



Travel the Rocky Mountains: Wine and Polar Bears

Travel to the Canadian Rocky Mountains and you can gain a wide view of life in the luxury lane. The Lake Louise Wine Summit at the Post Hotel in Lake Louise offers the 'best of the best' in food and wine in the mountains. Arctic Shores at the Calgary Zoo will be a replication of the ecosystem of the Canadian North, with plans including polar bears, penguins and the possibility of beluga whales.

Start in Calgary and within just a couple of hours' drive, you're enjoying Rocky Mountains wilderness and magnificent wines. First, a sneak peek at what's coming at the Calgary Zoo.

Calgary Zoo Expansion Unveils Arctic Shores

This is the second largest zoo in Canada and even before the Arctic Shores expansion gets underway, you can visit more than 900 animals from around the world, including trekking through a rainforest with gorillas, taking a safari over the Savannah to see hippos swim, journeying up into the Canadian wilds to grizzly bears and hiking Eurasia with tigers. And if you want to rest during your travel, there are six acres of botanical gardens.

The planned Arctic Shores exhibit will replicate the ecosystem of the Canadian North and play a major role in the efforts to save endangered species, including polar bears. The Arctic Shores exhibit is expected to be available to the public by 2010.

"Arctic Shores, a replication of the ecosystem of the Canadian North, represents the largest and, we believe, most comprehensive exhibit of its kind ever undertaken by a zoo," said President and CEO Alex Graham. As the northernmost zoo in the world accredited by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA), the Calgary Zoo is ideally situated to bring the story of the Arctic to its visitors.

Arctic Shores will provide visitors with a visceral connection to the terrain, seasons, animals and people of the Arctic. Guests will travel through a climate-controlled walk-through exhibit that will feature a replication of glistening ice caves, views of exhibits depicting the vast tundra of the North and one of the world's largest saltwater aquariums.

The exhibit will tell the stories of Northern animals – polar bears, seals, Arctic fox, and many others - and illustrate the ecosystems of the North through realistic representations of their habitats. Species will be selected based on conservation need, educational and research opportunities and acquisition will depend on availability from accredited conservation sources.

The Calgary Zoo participates in 23 AZA Species Survival Plans, breeding programs for threatened species, including a project focused on polar bears. The saltwater aquarium has been designed to accommodate larger marine mammals as the Calgary Zoo develops partnerships with other conservation organizations aimed at preserving threatened species, such as the International Marine Mammal Association and the AZA Population Management Plan and Taxon Advisory group for beluga whales.

Following the experience of visiting the Arctic exhibits, guests may also visit Antarctic Landing where they will be able to glimpse the wonders of the southern polar region and enjoy the company of the Antarctic's most popular ambassadors - penguins.

Lake Louise Wine Summit Welcomes Top Producers

While you won't find many Rocky Mountain vineyards, you can travel and experience the top wines provided by top wineries at the luxurious Post Hotel, which has been lauded with international wine and lodging awards. Even if you're not at the hotel for the summit, you can still enjoy The Post Hotel's wine cellar, which houses more than 2,000 selections labels and 28,000 bottles.

The Lake Louise Wine Summit 2006 is a three-day celebration (June 1-4) that builds on the quality and success of the first Wine Summit in 2004, featuring some of the wine world's greatest producers to share the 'best of their best' with summit guests.

One of the most highly regarded acknowledgements in the international culinary community is the Wine Spectator Grand Award, granted to fewer than 90 of the more than 3,500 restaurants worldwide that compete for it every year. Among those select few is the Post Hotel, a Grand Award recipient for four consecutive years, from 2002 to 2005.

The Lake Louise Wine Summit 2006 celebrates the marriage of food and wine.

"In keeping with the precedent we set in 2004, we expect wineries will bring their very best wines to the summit," says Post Hotel co-owner George Schwarz. "In 2004, we were delighted to have Château Latour share their 100-point, 1990 vintage with us at our gala wind-up dinner."

Headlining the second summit is Château Margaux, the Bordeaux producer of some of the world's most coveted red wines and one of only five wines to achieve first growth status in the Bordeaux Wine Official Classification of 1855. This prestigious vineyard's history can be traced to the 12th century and its tasting notes date back to 1771. Château Margaux's history and wine be brought to life at the summit by the winery's general manager, Paul Pontallier.

Included in travel to the 2006 summit is Joseph Phelps Vineyards, a Napa Valley producer whose 2002 Insignia earned first place in Wine Spectator's 2005 year-end review of the top 100 wines tasted. Insignia has been produced annually since 1974 and Wine Spectator notes it "has earned an outstanding score in 26 of its 29 vintages." Representing the winery at the summit will be Joseph Phelps chairman Bill Phelps.

The featured food producer will be David Wood, whose Salt Spring Island Cheese Company in British Columbia hand-produces about 20 tonnes of highly coveted goat and sheep cheese every year.

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