

TRAVEL

A summer of summits

Cassandra Karpiak

We didn't call it hiking back then. We just called it "going for a walk."

My dad and I hiked a lot together in his final years, though I'm not sure he'd have used that word either. He had dementia, and toward the end, the world became a quieter, blurrier place for him. But outside — out on the sun-baked slopes of Battle Bluff, along the dusty trail to Gibraltar Rock, or following game tracks through the grasslands near Lac du Bois — something in him always sparked.

He didn't always remember the names, but he remembered how it felt to move uphill, to breathe the dry sage-scented air, to sit at the top and say, simply, "Look at that." Sometimes, I wonder if those trails held the last pieces of clarity for him—unspoken but deeply known.

For the Kamloops Hiking Club, this is just one day among hundreds. In 2024, they logged more than 200 organized hikes, from quiet spring walks among the balsamroot to challenging summit scrambles across the Interior Plateau. With snowmelt revealing high-elevation

routes, summer marks a new chapter — longer days, longer trails, and the chance to climb into the mountains.

"Kamloops has opportunities to hike and explore in every direction," said Doug Smith, past President of the Kamloops Hiking Club. "The City is located at the junction of two major rivers, the North Thompson River from the mountains to the north and the South Thompson River from the mountains to the east. Together, they meet in the middle of the city and become the Thompson River, flowing into Kamloops Lake on the west. Rising above the valley are grasslands, sloping up toward the forested areas in the mountains and the Interior Plateau."

There are routes for every kind of hiker, from short loops in Peterson Creek to full-day destination hikes to remote summits. "From Kamloops, we can drive in all four directions to find more hiking trails, to Wells Gray Park in the north, the Shuswap to the east, the Nicola forests to the south, and the arid lands to the west. We can hike a different trail every day of the year."

The Kamloops Hiking Club serves as both compass



Cassandra Karpiak photo

and community for local hikers. With multiple outings each week — ranging from quick 90-minute loops to full-

day treks — its leaders offer a wealth of local knowledge.

"A few hike leaders know hundreds of routes, many of

which are not found in books or websites," says Smith. "The term 'hiking trails' is usually understood to be a designated

trail, complete with parking and signs. Most of the 'trails' in the Kamloops area are routes
See **HIKING** on A26

Final Boarding Call On These Great Canadian Summer Escapes!

Revelstoke Summer Splendor <i>Filling Fast!</i>	July 22	4 days	\$1410
Klondike to the Arctic Ocean <i>2 Seats Left!</i>	Aug 8	12 days	\$5690
Bella Coola & Tweedsmuir Park <i>4 Seats Left!</i>	Aug 11	6 days	\$2965
Barkerville & Wells Gray Park <i>8 Seats Left!</i>	Aug 20	4 days	\$1230

Fall into Travel: Your Perfect Autumn Escape!

Sunshine Coast <i>8 Seats Left!</i>	Sept 2	7 days	\$3770
The Lion King in Vancouver <i>Filling Fast!</i>	Sept 2	3 days	\$995
Waterton Lakes & Drumheller <i>8 Seats Left!</i>	Sept 9	6 days	\$2555
Wells Gray Park (EB) <i>8 Seats Left!</i>	Sept 27	4 days	\$1570
West Coast Cruise & Rail <i>3 Train Rides! (EB)</i>	Oct 4	15 days from	\$6235

Escorted Group Travel

Close to Home &
Around The Globe

(EB) Early Booking Bonus

Home City Pick-ups

Single Fares Available

Prices do not include GST

BC Reg. #65842

WELLS GRAY TOURS
a world to experience



Proudly Canadian Owned & Operated!

250.374.0831 or 800.667.9552

www.wellsgraytours.com

