

Contents

List of Maps

ix

1	Welcome to Banff & Jasper National Parks	1
1	Banff National Park Today	3
2	The Best of Banff National Park	4
3	Jasper National Park Today	12
4	The Best of Jasper National Park	13
2	Planning Your Trip	20
1	Getting Started: Information & Reservations	20
	<i>Online & on Your Way</i>	21
2	When to Go	25
3	Money	27
4	Permits	28
	<i>Parks Canada's Annual Pass</i>	29
5	Getting There	30
6	Getting Around	32
	<i>The Rental Advantage</i>	33
7	Planning a Backcountry Trip	33
	<i>Backpacking For Beginners: Leave No Trace</i>	34
8	Tips for RVers	36
9	Package Tours, Adventure Outings & Educational Programs	38
10	Tips for Travelers with Disabilities	40
11	Tips for Travelers with Pets	41
12	Tips for Travelers with Children	41
	<i>Hiking with Kids: Let the Discovery Begin!</i>	42
13	Protecting Your Health & Safety	43
14	Protecting the Environment	44
	<i>Wildlife Encounters: What to Do</i>	46

3**Exploring Banff National Park** 49

1	Essentials	.52
	<i>Numbers, Please</i>	.55
	<i>Fast Facts: Banff National Park</i>	.56
2	Tips from Park Staff	.58
	<i>Top 10 Shops in Banff</i>	.60
3	The Highlights	.61
	<i>Arts in the National Park</i>	.61
	<i>Banff: Where'd That Funny Name Come From?</i>	.62
4	How to See the Park in Several Days	.63
	<i>Photo Ops Galore</i>	.65
	<i>Banff Calendar of Events</i>	.66
5	What to See & Do in Banff Townsite	.67
	<i>The Banff Springs Hotel: Part of the Park's History</i>	.68
	<i>A Secret No Longer</i>	.72
6	Driving Tours	.73
	<i>The Continental Divide</i>	.75
	<i>Castle Mountain</i>	.76
	<i>Banff on a Rainy Day</i>	.80
7	Organized Tours	.83

4**Hikes & Other Outdoor Pursuits
in Banff National Park** 86

1	Day Hikes	.86
	<i>Hiking To-Do List</i>	.87
	<i>How Far (& Fast) Can I Really Go?</i>	.92
2	Exploring the Backcountry	.102
3	Other Activities	.107
	<i>Saddle Up & Head High</i>	.112
4	Winter Sports & Activities	.113
	<i>Winter Driving</i>	.114
	<i>A Word of Caution: You Are in Avalanche Country</i>	.117

5	Where to Stay, Camp & Eat in Banff National Park	118
1	Lodging in Banff National Park	118
	<i>Hostelling: Is it for You?</i>	125
2	Frontcountry Camping in Banff National Park	129
	<i>Regular vs. Self-Registering Campgrounds</i>	130
3	Backcountry Camping & Lodging in Banff National Park	134
4	Where to Eat in Banff National Park	137
5	Banff After Dark	142
6	Exploring Jasper National Park	144
1	Essentials	145
	<i>All about Jasper</i>	148
	<i>FAST FACTS: Jasper National Park</i>	151
2	Tips from Park Staff	153
	<i>Ranger Rick versus Warden Wayne</i>	154
	<i>"The Buildings Should Reflect the Landscape"</i>	156
3	The Highlights	156
4	How to See the Park in Several Days	157
	<i>Jasper in the Rain</i>	158
5	What to See & Do in Jasper Townsite	159
	<i>Titanic Dreams</i>	164
6	Driving Tours	164
	<i>Frequently Asked Icefield Questions</i>	167
	<i>David Thompson: Explorer & Mapmaker</i>	168
	<i>Mary Schaffer: Hunter of Peace</i>	171
7	Organized Tours	172
7	Hikes & Other Outdoor Pursuits in Jasper National Park	173
1	Day Hikes	174
	<i>The View from the Top of Old Fort Point</i>	175
2	Exploring the Backcountry	185
3	Other Activities	188
	<i>Biking Do's & Don'ts</i>	189
4	Winter Sports & Activities	192

8	Where to Stay, Camp & Eat in Jasper National Park	195
1	Lodging in Jasper National Park	195
2	Frontcountry Camping in Jasper National Park	201
3	Backcountry Camping & Lodging in Jasper National Park	203
4	Where to Eat in Jasper National Park	206
5	Jasper After Dark	209
9	Gateways to Banff & Jasper National Parks	210
1	Canmore & Kananaskis Country	210
2	Radium Hot Springs, British Columbia & Kootenay National Park	222
3	Golden, British Columbia & Yoho National Park	228
4	Mount Robson Provincial Park	237
10	A Nature Guide to Banff & Jasper National Parks	239
1	The Geology	239
	<i>Charting the Rockies East to West</i>	241
	<i>Canadian Rockies vs. American Rockies</i>	242
2	The Life Zones	243
3	The Flora	244
4	The Fauna	251
	<i>Sheepish Sheep That Jump</i>	253
	<i>How Many Mammals?</i>	257
5	The Future	259
	Index	261
	General Index	261
	Accommodations Index	265
	Restaurant Index	265

List of Maps

The Canadian Rockies	22	Banff National Park Trail	
Highway Access to Banff		Heads	88
and Jasper National		Jasper National Park	146
Parks	32	Jasper Townsite	161
Banff National Park	50	Columbia Icefield Area	165
Banff Townsite	69	Jasper National Park Trail	
Lake Louise Area	79	Heads	176