9 Of The Quirkiest Towns In Alberta

Alberta, a western province in Canada sandwiched between British Columbia and Saskatchewan, is home to the immensely popular Banff and Jasper National Parks, vast prairies, and the major cities of Calgary and Edmonton. Alberta has a strong European background, specifically Ukrainian, which is reflected in many of the province's attractions, events, and businesses. But while Alberta can be serious, it can also be extremely quirky, from the "Dinosaur Capital Of The World," Drumheller, to the Star Trek replica in Vulcan. This article delves into nine quirky towns in Alberta with tons of fun activities and attractions.

HIDDEN GEMS IN ALBERTA
Discover seven of the most offbeat towns in Alberta.

Drumheller

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"Welcome To Drumheller" sign with a dinsoaur in the town of Drumheller, Alberta. Editorial credit: Wirestock Creators / Shutterstock.com

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Usually referred to as the "Dinosaur Capital Of The World," Drumheller is a dino lovers' dream vacation spot with dozens of dino photo ops throughout. It is an hour and a half away from Calgary and three hours from Edmonton. Most visitors head straight to the Royal Tyrrell Museum, which features dozens of gigantic fossils and dinosaur information, as well as rocks, plants, and animals from all stages of evolution. For more dinosaur-related activities, opt for fossil hunting, with a good chance you might just find something along the rivers or up on the cliffs. Or, climb the steps to the top of the world's largest dinosaur, a massive T-Rex in town with a panoramic view of the town from its mouth.

For a different experience, one can drive out to the Hoodoos in the badlands, giant rock formations that will warp your mind as you try to understand how they came to be. Another way to explore is along the Dinosaur Trail, which takes you to Horse Thief Canyon, the Star Mine Suspension Bridge, and a tiny church that can only hold six people.

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Torrington

A scene from the Gopher Hole Museum in Torrington, Alberta. By JamesPFisherIII - Own work, CC BY 3.0, **Wikimedia Commons**.

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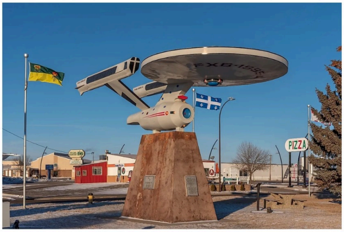
This little town is home to the Gopher Hole Museum, possibly one of Alberta's strangest attractions. Here, you will find 47 different scenes constructed in dioramas, with over 77 taxidermied gophers in different positions. These include gophers attending school, gophers being party clowns, gophers as farmers, gophers as firefighters, and gophers as pioneers. They even have fun little speech bubbles. Stop at the gift shop afterward for some adorable plushies and other keepsakes.

Another fun place to check out while in Torrington is Kirk's Alpaca Farm, home to over 110 alpacas. They let you feed them and have an on-site store selling mittens, hats, and more. After, you can sit down to a beer at the Torrington Hotel, one of the few businesses in this tiny town. With its German-esque exterior and extremely laid-back vibe, you'll feel at one with this close-knit community.

Vulcan



Replica USS Enterprise in the town of Vulcan, Alberta. Editorial credit: Jeff Whyte / Shutterstock.com

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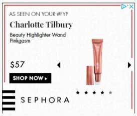

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This is a town that is obsessed with Star Trek, and they want you to know it. It is home to a giant replica of the Starship Enterprise, first constructed in 1995. The Trek Station is the town's main visitor center, full of Star Trek memorabilia, space murals, and a landed space station design. In June, the town hosts Spock Days, and in July, visitors can attend VulCon, a weekend dedicated to all things Star Trek. There's dinner, dancing, cosplaying, and even celebrity guests.

The town decided to play along since it shared the same name as Spock's home planet. You can visit this geeky oasis by driving an hour and a half from Calgary or just over four hours from Edmonton. Vulcan also has a Solar Tree, shaped like a futuristic flower, that powers itself and helps to light the tourism hub.

Jasper

The information center in the town of Jasper, Alberta. By WinterforceMedia (WinterE229) - Own work, CC0, ***Wikimedia Commons****.*

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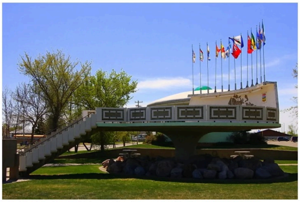
Jasper, like Banff, is a stunning mountain town in the **Rockies**. Known for its incredible views, massive canyons and waterfalls, and wildlife sightings, it also has its fair share of quirky attributes. Despite suffering a massive wildfire in the summer of 2024, which burned down a portion of the town, it is open once again to visitors and is encouraging tourism to bring it back to its once flourishing state.

The main quirky attraction in Jasper is the iconic Jasper the Bear statue, which survived the fire and continues to stand in the middle of town near the visitor center. Built in 1962, this funky guy serves as the town's mascot. Tourists can also enjoy the Jasper Planetarium, with dome theatre and outdoor telescope experience so you can witness the Northern Lights in all their glory. And for those who want to see even more natural sights, the Icefields Parkway connects Jasper to Banff, with stops at waterfalls, glaciers, and expansive lookouts.

St. Paul



UFO landing pad in St. Paul, Alberta. By Heterodyne at English Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, ***Wikimeda Commons****.*

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Not far from Glendon is the town of St. Paul, also known as the Centennial Capital of Canada. Here, you will find the giant UFO Landing Pad, unveiled on June 3rd, 1967. This town loves aliens, and the info center right next to the landing pad features a huge UFO on top of it. Inside and around it, you can read about UFO sightings, see photos, and take some photos with the alien statues. At night, the attractions even light up. Also, on clear nights, keep the fun going by heading out to stare at the stars and perhaps even see your own extraterrestrial sighting.

UFO Pizza is just down the road from the landing pad, with a quirky space-themed interior and fun menu names like Kryptonite Pizza. A few doors further is Elite Theatre, showing the latest releases inside their iconic, old-fashioned building that will make you feel like you've traveled back in time. And with $11 general admission tickets ($6 on Tuesdays), you truly can't beat the price.

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Smoky Lake

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Smoky Lake, Alberta. By ceasol from Edmonton, Canada - Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, CC BY-SA 2.0, ***Wikimedia Commons***

Smoky Lake is a quaint town in Central Alberta that loved pumpkins. The local Pumpkin Park is open year-round, featuring six giant concrete pumpkins of varying shapes. In early October, visitors can attend the Pumpkin Fair. This event is full of activities, so one can conquer the corn maze, attend the midway, and participate in the pumpkin showcase. Furthermore, there's a car show, a farmers market, and a pumpkin weigh-off. You will be absolutely blown away by the gigantic creations some people manage to grow. Top it all off with the crowd-favorite pumpkin drop, where pumpkins are dropped from a crane onto old cars for everyone's amusement.

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Rowley

Rustic buildings in the town of Rowley, Alberta. Editorial credit: Jeff Whyte / Shutterstock.com

To many, Rowley is a ghost town, except for the eight people who live there. Or is it 10? 12? Sources can't seem to agree. But what's for certain is this small amount of citizens keeps the town alive. Rowley had a population of around 500 in the 1920s and was a booming agricultural town that utilized the Alberta Midland Railway to ship its goods across the province. It was mostly abandoned in the 1970s and has remained a tourist stop between Stettler and Drumheller since. Those interested in the town's storied past can visit the Prairie School Museum, Rowley Trading Post, or Rowley Grain Elevators, each offering a unique insight for tourists. There's also Sam's Saloon, which hosts an occasional pizza night put on by the residents as a way for visitors to come out and experience the town and support it.

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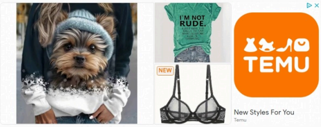

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Mundare

Giant sausage in the town of Mundare, Alberta. CC BY 2.5, **Wikimedia Commons**.

An hour from Edmonton is Mundare, the birthplace of the Stawnichy Meat Processing Company, which helped put this town on the map. The town was initially inhabited mainly by English and Eastern **European** settlers. Stawnichy's was established in 1959 and has been a staple ever since. They are also responsible for the giant sausage statue, which stands 42 feet high and weighs nearly 12,000 pounds. As the world's largest sausage statue, it is really a sight to behold. The statue is also near the current Stawnichy meat shop, so you can pick up some delicious items for home.

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Not far from the giant sausage and across the street from Stawnichy's, you'll find Baba's Bistro, serving authentic Eastern European cuisine, such as perogies and sausage. It is locally owned, family run, and even features a section for local artists to sell their handmade creations.

Beaverlodge

Highway 43 passing through the town of Beaverlodge in Alberta. By I, Qyd, CC BY-SA 3.0, **Wikimedia Commons**.

Beaverlodge is a lovely destination is close to the city of Grande Prairie. And on its 75th anniversary on July 21, 2004, it unveiled its gigantic beaver statue. It still remains the world's largest beaver. This massive statue took 90 gallons of polyurethane, 13 gallons of paint, and 18 foam blocks. It weighs a total of 3,000 pounds, with the beaver portion being 1,500 pounds and the log portion being 1,500 pounds. Surrounding it is interpretive signage about the town, beavers, and where **beavers** like to live. It's a must-see if you're driving along Highway 43.

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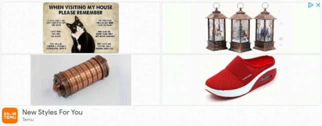

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Just on the outskirts of town is the South Peace Centennial Museum, an interactive heritage museum with steam engines, antique cars, and farm equipment, and over a dozen buildings to wander around. Fifteen minutes down the highway, you'll stumble onto the Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum, which not only features tons of dinosaur artifacts and info signs but also a fossil lab and revolving exhibits.

Wrapping Up

From dinosaur parks to giant perogies, Alberta's quirky towns bring a playful side to the province's rugged landscapes and cultural depth. Each town embodies its own unique charm, from Drumheller's prehistoric wonders to Vulcan's sci-fi enthusiasm, creating one-of-a-kind experiences for all kinds of travelers. Whether you're fossil hunting, exploring Star Trek replicas, or enjoying pumpkin festivities, Alberta's offbeat attractions offer a memorable blend of history, culture, and community spirit. These destinations are perfect for those looking to see a different side of Alberta, where local quirks meet stunning scenery and unforgettable adventures await at every turn.

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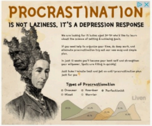
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