




JOHNSTON CANYON AND INK POTS

08.



LEGEND

-  Hike Route
-  Starting Point
-  Ending Point



08.

JOHNSTON CANYON AND INK POTS

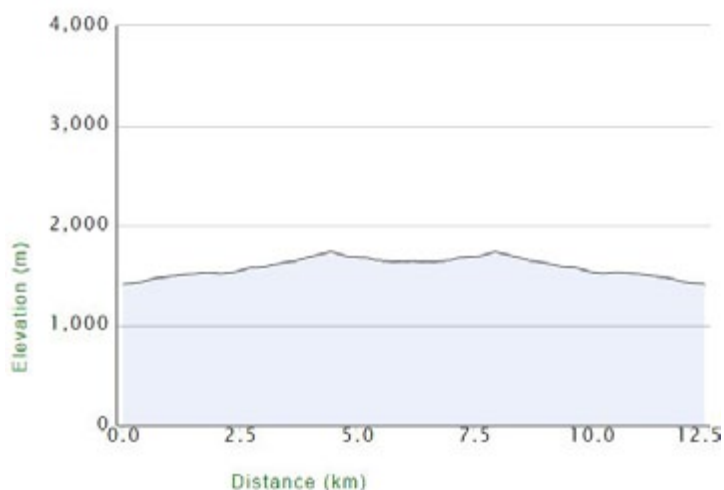
DIFFICULTY  12km  450m

 2.5-4.5h  Check Local Weather

OVERVIEW

The hike to Johnston Canyon is a great, albeit busy, family hike near Banff. The trail winds through the canyon to the Upper Falls and up to the Ink Pots – both boasting pretty mountain views. In peak season don't try this route between 10am and 4pm due to crowds.

ELEVATION CHANGE



HELPFUL INFO

Type of Hike	Out and Back
Crowd Levels	Extreme
Route Signage	Good
Toilets	Trailhead
Family Friendly	Yes
When to Hike	May-October

GETTING THERE

From Banff, head west on the Trans-Canada Highway towards Lake Louise. You can take the scenic route and take the Bow Valley Parkway exit (#1A) and drive along this all the way to Johnston's Canyon (18.1km) or else take the Trans-Canada all the way to Castle Mountain Junction and driving back 5.5km.



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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Get here early to avoid the crowds and enjoy your time ascending Johnston's Canyon. Begin your hike by heading upwards on the broad path through the Canyon. As you get deeper, the views are constantly changing. You'll soon have to start using catwalks that are fixed to limestone cliffs, which allow you to penetrate this canyon, as there is no space for a trail.

The trail approaches the Lower Canyon Falls (1.2km, 30m elevation gain), where you can walk through a tunnel to get an even closer look at the beautiful cascading water.

Continuing from here, there is another 1.2km and 90m of elevation to the Upper Canyon Falls. When you arrive, climb out of the forest and the lower canyon. One viewing area is accessible by a catwalk looking out on the bottom of the falls, while another requires taking a steep trail to a platform overhanging the gorge and looking down on the falls.

From here, many people return to their car, but those with energy can continue another 3km and 100m upwards to the Ink Pots. The Ink Pots are mineral springs that bubble up in a meadow surrounded by nearby peaks. This route is a broad path that cuts through the forest.

Once arriving at the Ink Pots, there are many great places to relax, eat a snack and enjoy the scenery. Continue back down the way you came, making sure you don't accidentally descend the Moose Meadows route – which leads to a different parking lot.

Note: The GPS map shows an alternative approach from Moose Meadows – which isn't as scenic of a walk as through the Canyon, though it's useful if the Johnston Canyon parking is full.

INSIDER HINTS

- » You'll be in a canyon for much of this hike, bring an extra layer of clothing as it can get chilly.
- » Do this very early or late, as this hike tends to be extremely busy.
- » You can bypass the crowds and hike from Moose Meadows to the Upper Falls and then back to Ink Pots.
- » The 1A highway has animals feeding very early in the morning, keep your eyes open for bears!