



RV RENTAL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

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RV RENTALS spread the spending power of guests to many areas of BC

With 50 million kilometers and 200,000 days of travel each season around Western Canada, many villages and small towns see happy guests from around the world visiting their farmer markets and local stores, mixing with residents, sightseeing and camping in nearby RV parks.

That's 2,000 times around the world in five months. Just in BC and Alberta. Visitors can be seen stocking up at general stores, enjoying a meal in a bistro, amused by watching cultural and sporting events, and pausing for a coffee at local merchants all around the province. Canada is known as a safe haven for international visitors.

Overseas travelers are always on the move, and spend a night or two in campsites before moving on to see our spectacular wilderness and remote communities. These visitors average two hundred kilometers per day, but might travel five hundred clicks in a day to the next attraction, or press on when the weather turns poor.

"We love your country, the beauty, the wild animals, the friendly people", said a guest from the Netherlands during a roadside lunch break in Bull Lake Provincial Park, who was on his way with two couples to the BC Ferry at Bella Coola. They were spending fifteen nights in campgrounds while motoring 3,000 kilometers around the province.

RVRAC in conjunction with the BC Lodging & Campgrounds Association has partnered in publishing the *RV BC/Alberta Spring & Fall Campground Discount guide* aimed at promoting off-season travel during April-June, and late August to Thanksgiving weekend with more than ninety participating private campgrounds offering a minimum 10% discount. Shoulder season bookings are increasing every year with 9,000 this year. The guide is supported by Destination BC and Travel Alberta that helps drive traffic to many remote parks and communities in spring and fall. RVRAC is active in supporting National Camping Week, and the Learn-to-Camp program sponsored by Parks Canada.

While less than 7% of overnight visitors to provincial parks are overseas visitors, three quarters of users are local residents often within a four or five hour drive from home. Albertans add another 15%, with the rest of the RVers making their way to BC from across Canada and the US.

BC has close to fifty thousand campsites in private, provincial and national parks, yet campsites in some areas are fully-booked, especially on long weekends in peak season.

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BC Parks – approximately 50% of 6,000 provincial campsites are reservable. BC Parks are listed on the BC Road Map showing road access, number of sites, showers and availability of other services such as sani-station, etc. Reservations on Discover Camping opened at 7am on March 15 this year which allows booking up to three months in advance of arrival date. There were more than 158,000 reservations made in 2015, a 19% increase compared to 2014.

Private campgrounds and RV parks – 548 privately owned and municipal campgrounds with over 30,000 campsites located in or near every community in British Columbia. Rates range from \$20-\$60/night depending on season, size, and hookups, and other services. Listings detailing the location of many private campgrounds can be found in the *Super Camping Guide* available at rental stations. Online listings can be located via travel-british-columbia.com, campingrvbc.com and HelloBC.com

National Parks - campsites in National Parks with motorhome access include Pacific Rim on the west coast of Vancouver Island, Kootenay and Yoho National Parks in the Canadian Rockies, Glacier and Mount Revelstoke in the Selkirk Mountains. Overflow sites are sometimes located close by main highways.

BC Recreation Sites – 570 authentic front country campgrounds on government owned Crown land, with many close to paved roads such as Duffy Lake north of Whistler. The number of sites may vary by year due to forest fires and floods. Great care must be taken to drive a motorhome into some of these areas, and sites do not provide hookups. Rental conditions may also restrict access on gravel roads.

Demand for campgrounds has reached an all time high in 2016 with many locals staying home due to the US exchange rate, major inflow of European visitors due to the strong Euro, and all taking advantage of cheap fuel.

Vancouver is by far the largest international gateway in North America for RV renters. Just about all pickups and drop-offs in Calgary cross the Continental Divide through the Canadian Rockies and travel around BC.

RVRAC is focused on partnerships with all levels of government including private campgrounds, provincial and national parks to promote off-season travel, which helps spread the spending power of our guests to all corners of BC. The RV Rental Association of Canada is a founding member of the BC Camping & RV Coalition.

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