



Alberta's Dinosaur Trail

Discover two-billion-year-old rocks plus the largest collection of dinosaur skeletons in the world.

Number of days:

4-5

Tour distance:

771 km/480 mi

Day 1	Calgary to Drumheller	140 km/88 mi
Day 2	Drumheller to Medicine Hat	247 km/155 mi
Day 3	Medicine Hat to Lethbridge	168 km/105 mi
Day 4	Lethbridge to Calgary	216 km/135 mi

SPECIAL INTEREST ROUTE

Calgary

See Tour 4

Brooks

Dinosaur Provincial Park

Drumheller and Area

World's largest Dinosaur
Fossil Shops
Drumheller Valley Historical Interpretive Centre
Splash Park/Centennial Park
Reptile World
The Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology
Dinosaur Trail
Bleriot Ferry
Homestead Antique Museum
Horseshoe Canyon
Horseshief Canyon
McMullen Island

Hoo Doo Drive Trail

East Coulee "Big" School Museum
Historic Atlas Coal Mine
Hoodooos
Mining History Statues
Rosedale Suspension Bridge
Valley Historic Sites

Lethbridge

Fort Whoop-Up
Indian Battle Park
Nikka Yuko Japanese Gardens
Sir Alexander Galt Museum
Southern Alberta Art Gallery
University of Lethbridge
High Level Bridge
Alberta Birds of Prey Centre, Coaldale

Medicine Hat

Clay Products Interpretive Centre & the Medalta Historic Site
Cypress Hills Provincial Park
Saamis Teepee

Milk River and Area

Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park
Devils Coulee Museum and Interpretive Centre (Wamer)
Village of Sterling National Historic Site (Sterling)

Rosebud

Akokiniskway Gallery
Akokiniskway Golf Course
Centennial Museum
Rosebud Theatre

If Calgary is your gateway, head north toward Dinosaur Trail on Highway 2 to Crossfield and then veer east on Highway 72 (which becomes Highway 9) to Drumheller where the Trail begins. But before you venture out on this scenic loop through Alberta's lunar-like Badlands, spend some time in the town of Drumheller where murals of dinosaurs decorate scores of historic buildings. At one end of Main Street, right on the banks of the Red Deer River, is the world's largest fibreglass Tyrannosaurus Rex, where 106 stairs lead you straight into the beast's actual mouth.

Just seven kilometres west of Drumheller, on North Dinosaur Trail, is the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology, arguably the finest dinosaur museum in the world. The Tyrrell is devoted to dinosaurs and was named after Joseph Tyrrell, who in 1884 discovered an *Albertosaurus*, the first of hundreds of complete dinosaur skeletons, since removed from Alberta's Badlands. Today the museum has more than 80,000 specimens and 35 complete skeletons, more than any other museum in the world. All are strikingly and imaginatively presented with the crowd-pleasers being the original *Albertosaurus* and *Tyrannosaurus Rex*, as well as more unusual creatures such as the *Xiphactinus*. The museum alone is worth several hours but you can spend a full day here by tacking on a short hike or guided jeep tour to some nearby bone-beds. Throughout the summer the museum hosts family sleepovers, Dino Camps and full-day digs.

Heading out on the Dinosaur Trail, drive west from Drumheller, along the Red Deer River Valley to the first point

of interest, the Little Church, often described as being able to seat thousands but only six at a time. The road then climbs steeply out of the valley onto the prairie benchland. Take the first access road on the left — it doubles back to Horseshief Canyon Lookout from where there are spectacular views of the Badlands and the multicoloured walls of the canyons. The trail's halfway point is the crossing of the Red Deer River on the Bleriot Ferry, one of the few remaining cable ferries in Alberta. The road continues along the top of the valley to Orkney Hill Lookout for more panoramic views across the Badlands and the lush valley floor below.

After completing the loop take a little diversion south past the Horseshoe Canyon to the tiny town of Rosebud, for a dinner theatre performance.

Serious 'dinophiles' can add another day to their trip by heading south on Highway 56, then east on Highway 1, and slightly north on Highway 36 to Dinosaur Provincial Park (a UNESCO World Heritage Site). Its focus is the Field Station, a base for scientific research, but is also home to numerous dinosaur bone-beds, rivaled only by sites in China's Gobi Desert. Most people come here for guided walks and the popular Badlands bus tours, which take in parts of the park otherwise out of bounds to visitors. Not only is the diversity of specimens great, but so is the sheer volume; more than 300 museum-quality specimens have been removed from bone-beds found here, and are exhibited in museums around the world.

Back on Highway 1, continue heading east. Visit the city of Medicine Hat, described by Rudyard Kipling in 1907 as a city "with all hell for a basement" because of the huge gas fields under the city and this area. Today visitors flock to the world's tallest teepee, bask under Medicine Hat's endless skies or tour the Clay Products Interpretive Centre and the Medalta Historic Site.

From Medicine Hat, head to the southwest corner of the province on Highway 3 to the city of Lethbridge. On the way through visit the Nikka Yuko Japanese Gardens, Fort Whoop-Up and the Sir Alexander Galt Museum. Finish off the tour by heading back to Calgary on Highway 2 and visiting points of interest along the way.



Dinosaur Dig, near Drumheller