

Wellspring Mountain Hiking Program

What you may expect on a typical day:

Your day will begin by meeting your facilitators at one of two locations. Once the group at the Carma House is assembled, you'll car pool out to the Petro-Canada station at the junction of the Trans-Canada Highway and Highway 22. Here the entire group will meet and sign the Association of Canadian Mountain Guide (ACMG) waiver. The group will then car pool to the trailhead.

At the trailhead, the facilitators will give a brief introduction to the hike by talking about some risk management matters, leader's capabilities, pace, objectives and meditative hiking. Throughout the gentle walk, there will be periodic checks from the leaders to ensure that everyone is doing OK. The pace is such that the group is always reasonably close together and conversation is not impeded by having to catch your breath.

Along the way, there will be some discussion about interesting aspects of natural history. As well, we will engage in two or three sessions of meditative hiking. These consist of short stretches of walking in silence, during which you are encouraged to be more deeply enmeshed in your thoughts and senses than in outward conversation.

Lunch is generally held at the hiking objective for the day, but we may stop earlier if the group is hungry. There will also be opportunities to stop for water and snacks along the way. Back at the trailhead, there's a short debrief before heading back home.

Although the hikes are not difficult, you should look carefully at the individual descriptions to help you determine whether the distance, elevation gain and nature of the terrain are appropriate for your physical condition.

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Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can I bring another person along?

As long as that person registers with Wellspring and signs their waiver, and as long as there is sufficient space on the trip, friends, relatives etc are welcome.

2. Can I bring a child?

Before bringing your child on the trip, please contact one of the facilitators to ensure that the hike is appropriate for a child their age. If it is, one parent must be with them and agree to supervise them all day. Parents must also sign the ACMG waiver on behalf of their child.

3. Can I bring my dog?

Pets add a level of complexity to hikes that we would rather not have to deal with. Some people are frightened of dogs and conflicts with wildlife or other pets are possible. Please leave your pet at home.

4. What time do we meet for the hikes?

Normally we meet at 8AM at Carma House or 8:30 AM at the Petro-Canada station at the junction of Highways 1 and 22. However, the times may differ for certain hikes due to the length of the approach drive. Please check the hiking schedule section elsewhere in this information package to ensure you know the meeting time for your hike.

5. What if I have to be home at a certain time?

While we have a general idea of how long a hike usually takes, factors such as weather, group pace and unforeseen situations preclude us from guaranteeing a specific return time. If you have an important appointment to make, consider carefully before joining us on the hike.

6. I'm a slow hiker. What if I can't keep up?

Members of hiking groups often have widely differing physical abilities. We pace our hikes such that most people who would consider going hiking in the first place would be able to reach the objective without physical hardship. If a participant decides that he/she is unable to reach the day's objective, one of the facilitators can stay with that person or escort him/her back to the trailhead.

7. What happens if the weather is really bad on the morning of the hike?

Since weather in the mountains may be radically different from Calgary, it will be up to the facilitators to determine whether the hike that day will be cancelled or the destination will be changed. If you choose not to come or

are concerned by the weather, please contact one of the facilitators by 7:30 AM at the cell numbers provided to you.

8. How much food should I bring?

Bring a reasonable lunch for your particular nutritional needs, along with some snack items that can be used to boost your energy along the way. As well, bring at least one liter of water; more if you tend to get thirsty on exertion.

9. Are bears an issue?

Many of our hikes are into areas where bears exist. However, there has never been a recorded incident of a bear encounter with groups of four or more people. In the unlikely event of a bear encounter, facilitators are equipped with bear spray to use as a last resort. As well, trail reports are checked for reports of recent wildlife activity.

10. Do we reimburse drivers for gas?

At this point, we ask that drivers volunteer their services. We will try to rotate drivers such that, unless they desire to do so, the same ones are not driving each trip.

11. Why is there a limit to the number of participants on any given hike?

As an ACMG Guide, I operate under land access permits for Kananaskis Country and the Mountain National Parks. These permits have regulations around the numbers that may go on commercially guided hikes. The limits are 13 for National parks and 15 for most trails in K-Country.

12. Do I have to carry a pack?

The short answer is yes. You will need to bring along food, water, a rain jacket and anything else from the equipment list that you think will be useful. The best way to carry these items is in a two-strap backpack.

13. Do the facilitators like chocolate?

Yes!!!!!!

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Gathering Locations:

Primary Location

Wellspring - Carma House
1404 Home Road NW

Public parking available at Park & Ride lot across from Carma House and along Home Rd.

Secondary Location

Petro-Canada Gas Station near junction of Trans-Canada Highway
and Highway 22

Take Trans-Canada Highway #1 West towards Banff
Exit into gas station immediately after the Bragg Creek turn-off
Turn right immediately and park somewhere along the service road
Trip leader will wait close to where you exit the Trans-Canada Highway #1

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2010 Hiking Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to last minute changes due to weather, trail conditions, area closures or other unforeseen circumstances.

Hike #1:

Chester Lake - Smith Dorrien area; Kananaskis Country

Date: Monday July 12

Meeting Times & Locations: Carma House 8AM or Petro-Canada 8:30AM

Description: The Chester Lake trail is one of the most popular routes in K-Country. Starting at the high point of the Smith-Dorrien Road in Peter Lougheed Park, this awe-inspiring trail climbs to spectacular sub-alpine meadows. Chester Lake itself is nestled in a basin surrounded by Chester, Galatea, Fortress and Gusty Mountains. Options exist for exploring the Valley of Rocks.

Total hiking distance: 9.6 km

Elevation gain: 310 meters (approx 1030 feet)

Terrain profile: Steady gentle uphill to subalpine; gently rolling subalpine to lake; short moderate uphill if you opt for Valley of the Rocks

Approximate driving time to trailhead: 90 minutes (20 minutes on gravel)

Hike #2:

Powderface Ridge - Jumpingpound area; Kananaskis Country

Date: Saturday July 17

Meeting Times & Locations: Carma House 8AM or Petro-Canada 8:30AM

Description: Considered to be one of the best ridge traverses in the Elbow Valley, this ridge offers exceptional panoramas along the east edge of the Rocky Mountains. The wildflowers are abundant and brilliant.

Total hiking distance: 9.2 km

Elevation gain: 300 meters (approx 1000 feet)

Terrain profile: Steady moderate uphill to first saddle; undulating subalpine ridge; easy to moderate descent.

Driving time to trailhead: 75 minutes. Involves a 7 km car shuttle on gravel road.

Hike #3:

Sunshine Meadows - Banff National Park

Date: Monday August 9

Meeting Times & Locations: **Carma House 7:30AM or Petro-Canada 8AM**

Description: On this amazing hike, we let a shuttle bus do much of the work getting us to the alpine environment of Sunshine Meadows. If you think it is great to ski there in the winter, you will be astonished at the beauty of the endless alpine meadows carpeted with flowers of all kinds. The hiking itself is gentle on well-maintained paths and the views of Mt Assiniboine, as well as many other peaks, are breath-taking.

Please note that there is a \$26 cost for the shuttle bus.

Total hiking distance: maximum 8.5 km

Elevation gain: 240 meters (approx 800 feet)

Terrain profile: Gentle to moderate uphill to the first viewpoint; gently rolling terrain through alpine meadows

Driving time to trailhead: 75 minutes

Hike #4:

Stanley Glacier - Vermilion Pass area, Kootenay National Park

Date: Saturday August 14

Meeting Times & Locations: Carma House 8AM or Petro-Canada 8:30AM

Description: Starting high in Vermillion Pass, this well-graded trail travels through the old Vermillion burn, up to a stunning hanging valley that lies between the North face of Mt Stanley and Storm Mountain. The reward is a close-up view of a glacier as well as the numerous waterfalls that cascade down the steep North wall of Mt Stanley.

Total hiking distance: 8.4 km
Elevation gain: 365 meters (approx 1200 feet)
Terrain profile: Gentle switchbacks through a burn; rolling terrain in the hanging valley; some steeper switchbacks near the high point.
Driving time to trailhead: 90 minutes

Hike #5:

Ptarmigan Cirque - Highwood Pass area, Kananaskis Country
Date: Monday September 13

Meeting Times & Locations: Carma House 8AM or Petro-Canada 8:30AM

Description: Imagine starting your hike from the top of the highest paved road in Canada! From Highwood Pass, a short but sustained ascent takes you into the stunning alpine environment of Ptarmigan Cirque. Situated on the West Side of Mt Rae, the upper valley not only has great views across to the Little Highwood Valley, there are waterfalls and rocky meadows to explore. Options exist to visit a high barren basin below the summit of Mt Rae.

Total hiking distance: 4.5 km
Elevation gain: 225 meters (approx 750 feet)
Terrain profile: Sustained climb for 1 km; gentle rolling path in the alpine; steeper, narrow ascent if you opt for the high basin
Driving time to trailhead: 90 minutes

Hike #6:

Larch Valley - Lake Louise area; Banff National Park
Date: Saturday September 18

Meeting Times & Locations: Carma House 8AM or Petro-Canada 8:30AM

Description: As its name implies, Larch Valley is a subalpine wonderland filled with those amazing larch trees that turn gold at this time of year. Starting from Moraine Lake in the Valley of the 10 Peaks, the trail switchbacks steadily up for two and a half kilometres, before opening into

the spectacular valley between Temple, Eiffel and Pinnacle peaks. Though it's the most elevation gain of any of our hikes, it's a great way to end the season!

Total hiking distance: 9 km

Elevation gain: 400 meters (approximately 1320 feet)

Terrain profile: Steady, moderate switchbacks through forest; gently rolling though subalpine and alpine basins

Driving time to trailhead: 110 minutes

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Day Hiking Equipment List

It is important to understand that mountain conditions are often variable. It may be sunny and warm in Calgary, but cool and rainy in the mountains. That's why it's good to be prepared with a bit of extra equipment as outlined in the list below. It's better to have a little extra with you than to be caught unprepared.

Clothing

Ski hat (toque)
Sun hat
Light gloves/mittens
T-shirt
Warm Shirt
Fleece pullover/jacket
Rain jacket and pants
Hiking pants
Shorts
Socks
Hiking shoes/Boots
Gaiters

Day Trip Gear

Day Pack
Water Bottle (minimum 1 liter)
Sunglasses
Sunscreen
Toilet paper
Food
Bug Repellent

Optional Gear

Collapsible trekking/ski poles
Camera and/ or binoculars

**RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS,
ASSUMPTION OF RISKS AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT
(hereinafter the "Release Agreement")**

**BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT YOU WILL WAIVE OR GIVE UP CERTAIN
LEGAL RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO SUE OR
TO CLAIM COMPENSATION FOLLOWING AN ACCIDENT**

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

SIGNATURE OF CLIENT/STUDENT

Name	Last		First		Initial
	Address				
Address	Street				
	City	Prov/State		Country	Code
Email Address					
Date of Birth	Year	Month		Day	Age
	Telephone		Office		Mobile
Trip Date	Home				
	Year	Month		Day	

TO: _____; _____;
ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN MOUNTAIN GUIDES; HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN IN RIGHT OF CANADA; and their directors, officers, employees, guides, agents, independent contractors, subcontractors, representatives, successors and assigns (all of whom are hereinafter collectively referred to as **"the Releasees"**)

WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES

In this Release Agreement, the term **"wilderness activities"** shall include but is not limited to: alpine skiing, nordic skiing, telemark skiing, snowboarding, hiking, touring, mountaineering, rock climbing, ice climbing, expeditions, trekking, glacier travel, and all activities, services and use of facilities either provided, arranged or organized by the Releasees including orientation and instructional sessions or classes, transportation, accommodation, food and beverage, and water supply, and all travel by or movement around helicopters, other aircraft, snowcats, snowmobiles or other vehicles and camping or overnight stays in the outdoors.

In this Release Agreement, the term **"Negligence"** includes the failure by the Releasees to use such care as a reasonably prudent and careful mountain guide/instructor would use under similar circumstances, or breach of any other duty of care imposed by law.

I AM AWARE OF THE RISKS, DANGERS AND HAZARDS ASSOCIATED WITH WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES AND I FREELY ACCEPT AND FULLY ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS, DANGERS AND HAZARDS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF PERSONAL INJURY, DEATH, PROPERTY DAMAGE OR LOSS RESULTING THEREFROM.

NOTICE TO SNOWBOARDERS AND TELEMARK SKIERS - INCREASED RISK

Unlike alpine ski boot/binding systems, snowboard, and some telemark boot/binding systems are not designed or intended to release and will not release under normal circumstances, thus increasing the risk of not surviving an avalanche.

NON-SCHEDULED OR EMERGENCY EVACUATION, RESCUE OR FIRST AID

I acknowledge and agree that all expenses associated with non-scheduled or emergency evacuation, rescue or first aid will be my responsibility and will not be covered by the Releasees.

**RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS
ASSUMPTION OF RISKS AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT
(hereinafter the "Release Agreement")**

**BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT YOU WILL WAIVE OR GIVE UP CERTAIN LEGAL RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE
RIGHT TO SUE OR TO CLAIM COMPENSATION FOLLOWING AN ACCIDENT**

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

SIGNATURE OF CLIENT/STUDENT

ASSUMPTION OF RISKS – AVALANCHES, ALPINE TERRAIN, WILDERNESS TRAVEL, WEATHER

I am aware that participation in wilderness activities involves many risks, dangers and hazards. Avalanches occur frequently in the terrain used for wilderness activities and may be caused by natural forces or by persons travelling through the terrain. I am aware that the Releasees may fail to predict whether the terrain is safe or whether an avalanche may occur. The terrain used for wilderness activities is uncontrolled, unmarked, not inspected, and involves many risks, dangers and hazards in addition to that of avalanche. These may include, but are not limited to: cornices; crevasses; cliffs; trees, tree wells; tree stumps; forest dead fall; creeks; rocks; rockfall; boulders; holes and depressions on or below the snow surface; variable and difficult snow conditions; effects of high altitude including pulmonary edema and cerebral edema; equipment failure; encounters with dangerous or poisonous flora and fauna; impact or collision with other persons; becoming lost or separated from one's party or guide; negligence of other persons; and **NEGLIGENCE ON THE PART OF THE RELEASEES, INCLUDING THE FAILURE BY THE RELEASEES TO TAKE REASONABLE STEPS TO SAFEGUARD OR PROTECT ME FROM THE RISKS, DANGERS AND HAZARDS OF WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES.** Communication in the alpine terrain may be difficult, and in the event of an accident or illness, rescue, medical treatment and evacuation may not be available or may be delayed. Alpine weather conditions may be extreme and can change rapidly and without warning. Disease may arise from the increased difficulty in maintaining personal hygiene.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

In consideration of the Releasees allowing me to participate in wilderness activities as defined in this Release Agreement, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is acknowledged, I hereby agree as follows:

1. **TO WAIVE ANY AND ALL CLAIMS** that I have or may in the future have against the Releasees and **TO RELEASE THE RELEASEES** from any and all liability for any loss, damage, expense or injury including death that I may suffer, or that my next of kin may suffer as a result of my participation in wilderness activities, **DUE TO ANY CAUSE WHATSOEVER, INCLUDING NEGLIGENCE, BREACH OF CONTRACT, OR BREACH OF ANY STATUTORY OR OTHER DUTY OF CARE, INCLUDING ANY DUTY OF CARE OWED UNDER ANY APPLICABLE OCCUPIER'S LIABILITY LEGISLATION ON THE PART OF THE RELEASEES, AND FURTHER INCLUDING THE FAILURE ON THE PART OF THE RELEASEES TO TAKE REASONABLE STEPS TO SAFEGUARD OR PROTECT ME FROM THE RISKS, DANGERS AND HAZARDS OF WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES REFERRED TO ABOVE;**
2. TO HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNIFY THE RELEASEES from any and all liability for any property damage or personal injury to any third party resulting from my participation in wilderness activities;
3. This Release Agreement shall be effective and binding upon my heirs, next of kin, executors, administrators, assigns and representatives, in the event of my death or incapacity;
4. This Release Agreement and any rights, duties and obligations as between the parties to this Release Agreement shall be governed by and interpreted solely in accordance with the laws of the province where the wilderness activities take place and no other jurisdiction; and
5. Any litigation involving the parties to this Release Agreement shall be brought solely within the province where the wilderness activities take place and shall be within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of that province.

In entering into this Release Agreement I am not relying on any oral or written representations or statements made by the Releasees with respect to the safety of wilderness activities, other than what is set forth in this Release Agreement.

I CONFIRM THAT I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THIS RELEASE AGREEMENT PRIOR TO SIGNING IT, AND I AM AWARE THAT BY SIGNING THIS RELEASE AGREEMENT I AM WAIVING CERTAIN LEGAL RIGHTS WHICH I OR MY HEIRS, NEXT OF KIN, EXECUTORS, ADMINISTRATORS, ASSIGNS AND REPRESENTATIVES MAY HAVE AGAINST THE RELEASEES.

Witness Signature
Please Print Name

Signature of client/student
Date
Signature of Parent or Guardian if under age 19