



# Alberta's UNESCO Trail

*Of Canada's 13 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Alberta claims five.*

**Number of days:** 7-14

**Tour distance:** 1890 km/1181 mi

Day 1/2	Waterton Lakes National Park	
Day 3	Waterton Lakes National Park to Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump	125 km/78 mi
Day 4	Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump to Dinosaur Provincial Park	265 km/166 mi
Day 5	Dinosaur Provincial Park to Calgary	233 km/146 mi
Day 6	Calgary to Banff	129 km/81 mi
Day 7	Banff	
Day 8	Banff to Jasper	295 km/184 mi
Day 9	Jasper	
Day 10	Jasper to Edmonton	363 km/227 mi
Day 11	Edmonton	
Day 12-14	Edmonton to Wood Buffalo National Park	480km/300mi

## ALBERTA'S UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES

### Brooks

Dinosaur Provincial Park

### Fort Macleod

Head-Smashed-in Buffalo Jump

### Rocky Mountain Parks

Banff National Park

Jasper National Park

### Waterton Lakes National Park

Akamina Parkway

The Red Rock Parkway

Cameron Falls

Cameron Lake

Red Rock Canyon

Waterton Shore Line Cruises

### Wood Buffalo National Park

Park Information Centre in Fort Smith

45,000 sq. km of Boreal Forest

Free roaming wood bison

Salt Plains Overlook/Trail

Gypsum karst topography

Karstland Trail

Sweetgrass Station

In order to see all five United Nations UNESCO World Heritage Sites, start in the far southwest corner of the province in Waterton Lakes National Park, which became the world's first International Peace Park in 1932 when it joined Glacier National Park. It's also a model of environmental co-operation. Girdled by a chain of deep glacial lakes, this gem of a park offers an unbelievable variety of high-altitude day hikes, horseback riding adventures, 1,200 species of plants and wildlife viewing opportunities.

Then jog north on Highway 6 to Pincher Creek, then east on Highway 3 to Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump. Its bragging rights are well-earned — as it's the largest, oldest and best preserved of all bison jumps in the world. At the base is a vast graveyard with thousands of years worth of bones from butchered bison piled 10 metres (32 ft.) high. The jump represents an exceptionally ingenious hunting technique used by Plains Indians up to 10,000 years ago. In recognizing the site's cultural and historical importance, UNESCO declared the jump a World Heritage Site in 1981.

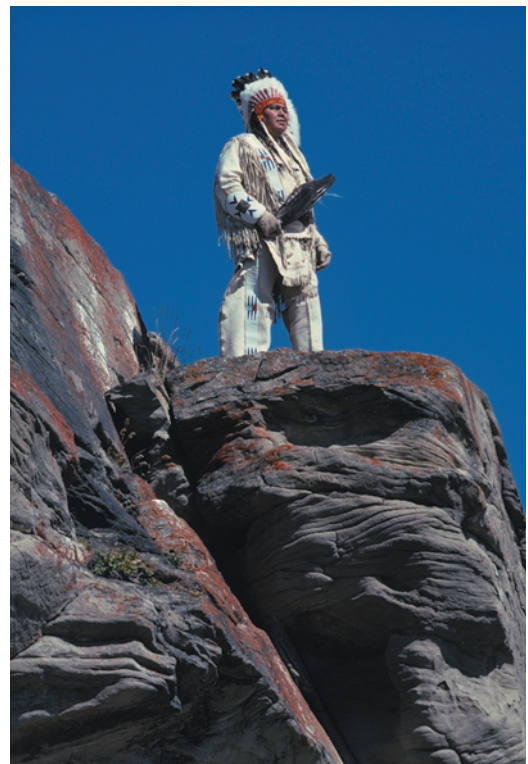
Back on Highway 3 head east to Taber, and then north on Highway 36. From there it's just a skip to a lunar world, swollen with coulees and hoodoos and other mystical things. Dinosaur Provincial Park has some of the most extensive dinosaur bone fields in the world, now protected under the UNESCO designation. Daily summer interpretive programs and digs walk you back through time.

From there, head west on Highway 544 and then a short distance south on

Highway 36 before reaching Highway 1 which will take you directly west to Calgary. Spend some time here or make a beeline to Banff and Jasper National Parks — two spectacular Rocky Mountain parks that are part of four adjacent parks which together have been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. (The other two are Kootenay and Yoho to the west in BC). Stays in either Banff or Jasper could range from an overnight to several weeks. Both parks are loaded with opportunities to hike, canoe, cycle, camp, golf, play tennis, go horseback riding or just laze around a steamy hot pool.

From Jasper, head east on the scenic Yellowhead Highway to Edmonton and call it a grand road trip, or, devoted UNESCO fans could squeeze in our last UNESCO site, Wood Buffalo National Park (the second largest national park in the world).

Miles from nowhere, in the far northeast corner of Alberta, most tourists either drive north through Peace River country into the Northwest Territories to the park's closest hub, Fort Smith, or they fly from Edmonton or Calgary. This vast chunk of lonely boreal forest and shallow lakes is home to the world's largest free-roaming herd of wood bison (more than 2,100 remain) and is the last natural nesting habitat of the rare whooping crane (183 individuals were counted in 1999). It was for these reasons Wood Buffalo National Park was deemed a UNESCO site in 1983. Numerous outfitters in Fort Smith offer adventure and nature-based holidays in the Park.



*Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, Fort Macleod*