



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



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The Underground Scene

Calgary, 2 Days

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: Calgary may be an oil town, but there is a thriving arts and culture presence here, as well as a whole generation of cool and funky young dreamers. If you want to tap into the underground scene here, there are a few key places you can go to find your way.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Calgary

DAY NOTE: Kensington, just north of the downtown core, is home to consignment clothing shops, record stores, cupcake bakeries, an independent movie theatre and one of the few independent bookstores left in our city. It's a great place to spend a day if you're looking for local culture. I would also recommend making the short trek north to the Alberta College of Art and Design, or ACAD, to check out their gallery.



Kensington Village

Vintage clothing shops, indie coffee shops, record stores and more



Alberta College of Art & Design

Institute of creativity

Day 2 - Calgary

DAY NOTE: Fourth St. is another hub of culture in the city, with loads of independent shops, art galleries and cafes, including the Green Bee Boutique, a new store that sells eco-chic clothing and gifts. In the same area is vegetarian/organic restaurant the Coup, a local favourite, where you can also enjoy live D.J. music some nights. For your evening entertainment, head over to Broken City, where you can drink pints and eat wings on the roof patio, or listen to good quality live music, including a lot of local talent.



Fourth Street Art Walk

Art on the Street



Coup (The)

Eco-conscious vegetarian fare



Broken City

Indie-rock music venue - big burgers, even bigger dance parties

Day 1 - Calgary

QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Kensington, just north of the downtown core, is home to consignment clothing shops, record stores, cupcake bakeries, an independent movie theatre and one of the few independent bookstores left in our city. It's a great place to spend a day if you're looking for local culture. I would also recommend making the short trek north to the Alberta College of Art and Design, or ACAD, to check out their gallery.

contact:
<http://www.visitkensington.com/>

location:
Kensington Street
Calgary AB

1 Kensington Village

DESCRIPTION: Our shops, restaurants and services (over 100!) are a unique and complimentary collection of cheap to chic. It truly is possible to spend the day here enjoying our scenery and relaxing on our benches in the courtyards.



contact:
tel: 403 284 7600
fax: 403 289 6682
<http://www.acad.ab.ca/>

location:
1407 14 Avenue Northwest
Calgary AB T2N 4R3

2 Alberta College of Art & Design

DESCRIPTION: For the past 80 years, Alberta College of Art and Design has been training students in the creative arena. This institute is known to introduce to the world, the finest of talented designers, artists and cultural producers. Besides being an educational institution, this college also hosts a variety of cultural events including the ACAD Grad Show and ACAD student exhibition. A must-visit for art lovers and connoisseurs is the international exhibition 'Wight Biennial' of graduate student artwork. © wcities.com

Day 2 - Calgary

QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Fourth St. is another hub of culture in the city, with loads of independent shops, art galleries and cafes, including the Green Bee Boutique, a new store that sells eco-chic clothing and gifts. In the same area is vegetarian/organic restaurant the Coup, a local favourite, where you can also enjoy live D.J. music some nights. For your evening entertainment, head over to Broken City, where you can drink pints and eat wings on the roof patio, or listen to good quality live music, including a lot of local talent.

contact:

tel: 403 229 0902

fax: 403 228 1889

<http://www.4streetcalgary.com/>

location:

4th Street

Calgary AB T2S 1V8

hours:

24 hrs

1 Fourth Street Art Walk

DESCRIPTION: With the plethora of restaurants, cafes and boutiques, Fourth Street is one of Calgary's most popular downtown promenades. Public artwork along the road make a walk along Fourth an even more enjoyable experience. Ten art pieces in all line fourth street from 17th to 26th Avenues. Fun and quirky sculptures such as the strolling cattle of 'Scene and Herd on Fourth' and the giant lounging frogs of 'Hanging Out' make hunting for art fun for both families and art lovers. Self-guided tour pamphlets can be picked up in various businesses along the route. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: 403.541.1041

[/www.thecoup.ca](http://www.thecoup.ca)

location:

924b 17th Avenue SW

Calgary AB

hours:

Lunch Tu - F 11:30 a.m. - 3

p.m., Sa, Su 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.,

Dinner Tu - F 5 p.m. - close,

Sa, Su 5 p.m. - close

2 Coup (The)

DESCRIPTION: The COUP is a modern restauraunt dedicated to providing a vibrant atmosphere and creative vegetarian fare while promoting local, whole and organic foods. © Website

contact:

tel: 403 262 9976

<http://www.brokencity.ca/main.html>

location:

613 11 Avenue Southwest

Calgary AB T2R 0E1

hours:

Daily 11a-2a

3 Broken City

DESCRIPTION: This very popular club hosts Calgary's up-and-coming bands with live music every night. You can also enjoy great food while you watch; the restaurant opens early to host lunch, dinner, and is always willing to pour a stiff drink. Wednesday night is a pub night/live music night. Saturday is dance night, and Saturday 3-6 is a very popular open jazz jam. If you're hoping to find the next big band and soak up some local culture at the same time, drop into Broken City where you're sure to do both. © wcities.com

Calgary Snapshot

Local Info

There are a lot of words that fit Calgary: Youthful. Dynamic. Enterprising. Independent. Pioneering. Innovative. From our spectacular Rocky Mountain backyard to our lively Stampede spirit, Calgary has a pace of life that is vibrant and energetic. Calgary is quickly becoming Canada's economic power-house. It is second only to Toronto in its number of Corporate Head Offices and is clearly the hub of Canada's petroleum industry, making Calgary a boom town like none other.

The city is a massive urban-sprawl, taking up approximately 215,000 acres (4.6 persons per acre), which is divided up into four quadrants (NE, NW, SE, SW) which meet in the Downtown Core. It can make getting around town difficult, but it's easy to navigate with a car. Calgary has huge open parkland, including Fish Creek Park, Nose Hill Park, and the Bow River pathways, and maintains world-class athletic facilities, which are remnants of the 1988 Winter Olympics.

Downtown Core

Downtown Calgary is always on the move. From Stephen Ave. to Eau Claire Market, there's always business being done. While you enjoy a coffee at a Starbucks, it's very likely the group next to you is putting together a deal to drill for oil! The industry operates at a frenetic pace. But for 10 days in July, that is. Downtown ceases working during Stampede week, as there's a party on every corner! Don't even think about wearing professional business attire; it's jeans and cowboy duds, only!

The Calgary Tower remains an icon from the Olympic era, although it's now dwarfed by other buildings, including the newly built Bow Tower. A trip up the Calgary Tower is still great, though, especially on clear days when the Rocky Mountains look close enough to touch. Olympic Plaza is ideal for skating in December, as the city drapes Christmas lights over the trees. It's an easy stroll to get a coffee or hot chocolate on Stephen Ave. In the summer, the Eau Claire Market and the trails around Prince's Island Park provide a refreshing break from downtown, and are popular lunch spots with downtown office workers.

Southwest

The Southwest is the most affluent quadrant of the city. It includes the haute couture shopping of 17th Ave, aka the Red Mile, and 4th Street. The Elbow River winds its way from the Glenmore Reservoir to the Stampede Grounds, where it meets up with the Bow River. It's a fun afternoon to float from Sandy Beach past Stanley Park to the Talisman Centre. North Glenmore Park is also a great spot for a picnic, and Heritage Park is a favorite for locals. And, don't miss out on the world famous Spruce Meadows!

Southeast

The Southeast is largely an industrial center. The Scotiabank Saddledome and the Stampede Grounds are in the SE near the Core, and are easily accessible by the C-train. There's also the shopping district of Inglewood, which has some unique stores, as well as Fort Calgary. Just down McLeod Trail from the Saddledome, you can find Chinook Centre, which is one of Calgary's best shopping malls.

Northeast

Sadly, the Northeast is a largely 'forgotten' about quadrant, separated from the rest of the city by Deerfoot Trail. It is a largely residential area, except for the Calgary International Airport. Also, the Calgary Zoo is in the NE, near the Core. If you want shopping, Canada's largest mall, CrossIron Mills, recently opened in Balzac, just a few minutes north of the airport.

Northwest

The Northwest is home to the University of Calgary, which boasts over 30,000 students! The Calgary Stampeders, our beloved Canada Football League team, play at McMahon Stadium, which is the home of the U of C Dinos, as well. Canada Olympic Park is an in-city ski hill and world-class athletic training facility. Nearer to the Core you can find Kensington Village, a small collection of shops, galleries and restaurants. It's one of Calgary's most trendy, artistic areas. Check out Crave Cupcakes for something uniquely Calgaryan (and delicious!).

© NileGuide

History

Experts believe that humans have inhabited the Bow River Valley for at least 11,000

years, having made their way down the Bering Straight from Siberia at the end of the last Ice Age. The Piikani (Peigan), Siksika (Blackfoot), Kainai (Blood), Nakoda (Stoney) and Tsuu T'ina (Sarcee) nations lived in what is now Southern Alberta, where they hunted bison and other plains/woodlands animals. David Thompson was the first European to document his interaction with the native peoples, having wintered along the Bow with the Piikani in 1787.

The Hudson's Bay Company, who owned the lands which comprised the Hudson's Bay watershed, set up trading posts around what was then called Rupert's Land. They traded for animals pelts with the natives, which were transported to Paris, London, and New York and commanded high prices for their quality. The native way of life would not change drastically until the 1870's, when the bison were hunted almost to extinction.

In 1870, the Dominion of Canada purchased Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company for 300,000 pounds sterling. In 1873, the federal government created the Northwest Mounted Police to protect the native peoples and the fur trade from American whiskey traders. They established Fort Calgary in 1875 and helped to restore order to the region.

Meanwhile, homesteaders began moving westward into Alberta's fertile prairies. Historians consider John Glenn to be the first settler in Calgary in 1873. By 1884, Calgary incorporated into a town. Ten years later, it incorporated again into "the City of Calgary," which was at that time a part of the Northwest Territories. Hundreds of settlers continued to come west, forever changing the region.

Due to fears of American expansion into the Northwest Territories, the Canadian government proposed the creation of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which would connect the Atlantic to the Pacific. The Rocky Mountains posed a huge obstacle, but they managed to work through the Kicking Horse Pass. This decision routed the railroad through Calgary in 1883, dramatically increasing the profile of the city by making it the 'jumping off' point for settlers to the area. The land around

Calgary Snapshot continued

Calgary was ideal for homesteaders to grow grains and herd cattle.

In 1914, oil and gas were discovered in Turner Valley, and by 1919 many of the local ranchers had become wealthy supplying the First World War effort. It was Calgary's first, but certainly not last, oil boom.

In 1912, Guy Weadick, an American entertainer, founded the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede. It did not continue through the war years, but did come back in 1919 as a celebration of the returning troops. After 1923, it became an annual celebration of western culture and rodeo, dubbing itself the "Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth." It is now one of the most famous aspects of summer in Calgary, attracting 1.2 million visitors per year.

The oil and gas industry did not assert itself in Alberta until 1948, when Imperial Oil discovered the Leduc formation. This proved to be one of the greatest discoveries of oil in Alberta's history. It also introduced seismic technology to the region, which would lead to major discoveries all over Alberta. Calgary became the financial hub of the oil industry in Alberta in large part because of its proximity to the railroad and is now home to many of the largest energy companies in the world. The industry now employs about 30% of Calgaryans.

During the 1990's, many of Canada's largest corporations also moved the head offices to Calgary from more traditional centers, such as Montreal and Toronto. It is not just oil and gas, anymore, as Calgary has growing electronics and e-commerce sectors. Tourism is also a major industry in Calgary, thanks to the Stampede, the 1988 Winter Olympics, and the nearness of Banff National Park.

© NileGuide

Hotel Insights

Because Calgary is so spread out, you will have to consider where your desired activities are located before choosing your accommodations.

Definitely the highest quality and most luxurious hotels are Downtown. These are surrounded by Calgary's finest dining, entertainment, and business districts, too. You can choose from major brands, such as Hyatt, Sheraton, and Westin, or stay in the

historic (and beautiful) Palliser Hotel. There are also many options for hotels near the airport and all throughout the city.

Downtown

The first major hotel in Calgary was the Palliser Hotel, built by the Canadian Pacific Railway (they also built the Banff Springs Hotel, among many others). The Palliser is a testament to the railroad history that put Calgary on the map in the 1880's. Most travelers come to Calgary by plane, now, but the Fairmont Resorts company has continued to provide excellent quality and service at these classic hotels. Other top end choices include the Eau Claire Sheraton Suites, the Westin, and the Hyatt Regency.

Airport

Calgary International Airport is in the NE part of Calgary, a fair distance from the Core. There is a Delta hotel at the airport, but there are a lot of options near the airport that offer shuttle service, including the Sheraton Cavalier and the Holiday Inn Express Airport.

Bowness/ Banff Trail

Bowness is conveniently located near the western end of 16th Ave (the Calgary section of the Trans-Canada Highway). It makes this part of town an easy location to jump off from in order to get to Banff. Bowness is across the highway from Canada Olympic Park and only about 10 minutes from the Core. These areas, though, are difficult to access without your own vehicle.

The Banff Trail is closer to the Core than Bowness, but it is also near 16th Ave. These hotels are near McMahon Stadium and the U of C, and they have a C-train station very nearby.

MacLeod Trail

MacLeod Trail runs from the Core to southbound Highway #2. There are many hotels along this strip, all of which are moderately priced franchises, such as Best Western and Howard Johnson. The C-train runs along MacLeod, making it easy to get back and forth to the Core and the Stampede Grounds. MacLeod also has many restaurants, nightclubs, and malls.

B&B

Calgary has a few excellent options for B&B, including Along River Ridge B&B, Bankview House B&B, and Betty's Bed & Breakfast.

© NileGuide

Restaurants Insights

Calgary, like most major North American cities, has a wide variety of food and beverage options.

Stephen Avenue Walk

Stephen Ave. is a pedestrian only section of 8th Ave. that runs from City Hall through the Core. There is a huge selection of restaurants in this area. For up-scale dining, Teatro, the Belvedere, and Catch are great choices. For ethnic food, The Rose Garden has good Thai and Mango Shiva has Indian. James Joyce is a great pub, and don't forget about Flames Central!

17th Avenue/Fourth Street

This district, known mostly for its shops, has a number of restaurants. The Ship and Anchor is one of Calgary's best pubs. Kashmir and the Spicy Hut offer an ethnic twist. And, the Living Room is a trendy, casual spot. There are also a lot of big franchises, too, such as Subway, Wendy's, etc.

Fourth Street offers more variety and is known as Calgary's restaurant row with 35 different restaurants offering all kinds of styles of food: Sushi, Indian, Greek, Pub, Diner, etc. A great district for foodies.

Kensington

Kensington is known for its coffee shops. The House is a unique one. But, it also has a lot of restaurant options, too. Pulcinella serves authentic neapolitan-style pizza. Broken Plate serves Greek. In Kensington, you can get Vietnamese, Ethiopian, sushi, or traditional pub fare. There's a lot of choice.

Inglewood

Inglewood is next to Calgary's 'east village', which is a largely run-down side of the Core. There are plans to revive the area, soon. Still, there are some goodies in this part of town. Club Paradiso is a piano bar, and The Hose and Hound Pub is a deserted fire-hall turned restaurant.

MacLeod Trail

Calgary Snapshot continued

MacLeod Trail has standard, chain restaurants and fast food for the most part. However, one great restaurant is Bolero, a Brazilian steak house.

© NileGuide

Nightlife Insights

Although its not renown for world-famous nightlife, Calgary loves to party, particularly during the Stampede. Cowboys Nightclub is especially famous for its Stampede week festivities, among others, such as Ranchman's and Nashville North (which is set up on the Stampede Grounds every year). There are plenty of other nightclubs, too: the Whiskey, the Back Alley, the Roadhouse. If you want nightclubs, they aren't hard to find.

But, there's other sources of entertainment in Calgary, too. Check out the Scotiabank Saddledome for some Calgary Flames (or Hitmen) hockey, or any number of musical acts who come through town. The Calgary Stampeders (and U of C Dinos) play Canadian Football at McMahon Stadium. There's nothing else quite like an Canadian outdoor stadium in November! Or, if you want comfort and good food, try Flames Central on Stephen Ave.

Calgary's Jubilee Auditorium is world-famous for its acoustic quality, and it hosts many Broadway favorites, such as Mamma Mia!, Les Miserables, and The Lion King, among others. It also regularly shows opera and other artistic performances. The Epcor Centre for the Performing Arts and the Jack Singer Concert Hall hosts a wide variety of entertainers, from classical musicians to comedians, and it makes for a great evening downtown, as you can enjoy the best of Stephen Ave and a top-notch show. The Loose Moose Theatre is well liked for its improv, or try the Comedy Cave for stand-up.

For the indie movie lover, the Plaza and Uptown Stage and Screen are a must. The Calgary International Film Festival usually runs in late September. There are huge multi-plex cinemas in Calgary, too, for the mainstream movie lovers. They can be found in most of the major shopping malls, Chinook Centre, Market Mall, CrossIron Mills, etc.

There are a number of shopping districts, such as 17th Ave SW, Inglewood, and Kensington, and there are five major shopping malls. Downtown there is TD Square, Banker's Hall, and Eau Claire Market. Many communities have large shopping areas, too, such as 130 Ave SE, Westhills, etc.

The Calgary Folk Music Festival is a summer-time favorite, attracting an eclectic assortment of musicians. There's also the Calgary Jazz Festival every July. The Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra performs on a regular basis, as well. And, there's a steady stream of popular acts that come to town to perform at the Dome or one of the many clubs in Calgary.

© NileGuide

Things to Do Insights

Much of Calgary's appeal is its nearness to the Rocky Mountains, and many of the best things to do in Calgary are mountain related. Kananaskis Country, or K-country, is a local favorite. This provincial park is not as famous as Banff National Park (and not even half as touristy), but it may be the most beautiful area in Canada. There is a profound amount to do in K-country, miles of hiking or biking, fishing, golfing at Kananaskis Country Golf Course (probably the best value for your dollar in Alberta), camping, sightseeing, horseback riding... and, it's only 45 minutes out of town!

In Calgary, there are plenty of ways to keep active. Try jogging or biking along Calgary's Bow River bike paths or Fish Creek Park or Nose Hill Park. Prince's Island Park is Downtown Core's peaceful spot and is great for a picnic or frisbee toss. Canada Olympic Park is fantastic for the sport lover. Try bobsledding, cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, ski jumping, or mountain biking, or the Olympic Oval on the U of C's campus is a great place to skate! Chinook River Sports can help you take advantage of the Bow River, if you want to raft or fish.

You can also learn the history of Calgary at Heritage Park Historical Village or Fort Calgary. The Glenbow Museum is also a neat place to learn about the First Nations or the geological history of Alberta. The Royal Tyrrell Museum in Drumheller is a world-class paleontology museum. Check out the Calgary Zoo, which has a wide

range of animals and will soon include Pandas!

Spruce Meadows is a famous show jumping facility, and it is a must for horse lovers. It has been host to Queen Elizabeth during some of her visits to Alberta, and is truly a great facility.

© NileGuide

Travel Tips

Getting There

By Air

Calgary International Airport (+1 403 735 1200/ <http://www.calgaryairport.com>) offers service on numerous airlines. Its terminals house the following airlines:

Alaska Airlines (+1 800 426 0333/ <http://www.alaskaair.com>) American West Airlines (+1 800 235 9292/ <http://www.americawest.com>) Air Canada (+1 800 776 3000/ <http://www.aircanada.ca>) American Airlines (+1 800 433 7300/ <http://www.aa.com>) Canadian North (+1 800 661 1505/ <http://www.canadiannorth.com>) Continental (+1 800 525 0280/ <http://www.continental.com>) Delta (+1 800 221 1212/ <http://www.delta.com>) Jetsgo (+1 866 440 0441/ <http://www.jetsgo.net>) Northwest (+1 800 225 2525/ <http://www.nwa.com>) QuickAir (+1 800 551 7845/ <http://www.quickair.ca>) United (+1 800 241 6522/ <http://www.ual.com>) US Airways (+1 800 428 4322/ <http://www.usairways.com>) WestJet (+1 800 538 5696/ <http://www.westjet.com>) Zoom Airlines Inc (+1 866 359 9666/ <http://www.flyzoom.ca>)

Calgary Transit (+1 403 262 1000/ <http://www.calgarytransit.com>) offers service from the airport to destinations throughout the city.

Shuttle services are provided by Allied Limousine (+1 403 299 9554), Ambassador Limousine (+1 403 299 4910), Air Linker Limousine Service (+1 403 250 8300), and Limojet (+1 403 863 5268).

Rental Cars

Avis (+1 800 831 2847/ <http://www.avis.com>) Enterprise (+1 800 736 8227/ http://www.enterprise.com/car_rental/home) Budget (+1 800 527 0700/ <http://www.budget.com>) Hertz (+1 800 654 3131/

Calgary Snapshot continued

<http://www.hertz.com>) Thrifty(+1 800 367 2277/ <http://www.thrifty.com>)

By Train

Calgary is serviced by VIA Rail Canada(+1 888 842 7245/ <http://www.viarail.ca>) and Royal Canadian Pacific(+1 403 508 1407/ <http://www.cprtours.com>).

By Bus

Calgary can be reached by Greyhound(+1 800 661 8747/ <http://www.greyhound.ca>), Red Arrow Motorcoach(+1 800 232 1958/ <http://www.redarrow.ca/home>), and a number of regional providers.

By Car

Calgary can be reached by Trans-Canadian Highways 1, 2, and 72. Cab facilities from reputed companies like Associated Cabs Limited and Mesi Executive Limousine are available.

Getting Around

Calgary Transit(+1 403 262 1000/ <http://www.calgarytransit.com>) offers extensive public transportation throughout the city.

©

Fun Facts

1. In 2010, the Mercer Quality of Living survey ranked Calgary as the #1 Eco-City in the world, based on water availability and drinkability, waste removal, quality of sewage systems, air pollution and traffic congestion.

2. 2. Interesting fact: Calgary recently elected Naheed Nenshi as mayor. He is the first Muslim mayor in North America.

3. 3. Fun fact: The 1988 Calgary Winter Olympic Games Torch Relay lasted 88 days and spanned over 18,000 kilometers, making it one of the longest relays ever.

4. 4. At 58 stories, The Bow will be the tallest office tower in Canada outside of Toronto, when completed.

5. 5. Random fact: Downtown Calgary's Plus-15 system is North America's largest indoor network of walk-ways.

6. 6. Interesting fact: the Trans-Canada Pipeline, completed in 1958, was the longest pipeline in the world for more than two decades. It nearly bankrupted the federal government but it helped make Calgary a petroleum hub.

7. 7. The Calgary Flames moved from Atlanta to Calgary in 1979, winning the Stanley Cup in 1989.

8. 8. Founded by Guy Weadick, the first Calgary Exhibition and Stampede was in 1912. It has become one of the richest rodeos in the world and attracts over 1.2 million visitors per year.

9. 9. Calgary's population has increased nearly 35% since hosting the Winter Olympics in 1988 and crossed the 1 million mark in 2007.

1010. Random fact: Deerfoot Trail is named after the legendary long-distance runner,

Api-kai-ees, aka Deerfoot, who couriered messages on foot between forts in southern Alberta.

1111. Weird fact: Calgary's urban sprawl covers a geographical footprint the same size as New York City but with only about 10% of the population.

1212. Calgary is the hometown of Canada's current Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, whose riding is Calgary SW.

as Calgary, Alberta, Canada- **Quick Facts**

Population: 1,071,515

Elevation: 3556 feet

Average Winter Temperature: 19 degrees F
Average Summer Temperature: 62 degrees F

Electricity: 110 volts, 50 cycles, AC

Time Zone: GMT-7

Country Dialing Code: 1
Area Code(s): 403, 587

Calgary is located at the foothills of the Canadian Rocky Mountains.

The city is located 151 miles north of the U.S./Canadian Border, 246 miles east of Jasper, and 176 miles south of Edmonton.

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