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Top 10 Best Canadian Road Trips (1/10)

Roll down your windows, cue up the playlists and hit the highway on one of these 10 great Canadian road trips. Whether you've got days or just a few hours to spare, these unforgettable cruises offer breathtaking scenery, iconic landmarks and thrilling stops along the way.

BY YUKI HAYASHI, READERSDIGEST.CA



Photo: Shutterstock

Vancouver to Tofino, British Columbia

Even if you're not a Vancouverite, this is one trip worth travelling across Canada to do. (Fly in and rent a car.) Head to Horseshoe Bay for the ferry to Nanaimo, then hit the Pacific Rim Highway (BC Highway 4) for a gorgeous, windy drive boasting views of mountains, lakes, coast and through ancient temperate rainforest. Blink and you might miss the sight of a mama bear and her cubs frolicking in a stream.

Essential stops along the way include **Coombs Country Market** for locally made souvenirs, and a view of their famed **Goats on the Roof**; and a stroll through **Cathedral Grove**, a forest of majestic Douglas fir trees - some of them 800 years old!

Before Tofino, Canada's surfing capital, you'll hit Ucluelet, which also boasts big waves and a laid-back vibe - at a slightly lower cost than its sister down the road. Spend a couple days here and then continue along the coast to Tofino's Relais & Chateaux-accredited **Wickaninnish Inn** your HQ for surfing world-famous Chesterman Beach. Other attractions include whale-watching tours, winter storm-watching, fishing, hiking, and just taking it easy enjoying the great locavore cuisine, or unwinding at **The Wick's famed Ancient Cedars Spa**.

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The Sea to Sky Highway, Squamish to Whistler B.C.

“I’ve been driving this highway commute daily for the past 12 years and it still takes my breath away,” enthuses Mary Zinck, media relations coordinator for **Tourism Whistler**.

“From downtown Vancouver to Whistler it’s approximately a two-hour drive along the winding Sea to Sky highway (BC HIGHWAY 99) with a continuous view of the Coast Mountains and Howe Sound. This drive has been regarded as one of the most beautiful in

North America. In 2010, the highway was designated The Cultural Journey to celebrate the area's First Nations history. As you wind your way north between mountains and ocean, stopping at the various pullouts is a must. Breathtaking vistas provide backdrop to information kiosks placed at areas of cultural significance along the route," says Zinck.

En route, stop at: scenic **Shannon Falls**, dine at **The Watershed Grill**, which boasts a large patio overlooking the Squamish River, and stretch your legs and take in the views at the Tantalus Range Lookout.



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A Foodie Tour Through Kelowna, B.C.

Set in the orchard and winery-strewn Okanagan Valley, ski destination Kelowna has, in more recent years, built a reputation as a gastronomic adventure hot spot.

Want a day of exquisite shopping and locavore eating? “Our self-guided **2012 Studio & Farm Tour** highlights Kelowna’s artisan and farm-gate gems, many of which are tucked away and a little off-the-beaten track. People love to meet interesting, creative locals who are dedicated to their craft and farming,” says **Tourism Kelowna’s** Tour Guru,

Catherine Frechette.

We suggest focusing on South East Kelowna: sample **Tantalus Vineyards'** renowned Riesling, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir; tour **Arlo's Honey Farm**; load up on lavender jelly and bath oil at the **Okanagan Lavender & Herb Farm**, plus meet the goats and choose from 20 types of handmade goat cheese at Carmelis Goat Cheese Artisan farm/fromagerie/boutique.

“You could do this whole tour in about four to six hours. Stop for lunch in this area at the Wild Apple Restaurant, Cabana Grille, or, closer to the goat cheese farm at Sunset Organic Bistro (**The Summerhill Pyramid Winery's restaurant**), and you'll be eating ingredients from Kelowna's farm-to-table program,” says Frechette.



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