shortcuts.

**Leave What You Find and Take What You Bring**

- Pack out all garbage, including diapers and food waste.
- Dispose of human waste at least 70 m from any water source. Bury solids 15 cm deep. Pack out toilet paper.
- Artifacts like antlers, rocks, wildflowers, etc. are protected by law and must be left undisturbed.

**Backcountry (780-852-6177)**  
A backcountry camping permit is required for any overnight trip. Reservations can be made three months in advance.

**Cycling**  
Cyclists are susceptible to sudden, dangerous wildlife encounters – **slow down, stay alert and make noise.**

- When approaching horses, stop, move off the trail
- Mountain biking is allowed only on designated trails.

**Fishing** - A National Park fishing licence is required.  
For more specific information please ask at the Information Centre for one of our many guides.

**How was your trip?**  
Please send us your comments at [jnp.info@pc.gc.ca](mailto:jnp.info@pc.gc.ca) and report trail conditions to park staff.

## Safety

**Emergency**  
Call 911 or, if using a satellite phone, call the park dispatch office (780-852-3100). Cell phone reception is unreliable.

**Keep wildlife wild, and yourself safer**

- Travel in groups and make noise to avoid surprise encounters.
- Do not feed, touch or approach wildlife. Stay at least 30 metres away from most animals and 100 metres away from bears.
- Carry bear spray and know how to use it.
- Pets must be on a leash at all times.

**Avalanches**  
Be careful when crossing snow slopes or when exposed to avalanche paths.

## More information

Palisades Lookout

**JASPER TOWNSITE INFORMATION CENTRE:** 780-852-6176  
**ICEFIELD CENTRE:** 780-852-6288, open May to September  
**WEBSITE:** [www.pc.gc.ca/jasper](http://www.pc.gc.ca/jasper)  
**JASPER TRAIL CONDITIONS REPORT:** [www.pc.gc.ca/jaspertrails](http://www.pc.gc.ca/jaspertrails)  
**WEATHER:** [www.weatheroffice.gc.ca](http://www.weatheroffice.gc.ca)  
**AVALANCHE REPORTS, INFORMATION AND TRAINING:** [www.pc.gc.ca/avalanche](http://www.pc.gc.ca/avalanche)  
**MAPS AND GUIDE BOOKS:** Friends of Jasper National Park at 780-852-4767 or [www.friendsofjasper.com](http://www.friendsofjasper.com)  
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These easy multi-use trails provide opportunities to explore and access areas close to the town of Jasper.

1 Jasper Discovery Trail (MAP A and B) 8.3 km loop; 120 m elevation gain/loss; 2-3 hrs Trailhead: This loop around the town can be started nearly anywhere. Follow the bear symbol. The Jasper Discovery Trail is split into three sections. Explore one part or travel the whole 8.3 km. There's something to suit nearly everyone. Along the trail, look for signs, maps, markers and kiosks to guide your way.

12 Wapiti Trail (MAP A and B) 4.7 km one way; no elevation gain; 1-2 hours Trailhead: The junction of Connaught Drive and Highway 93A North/Hazel Avenue. Use this trail to access Whistlers and Wapiti campgrounds on Highway 93.

13 Bighorn (MAP A and B) 4.3 km one way; 33 m elevation gain; 1-2 hours Trailhead: The north-east end of the Jasper Discovery Trail. This trail provides access to lakes Annette and Edith via the Moberly Bridge on Highway 16. Use caution when crossing the highway.

14 Red Squirrel (MAP A and B) 1 km one way; no elevation gain; 1/2 hour Trailhead: The junction of Hwy 16/93A. This trail provides access to and from historic Old Fort Point. Portions of the trail are adjacent to the beautiful Athabasca River.

These trails lie on the east side of the Athabasca River.

4c Lake Annette Loop (Clifford E. Lee Trail) (MAP A) 2.4 km return; no elevation gain; 1-1.5 hours Trailhead: P19 Lake Annette parking lot. This accessible interpretive trail offers a paved loop along the shores of Lake Annette. Bicycles and horses are not permitted.

1a Old Fort Point Loop (MAP A) 3.8 km loop; 130 m elevation gain/loss; 1-2 hours Trailhead: P2 From Highway 93A North, follow the Old Fort Point/Lac Beauvert access road. Cross the bridge and park in the lot on the right. Old Fort Point is a prominent bedrock hill standing 130 m above the Athabasca River. The trail is steep in places, but it provides an excellent view of Jasper and its surroundings.

7g Maligne Canyon (MAP A) 2.2 km one way; 100 m elevation gain; 1-2 hours Trailhead: P11 Fifth Bridge, 8 km east of Jasper via Highway 16 and the Maligne Road. The Maligne Canyon Trail provides the best views of Jasper's famous limestone gorge. Water gushes from springs along the way; interpretive signs explain how Maligne Canyon is connected to Medicine Lake by a cave system.

10 The Overlander Trail (MAP A) 15.5 km one way; 65 m elevation gain; 5-6 hours Trailhead: P20 Sixth Bridge, 7.5 km east of Jasper via Highway 16 and the Maligne Road. One of the park's signature trails, this route passes by an early valley homestead and through prime montane habitat.

West of Jasper the Pyramid Bench is bordered by the Miette River and more lakes.

3 Caledonia Lake and the Saturday Night Lake Loop (MAP A and C) 4.2 km one way to Caledonia Lake; 2-3 hours or 24.6 km total loop; elevation gain 540 m; 7-9 hours Trailhead: P2 Cabin Creek Drive near the south-west end of Jasper. A gentle uphill walk takes you past Marjorie Lake to Caledonia Lake. From there the grade steepens toward Minnow Lake and the rest of the Saturday Night Lake Loop; a long day-hike, a half-day bike ride or an easy overnight backpack (Wilderness Pass required).

6a Viri, Dorothy and Christine Lakes (MAP C) 8.6 km return; elevation gain 250 m; 4-6 hours Trailhead: P26 11.5 km west of Jasper off Highway 16. Step in places, the hike to beautiful Christine Lake is well worth the effort. Be careful crossing the railway tracks!

5 The Whistlers Trail (MAP A) 6.8 km one way; elevation gain 1200 m; 3-5 hours up; 2-3 hours down Trailhead: P4 2.8 km up the Whistlers Road. The effort required to hike this steep trail is well rewarded by panoramic views of the Miette and Athabasca valleys. Warning: there is avalanche danger when the upper part of this trail is snow-covered.

5a The Whistlers Summit Trail (MAP A) 1.1 km one way; elevation gain 150 m, 1 hour Trailhead: Tramway upper terminal. Venture up for a 360-degree view of the Athabasca Valley and surrounding mountains.

Pyramid Bench

The trail routes described below are on the Pyramid Bench, a lake-dotted terrace adjacent to Jasper.

15 Pyramid Trail (MAP A) 5.2 km one way; 118 m elevation gain, 1-2 hours Trailhead: P3 Jasper Activity Centre Parking Lot Use this connector as your gravel freeway to the Pyramid Bench trail system.

2a Cottonwood Creek Loop (MAP A) 5.1 km return; 60 m elevation gain; 1-2 hours Trailhead: P3 Jasper Activity Centre Parking Lot This loop offers an exceptional view and a quiet forest.

6c Patricia Lake Loop (MAP A) 4.3 km return; 75 m elevation gain; 2-3 hours Trailhead: P5 Pyramid riding stables parking area. This is an easy trail with moderate hills that offers fine views of Patricia Lake and Cottonwood Slough. Watch for ducks, beavers and loons along the way.

8 Mina - Riley Lakes Loop (MAP A) 9 km loop; 172 m elevation gain/loss; 3-4 hours Trailhead: P3 Jasper Activity Centre parking lot. This popular trail takes you to Mina Lakes where you may see Barrow's goldeneye ducks and loons. Past Upper Mina Lake you can shortcut back to town via Trail 8c or continue on to small but scenic Riley Lake.

