

Adrift in the District: Rediscovering Washington by paddleboard WASHINGTON D.C. C8

# escapade



The historic Banff Gondola PHOTO: CHRIS AMAT/PURSUIT



A grey jay makes its home in the forest. PHOTO: TIFFANY THORNTON/FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



Rustic glamping at Mt. Engadine PHOTO: TIFFANY THORNTON/FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



Inside Sky Bistro PHOTO: CHRIS AMAT/PURSUIT

## Going off grid in the Canadian Rockies

**TIFFANY THORNTON**  
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The Canadian Rockies have long been a place of inspiration and adventure. Jagged snow-capped mountain peaks greet you at every turn, and aquamarine lakes glisten under the sun. The Rockies beckon the nature enthusiast to explore the varied terrain.

### Off the grid

One of the best places to begin your rocky mountain adventure is at Mount Engadine Lodge, in Alberta. Here you will find one of the most optimal spots to watch the sun set over the mountains, casting an alpine glow across the sky.

Moose love to graze in the nearby meadow, and inside the rustic lodge a roaring fire is always stoked. It's the kind of magical place you go to get lost in nature: a true off the grid get-away with just you, the mountains and

the clear blue sky.

Located under two hours away from Calgary, Mount Engadine is surrounded by Spray Valley Provincial Park. It is a wilderness oasis filled with fantastic hiking opportunities.

The Lodge recently opened five "glamping tents", overlooking the mountains, meadow and creek. They are the perfect place to hunker down for a few nights. The interior is Canadiana "great outdoors" inspired, with wooden bed frames, moose-themed decor and gas fireplaces. Even the bathroom smells like a cedar wood forest.

It's only a few minutes walk from the glamping tents to the main Lodge.

Hanging out inside the Lodge is like being at a

friend's cozy home. Every day from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., guests can indulge in afternoon tea and a charcuterie board – a delicious spread of cured meat, fresh cheese and baked treats.

All stays at Mount Engadine Lodge include three meals a day. Dinnertime is served up family style. All guests gather around one long table to gab and feast on the chef's latest creations. The dishes are always inspired by local ingredients and "back country tastes". Ranging from pan-seared duck to braised bison, the meals are sublime.

### Rocky Mountain day trip

Be sure to add a day trip to

Banff, Alta., – from the Lodge the drive time is about an hour. Head to the historic Banff Gondola, which has been taking visitors to the top of Sulphur Mountain since 1959. The eight-minute ride up offers incredible views of the Rockies.

Once on top make your way to the viewing platform, a massive outstretched deck offering outstanding panoramic views. It is here that you can truly experience the sheer grandeur of the Canadian Rockies. Have your camera handy, and keep your eyes peeled for bighorn sheep and other wildlife roaming below.

### Lunch Time

When in Alberta, nosing down on a tasty bison burger is a must. Sky Bistro situated 2,900 feet above Banff serves up the best burger. Be sure to snag a seat by the floor-to-ceiling windows to take in the stellar views.

Before heading back to your cozy glamping tent at Mount Engadine Lodge, a stop at Kananaskis Nordic Spa

will not disappoint. The first of its kind in Alberta; the Scandinavian-inspired spa sits in a natural setting where you can breathe in the fresh alpine air. Purchase a day pass, which includes your locker, robe and towels, and unwind in three outdoor pools (including a cold one to get the heart rate up). The spa also has three saunas and steam cabins, one filled with eucalyptus to help soothe away any stresses. It's the perfect end to a fabulous mountain getaway.

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Sunset over the Rockies at Mt. Engadine. PHOTO: TIFFANY THORNTON/FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

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