



# B.C.'s Okanagan Valley

Imagine-Canada's only real desert and more hours of summer sunshine per day than Hawaii. Arid brown hills clash with lush green orchards and vineyards. Inset, deep cool lakes that fascinate with names like Skaha, Kalamalka, Osoyoos, and Okanagan.

The Okanagan Valley in the interior of southern British Columbia is all of these, and the locals plan to keep it that way. City councils in Vernon, Kelowna and Penticton prohibit the growth of any heavy industry in the valley in an effort to preserve the natural beauty of the area.

As well as an agricultural oasis, Canada's Okanagan region is a vacationer's paradise. It's not difficult to see why: kilometre upon kilometre of warm sandy beaches, scenic panoramas around every twist in the road, white fruit, wine, and water abound.

And then there's North America's version of the elusive Loch Ness monster. Like the famed Loch Ness, Lake Okanagan is long and just about fathomless-up to 210m (660 feet) deep. So deep in fact, that B.C.'s only floating bridge had to be constructed to connect the city of Kelowna with the western shore.

But Ogopogo is more than a promotional stunt. A sign erected by the B.C. government testifies that the fearsome monster was originally known as "N'ha-a-ilk" to the five Indians. When canoeing on the lake, it was customary to carry small animals on board to appease the beast.

Named in jest by the skeptical white settlers, Ogopogo

has risen to impress not a few stalwart Okanagan locals over the years. Driving east into the southwestern toe of the valley, a bounty of fruit and vegetable stands greet you with such eye-popping originals as "Carol the Barrel".

The community of Keremeos on Highway 3 is the jumping off point for Cathedral Provincial Park, a wilderness area stretching south to the Washington border.

Should you enter the valley via Highway 3 West, a magnificent panorama unfolds as you wind your way down Anarchist Mountain. Beneath your feet lies Osoyoos and Osoyoos Lake. A beautiful fruit belt fringes the community and ripples off gently into the distance.

With an average rainfall of 20 cm (eight inches) and temperatures as high as 46 degrees C (115F), the area between Osoyoos and Okanagan Falls is unique in Canada. In this spiny toe of the valley you find desert, complete with cactus, sagebrush, and antelope bush.

From Osoyoos to the community of Enderby, north of Vernon on Highway 97, the Okanagan is nearly 160 km (99 miles) end to end.

Skirting Skaha Lake, Highway 97 north of Osoyoos joins with Route 3A from Keremeos, and takes you into the bustling city of Penticton, between Skaha and Okanagan Lakes.

Smack on the southern fringes of Penticton, the Okanagan Game Farm lies on almost 240 hectares (600 acres) leased from the local Salish Indian reserve. If you're in a hurry, you can see

close to 800 animals without stepping outside your car.

But take your time if you're patient you may see Ed Lacey, game farm manager, feeding the fearsome grizzlies with a milk bottle. And his son Howie is a charmer too. Ask the rattlers in the pit! Or watch him ride the white rhinos two at a time!

With more accommodation than any other Okanagan city, Penticton has the added advantage of a sheltered beach, no matter which way the wind is blowing. You have a choice of two lengthy beaches-Skaha on the south and Okanagan on the north.

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It's no wonder Penticton is one of the largest convention centres in western Canada. Along with its large meeting centre, there's the annual Peach City Festival, the first week in August, followed by the world's largest square dance jamboree.

Penticton is also home to Casabelle Wineries, fast becoming renowned for its fine natural vintages.

Driving north around the clay buttes and bluffs jutting into Okanagan Lake, the town of Summerland beckons at the tip of a vast orchardland.

Among the rolling hills you'll find a R.C. Fish and Wildlife Hatchery and a federal government agricultural experimental station. At the "Larkin", as it is known in the valley, scientists wrestle with such problems and challenges as increasing fruit yields and eliminating fruit diseases.

From a commanding view of the valley, the hike up G Gann's Head Mountain is well worth the energy you put into it.

Winding up past the communities of Peachland, Westbank and Lakeview, you pass many scenic roadside stops-Okanagan Lake Park, a camper's must, and Squally Point, home base of the clandestine Ogopogo.

Like a drawbridge over a moat, Kelowna's floating bridge reaches out 640m (700 yards), drawing you into the

largest centre in the valley. Kelowna lies in the midst of sun-drenched beaches and thousands of hectares of orchards and vineyards.

Vast irrigation has brought an explosion of life to the naturally semi-arid area. In an average year, the Okanagan Valley yields over 136.2 million kg (300 million pounds) of cherries, peaches, apricots, pears, apples and grapes.

At the southern end of the valley, blossom time begins in early April and ends in the north around the end of May. Harvest time for cherries and apricots runs from early July to early August; peaches are picked from mid-July to late September; pears from late August to late October, and apples from early August to late October.

From "pick-your-own" farms to abundant roadside stands, coming away with Okanagan fruit is anything but difficult!

Connoisseurs and Canadian patriots take note-the quality of Okanagan wines has been rated on par with those of southern France and Germany.

Sixty-five percent of the region's wine comes from the Riesling, Foch, and DeChaux grape varieties. However, recent plantings include true Vinifera strains like the French Pinot Noir and Gamay Beaujolais.

You can step back into Kelowna's past at Father Pandosy's Mission. Located at the corner of Casorso and Benoulin roads, the rustic mission has been restored, as mission has been restored, as mission has been restored.

For the romantic, there's a leisurely tour of Okanagan Lake on board the stern-wheeler M.V. Fintry Queen, dinner included.

Ogopogo can be captured in Kelowna's city park. Or, perhaps more accurately, an irrevocable sculpture thereof -authenticity debatable!

And the Okanagan has plenty of extras for the young. There's Broedrick City and Old MacDonald's Farm in Kelowna, Space Trek at Westbank, and the recently opened alpine slide near Vernon.

Driving north from Kelowna, those big brown hills drive a wedge between the highway and Okanagan

Lake. But it's not long before you catch sight of Kalamalka, "lake of 1,000 colours".

Kalamalka's mysterious transformations from emerald green to the coolest of blues are as fascinating as they are beautiful. Just before entering Vernon, you can catch an excellent view of Kalamalka, the valley, the city and the Monashee Mountains beyond.

North of Vernon, you'll find more surprises in the communities of Lumby, Armstrong and Enderby. Every September, Armstrong hosts the largest agricultural fair outside Vancouver-the Interior Provincial Exhibition.

For more information on Canada as a travel destination contact the Canadian Government Office of Tourism, Ottawa, Canada, K1A 0L6.

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**WE HAVE JUST LISTED THIS LARGE 2-STORY 4 BEDROOM HOME**

Brick and Alum. maintenance free exterior, 3 baths, large eat-in kitchen, formal dining room, main floor family room with walkout to sundeck. Situated in an area of good homes in east end of Georgetown. Call Del d'Entremont for a personal inspection.

**NEW LISTING!**

Beautiful raised bungalow. Spacious 3 bedroom, Living and dining room combination. Large lot backing onto stream. Minutes north of Halton Hills. Asking \$51,500. Peter Thornton.

**DOUBLE GARAGE HUGE LOT**  
\$60,500.

This super 3 bedroom home, has an eat-in kitchen, dining room to entertain in, plus a huge rec room, and it's on a crescent. Don't miss out, call Sandra Nairn to view.

**EXCELLENT STARTER.**

Located in town on a 1 1/2 acre lot. Handyman's special. Call now to set your goal for home ownership. Bert Boersema.

**UNIQUE CUSTOM BUILT HOME OF SOLID MASON CONSTRUCTION**

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1 Acre of mature trees. Close to town, 4 bedrooms, family room, brick fireplace, lovely living and dining room, spacious eat-in kitchen with appliances, broadloom throughout. Call Ursula Zeidler to show you this fine home.

**SPACIOUS BRICK-SEMI SUPER VALUE**

Only 1 1/2 years old, value priced at only \$48,900. 3 large bedrooms, 2 baths, separate dining room, walkout from rec room. Immediate possession. Beverly Hagan.

**2800 SQ. FT OF COMFORT**

is exemplified in this custom built home of nearly 3 1/2 acres located 10 minutes from 401 highway. Features 4 bedrooms, 2 fireplaces. Main floor family room with walkout dressing room and 3 pce. bath ensuite to large master bedroom. Call Del d'Entremont.

**EXCLUSIVE LIVING ON 1.6 ACRES**

This elegant 2 storey is situated on a wooded lot. It features 4 bedrooms, state floor in foyer and many more features. Call now for your personal appointment. Bert Boersema.

**VACANT LAND 3.1 ACRES TO BUILD YOUR DREAM HOME.**

Tree-lined front - bush at rear, small stone-lined creek, drive way in in, raised fields bed. This parcel is ready for building. Call Ursula Zeidler

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**HERE'S YOUR MANSION - ONLY \$76,900.**

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