

Banff, the Beautiful

Pine-woods and a broad-spreading valley surrounded by fine mountains are the characteristics that have gained for Banff, beautiful as are the other resorts in the Canadian Rockies, many enthusiastic devotees. It has a world-wide reputation and draws its visitors from many lands, delighting them with the wonderful variety of its scenery and the great choice of attractions it offers to men of diverse tastes.

The whole place centres round the Canadian Pacific Railway hotel. It is delightfully situated a mile and a half from the line, and is supplied with everything to add to the comfort of its guests. On every hand are woods of pine, and the road from the village leads for half a mile through thick groves of trees before the hotel is reached. Delightful walks meander in all directions, and the visitor may wander on and on, till he finds himself far up the valley of the Spray, itself almost hidden by the woods along its banks.

Just below the hotel is the junction of the Spray and the Bow and the falls of the latter stream. Here the river, some fifty yards wide, takes a plunge

at the end of a fine rapid. Cascade is perhaps a better name for it than waterfall, but within its limits it shows a fine fury and its roar is distinctly heard on the heights above. From the terrace of the hotel a splendid view may be obtained down the Bow Valley to the regular bulwarks of the Fairholme Range. The river is right below the eye, and as it cuts its way between Mts. Rundle and Tunnel and then across the plain, its precision seems almost artificial. Its waters are emerald green, and contrast well with the yellow grey of its clay banks and the dark, formal spruce that marks its course.

A still better view may be obtained from the summit and sides of Tunnel Mt. Cascade and Rundle rise on either side and shut the valley in, but between them stands the lower height of Tunnel and commands a splendid prospect in every direction. A good bridle-path leads to the summit, and the carriage road to Lake Minnewanka and the buffalo corral in the Canadian National Park passes round it, and the visitor, as he goes, has first one then another vista spread before him.

To Minnewanka is only one of the charming views round Banff, and the valley may be explored in many directions in a carriage and pair. A tally-ho starts daily from the hotel, and the drive through the wooded lowlands, with Rundle, Cascade and the Fairholme Range presenting themselves from ever new points of view, is wonderfully picturesque.

For those who ride still other excursions are open. On Sulphur Mt., right behind the hotel, a switchback trail six miles long has been cut to the observatory at the top. It leads through a wood which opens out every now and then and reveals the Bow running thousands of feet below, or shows the valley of the Spray with the Twin Peaks at its end and the snow-covered pyramid of Mt. Assiniboine just visible twenty miles away. As the higher ground is reached, the spruce diminishes in size and the underbrush is formed of stunted trees that on lower ground might be of forest size. Here and there an open glade appears, and the grass is spangled with bright-colored wild flowers.

Sulphur Mt. takes its name from medicinal hot springs found in a natural basin far up its heights. The water is laid on to the hotel and an excellent swimming bath provided, where those with rheumatism and kindred affections may bathe.

But though the invalid is not unknown at Banff, it is very far from being merely a health resort. The hearty laughter that is heard in the evening along the corridors of the hotel, the cheerful talk that passes before its crackling log-fire, the many parties that sally forth day by day on distant expeditions or for golf and tennis, dispel effectually that notion. It is in truth a delightful summer resort, where if the invalid may find relief from his pains, the athlete will also have much to interest him, and people of every taste and age will be able to enjoy themselves amid its lovely scenery, splendid air and varied amusements.



BOW RIVER VALLEY



BANFF HOTEL