

Tourism Sector

Resident Winter Travel and Recreation Toolkit

Quick guide for safe travel and what to expect this unique winter season

#exploreBC

December 9, 2021





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Introduction

Resident Winter Travel and Recreation Toolkit

British Columbians have faced unprecedented challenges from severe weather and flooding that have impacted the normal ability to travel between the Lower Mainland and the rest of the province.

While the work is ongoing to repair the damage done, we can still travel to connect with family and enjoy winter recreation if we plan ahead and prepare for situations that can shift rapidly. Many of us are eager to travel and see family and friends this winter.

This toolkit is designed as a guide for operators with the information needed by the public to plan travel in British Columbia this winter. Operators can share this document, include the information in their communications, and provide links on their website.

Until the New Year, people can get from the Lower Mainland to the Interior by driving via the United States, taking advantage of the lower rates and extra capacity a number of airlines have added, or via Highway 3 on existing commercial bus operators.

Situations can evolve rapidly, and we'll do our best to keep everyone informed by updating this toolkit and the links to critical information that should reflect changes to travel information.



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A Message from B.C.'s Tourism Sector

Winter Travel and Recreation in B.C. in 2021-22

- Winter travel can be a great way to connect with family and friends, experience British Columbia, and help support small, family-owned businesses. Each of British Columbia's tourism regions – Northern BC, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast, Kootenay Rockies, Thompson Okanagan, Vancouver Island, and Vancouver, Coast & Mountains – is ready to welcome those connecting with family and friends and visiting their regions.
- The first step for any trip is to know before you go – what business are open, what the rules are, and what is the best way to get there and back.
- Supply chain issues are impacting businesses across the province. Some communities have been heavily impacted by flooding and are experiencing shortages. Their focus is on recovery and the safety of their residents. Please be respectful, patient and kind while you are travelling.
- Remember to be prepared before you travel. Ensure you have winter tires or chains, put an emergency kit in your vehicle, bring water and food in case of a delay, and let your contacts know your plans before you leave and when you arrive. It's the right thing to do every winter, not just this year.
- Your travel may take you through the United States, or via air, and the rules for this travel are constantly evolving. Be sure to check before you go.
- The tourism sector and communities across the province are eager to welcome you this winter, and we thank you for taking extra time to plan and prepare before you travel.

Joint statement of Brenda Baptiste, Chair, Indigenous Tourism BC; Walt Judas, CEO, Tourism Industry Association of BC; Ingrid Jarrett, President and CEO of the BC Hotel Association; Anthony Everett, Chair of the BC Regional Tourism Secretariat; Christopher Nicolson, President & CEO, Canada West Ski Areas Association; and Richard Porges, President and CEO of Destination BC.



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Be Prepared I

Steps to prepare for winter driving

Winter driving requires more planning and preparation to be ready for changes that can happen quickly. Follow these steps before any road trip to ensure a safe trip – this winter and every winter.

- Keep your gas tank as topped up as possible
- Install winter tires – it's the law on most highways. <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021TRAN0139-001874>
- Plan your route, and make sure you let a key contact know when you leave and when you arrive.
- Pack extra snacks and water
- Carry a blanket and warm clothes and boots
- Bring essential safety equipment
 - roadside emergency kit
 - flashlight with extra batteries
 - mobile phone charger and portable phone battery charger
 - windshield scraper, snow brush, and shovel
 - salt or traction aid
 - booster cables
 - extra antifreeze and windshield washer fluid
 - tire chains
- A great place for all kinds of winter driving advice is [shiftintowinter.ca](https://www.shiftintowinter.ca)



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Be Prepared 2

Health regulations and restrictions

COVID-19 is still having an impact across B.C. and the world. There are different restrictions in different parts of B.C., so be sure to know what to expect before you go.

- Travel and COVID-19: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/travel/current>
- Provincewide health orders are here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>
- Northern Health specific health orders: <https://www.northernhealth.ca/health-topics/covid-19-orders>

Travellers are strongly advised to check current conditions. Destination BC's Know Before You Go page brings together up-to-date information at <https://www.hellobc.com/know-before-you-go>.



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Map out your route

Lower Mainland to the Interior through Washington State

The Interior can be reached through Washington State Highways by travelling south from Vancouver (A) to Everett (B), east to Wenatchee (C), and north to Osoyoos (D) and then on to where you want to go in Okanagan and points North. (as of Dec 9, 2021)



- Check conditions at www.drivebc.ca and <https://wsdot.com/travel/real-time/map/> before travelling go.
- There are travel requirements in place – including proof of vaccination – to enter the U.S. and to re-enter Canada.
 - US requirements are <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2021/10/29/fact-sheet-guidance-travelers-enter-us-land-ports-entry-and-ferry-terminals>
 - Canadian requirements are <https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid/travel-restrictions/covid-vaccinated-travellers-entering-canada#vaccinated>



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Travel alternatives

Air and bus options

There are multiple airline and bus line connections between the Lower Mainland and the Interior and points beyond in B.C. Though availability may be limited, consult their websites for bookings.

Airlines

- Air Canada - aircanada.com
- Air North - flyairnorth.com
- Flair Airlines - flyflair.com
- Pacific Coastal Airlines - pacificcoastal.com
- Swoop - flyswoop.com
- West Jet - westjet.com

Ground Transportation

- Ebus - myebus.ca
- Rider Express - riderexpress.ca
- Mountain Man Mike Bus Service - mountainmanmikes.ca

Getting from Airport to Ski Hills and to Town

- YLW Kelowna - ylw.kelowna.ca/passengers/transportation
- YKA Kamloops - kamloopsairport.com/to-from/car-rentals-transportation



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Planning a stay

Connecting with local accommodations, activities, and situations

B.C.'s six tourism regions are the best source of on-the-ground information on local accommodations, activities, and community status. Many recreation activities like ski hills are open and operating and ready to welcome travellers.

- Northern BC Tourism Association - travelnbc.com
- Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association - landwithoutlimits.com
- Kootenay Rockies Tourism Association - krtourism.ca
- Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association - ThompsonOkanagan.com
- Tourism Vancouver Island - vancouverisland.travel
- Vancouver, Coast & Mountains - hellobc.com/places-to-go/vancouver-coast-mountains/

People can also connect with a Visitor Centre where local destination experts around the province are ready to help with trip planning assistance, visitor information, and local expertise. Look for the blue and yellow 'i' on BC's highways or check out hellobc.com/plan-your-trip/visitor-information-services

Key contacts

Ingrid Jarrett, President & CEO

Email: ingrid@bcha.com

Phone: 1-800-663-3153



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British Columbia
Regional Tourism
Secretariat

Anthony Everett, Chair

Email: anthony@tourismvi.ca

Phone: (250) 754-3500

Christopher Nicolson, President & CEO

Email: ceo@cwsaa.org

Phone: (778) 484-5535



Richard Porges, President & CEO

Email: Richard.Porges@DestinationBC.ca

Phone: (778) 572-1808

Brenda Baptiste, Chair

Email: bbaptiste@oib.ca

Phone: 250-535-0556



Walt Judas, CEO

Email: wjudas@tiabc.ca

Phone: 778-953-0620