

Short Driving Tours...

Destinations to satisfy everyone in the family

From lush rainforests and sparkling lakes to dry semi-arid desert-like terrain, these short driving tours offer an hour to a full day or more of enjoyment of the historic and spectacular country in which Williams Lake is set.

Alkali Lake/Gang Ranch Tour

Full Day

Points of interest: Alkali Lake Wildlife Sanctuary, Dog Prairie, Dog Creek, Canyon Views, Churn Creek Bridge, Gang Ranch, Churn Creek Protected Area, Farwell Canyon.

Note: Dog Creek Road is very rough in several stretches.

Dog Creek Road branches south off Highway 20, approximately 2.5 km from highway 97. Travel south passing Springhouse Trails Ranch, Springhouse Air Park, Escetemc First Nation (Alkali Lake) Alkali Lake Ranch (established in 1858), Alkali Lake, a wildlife sanctuary on the Pacific Flyway (American White Pelicans among other waterfowl stop over here).

Beyond Alkali Lake the road parallels the Fraser River and traverses Dog Prairie, a Second World War stopover for aircraft flying between the USA and Alaska. There are several views of the spectacular semi-arid Fraser Canyon. Approximately 15 km past Dog Creek Road junction, descend to Churn Creek and cross the Fraser River.

Churn Creek Protected Area is to the south. This 36,100 hectare tract of grassland habitat is home to spotted bats, long-billed curlews and California bighorn sheep. To the west is the historic Gang Ranch, where there is a post office, store and cookhouse.

To Return: There are a number of roads on the ranch, please enquire about return routes. Follow signs to Williams Lake: From the Ranch along 2700 Road, approximately 34 km to 2200 Road, then north approximately 6 km to Big Creek Road. Right approximately 9 km to Farwell Canyon. From here it is approximately 20 km to Highway 20 at Riske Creek and 50 km back to Williams Lake.

Option: explore Farwell Canyon or Junction Sheep Range Park, 5 km north of Bridge.

Enterprise/Chimney Lake Tour

89 kilometres paved and unpaved - 2 hours

From Williams Lake follow Highway 97 south for approximately 35 km, turn right onto Enterprise Road. Follow this road for approximately 11 km to Chimney Lake Road on your right. This road passes Chimney, Felker and Brunsen Lakes, all great picnic sites. It meets Dog Creek Road leading back to Highway 20 to Williams Lake.

Farwell Canyon/Junction

Sheep Range Tour

Approximately 220 kilometres, 4 to 5 hours

From Williams Lake take Highway 20 west to Riske Creek (50 km) and turn south on Farwell Canyon Road (2200 Road). This gravel road passes the Junction Sheep Range Park access (15 km), then switchbacks down into Farwell Canyon. A spectacular setting of hoodoos, sagebrush, sand dunes and river. Return back to Williams Lake along the same route.

Sugar Cane/Mission Road

Approximately one leisurely hour

Take Highway 97 south of Williams Lake and enter the Mission Road at Sugarcane First Nation community (Williams Lake Indian Band). The road passes the rodeo ground, the Onward Ranch house and the old St. Joseph Mission, circling back to Highway 97, south of 150 Mile House, near access to the Mule Deer Reserve and UBC Research Forest. A.Y. Jackson, one of the famous Group of Seven painters, visited the Onward Ranch several times during the 1930s.

Short Driving Tours... continued

Likely to Barkerville on the Matthew River Road

4 to 5 hours

Before you embark on your trip to Barkerville, check in at the Likely Information Centre/Museum located at Cedar Point Park to get all the information that you need for this trip, together with road conditions. From Likely you turn onto the Keithly Creek Road – at the junction of 1300 Road and at Keithly Creek is a kiosk, with all the information regarding your route to Barkerville on the Matthew River Road. Less than 25km out of Likely, you turn right onto the 8400 Road (which is well signed), at which time Cariboo Lake will be on your left hand side. This road has 11 signs from Likely to Barkerville; you will pass the Ladies Creek Recreation Site, Ghost Lake and Antlers Creek Recreation Site. This road is gravel, but is used by industrial traffic from Mines and Logging, so always have your headlights on. Be travel prepared! Check your gas as there is no service station between Likely and Barkerville. You may want to carry food and water. Enjoy the trip!

Old Gold Rush Country Tour - Likely and Horsefly

Full Day

Points of interest: Bullion Pit, Quesnel Forks, Likely, Cedar Point Park, The Likely Museum, Quesnel Lake, Horsefly River, Horsefly, Moffat Falls. In late summer salmon migrate up the Quesnel and Horsefly Rivers and may be viewed from the Likely and Horsefly bridges.

At 150 Mile House turn north-east on the Gold Rush Trail Road to Likely and Horsefly. At 6 km turn left to Likely. Williams Lake to Likely is about 1-1/4 hours or 100 km. You'll pass Big Lake, Gavin Lake access, and Morehead Lake. On the left about 2 km before Likely is the Bullion Pit, a monstrous hydraulic mine pit.

Option 1: At Likely follow the signing to Quesnel Forks, about 19 km, to see the old ghost town and historic cemetery.

Option 2: About 2 kilometres southwest of Likely Bridge is the Ditch Road to Horsefly. This road offers views of Quesnel Lake, and becomes Mitchell Bay Road at Mitchell Bay/Horsefly River estuary (verify road conditions prior to travel). Here eagles, herons and other birds congregate in season. Along Horsefly River, bears and other wildlife are often seen. At Horsefly, return to Williams Lake or continue across Horsefly River Bridge to resorts on Quesnel Lake and Horsefly Lake.

Fraser River Tour

Soda Creek/ Meldrum Creek/ Rudy Johnson's Bridge/ Highway 20

Take the Old Soda Creek Road north from Williams Lake. Cross Rudy Johnson's Bridge over the Fraser River and turn left on the Meldrum Creek Road, heading south following the Fraser past Meldrum Creek to Highway 20 at the top of Sheep Creek Hill. Turn left on Highway 20 and return to Williams Lake.

Option: Visit Xat'sull Heritage Village. Instead of turning left down the hill to Rudy Johnson's Bridge, continue along the less travelled Old Soda Creek Road to the First Nation community of Soda Creek. Turn left and follow the signs to Xat'sull Village along the banks of the Fraser. To return to Williams Lake turn right on the road at Soda Creek and proceed up to Highway 97, and return south to Williams Lake.