

British Columbia is where untamed wilderness meets urban energy. Dramatic mountains, ancient rainforests, and endless coastlines define the landscape, while cities pulse with culture, creativity, and trailblazing innovation.

### THE LAND

- Diverse landscapes: From glacierfed rivers to semi-arid deserts, BC's geography is shaped by 10 mountain ranges that cover 75% of the province.
- ► Vast wilderness: 14% of BC's wilderness is protected, with 1,033 provincial parks and seven national parks safeguarding ecologically rich ecosystems and abundant wildlife.
- ► Epic coastline: Stretching over 25,000 kilometres, BC's coastline is lined with dramatic fjords, marine islands, and coastal habitats.

# **QUICK FACTS**

- ► Climate: BC features diverse microclimates, including alpine, tundra, desert, and rainforest. The coast enjoys Canada's mildest weather, while the interior sees hot, dry summers. Central and northern regions have colder, snowier winters.
- ► Time Zone: Most of BC follows Pacific Standard Time (PST). Some eastern communities (e.g. Fort. St John, Dawson Creek, Golden, Kimberley, Cranbrook) use Mountain Standard Time (MST).
- Languages: English and French. There are 35 First Nations languages, and large Mandarin, Punjabi, and Cantonese-speaking communities.
- **Population:** 5,000,879 (2021)
- ► Main Airport: Vancouver International Airport (YVR)
- ► More Info: gov.bc.ca/travel







# THE PEOPLE

Indigenous Peoples have inhabited this land for over 10,000 years. Today, more than 200 First Nations share their living cultures through art, cuisine, and immersive experiences.

- ► Cultural diversity: One of Canada's most multicultural regions, BC is home to significant Chinese, Punjabi, German, Italian, and Russian communities.
- ► Vast and sparsely populated: Larger than France and Germany combined, BC spans nearly 945,000 km²—yet has fewer than five people per square kilometre.



#### **SUPERLATIVES**

# **Tallest peaks:**

Fairweather Mountain, straddling the BC/Alaska border, soars 4,663 metres (15,299 feet), while Mount Waddington—the highest peak entirely within BC—rises 4,016 metres (13,176 feet) in the remote Coast Mountains.

### Longest river:

Flowing 1,375 kilometres (855 miles), the Fraser River is BC's lifeline—home to legendary salmon runs and vital to the province's ecology and economy.

### **Epic salmon migration:**

Witness one of North America's largest sockeye salmon runs at the Adams River, in Tsútswecw Provincial Park—a natural spectacle that draws global attention each fall.

#### Largest island:

Sprawling 31,285 square kilometres (12,079 square miles), Vancouver Island is nearly half the size of Ireland and a hotspot of marine and land-based life.

### **Highest waterfall:**

Della Falls plunges 440 metres (1,444 feet) in Strathcona Provincial Park—making it more than eight times taller than Niagara Falls.

#### Oldest tree:

Meares Island's "Hanging Garden Tree" is one of the oldest western red cedars on the planet—estimated at up to 2,000 years old.

## **Biggest rainforest:**

The Great Bear Rainforest spans 6.4 million hectares (15.8 million acres) and is part of the Pacific temperate rainforest eco-region—the largest coastal temperate rainforest in the world.

#### Rarest bear:

The Kermode (Spirit) bear—found only in the Great Bear Rainforest—is a white-furred black bear revered by First Nations communities.

#### **Fastest tidal currents:**

Skookumchuck Narrows on the Sunshine Coast hits speeds over 16 knots, creating dramatic whirlpools and reversing rapids.

## Longest free ferry:

The Kootenay Lake ferry crosses eight kilometres (4.9 miles), linking Balfour to Kootenay Bay—gateway to the artisan village of Crawford Bay.

## Most per capita cyclists:

Victoria leads the nation with the highest number of cyclists per capita.

### **Highest-elevation restaurant:**

Eagle's Eye Restaurant at Kicking Horse Mountain Resort sits 2,350 metres (7,710 feet) above sea level, offering fine dining with alpine views.

**VALUE OF TOURISM IN BC** 

Total revenue:

\$22.1B

Jobs supported by tourism:

125,700

**Tourism GDP contribution:** 

\$9.7B

Number of tourism businesses:

16,860



