HELI-HIKING IN THE CANADIAN ROCKIES

DETAILED ITINERARY

Sep 15/26

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Imagine hiking in a pristine area surrounded by stunning and surreal landscapes in the Canadian Rockies. Your accommodation is in comfortable lodges. Your guides are fully certified, professional mountain guides with years of training and experience. YOU choose how rigorous or how relaxing your day will be. And the final touch... you are delivered and picked up from this magical wilderness by helicopter. The scenery, the service, the experience does not get any better. Welcome to heli-hiking.

We are offering a superb 7-day heli-hiking journey in the Columbia Mountain Range.

FACTS & HIGHLIGHTS

• 7 land days • Start and finish in Banff, Alberta • All meals included • Includes bus shuttle from Banff to helipad and helicopter flight to/from lodge • Hike in pristine, remote mountainous wilderness • Helicopter flights to/from lodges to hiking areas • Tailor your own hikes - easy or hard, long or short

DEPARTURE DATES &PRICE

Please call our office or visit our website for 2028 dates & rates.

Activity Level: 1-5

You choose your activity level daily.

Comfort Level: Terrain varies depending on hikes chosen by you.

ACCOMMODATIONS

2 comfortable lodges in the mountains with private washroom facilities.

Located on the western side of the great swash of the Rocky Mountain Trench, the Columbias are technically not part of the Rockies, but run parallel to it and are a stunning and little-known collection of peaks and ranges.

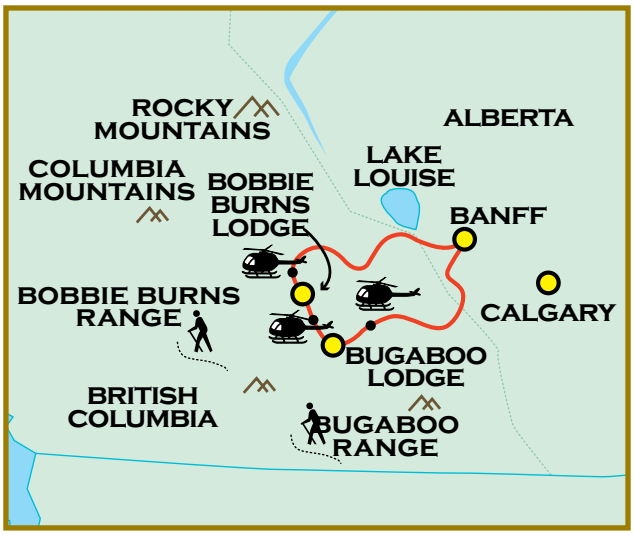
Older than the Rockies by a couple of hundred million years, comparable to them in height and fully their equal in majesty, the Columbia Range attracts only a tiny fraction of the Rockies visitors. Why? A simple reason: it's very hard to get to. Only the most inspired, experienced and stubborn backpackers are able to bushwhack their way to the dazzling heights, which we attain with ease, thanks to our helicopters. No trails, no campgrounds, no pre-packaged view spots. Expect to encounter no one else, as you are simply that remote, making it almost impossible for anyone to get to the places our helicopter takes us to.

A typical day of heli-hiking: After a great sleep and hearty breakfast, our helicopter delivers us to one of several possible starting points. We set out hiking and exploring, always at a comfortable pace, with long or short, strenuous or leisurely hikes to choose from. Our guests, not our guides, set the pace. Our guides are in constant communication with the lodge's helicopter, so we may take two or three different hikes during the day. Our golden rule is flexibility and adaptability.

Each day we immerse ourselves into different terrains, which could include being dropped in a meadow beneath a stupendous glacial cirque for a morning hike followed by a picnic lunch. With the help of our helicopter, we begin our traverse around a cobalt lake, all the time soaking in the mountain beauty and solitude. In the late afternoon, we fly back to the lodge for a massage, an outdoor hot tub soak or a sauna, a well earned, beautifully prepared dinner, and some story swapping while sipping wine by the fireplace in our comfortable lodge.

We hope you can join us and enjoy the magic that is heli-hiking.

This is not an ElderTreks operated tour. As such, participants on this tour are not exclusive ElderTreks clients and it may not adhere to ElderTreks' maximum size restrictions of our tours.



View of Banff's surrounding area.

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DAY 1 CALGARY OR BANFF, TO BOBBIE BURNS LODGE

A shuttle bus departs the Calgary Airport Marriott Hotel (in terminal) bright and early at 5:15am. We recommend you book an overnight at the Calgary Airport Marriott Hotel the night before. Alternatively, if you wish to make your way up to Banff before the trip, you will make your own way to the Brewster Transportation Center (Banff Bus Depot) for 6:45am. The drive takes us west toward Golden, BC, through the fabulous scenery of Banff and Yoho National Parks.

We travel over Kicking Horse Pass, site of the famous Spiral Tunnels, which minimized the steep grade for the rail lines of Canada's National Dream, the transcontinental railway, when it was heroically built in the late 1800s. From Golden, we head south through the Rocky Mountain Trench, with the Rockies to the east and the front ranges of the Columbia Mountains to the west. The Rocky Mountain Trench, down which flows the great Columbia River, is the boundary between the Columbias and the Rockies. One of Earth's most dramatic landmarks, it's clearly visible from orbital space.

We arrive at the helipad for the quick, exhilarating flight to Bobbie Burns Lodge. Before settling into our rooms, we'll be outfitted with all the necessary hiking gear, get acquainted with helicopter safety procedures, then fly up for an afternoon of hiking in some of the world's most stunning mountains.

Late afternoon, we return to the lodge to relax before dinner. After dinner, you may choose to just relax by the fire with your fellow hikers or take a whirlpool soak or sauna.

Overnight at the Bobbie Burns Lodge.

DAY 2 -3 FULL DAY OF HELI-HIKING

For those who want a warm up, there is a morning stretch class before the buffet breakfast. We then board our helicopter for a flight to your starting point for the days hiking.

Each group of hikers, accompanied by a guide, spends the day exploring the immense variety of landscapes in the Bobbie Burns, a winsome sub-range of the Columbias. The Bobbie Burns abounds with distinctive glaciers, turquoise lakes and airy mountain ridges. And everywhere, from every vantage point, vast, heart-stirring views.

We'll enjoy a picnic lunch (or, on special days, a grand high mountain barbecue) amidst stunning, utterly unspoiled scenery. After a memorable day, we fly back to the lodge, where snacks, beverages, a good book, or the sauna and restful outdoor whirlpool await. One of the charms of family-style dining is getting to know our fellow guests as we savor the chef's creation of the evening.

Overnight at the Bobbie Burns Lodge.

DAYS 4 HIKING THE BUGABOOS

Today, fly by helicopter to Grizzly Ridge and trek along the ridge to the Bugaboo Lodge with a picnic lunch on the way. Arrive at your new destination to find your luggage and another remote, exclusive lodge tucked away in the Purcell Ranges.

We follow a similar routine at the Bugaboos where snacks and beverages await after a memorable day of hiking. There's time to relax before dinner; read a good book, relax in the sauna or outdoor whirlpool. Dinner is served family style with the chance to get to know the Bugaboo staff and other guests.

Before retiring, enjoy conversation by the fire, take a look at the Bugaboo's fine history exhibits, make a visit to the lodge's retail shop, set up an appointment with the masseuse (at additional cost) or just enjoy peace and quiet on the deck as the alpen glow settles on the great monoliths above.

Overnight at the Bugaboo Lodge.

DAY 5-6 FULL DAYS OF HELI-HIKING

Optional morning stretch class or sleep in. Enjoy a helicopter journey to your starting point for your days hiking. Each group of hikers, accompanied by a guide, will spend the day exploring the immense variety of landscapes in the Bugaboos.

We'll enjoy a picnic lunch (or, perhaps, a grand high mountain barbecue) amidst stunning, utterly unspoiled scenery (there is not much chance of seeing other hikers, despite the Bugaboos' world fame). After another spectacular day, we fly back to the lodge for another gourmet meal.

Overnight at the Bugaboo Lodge.

DAY 7 BUGABOO HELIPAD, TO BANFF OR CALGARY AIRPORT

After breakfast, take your final helicopter ride from the lodge to the Bugaboo Helipad. From the helipad, we take a bus journey through Kootenay and Banff National Parks en route to Banff and Calgary. A box lunch is provided.

The bus arrives in Banff at approx 1:30pm, or stay aboard and return to the Calgary Airport Marriott (in terminal) hotel for arrival at approximately 3:00 pm. It is recommended you do not book flights before 6:30pm.

Helicopter landing.

Exploring the Rockies.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. HOW BIG ARE THE GROUPS?

While the Bobbie Burns Lodge may have up to 44 guests and the Bugaboos Lodge may have up to 65 guests, each hiking group is limited to 11 hikers plus the guide (groups are often smaller). Small groups are an important ingredient in adventure travel. They allow for more interaction and more personalized service throughout the itinerary.

2. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

All accommodations throughout; all meals, starting with lunch on day 1 and finishing with lunch on departure day; all internal transportation; transfer from Brewster Transportation Center in Banff to the Cariboos Helipad, on arrival day. Transfer to Brewster Transportation Center or the Calgary Airport on Day 7; all day trips as outlined in the itinerary; and the services of lodge staff and experienced trekking guides. Note: some specialized gear needed for backcountry heli-hiking is provided for your use on the trip - boots, day pack, walking stick, jacket and rain gear.

3. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

Flights to/from Calgary, Canada, transportation to Brewster Transportation Center in Banff on Day 1; visas and travel insurance; additional lodge services such as massage and spa treatments when available; alcoholic beverages; gratuity to lodge staff and trekking guides.

4. HOW DO WE TRAVEL DURING THE TOUR?

We travel by bus (to and from Banff), by foot (while hiking) and helicopter (daily to our hiking location and later to return to the lodge). The helicopters are Bell 212's which hold 15 passengers.

5. WHAT ARE OUR ACCOMMODATIONS LIKE?

We spend 3 nights at Bobbie Burns Lodge and 3 nights at Bugaboo Lodge. Bobbie Burns accommodates 44 Heli-hikers in 24 rooms, all with private bath. The lodge has a view-rich outdoor whirlpool, a sauna, games room, porch-side basketball hoops, shop, and a big, welcoming fireplace in its exceptionally homey common area. Its extensive wine cellar is certainly one of the world's best in a wilderness lodge. Newly renovated Bugaboo Lodge sits about 1,600 metres (just shy of a mile) high, with 35 rooms with private baths, a wood and stone bar-lounge, an expanded spa area with sauna, steam room, a games room, a handy shop, and a new rooftop hot tub for extra-luxurious view catching.

6. WHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER?

Our trips take place during the summer months, when the weather is generally warm, however cooler temperatures may occur. In general, one must be fully prepared for both sun or rain, warmth or cold.

7. WHEN IS PAYMENT DUE?

A non-refundable deposit of $2500 (plus insurance if you require) is due at the time of booking and will reserve your place on the tour. Payment of the full tour cost is due 120 days before departure. Payments are non-refundable for this tour 120 days prior to departure.

8. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE ON THE TOUR?

There is a detailed "What to Take" list in our Trip Kit, which we will send to you after you have booked the trip.

9. IS MEDICAL INSURANCE REQUIRED?

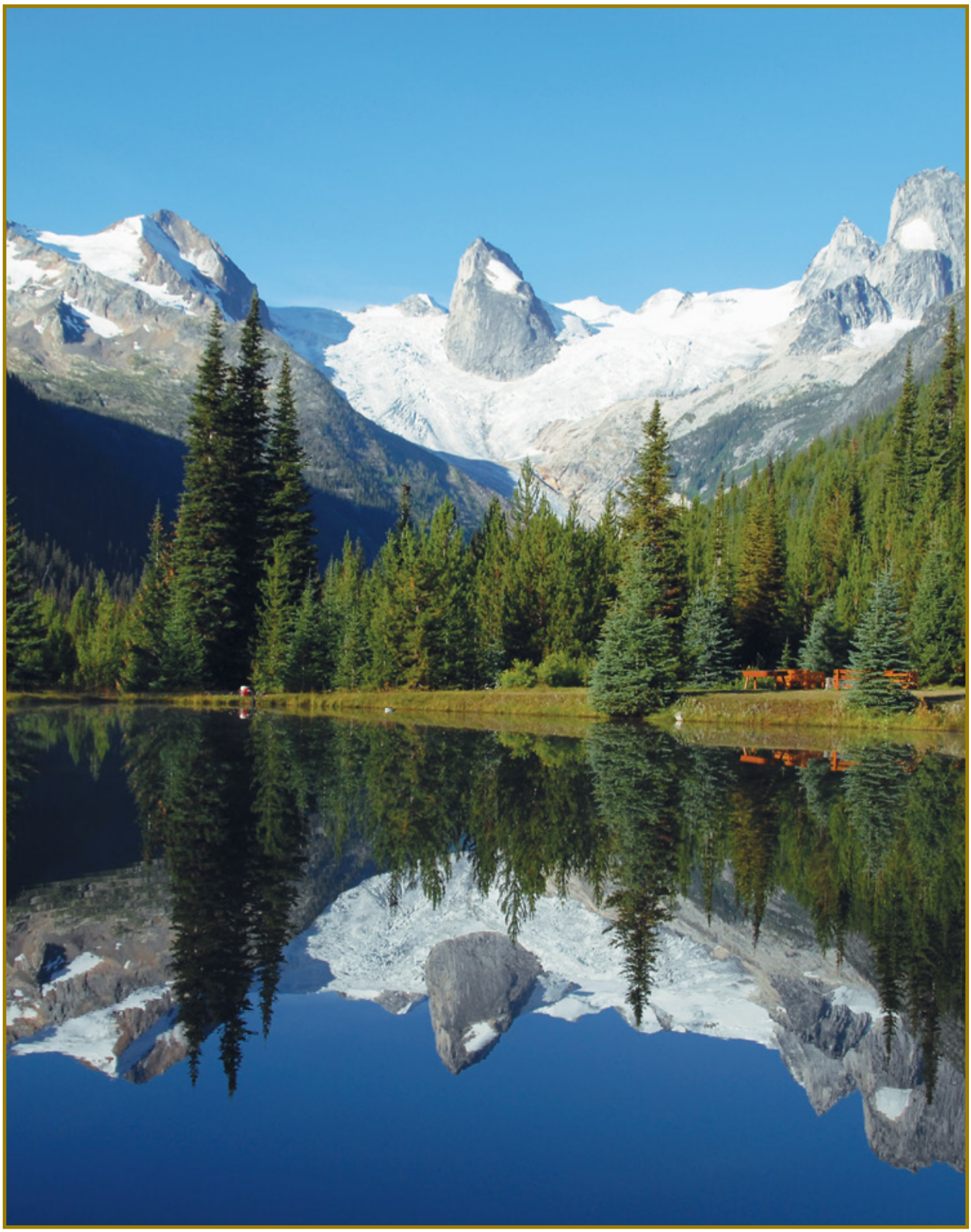
Insurance coverage is not included in the cost of your trip. Please note that medical insurance is not required for this adventure but is recommended. ElderTreks offers comprehensive travel insurance and we are happy to provide you with a quote if you call our office. If you are purchasing insurance elsewhere, please ensure you provide the details to ElderTreks as soon as possible.

10. WHAT MEALS ARE INCLUDED?

All meals on the trip are included, starting with lunch on day 1 and finishing with lunch on departure day.

11. CAN YOU ARRANGE MY FLIGHTS?

We would be happy to take care of your air arrangements. ElderTreks offers personalized flight itineraries — not group flights. Stop over en route, come in a few days early, or extend your stay. Call us for a customized itinerary.

12. WHAT IF I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any further questions about the trip, please do not hesitate to contact our office for additional information. A Trip Kit containing further details on the destination will be sent to you once you have booked the trip.