



BANFF NATIONAL PARK WINTER TRAILS GUIDE

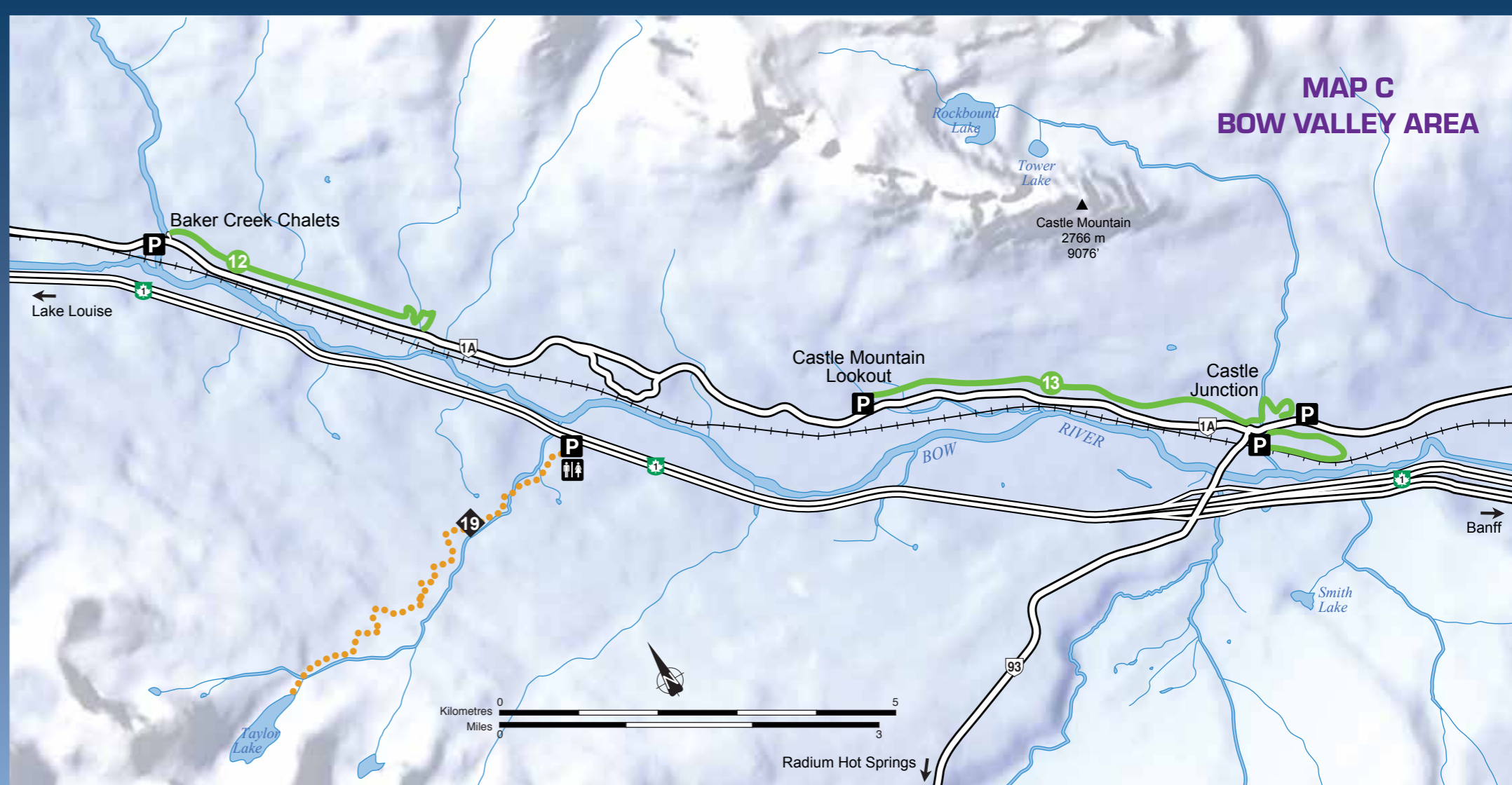


Egalement offert en français



Winter, the season to play in...

Welcome to winter in Banff National Park, Canada's first national park. Whether you're here for a family adventure or a relaxing getaway, there's no better way to experience the Lake Louise area's pristine mountain landscape than on foot. Lace up your boots, wax up your skis, strap on a pair of snowshoes and enjoy one of our many winter trails.



MAP C BOW VALLEY AREA

Cross-Country Ski Trails

Cross-country ski trails are groomed regularly, especially after a fresh snowfall. Trails are classified as novice, easy, more difficult or most difficult based on the nature of the terrain and width of the trail. Please look at the map legend for trail difficulty ratings as some trails contain sections of varying levels of difficulty. Actual difficulty can vary day-to-day depending on snow conditions.

Trails in Lake Louise

- 1 Moraine Lake Road (map A):** 15.6 km return, 250 m elevation gain
Double trackset with skating lane
Climbing steadily, this trail includes both gently rolling and hilly stretches. Tracksetting ends at a viewpoint of Consolation Valley and the Ten Peaks. Beyond the viewpoint, the road crosses large avalanche paths.
- 2 Fairview (map A):** 4.6 km one way, 60 m elevation gain
Single Trackset
A beautiful trail, the Fairview runs through sections of open clearings and snow-draped woods. It's also possible to make a 7.5 km loop (160 m total elevation gain) using the Fairview trail, the Moraine Lake Road and the Tramline trail: the recommended direction is counter-clockwise.
- 3 Tramline (map A):** 4.8 km one way, 195 m elevation gain
Double trackset
This trail runs from valley bottom to Lake Louise at a steady 3% rise, following the old grade of the tramline that once connected the train station and the Chateau Lake Louise.
- 4 Lake Louise Loop (map A):** 4.1 km loop, 15 m elevation gain
Double trackset
This loop features a wide open ski across frozen Lake Louise, followed by a fun "up & down" trip back through the woods -- just 100 metres uphill from the lakeshore walking path. Use the Fairview - Lake Louise Connector trail to ski directly from the parking lot onto the lake. Tracksetting ends at the back of the lake, as the trail up the valley crosses large avalanche paths.
- 5 Upper Telemark (map A):** 1.4 km one way, 65 m elevation loss
Double trackset
This trail has several steep and technically demanding hills. If you find them too imposing, they can be avoided by taking the "Hillside" bypass. Start in front of the Chateau Lake Louise as if going to Lake Agnes, then turn right onto trail #5. Once up and behind the Chateau, ski steeply down to the Great Divide and Lower Telemark trails.
- 6 Great Divide or "Old 1A" (map A):** 20 km return, 60 m elevation loss
Double trackset with skating lane
Mostly flat, but trending gently downhill, this trail takes you to the "Great Divide" - the BC / Alberta

border at km 7. From here, you can continue into Yoho National Park another 3.5 km (grooming irregular) to the Lake O'Hara parking lot.

- 7 Peyto (map A):** 2.2 km one way, 45 m elevation loss
Double trackset
This trail has a tricky starting point, off the small access road to the Brewster Stables behind Deer Lodge, but it offers a more gentle downhill to the Great Divide and Lower Telemark trails than trail #5.
- 8 Lower Telemark (map A):** 4.0 km one way, 110 m elevation loss
Double trackset
Park at Great Divide trailhead, ski 700 metres, and turn right at the #8 trail sign. After 4.0 km of twists and turns, exit back onto the Great Divide trail, and turn left to return to your vehicle.
- 9 Bow River Loop (map A):** 6.6 km or shorter versions of loop, no elevation gain
Single trackset
Mostly flat, following the river. To start, park near the Station Restaurant or just past the campground kiosk, or use the connecting trail from the Post Hotel or the Samson Mall.
- 10 Campground Loop (map A):** 2.2 km outer loop, 15 m elevation gain
Double trackset with skating lane
This trail loops around and through the campground on gentle terrain. For access, park just past the campground kiosk.
- 11 Townsite (map A):** 0.7 km one way, no elevation gain
Double trackset
This short trail provides access to the northwest end of Village Road, near all the village hotels.
- 20 Pipestone Loop (map A):** 13.3 km loop, 190 m elevation gain
Single trackset
Watch for the occasional tight corner and be cautious on the hills. The recommended direction for the outer loop is counterclockwise.
- 21 Hector (map A):** 3.0 km one way, 95 m elevation gain
Single trackset
This trail features good views at both a major fire protection clearing and tranquil Pipestone Pond.
- 22 Drummond (map A):** 2.7 km one way, 24 m elevation loss
Single trackset
If you need a breather, this is the only flat trail in the Pipestone trail system.
- 23 Merlin (map A):** 2.3 km one way, 55 m elevation gain
Single trackset
Watch for the old pioneer log cabins along this leg of the Pipestone.

Trails on the Bow Valley Parkway

- 12 Baker Creek to Protection Mountain Campground (map C above):** 3.5 km one way, no elevation gain
Single trackset
This trail (labelled "#2" on-site) runs parallel to the parkway, and starts across the road from the Baker Creek Chalets.
- 13 Castle Junction (map C above):** 8.7 km of trails, 20 m elevation gain
Single trackset
You can park for these trails (labelled #1, #2 & #3 on-site) either near the hostel, or at the Rockbound Lake or Castle Lookout trailheads. Detailed maps are available at Castle Mountain Village or the hostel.

Hiking & Snowshoeing Trails

Most of the hiking and snowshoeing trails outlined in this guide follow summer hiking trails. They are not groomed or maintained during the winter season and may be slippery. Weather can change quickly and dramatically in Banff National Park. Be prepared to adjust your activity based on current conditions. As a general rule, if there is fresh snow, conditions may be better suited for snowshoeing; if the snow is old and well-travelled, it may be better for hiking. If you're looking for trails not in this guide, consult with Parks Canada information centres for more trip planning assistance.

Trails near Lake Louise

- EASY TRAILS**
- 14 Lake Louise Lakeshore (map A):** 4 km return, no elevation gain
Starting in front of the Chateau Lake Louise, this trail features classic views and at lake's end, a 100 m tall frozen waterfall.
- 15 Fairview Lookout (map A):** 2 km return, 100 m elevation gain
This steep trail ends at a viewpoint overlooking historic Chateau Lake Louise. Start by facing the Lake at the World Heritage Site rock. Look left and follow the trail signs for Fairview Lookout. **Warning:** return via the same path; the loop option is not safe in the winter due to avalanches.
- 16 Louise Creek (map A):** 5.6 km return, 195 m elevation gain
This is the best pedestrian option from the village to the lake. From Samson Mall, walk along Lake Louise Drive to the Bow River bridge. Cross and look for the trailhead on the downstream (south) side of the bridge.

CROSS COUNTRY SKI TRAIL DIFFICULTY RATING

- Novice
- Easy
- More Difficult
- ◆ Most Difficult

Season

Although snow can fall at any time of the year in Banff National Park, optimal skiing and snowshoeing runs from mid-November to early April. Lower elevations in the park may be available for hiking year-round.

Trail Report

Get the latest information on trail conditions by checking trail reports online (www.pc.gc.ca/banfftrails) and at park information centres. The report is updated as conditions change and trails are rated for their overall condition; cross country ski trails include a grooming report.

Trail Etiquette

- Skiers going downhill have the right of way
- Keep to the right when meeting oncoming skiers
- When resting or visiting, move off the trail
- When passing say "Track Please" and pass on left side
- Do not walk or snowshoe on ski tracks, travel beside them
- Please respect pet restrictions
- Pack out all garbage

Wildlife

Winter offers a unique glimpse at wildlife as prints in the snow reveal the story of their movements. Learn how to identify a few tracks and find out whose habitat you're sharing. It's a challenge for wildlife to survive through a Rocky Mountain winter, but you can help make it easier. Give wildlife lots of space and resist the urge to approach. Observe animals from a distance with binoculars or a telephoto lens.



Rob Moss

Dogs

Dogs on leash are permitted in the park - just not everywhere. Dogs are not allowed on the following groomed ski trails: (1) Moraine Lake Road, (2) Fairview, (3) Tramline, (5) Upper Telemark, (6) Great Divide, (7) Peyto and (8) Lower Telemark.

Dogs can also add stress to wildlife; just the sight of a dog can remind some animals of predators like wolves and coyotes. Keep your dog on a leash at all times and restrain it from chasing wildlife.



SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- ### Planning
- Visit a Parks Canada information centre for trip planning help.
 - Study trail descriptions and maps before starting.
 - Choose a trail suitable for the least experienced member in your party.
 - Check the weather forecast and current trail conditions.
 - Travel with a friend or in a group.
 - Tell somebody where you're going, when you'll be back and who to call if you don't return (see directory).
 - Be prepared for emergencies and changes in weather.
 - Park Trails are not patrolled. Use them at your own risk.

- ### Packing
- Trail guide and map
 - Full water bottle or thermos
 - High energy food
 - Sunscreen and sunglasses
 - First aid kit
 - Repair kit
 - Lightweight emergency blanket, candle, and lighter or waterproof matches
 - Headlamp or flashlight
 - Extra clothes: use the layering system! Peel off or add layers of synthetic material, silk or wool as needed to stay dry and warm. Don't forget extra hat and gloves
 - Ski wax, cork and scraper
 - Camera and binoculars

Avalanches

If you are planning to travel in areas beyond the trails described here, you may be in avalanche terrain. In such cases, make sure you have the appropriate knowledge, skills and rescue equipment. For information about a trail you're considering, contact a Parks Canada information centre, consult the Avalanche Terrain Exposure Scale (www.pc.gc.ca/avalanche) and read the Banff/Yoho/Kootenay daily avalanche bulletin (www.avalanche.ca).



Directory

EMERGENCY

Dial 911 (cell phone)
Cell phones are not always reliable
 Dial 403-762-4506 (Satellite Phone)

LAKE LOUISE INFORMATION CENTRE

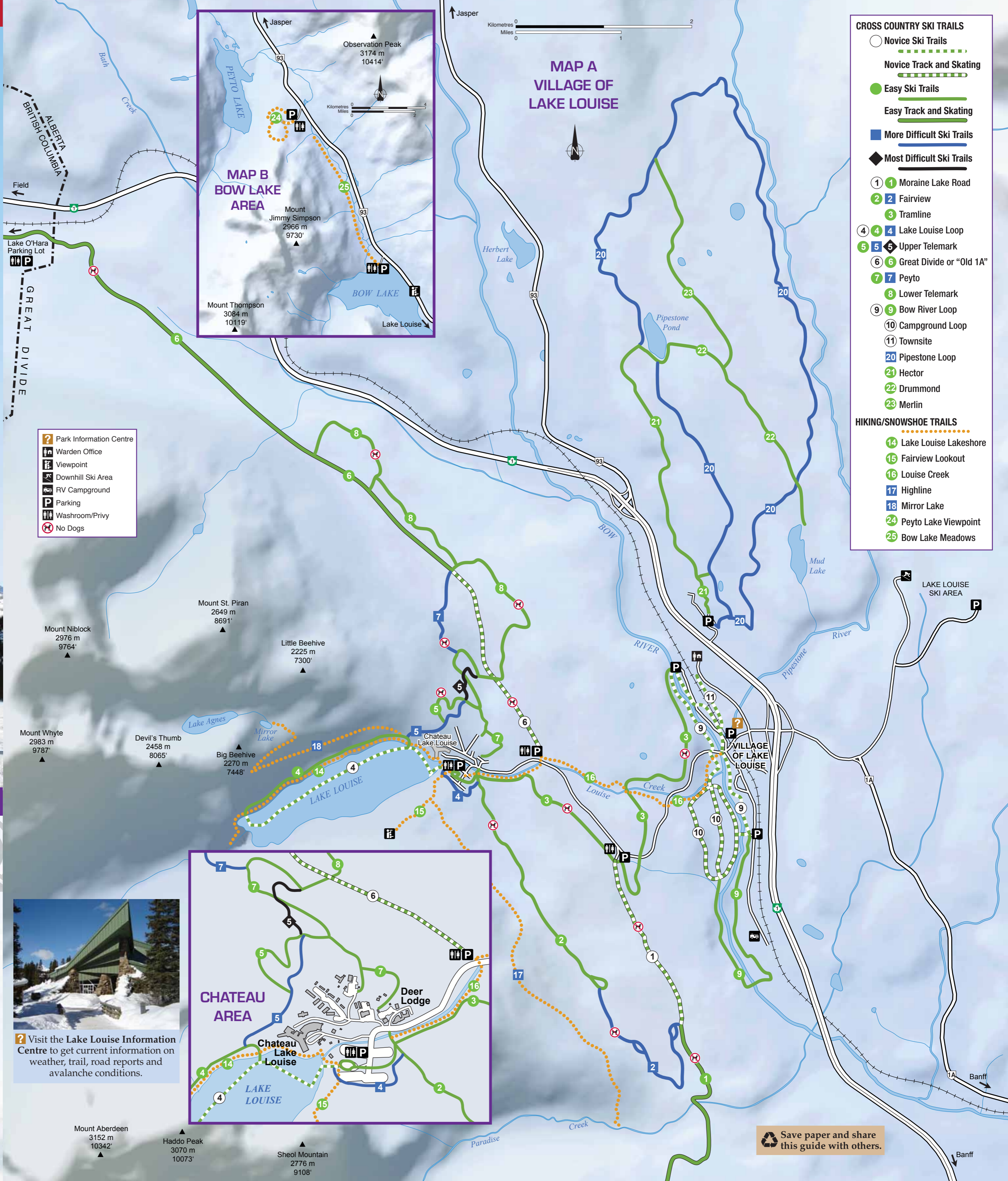
Parks Canada: 403-522-3833
 Located at: 201 Village Road,
 Samson Mall, Lake Louise Village
 Or Banff/Lake Louise Tourism: 403-762-8421

GENERAL

Banff Weather: 403-762-2088
 Road Conditions: 403-762-1450
 Avalanche Bulletin: 1-800-667-1105
 Parks Canada Website:
www.pc.gc.ca/banff

Information on accommodations, dining,
 activities or attractions:
 Banff Lake Louise Tourism Website:
www.banfflakelouise.com

Canadian Avalanche
 Association Website:
www.avalanche.ca



Visit the Lake Louise Information Centre to get current information on weather, trail, road reports and avalanche conditions.



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