



Fireweed is the official floral emblem of Yukon.



Mountains overlook the Kathleen River in Yukon's Kluane National Park.



Fly-fishing is popular in the Kathleen River.

Kluane National Park is bold,

TALES FROM THE ROAD



ARLENE & ROBIN KARPAN

Everything about Kluane National Park is big.

It sprawls across southwestern Yukon, is home to the world's largest ice fields outside the polar regions and has glaciers, wild rivers and wildlife galore. It encompasses 17 of Canada's 20 tallest mountains, including the imposing Mount Logan, Canada's highest peak at 5,959 metres.

The natural features are so significant that the huge complex including Kluane, along with neighbouring preserves in northern British Columbia and Alaska, have been designated a UNESCO

World Heritage Site.

Despite the largely untouched nature of this world of mountains and ice, Kluane is easy to visit, thanks in large part to the Alaska Highway that runs along most of the eastern edge of the park and adjoining Kluane Wildlife Reserve.

Roads do not run through the park (so there are no park admission fees), but instead access points off the highway lead to lakes, picnic sites, and hiking trails.

The park has a campground at Kathleen Lake, but all other campgrounds and accommodations are outside the park.

The main service centre is the small town of Haines Junction. Here, the Alaska Highway comes from Whitehorse, then turns northwest along the park, and the Haines Highway heads south toward Haines, Alaska, offering access to the park's southern reaches.

The town is home to a large building that houses the Parks Canada and Yukon visitor centres, along with the DaKu Cultural Centre

focusing on local First Nations groups.

Accommodation is available in town, along with restaurants and places to pick up supplies. Not to be missed is the tiny and unusual Our Lady of the Way Catholic Church, built in 1954 from a quonset fitted with a more fancy entrance. It is said to be the most photographed church in Yukon.

A major draw of visiting Kluane is the wealth of hiking trails, especially multi-day treks offering spectacular mountain and glacier views. Alternatively, you can choose relatively easy day hikes or even short strolls. Among the easiest is the one-kilometre return walk to Soldier's Summit, where the Alaska Highway was officially opened in 1942.

Rock Glacier trail packs variety into a 1.6 km return route. A long boardwalk leads through marshland and forest, then suddenly you emerge from the trees and enter a barren boulder-strewn landscape, which is the remains of an ancient glacier.



LEFT: The park's mountains are awe-inspiring.

ABOVE: The authors pose in front of a gold rush era cabin at Mount Logan Lodge.



ABOVE: The Kaskawulsh Glacier is a sight to behold.

RIGHT: Our Lady of the Way Catholic Church is located in Haines Junction, Yukon.



For more information on the Klauane area, visit www.travel yukon.com.

Arlene and Robin Karpan are well-travelled writers based in Saskatoon. Contact: travel@producer.com.

ARLENE AND ROBIN KARPAN PHOTOS

big and easy to visit

King's Throne hike is a steep and more challenging 10 km walk, but you can shorten it by only going partway to enjoy magnificent views over Kathleen Lake and surrounding peaks.

Places to stay run the gamut from Territorial Campgrounds (only \$12 per site) to hotels, simple cabins, and upscale lodges such as Dalton Trail Lodge, which specializes in sport fishing. The most unusual place we stayed was a gold-rush-era log cabin, thought to be among the oldest buildings in the Haines Junction area. Restored by Mount Logan Lodge to give guests a taste of historic Yukon, it has become a hit with visitors.

While driving and hiking give you a taste for this magical landscape, nothing compares to experiencing

it from above. We left the airstrip at Kluane Lake with our pilot, Charles, from Icefield Discovery, and two other passengers for a one-hour flight-seeing trip that capped off our Klauane experience.

We rose above the sprawling mouth of the Slims River bordering the lake and then seemed to enter another world as we soared above the massive Kaskawulsh glacier. Arms of the main glacier, plus side ones such as the Stairway glacier flow together into an ice sheet six km wide in places. It's a surrealistic scene, like a giant abstract painting with sinuous curves of ice and rock. Most amazing was that the huge expanse of ice and mountains around us was still only a small part of the wild terrain that lies beyond.

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Animal Health Clinic

• GRAND OPENING •

Friday, September 7
Lakeland College, Vermilion Campus
5707 College Drive

2 p.m. official opening ceremony.
Tours to follow.

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Students and industry will benefit from the state-of-the-art technology in this clinic.

Thank you to the Government of Canada's Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund, the Government of Alberta, and donors for helping make Lakeland's Animal Health Clinic a reality.

