



Peyto Hut

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Peyto Hut

Booking, Payment and Cancellation Policy

View the Booking, Payment and Cancellation Policies at www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/facility/reservations.html

Rates

Visit www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/facility/rates.html for current hut and wilderness pass prices.

Getting There

The Peyto Hut is located at the farthest north end of the Wapta Icefields. It sits on an elevated moraine at the base of Mt. Thompson, next to the Peyto Glacier. It is built similarly to the Balfour and Scott Duncan huts, both also located on the Wapta.

Summer

Trailhead location:	40 km north of Lake Louise on Highway 93
Hiking distance:	10 kilometres
Elevation gain:	2,200 feet
Approximate time:	5-6 hours

Winter

Trailhead location:	40 km north of Lake Louise on Highway 93
Hiking distance:	10 kilometres
Elevation gain:	2,200 feet
Approximate time:	5-6 hours

Trailhead location

The trailhead from which to access the Peyto Hut (if not coming from a previous hut further along the icefields) is located at the parking lot and tourist viewpoint at Peyto Lake. The turn-off for the parking lot is located five km north of the turn-off for the Num-Ti-Jah Lodge on Highway 93 North.

Summer approach

A steep trail leads down the hillside toward Peyto Lake from the end of the tourist trails. At the bottom of the hill, the trail follows the south end of the lake and the inlet streams. The route generally follows the creek and moraines on the northwest side of the valley until it is possible to gain the Peyto Glacier. Proceed up the glacier in a southwest direction, onto the Wapta Icefield itself, staying to the right of the crevasses. Once you have passed the crevasses, circle back to the left toward the Whyte Hut on the elevated moraine below the northwest ridge of Mt. Thompson.

Note: This area is located in a wilderness zone of Banff Park with no maintained trails. Travellers must have a high degree of self-reliance and are expected to be able to evaluate and manage hazards such as creek crossings and routes in sloping terrain.

It is also possible to access the Whyte Hut in the summer across the Wapta Icefield from the Bow Hut. The route is over the same terrain as described for winter access. Glacier travel and crevasse rescue experience as well as proper equipment are essential.

Winter approach

The route starts further north on Highway 93, descends to and crosses Peyto Lake itself and then follows the general line of the summer route, with a few important variations. Be certain that the lake is well frozen before attempting to cross the ice. Refer to Chic Scott's book *Summits and Icefields of the Canadian Rockies* or *Ski Trails in the Canadian Rockies* for a detailed description of this route.

In good conditions, the Bow to Peyto approach can be an easy trip, but in poor visibility or whiteout conditions navigation can be extremely difficult. From Bow Hut, the route ascends onto the Wapta Icefields and travels toward the Whyte Hut for 6 km to the northwest. Refer to Chic Scott's *Summits and Icefields of the Canadian Rockies* guidebook for more information. The route first ascends 1,100 feet, and then slowly descends about 600 feet back down to the Peyto Hut. Three to four hours is standard for this trip in good conditions.

Maps and Guidebooks

All of the following books and maps can be purchased through the ACC office or online through the ACC online store at: www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/store/index.html

Map and GPS references

Map reference:	82N/10 (Blaeberry River)
Grid reference:	314237
GPS coordinates:	51°39' 48"-116°32' 42" 11U 531470 5723692
Hut elevation:	2,500 metres (8,200 feet)

Maps

- "Touring the Wapta Icefields" 1:50, 000 topographic map by Murray Toft. This is an excellent map that highlights the popular ski traverse routes used in the wintertime. A great close-up view of the entire Wapta Icefields area.
- The Peyto hut and the approach from the highway are on the Canadian Government issued standard 1:50,000 topographical map 82N/10 (Blaeberry River). You will also need 82N/9 (Hector Lake) if you plan to go anywhere on the Icefields.
- Gem Trek Publishing 1:70, 000 topographic map entitled "Bow Lake and Saskatchewan Crossing". This excellent map shows trails and highlights in detail.

Guidebooks and general interest books

- *Backcountry Huts and Lodges of the Rockies and Columbias*, by Jim Scott
- *Summits and Icefields, Canadian Rockies*, by Chic Scott
- *Backcountry Banff - Walking, Hiking, Backpacking, and off-trail Scrambling in Banff National Park*, by Mike Potter
- *Canadian Rockies Trail Guide*, by Brian Patton & Bart Robinson
- *Don't Waste Your Time in the Canadian Rockies*, by Kathy & Craig Copeland
- *The 11,000ers of the Canadian Rockies*, by Bill Corbett
- *Ski Trails in the Canadian Rockies*, by Chic Scott
- *Summits & Icefields Canadian Rockies, Alpine Ski Tours*, by Chic Scott
- *Selected Alpine Climbs in the Canadian Rockies*, by Sean Dougherty
- *Mixed Climbs in the Canadian Rockies*, by Sean Isaac
- *Waterfall Ice Climbs in the Canadian Rockies*, by Joe Josephson
- *Artists of the Rockies*, by Jane Lytton Gooch
- *Handbook of the Canadian Rockies*, by Ben Gadd

Website Links

Current conditions

Weather: Go to www.weather.gc.ca click on <British Columbia>, then scroll down to <Yoho National Park>. The weather forecasts are updated 3 times daily.

Avalanche Hazard: Go to www.avalanche.ca click on the <Public Avalanche Bulletins> and review the section for <Banff/Yoho/Kootenay National Parks>. The avalanche forecast for this region is kept currently updated.

Area information

Avalanche Terrain Rating System (ATES): Parks Canada has developed a classification system for avalanche terrain, and has applied ratings to approximately 250 trips in the Mountain National Parks. For more information, visit www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/ab/banff/visit/visit7a1_E.asp

Google Earth Reference: The Peyto Glacier area is covered in medium resolution on Google Earth. Go to <http://earth.google.com/>. You will find the Peyto Hut at 51°39' 48" N -116°32' 42" W.

1:50,000 Topographic Map: The Canadian Government offers free downloads of their regular 1:50,000 topo maps. The map files are large (25 MB) and take a few minutes to download. You will find this service at: <http://www.geogratis.gc.ca/geogratis/en/product/search.do?id=10119>. Perform your search by selecting "NTS Mapsheet", and enter 082N09. Next, press "Search" under "Search Options" (without changing any of the information in "Search Options"). Select 082N09 from the options and download it.

Parks Canada Info

Wilderness Passes in National Parks

Banff, Jasper, Kootenay, Yoho, and Glacier National Parks collect a fee for backcountry overnight use in the Parks. The fees collected from the wilderness passes go towards maintaining trails, supplying the voluntary registration service, avalanche forecasting, backcountry bridge-building, etc. Overnight users of the ACC huts (ages 16 and over) are required to pay this fee. A copy of the wilderness passes should be carried in the backcountry at all times as a Parks Canada representative may ask to see proof of purchase.

We encourage you to buy these passes from the ACC, as 40% of the monies collected goes to a special huts account for our heritage huts and environmental improvements. You will be offered the option to purchase the pass when you make a reservation, or you can buy an annual pass from our online store at: <http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/store/index.html>. For current rates, visit: <http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/facility/rates.html>.

Vehicle Permits

All vehicles stopping in a National Park must have a Park Motor Vehicle Permit. Annual or single day permits can be purchased at most Park entrance gates and Park visitor centres and soon through the Alpine Club of Canada's national office.

Maximum Group Size

The maximum group size for hiking is 10 persons. If your group is larger, you will need to split into smaller groups.

Voluntary Hazardous Activities Registration

It is recommended that anyone participating in hazardous activities in the backcountry register with the Park Wardens. This registration is free and is the best method of ensuring that someone comes looking for you should an emergency happen. You can register at any Parks Canada Visitor Centre.

What Is At the Hut

Summary

Lighting:	Propane
Cooking:	Propane stove, cookware, dishes & utensils provided
Sleeping:	Dormitory style on thick foam mattresses
Capacity:	18 in the summer, 16 in the winter
Drinking water:	Small glacial stream 150 m north of the hut or snowmelt
Human Waste:	Outhouse
Dishwater:	Ground sump approximately 20 m east of the hut
Garbage:	Pack it out!

The building

The Peyto Hut is a modern, single-roomed hut with bunks along one side and the kitchen space along the other side of the hut. On a clear day, there is a great view of the surrounding peaks from where the hut is perched up on the moraine.

Capacity

The hut sleeps a total of 18 people in the summer and 16 people in the wintertime. When the hut is at capacity, storage and cooking space are at a premium, and it is important to organize gear neatly.

Kitchen

The kitchen is well supplied with dishes, cutlery, utensils, pots and pans. There are several two-burner propane stoves for cooking.

Lighting

The hut is lit by several propane lights. Propane is supplied by the ACC via a large outdoor tank.

Heat

The hut does not have a wood-burning stove or heating system but is well insulated and can heat up comfortably with body warmth along with the heat from the cooking stoves and lanterns.

Tools

The hut has a good supply of tools including water buckets, axes, saws, shovels, etc. for proper maintenance of the hut.

Drinking Water

In the summer drinking water can be reached from a lake 75 metres to the east of the hut. In the winter, water is made from snowmelt and it is recommended that all water be boiled or filtered before drinking.



Grey Water

A grey water disposal site at the Whyte Hut is not presently designated. It is recommended that strained water be dumped into the porous rock field to disperse it. Strained food scraps from the grey water should be packed out as garbage. Do not dispose of any scraps or unused food into the outhouse.

Human Waste

The outhouses are located approximately 30 metres to the west of the hut. Please do not put any garbage into the outhouse. There is also a urinal adjacent to the toilet, do not pour anything down the pipes - this is for urine only.

Garbage

All garbage, bottles, and unused food packed back out of the hut. As there is no wood-burning stove there is no opportunity to burn garbage, but if you are continuing your trip along the Wapta with plans to stay at the Bow Hut, you can plan to burn your paper and food scraps there.

What you need to bring

- reservation form from the ACC stating how many beds you have booked and the length of your stay
- Parks Canada overnight or annual wilderness pass (the former will be on your reservation form if you purchase it through the ACC).
- sleeping bag
- food for the duration of your stay
- toilet paper
- first aid kit
- 9V battery for the smoke detector

Hut Rules

Here is a list of simple rules we ask that you follow in order to maximize everyone's enjoyment of the "hut experience".

While at the hut:

- No smoking.
- Dogs are not permitted in any ACC facility (with the exception of seeing eye dogs).
- Some Parks also outlaw dogs entirely; leashed or not. Check before you go!
- If you arrive at the hut before 2:00 pm, put your belongings where they will not disturb the previous nights' occupants.
- Please be considerate of others; the hut should be quiet by 10 pm.
- Carry out all of your garbage.
- Do not do personal washing in cooking pots or nearby streams - use wash basins and slop pits.
- Fill stoves and lanterns outside the hut and leave extra fuel outside.
- Clean the stoves after using them.
- Clean up after yourself.
- Follow posted instructions for care and maintenance of toilet systems so that they function properly with minimum odour and environmental impact.

When leaving a hut:

- If your belongings will be in the hut after 2:00 pm, and you are not staying that night, be sure to pack everything up and leave it out of the way in a corner so the new guests can move in.
- Leave all tools inside the hut when not being used.
- Empty all water containers and slop buckets before leaving the hut.
- Take out all leftover food as food left in the hut encourages rodents. (Other people generally won't use it as they don't know how old it is.)

- Bring out damaged axes, lanterns or stoves and discharged fire extinguishers - advise the national office.
- Close & latch the outhouse door when leaving to keep out rodents & snow.
- Close/lock hut, replace shutters (if applicable), before leaving the hut.
- A nearly full outhouse, damage to hut & similar matters should be reported to the national office (you may call collect)

Please leave the hut in better condition than you found it. Thank you for your consideration in following these rules, and have a great time!

Things To Do Around the Hut

Hiking

While the Peyto Lake lookout can be a very crowded area in the summertime, there are excellent hiking opportunities in the area that allow you to get high up on the glaciated peaks and get a beautiful view of Peyto and Caldron Lakes, among many glacial features in the area. For more information on specific trips, refer to the book *Don't Waste Your Time in the Canadian Rockies* by Kathy and Craig Copeland.

Mountaineering

From high up at 2500 metres elevation, the Peyto hut is an excellent base from which to bag high peaks surrounding the hut. All of the peaks around the Whyte Hut are climbed in both summer and winter. Some ascents can be made entirely on skis, while others must be made on foot for the final section. Refer to the book *Summits and Icefields of the Canadian Rockies* by Chic Scott for more information on winter ascents.

Backcountry Skiing

The hut-to-hut ski trip along the Wapta Icefields is listed in *Explore Magazine's* March/April 2008 issue as one of "Canada's 25 Trips of a Lifetime". There are opportunities to get some turns in on the lower slopes of the large ski-mountaineering peaks. Mt. Thompson, Rhondda and Baker are the best in the area for good snow, and the lower slopes of Peyto Peak could also offer a great run in spring conditions.

History

The evolution of this facility (commonly called the Peyto Hut, but correctly referred to as the Peter and Catharine Whyte Hut, or simply the Whyte Hut) mirrors the development of other huts on the Wapta, especially the Balfour Hut. The first structure built on this site was a fiberglass igloo; the next consisted of surplus plastic bubble huts from Parks Canada; and finally, the present insulated corrugated metal structure. Unlike the Balfour Hut, the Whyte Hut has always been in the same location.

While on a Calgary Ski Club trip in 1967, Peter Fuhrmann inspired Catharine Whyte to fund the construction of the first hut on this location. The ACC got permission from the Parks to construct the hut, and then turned it over to Parks to operate upon completion. It was a 12-man fiberglass igloo identical to the Balfour Hut, and was named the Peter Whyte Hut after Catharine's husband who had passed away in 1966. Bands of wolverines roving in search of booty pillaged the place, and thus the first Whyte Hut fell victim to the same problem as beset the original Balfour igloo.

The igloo was replaced in 1970 by two Parks Canada surplus backcountry fiberglass bubbles. The bubbles were wolverine-proof, but presented their own problems: extensive condensation on the interior and a white exterior that made them difficult to see in the snow. These structures remained as the Whyte Hut for 13 years before they were removed and replaced by the present hut.

The present hut was built in 1983 by the Alpine Club, with another large donation from the Whyte Family and volunteer labor supplied primarily by the Banff (now Rocky Mountain) Section of the ACC. The responsibility for operating the hut was turned over to the Alpine Club in 1989 along with the Balfour and Bow Huts.