

Interesting Facts about BC

BC is big on superlatives. Here are just a few of our bragging rights:

Tallest Mountain:

The highest mountain partially within BC is Fairweather Mountain (4,663 metres/15,299 feet) on the BC/Alaska border. The tallest mountain entirely within the province is Mount Waddington in the Coast Mountains, at 4,016 metres/13,176 feet.

Oldest Tree:

In Carmanah Walbran Provincial Park, "Heaven Tree," a Sitka spruce, has a diameter of 3.5 metres/11.5 feet and is thought to be around 800 years old; some of the cedars in the park are estimated to be well over 1,000 years old. The "Hanging Garden Tree" on Meares Island near Tofino is one of the oldest known western red cedars, estimated to be anywhere between 1,500 and 2,000 years old.

Fastest Water:

Skookumchuck Narrows, on BC's Sunshine Coast, has, at speeds in excess of 16 knots, among the fastest flowing tidal currents in the world.

Highest Waterfall:

Della Falls in Strathcona Provincial Park on Vancouver Island. At 440 metres/1,444 feet, it is one of the highest waterfalls in Canada, around eight times the height of Niagara Falls.

Biggest Lake:

BC's biggest lake, and one of North America's largest man-made lakes, Williston Lake, in northeastern BC, has an area of 1773square kilometres/685 square miles.

Longest River:

The Fraser River is 1,370 kilometres/851 miles long.

Largest Island:

Vancouver Island, at 31,285 square kilometres/12,079square miles, is about the size of Belgium. It is the largest island on the west coast of North America.

Biggest Provincial Park

Tweedsmuir Provincial Park, at 989,616 hectares/2.4 million acres, is British Columbia's largest provincial park.

Smallest Provincial Park

BC's smallest provincial park, at one hectare/2.5 acres, is Memory Island, on Vancouver Island's Shawnigan Lake.

Oldest Provincial Park

Created in 1911, Strathcona Provincial Park on central Vancouver Island was BC's first provincial park.

Here are a few more things you might like to know about BC, but never thought to ask:

There are only 31 nations in the world, and one American state (Alaska), larger in surface area than British Columbia.

British Columbia is four times the size of Great Britain, and more than two times the size of Japan.

BC's population, of 4,581,978 (in 2013) averages 4.9 people per square kilometre.

Almost 90 per cent of British Columbians have used a provincial park at some time.

Victoria is known as the "Cycling Capital of Canada," with more cyclists per capita than anywhere else in the country.

The town of Kimberley, in the Kootenay Rockies, is home to Canada's largest free-standing cuckoo clock.

The world's oldest intact passenger sternwheeler, the 1898 SS Moyie, is permanently berthed at Kaslo on Kootenay Lake.

Kicking Horse Mountain Resort, near Golden in the Kootenay Rockies, is home to Canada's highest restaurant, the Eagle's Eye. It's 2,350 metres/7,710 feet high on the summit of the Golden Eagle Express gondola.

From Balfour, near Nelson in the Kootenay Rockies, the world's longest free ferry ride whisks drivers across Kootenay Lake to Kootenay Bay and the tiny artisans' community of Crawford Bay.

One of North America's largest sockeye salmon runs can be viewed at Roderick Haig-Brown Provincial Park in the Thompson Okanagan.

One of Canada's most recent volcanic eruptions occurred an estimated 250 years ago at what is now the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park, a moonscape of hardened lava, about 100 kilometres/62 miles north of Terrace, in Northern BC.

Prince Rupert's harbour is the deepest natural ice-free harbour in North America.

Prince Rupert has the highest average annual precipitation of any city in Canada, at approximately 2,500 millimetres/100 inches.

The world's largest intact coastal temperate rainforest is over 321,000 hectares/793,208 acres in the Kitlope Heritage Conservancy Protected Area on BC's central coast.

One of the windiest places in Canada is Cape St. James, at the southern tip of Haida Gwaii. Here, there are more days each year with gale-force winds than any other place in Canada.

The oldest non-Aboriginal settlement on the mainland of BC is Fort St. John, established in 1794.