



How to Get There

Both Air Canada and WestJet have multiple daily flights from most major cities into Calgary. From there, it's a scenic 90-minute drive west to the town of Banff. If you have time, plan for a short stop in the town of Canmore.

Where to Stay

Banff is designed to expand into a small city during peak winter months. In June, there are multiple affordable options, including the **Inns of Banff**, which has seen better days but was less than \$150. Ideally, find accommodations closer to the centre of town at the southwest end of Banff Avenue. Of course, there's always the **Fairmont Banff Springs**, one of the crown jewels of Canada's grand railway hotels, perched atop the Bow River.



along the Legacy Trail. Although Banff sits at altitude, making running a PB challenging, the new course was speedy, delivering you back into the town after non-stop panoramic views of the area's breathtaking mountain ranges. The last few kilometres of the course around the town are no less spectacular, as you go over bridges and run along the serene Bow River before crossing the finish line in Banff's Central Park.

Fittingly, the race hosts a small expo, race kit pickup and post-race festivities outdoors, surrounded by mountains in Central Park. Banff National Park is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site and, because the area is protected, the race is limited to 1,500 entrants. The inaugural event attracted an international field from over 30 countries, including a delegation of 100 Chinese runners looking for a uniquely Canadian marathon experience. And what an experience it was. Running the Banff Marathon's "A" course will make next another special experience, if the Grizzlies co-operate, of course.—MD **R**



Photos: Pam Doyle Photography/pamdoylephoto.com, Marathons, Pam Doyle Photography/pamdoylephoto.com