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From whale-watching to waterfalls, Canada's 10 most majestic road trips



Canada offers drivers some of the most stunning scenery CREDIT: GETTY

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There are few countries better primed for exploration by car. Here we run through the 10 best road trips Canada has to offer.

1. Nautical (and nice)

Eastern Canada's maritime province of Nova Scotia, a long mainland peninsula and offshore islands, is scattered with historic towns and small harbours making it ideal territory for relaxed touring. Highlights include the capital, Halifax, with its citadel and famous clock, Peggy's Cove lighthouse and the Unesco world heritage town of Lunenburg with clapboard houses and old sailing ships. The Cabot Trail on Cape Breton Island is one of the country's most scenic coastal drives.

A Glimpse of Nova Scotia Self-Drive from £2,640 for 13 nights including flights, car hire and some breakfasts. April to November. Audley Travel (audleytravel.com (<http://audleytravel.com>)).

2. Vintage routes

From Vancouver it's a five-hour drive east to Kelowna, capital of the Okanagan wine-producing region of British Columbia. The mild, dry climate creates ideal conditions for the vines that grow on the shores of its lakes and rivers. Further highlights include Revelstoke with its historic courthouse and art centre, Nelson with its local farmers market and the wineries of the Osoyoos and Oliver region.

Valleys and Vineyards of British Columbia from £912 for 10 nights including car hire and some meals. Excludes flights. May to October. Discover the World (discover-the-world.com (<http://discover-the-world.com>)).



Kelowna is home to some of BC's finest wine CREDIT: GETTY

3. Dinosaur adventures

Central Alberta – the Canadian Badlands – is a region of vast plains, meandering rivers and ravines, once inhabited by dinosaurs. The Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology in Drumheller displays the fossils and bones found in the area and there are more to be seen in Dinosaur Provincial Park, a Unesco World Heritage Site. Another road trip highlight is the Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump exhibition near Waterton, exploring the 6,000-year-old hunting techniques of the First Nations.

Jurassic Adventure in southern Alberta from £1,429 for nine nights including flights and car hire. May to October. My Canada Trips (mycanadatrips.co.uk (<http://mycanadatrips.co.uk>)).

4. Outback odyssey

Travelling through Canada's central provinces is a good way of appreciating the enormity of its rolling hills and open plains. A two-week fly-drive offered by Trailfinders from Calgary in Alberta to Winnipeg in Manitoba includes a stay at La Reata Ranch in Saskatchewan for treks into this outback country. The itinerary also includes a visit to the training academy for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and detours to the National Park of Riding Mountain.

Canadian Pioneer Mounties and Cowboys of Saskatchewan from £2,299 for 13 nights including flights, car hire and some meals. May to October. Trailfinders (trailfinders.com (<http://trailfinders.com>)).

The great American road trips you must tackle
in your lifetime

5. Chasing waterfalls

For sheer variety of landscape, culture and history, it's hard to beat a fly-drive to the Canadian provinces of Ontario and neighbouring Quebec. As well as the cultural cities of [Toronto](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/north-america/canada/toronto/hotels/) (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/north-america/canada/toronto/hotels/>), Ottawa and [Montreal](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/north-america/canada/quebec/montreal/hotels/) (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/north-america/canada/quebec/montreal/hotels/>), itineraries to the region usually include a cruise among the 1,000 islands of the St Lawrence river and a visit to the

Muskoka Lakes of Ontario's Algonquin Park, but the main highlight is the famous Niagara Falls on the Canadian-US border.

Classic Ontario and Quebec from £2,930 for 15 nights including car hire and some breakfasts. Excludes flights. May to October. Abercrombie & Kent (abercrombiekent.co.uk) (<http://abercrombiekent.co.uk>).

6. Call of the wild

Kluane National Park in south-west Yukon lies in the largest areas of protected wilderness on earth, a vast region of ice fields, forests and peaks. Whether motoring along the iconic Alaska Highway and South Klondike Highway or driving through the Chilkat Pass, the highest summit on the Haines Highway, this region offers awe-inspiring landscapes including the Valley of the Eagles where nearly 4,000 American bald eagles gather for the salmon run in the autumn months.

Yukon and Alaska Wilderness Drive from £1,345 meals for 11 nights including car hire and some breakfasts. Excludes flights. April to October. Cox and Kings (coxandkings.co.uk) (<http://coxandkings.co.uk>).

Catch a glimpse of whales off the coast of British Columbia CREDIT: GETTY

7. Whale of a time

This west coast island is a touring destination in its own right. Measuring over 12,000 sq miles, with British Columbia's capital Victoria at its southern end, Vancouver Island offers a mix of cosmopolitan city life and remote wilderness with scenic drives through the Pacific Rim National Park. Whale-watching trips depart from the surfing resort of Tofino and bears roam the island's rocky shores.

Self-drive Whales, Bears and Vancouver Island from £3,369 for eight nights including car hire and flights. May to October. Canadian Sky (canadiansky.co.uk (<http://canadiansky.co.uk>)).

8. Big country

Distances might be huge but the awe-inspiringly majestic landscapes are worth the long hours behind the wheel. Highlights of Canada's westernmost province, British Columbia, include the cosmopolitan coastal city of Vancouver, the region's capital Victoria and its island, plus the mountain resort of Whistler. [The Icefields Parkway linking Alberta's Banff and Jasper National Parks](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/north-america/canada/articles/canadian-rockies-honeymoon-camper-van-road-trip/) (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/north-america/canada/articles/canadian-rockies-honeymoon-camper-van-road-trip/>) is among the world's most iconic drives.

Western Canada Fly-Drive from £3,325 for 15 nights, room only including flights and car hire. May to October. Wexas (wexas.com (<http://wexas.com>)).

Bear are fine, but how about a moose? CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK

9. Going on a bear hunt

The Reserve des Laurentides, two hours from Quebec, is rich in wildlife including moose and black bear. A self-drive programme offered by Wildlife Worldwide takes in this region of lakes and forest on an itinerary departing from Quebec City. Local guides accompany excursions to bear watching hides, on a day of canoeing along the Pikauba river in search of beaver and on a half-day sea kayaking expedition from Bergeronnes. The tour also includes a three-hour whale-watching tour on the St Lawrence river.

Quebec's Bears, Whales and Moose from £2,975 for eight nights including flights, car hire and some meals. June to September. Wildlife Worldwide (wildlifeworldwide.com (<http://wildlifeworldwide.com>)).

10. Atlantic isles

Forming the most easterly province of Canada, Newfoundland is separated from the Labrador Peninsula by the Strait of Belle Isle. The large island's capital, St John's, makes a good base for exploring the southern Avalon Peninsula and northern Bonavista Peninsula with its historic lighthouse. Book a stay at the Fogo Island Inn, where all rooms have floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the Atlantic, and the Terra Nova National Park near Clarenville, home to red squirrels, caribou and black bears.

The Peninsulas and Fogo Island: Explore the Coasts of Newfoundland from £4,300 for 10 nights with flights, car hire and some meals. May to September. Frontier Canada (frontier-canada.co.uk (<http://frontier-canada.co.uk>)).

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