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SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 2009

TRAVEL NOTES

New flights for Calgarians

IN THE SKIES • Two airlines announced new services from Calgary this week.

Flyglobe span began direct flights from Calgary to Dublin on June 3. It's offering an introductory one-way ticket price of \$59 (plus taxes). The airline will fly from Calgary on Wednesdays in the wide-bodied B767-300. Here's a sample fare:

June 10, Calgary to Dublin \$59; returning June 17 for \$149. With tax, that comes to \$633.

For details go to flyglobe-span.ca and click on "Lowest fare flights." The airline also offers service from Calgary to Glasgow, London Gatwick and Manchester.

Beginning Nov. 1, WestJet will add an extra flight to Cancun and Puerto Vallarta, increasing the service from two to three times a week. That's in addition to its twice-weekly service from Calgary to Cabo San Lucas and Mazatlan.

Flights to PV and Cancun will go on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, with introductory fares of \$209 (taxes extra).

— Calgary Herald

Travel for as little as...

\$75

... buy your ticket by June 30 to attend the Okanagan's first Feast of Fields (www.feastoffields.com). It happens on Aug. 23 at Summerland's Valentine Farm. You can taste as you wander the farm and meet chefs, farmers, vintners, brewers and food artisans. **\$129**

... stay overnight at Toronto's Fairmont Royal York (www.fairmont.com/royal/york) with the new Much More Toronto package until Sep. 7. It includes a booklet of over 20 value-added attractions, dining experiences and activities such as complimentary wine tour and tasting, half price on Gardiner Museum admission and a twofor brewery tour.

— Canwest News Service

SURE SIGN OF SUMMER



Courtesy, Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise

Yes, there's still snow on the mountains, but the ice has melted on Lake Louise as of June 1, inspiring some paddlers to take advantage of the first sign of summer.



Alberta BOUND

FAMOUS ALBERTANS SHARE THEIR FAVOURITE PLACES IN THE PROVINCE

Photos, Herald Archive
Prince of Wales Hotel, above Waterton Lake.

The iconic hoodoos of the Badlands in the Red Deer River valley near Drumheller.

The Milk River winds through the buttes and coulees of Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park.

LISA MONFORTON, CALGARY HERALD

We live in a province of big, showy landscapes — the Rockies, endless sky, vast prairie, boreal forest, rivers, lakes and those strange formations called hoodoos. But within each of these larger-than-life features lie some little-known places we might not have ever heard of, or places you have meant to visit but for some reason just haven't. Borrowing the idea from the popular book, 1,000 Places to See Before You Die, we've asked six well-known Albertans to tell us their do-before-you-die destinations in this first of a six-part series on exploring Alberta. Some are predictable but definitely worthy; others surprised us and made us think, hey, I need to get there someday soon.

Walk on the wild side in Waterton

Andrew Hempstead knows Alberta intimately. For the past two decades the outdoorsman, writer and photographer has been penning travel guides for a variety of destinations, including Moon Handbook titles on Alberta, British Columbia and the Canadian Rockies.

When it comes to his favourite spot in the province, Hempstead says, "Waterton Lakes, without a doubt as a mountain destination. "It's a mini Banff and it's a lot more visitor friendly," says Hempstead, who lives in Banff.

Though you're in the midst of some of North America's most wild and untouched landscapes, he loves that you can camp in a lakeside national park right in town at the Townsite Campground. "It's an opportunity for people to experience the wilderness without going into the backcountry," making it especially accessible for families with young children.

Must do: Be sure to stop by Pat's, a Waterton institution, Hempstead says. It may look like just another gas station, but the 40-year-old business rents bikes, tennis rackets, baby strollers, mopeds, bicycles and even binoculars. Its claim to rental fame is the "Surrey," a four-wheeled quadricycle that accommodates up to four people for leisurely riding around town.

Hempstead also recommends taking a paddle around Cameron Lake. "You're in total wilderness and (the canoe) is half the price of Lake Louise."

If you're feeling more adventurous, he recommends the spectacular six-hour Crypt Lake Hike

More info: <http://www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/ab/waterton/>



Dinosaur bones and badlands

George Webber's photos of the people who live in Alberta's Hutterite colonies and on the Blood reserve have brought unique and compelling parts of the West's culture to the world.

They have been published in such magazines as Canadian Geographic, Saturday Night, The Calgary Herald's Swerve and American Photo. Well-known American photographer Mary Ellen Mark calls Webber "a lyrical poet with his camera."

In addition to his passion for capturing the faces and way of life of the Hutterites and aboriginals, there is one landscape in Alberta that Webber calls his favourite: the Badlands' Dinosaur Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

In the early years of his photo career, he trained his camera extensively on the Badlands topography. "It's extraordinary because it's an amazing collision of rough, feral landscape and prehistoric remnants of the past," says Webber, who was born in Drumheller. "A lot (of those remnants) are sitting right on the surface. It's magic and surreal."

Must see: Webber says summer is the best time to go, especially in early morning. "It's the most revealing and beautiful time to see the texture and shape in the landscape."

More info: The park has a summer-long itinerary of fossil hikes, such as the Bonehead 30 Guided Excavation and the Great Badlands Hike. Reservations are recommended. For more information, go to <http://tpr.alberta.ca/parks/dinosaur/flashindex.asp> or call 403-378-4342



Ian Tyson's old west

It only took Ian Tyson three times to answer the question: If you were to tell someone what they should see in Alberta before they die, what would it be?

"Tucson, Arizona," he deadpans. No, in Alberta, Mr. Tyson. "How about Patagonia, just to see if it's true that their weather is as bad as ours."

Pressed once again, Tyson says, "I'd say, Writing-On-Stone (provincial park) when they have the rodeo."

He's referring to the amateur rodeo put on by the Foot-hills Cowboys Association, which holds events around the southern part of the province all summer.

"It's a good, old-fashioned rodeo in a great setting... the badlands, the canyons," Tyson says.

Writing-on-Stone is located on the northerly tip of the great American desert 40 kilometres straight east of the Milk River off Highway 3.

Though he hasn't been in about a dozen years, he fondly recalls the experience. "It's pretty cool, like the old west. It's part of the old cowboy world."

Must see: "They have parks stuff (going on)," but it's the flora and fauna that's the main attraction for Tyson. "It's pretty spectacular."

More info: Details about programs, campsites and hours of operation can be found at, <http://gateway.cd.gov.ab.ca> and search under "parks." For a list of rodeos, check out fcarodeo.com.



SEE PAGE F5 FOR MORE FAVOURITE PLACES



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