Winter Trails in the Banff Area





Canadä

Winter, a season to play...

Welcome to Banff National Park, Canada's first national park. Whether you are here for a family adventure or a relaxing getaway, there is no better way to experience Banff's expansive mountain landscape than to get out there in the snow.

Lace up your boots, wax up your skis, strap on a pair of snowshoes or hop on a fat bike and enjoy one of many winter trails.



How to Use this Guide

Whether you want to explore the national park by foot, ski, snowshoe or fat bike, this guide lists the recommended trails for each activity.

Stop by the visitor centres or visit parks.canada.ca/banff-trails for trail conditions and closures before heading out.

For all trails, be prepared as conditions can change quickly; easy and moderate trails can become difficult due to weather change, icy conditions or poor visibility.



• Suitable for all visitors, including those with little or no trail experience.

- Flat to gently rolling.
- Little or no elevation gain or loss.

MODERATE

- Suitable for most visitors who have some basic trail experience.
- · Gently rolling with short steep sections.
- Moderate elevation gain or loss.

Trails are shared in the national park, which means you could see people fat biking while you are winter hiking, or people skiing while you are snowshoeing.

Plan Ahead and **Prepare**

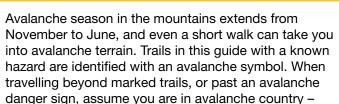
Winter **Safety**

Safety is your responsibility. There are always hazards associated with outdoor recreation. Even short trips from the town of Banff can have serious consequences.

- Ask for advice at a Parks Canada visitor centre for help with trip planning.
- Visit parks.canada.ca/banff-trails for up-to-date
- information on trail conditions, warnings and closures. Pick up and dispose of your pet's waste in a When trails are icy, hiking poles and ice cleats can
- make winter hiking much more safe and enjoyable. Study descriptions and maps before heading out. Always choose a trail suitable for the least experienced member in your group.
- Tell somebody where you are going, when you will be back and who to call if you do not return.
- Expect that trail conditions and winter hazards may change throughout the day. Consult weather forecasts and be prepared for changing weather and emergencies.
- Winter hazards include avalanches, disorientation, thin ice, hypothermia and frostbite.
- From November to March, make sure your vehicle is winterized. Snow tires are mandatory on some roads. Visit parks.canada.ca/banff-driving for winter driving safety information and 511.alberta.ca for

Avalanche Risk 📣

knowledge, skills and equipment.



your group should be prepared with the appropriate

Check the current avalanche forecast at avalanche.ca or a Parks Canada visitor centre. Visit **parksmountainsafety.ca** for more information on backcountry travel and how to stay safe in the mountains.

Recommended Packing List

- Trail guide and map
- Full water bottle or thermos High-energy food
- Bear spray
- Hiking poles and ice cleats
- First aid kit and repair kit
- Lightweight emergency blanket, candle and lighter or waterproof matches
- Headlamp or flashlight with spare batteries
- Toque or winter hat and gloves Sunscreen and sunglasses
- Hand and toe warmers
- Extra warm clothing in case of an emergency
- Cell phone or satellite emergency
- communication device Helmet when fat biking
- Visit parksmountainsafety.ca for additional



In Banff National Park, pedal assist electric bicycles are only allowed on roads or trails that are identified with the e-bike symbol in the trail descriptions. Visit parks.canada.ca/banff-e-bike for more information.

information on winter packing.

Roam **Public Transit**



Trails identified with a bus symbol indicate that the trailhead is accessible by public transit. Limited bike rack space available on buses. Skis and snowshoes are welcome inside buses. Visit the Roam Public Transit desk at the Banff Visitor Centre or visit **roamtransit.com** for fares, maps and schedules.



Winter hiking recommended

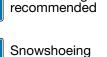
Fat biking

recommended

Cross-country

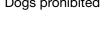
Pedal assist

e-bikes allowed













5a) 3.9 km of trails

5b) 5 km one way

Castle Junction

(Hwy 1A).

19 km one way

<u>M</u> 😭 🚱

Minimal elevation gain

Minimal elevation gain





The track-set trail can be skied and the flat, groomed lane can be biked in either direction. Most people choose to start at the Goat Creek trailhead above Canmore and ski or bike downhill most of the way to Banff. Bikes are prohibited on Spray River West (#2) in the winter. Vehicle shuttle recommended.

Starting point: Parking area on the HI Hostel road south of

A series of interconnected single track-set trails that wind through

Goat Creek and Spray River

spruce forest. The main trail runs from Castle Junction to Castle

Mountain Lookout trailhead along the Bow Valley Parkway

Goat Creek trailhead: 8 km south of Canmore on Spray

Cross-country Ski Trails

1 Tunnel Mountain Winter Trails

8 km all loops No elevation gain **Trailhead: Tunnel Mountain Trailer Court** Campground entrance

🞢 😭 🗐 Route 2

Spray River bridge

Banff Springs Hotel

Do not stop in this area.

to Sundance Canyon junction

the Sunshine Village Access Road

at Sundance Trail west of the building

along Cave Avenue to the Banff Avenue bridge.

4a) 6.3 km one way to Cascade River bridge

Elevation gain 135 m, elevation loss 50 m

Elevation gain 250 m, elevation loss 85 m

Trailhead: Lake Minnewanka Day-use Area parking lot

This wide trail is double track-set with a skate-skiing lane to

return trip. For an additional 2 km round trip, ski the trail to

Cascade River bridge and single track-set for the remaining route

to Stoney Creek on pleasant rolling terrain. Enjoy a fun downhill

4a + 4b) 15.1 km one way

Upper Bankhead

Elevation gain 95 m. elevation loss 100 m



Two seasonally closed campgrounds offer first-time skiers the perfect place to try out a new sport. Get your evening fitness fix with 2.6 km of lit trails in Trailer Court or explore the 5.4 km quiet, forested loops of Village 1. Dogs are prohibited on ski trails.

(2) Spray River West Trail 5.6 km one way from Spray River West trailhead to

Elevation gain 105 m, elevation loss 70 m

Route 2

there is a picnic spot beside the river near the bridge.

Trailhead: Spray River West trailhead, past the Fairmont

This locals' favourite is double track-set with skate-skiing lane,

Avalanche hazard: Avalanche paths from Sulphur Mountain

offering rolling terrain in a picturesque river valley. Bring a snack;

cross the Spray River 4.5 - 5 km from the Spray River trailhead.

5.5 km one way from Healy Creek/Brewster Creek trailhead

West Trailhead: Healy Creek/Brewster Creek trailhead on

East Trailhead: Cave and Basin National Historic Site, start

This forested trail is a taste of the backcountry, close to town. Track

setting occurs when adequate snow is available. For a shorter one-

way trip, arrange for a drop-off at the Healy Creek/Brewster Creek

trailhead, and ski or fat bike into the town; a short trail will bring you

In Banff National Park, we share the trail:

Dogs 😭 😭

control at all times.

garbage bin.

for more information.

Fat bikers

yield to

all users

Trail **Etiquette**

 The track-set portion of the trail is for classic skiing **only**. The flat, groomed lane is for other users.

Dogs cause stress for wildlife. Dogs, like wolves and

coyotes, may be seen as a threat. Off-leash dogs

can trigger aggressive behaviour from wildlife such

as cougars and elk. To prevent unsafe situations for

yourself, your dog, wildlife and other people, it is your

• Ensure your dog is on a leash and under physical

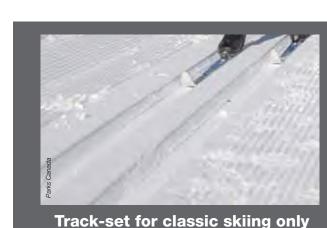
Dogs are not allowed on some trails: read the trail

descriptions or visit parks.canada.ca/banff-trails

- Walk and fat bike only on hard-packed trails to prevent ruts. If your feet or tires sink deeper than 2.5 cm (1 inch), conditions are too soft.
- When climbing, please yield to descending skiers and fat bikers.
- If you fall, move off the track as quickly as possible
- When taking a break, step to the side, leaving room for others to pass.
- Leave no trace. Pack out everything you pack in.



Skiers yield to descending skiers

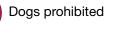




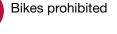
Legend

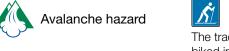














Elevation gain 435 m, elevation loss 160 m

Avalanche hazard: Avalanche paths from Sulphur Mountain cross the Spray River 4.5 - 5 km from the Spray River trailhead. Do not stop in this area.



11.1 km one way (2.6 km from trailhead to Brewster Creek junction, plus 8.5 km to Sundance Lodge) Elevation gain 315 m, elevation loss 150 m Trailhead: Healy Creek/Brewster Creek trailhead on the **Sunshine Village Access Road**





This trail offers valley views through open and forested areas. Track setting occurs when adequate snow is available. For the more experienced, take the trail to Sundance Lodge. Note that hills can get icy.



Snowshoeing Trails Snow conditions on snowshoe trails are best after a

recent snowfall.



Elevation gain 130 m, elevation loss 135 m Starting point: The closed gate at the intersection of Tunne Mountain Drive and St. Julien Road

Closed to vehicles in the winter, this route has splendid views

of Cascade Mountain. It also connects with Surprise Corner to Hoodoos Trail (#11).



(9) Johnson Lake

2.8 km loop Minimal elevation gain Trailhead: Johnson Lake Day-use Area





This trail follows the lakeside shoreline and includes views of Cascade and Rundle mountains. This forest of Douglas fir, spruce and pine trees is the richest biological zone in Banff National Park – the montane ecoregion.

10 Surprise Corner to Hoodoos

4.8 km one way Elevation gain 115 m, elevation loss 90 m Trailhead: Surprise Corner, east end of Buffalo Street





This sunny trail provides open vistas to the Hoodoos Viewpoint. Keep an eye out for wildlife and watch for icy sections. You can make a loop or return to town along Tunnel Mountain Road.

Trailhead: Kiosk at the south end of Mount Norquay ski

11 Upper Stoney

4.8 km loop Elevation gain 205 m



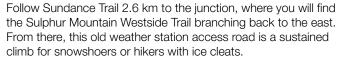


This narrow trail climbs through the forest to the Stoney Lookout where you can enjoy views of Cascade Mountain and the Bow Valley below. From there, continue north and descend on a twisting trail that winds above the ski-area lodge.



Elevation gain 885 m Trailhead: Cave and Basin National Historic Site, start at **Sundance Trail west of building**







Trailhead: Johnston Creek trailhead at the Moose Meadows parking lot (大)<

A quieter alternative to the busier Johnston Canyon Trail, this trail climbs through thick forest to an open meadow with brilliantly coloured mineral springs.



Trails can be icy in the winter. Hiking poles and ice cleats are recommended when exploring. Cleats are designed to fit over shoes or boots and can be purchased at the Banff Visitor Centre, 224 Banff Avenue, and most outdoor stores in the town of Banff.



(14) Fenland Trail

No elevation gain

Trailhead: Fenland Trail parking lot, west of Mount Norquay Road. Trailhead is a 20 minute/1.5 km walk from downtown



This interpretive trail under old growth spruce trees is great for families with young children. For a longer walk from the Banff townsite, start at Central Park and follow the Bow River to the Fenland trailhead. Walk east, just over the railway tracks on Mount Norquay Road (0.9 km one way).

(15) Marsh Loop

Minimal elevation gain Trailhead: Cave and Basin National Historic Site parking lot

This trail is located in the wide expanse of the Bow Valley and circles around a marsh. It comes alive with birds in the winter and is a great place to see animal tracks.

(16) Spray Connector

2 km one way

Minimal elevation gain Starting point: Park at the Bow Falls Day-use Area, walk past the gate and across the bridge. Follow the Golf Course

right. Go past the kiosk, head southwest and take a left on the trail closest to the Spray River.





This short outing close to town links the Spray River East Trail to Spray River West Trail via a small scenic bridge. If conditions are icy, ice cleats are strongly recommended.

Road 350 m to the Spray River East trailhead kiosk on your

(17) Stewart Canyon

1.5 km one way Minimal elevation gain Trailhead: Lake Minnewanka Day-use Area, kiosk at the far end of picnic area



Explore the Cascade River which feeds Banff National Park's largest lake. This trail can be very icy, especially during the spring.



(18a) (18b) Johnston Canyon 19a) 1.2 km one way to the Lower Falls

Elevation gain 50 m

19a + 19b) 2.5 km one way to the Upper Falls Elevation gain 120 m Trailhead: Johnston Canyon Day-use Area **M M**

bridges with railings that lead to the Lower Falls or to the spectacular 30 m high frozen Upper Falls. The trail is usually very icy – ice cleats are strongly recommended. Travel an additional 3.2 km beyond the Upper Falls to reach the lnk Pots.

Travel in the depths of the canyon on wide trails and narrow

19 Tunnel Mountain Summit

2.4 km one way Elevation gain 260 m Trailhead: Lower parking lot on St. Julien Road. Trailhead is a 15 minute/1 km walk from downtown Banff.



Reach the summit of a mountain in the heart of the Banff townsite. Take in breathtaking views of the town and Bow Valley. This steep trail can be extremely icy. Hiking poles and ice cleats are strongly recommended.

20 Sulphur Mountain

5.5 km to top of gondola, plus 0.5 km to Sanson Peak Elevation gain 655 m Trailhead: Banff Upper Hot Springs parking lot





Switchbacks on the slopes of Sulphur Mountain provide a steady uphill hike to a summit renowned for its stunning mountain views. Take a 0.5 km side trip on the boardwalk along the ridge ending at Sanson Peak. You will find more great views, the Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station National Historic Site and the 1903 weather observatory. If conditions are icy, ice cleats are trongly recommended.

Avalanche hazard: There is hazardous avalanche terrain adjacent to this trail. Stay on the trail at all times.

Trailhead: Cave and Basin National Historic Site, start at

Follow the Sundance Trail to this moderately difficult canyon loop.

Bikes are not permitted past the bike racks. This trail can

If trails are icy, studded tires are recommended to

Looking for a place to get a feel for fat biking on wide, groomed

snowshoeing after a big snowfall? The flat terrain of Trailer Court

has something for everyone, and the trails are lit at night. For a

slightly more difficult terrain, try the 2.5 km fat bike loop

22a 22b Tunnel Mountain Winter Trails

Trailhead: Tunnel Mountain Trailer Court

Route 2

that meanders through coniferous forest.

(23) Spray River East Trail

Elevation gain 135 m, elevation loss 80 m

River bridge

the east-most trail.

5.7 km one way from Spray River East trailhead to Spray

Trailhead: Park at the Bow Falls Day-use Area, walk past

Road 350 m to the Spray River East trailhead kiosk on your

right. Go past the kiosk, head southwest and take a left on

the gate and across the bridge. Follow the Golf Course

This trail offers rolling terrain in a picturesque river valley. As

the snow falls throughout the year, snowshoers flatten the trail

and fat bikers compact the snow, creating a hard-packed trail

21 (24a) (24b) Sundance Canyon

Elevation gain 155 m, elevation loss 60 m

be icy - ice cleats are strongly recommended.

Fat Biking Trails

Recommended

3.7 km one way, plus 2.1 km loop

Sundance Trail west of building

add grip to your ride.

23a) 3.4 km of trails

Minimal elevation gain

Campground entrance

No elevation gain

23b) 2.5 km loop



Starting point: East end of Banff Avenue at the junction with Banff Legacy Trail

Access this trail from the start of the Banff Legacy Trail located at the east end of Banff Avenue. Ride 100 m until you see a steep path going up through thick forest. Beware of icy conditions. The trail levels-off gradually until it reaches an open meadow; head left on nice rolling singletrack. This north-facing slope retains

26 Tunnel Bench Loop

9.7 km loop The wide tires of a fat bike add extra surface area for Elevation gain 60 m



in the spectacular views of iconic Mount Rundle and Cascade Mountain as well as the Fairholme Range. Some sections have

7.8 km one way to Aylmer Pass junction Elevation gain 45 m, elevation loss 35 m Trailhead: Lake Minnewanka Day-use Area, kiosk at far





physical demands and the remoteness of this trail require excellent fitness, bike-handling skills and preparation. The challenging and at times exposed sidehill trail climbs steeply

Banff Visitor Centres 224 Banff Avenue and 327 Railway Avenue 403-762-1550 / parks.canada.ca/banff

Alberta Transportation Road Report 511 (in Alberta) or 1-855-391-9743 / 511.alberta.ca

the Banff Visitor Centre, 224 Banff Avenue, and retail outlets in the town of Banff.

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Tunnel Mountain Summit

3.7 km one way Elevation gain 75 m, elevation loss 60 m Trailhead: Cave and Basin National Historic Site, trail starts



25 Banff Avenue Trail

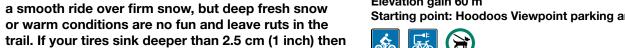
forested areas to the Sundance Canyon picnic area. Sections of the trail are single and double track set. Bikes are not permitted past the bike racks.

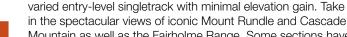




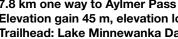


snow well and is a reliable fat biking experience. The trail ends at Tunnel Mountain Road. Return the same way or connect with the Tunnel Bench Loop (Coastline) to return to town.













More **Information**

403-762-2088 / weather.gc.ca

Avalanche Bulletin

satellite phone: 403-762-4506. Cell phone coverage is not reliable throughout the national park.

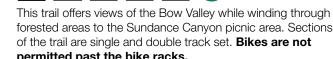
Avalanche education and training **Banff Dispatch** 403-762-1470

In case of EMERGENCY, call 911 or

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Également offert en français



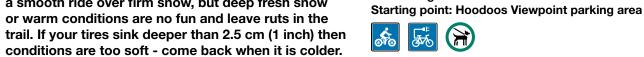


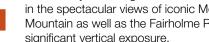




Coastline, and the Peyto Pit Road to make a winding and

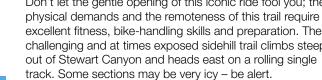












Trail Conditions Report Environment Canada Weather Forecast

Guidebooks and topographic maps are available at

trails? Want to enjoy a quiet stroll in nature with your dog or try out

