

# The Golden Circle Route

One of the most popular driving routes in the Yukon, this spectacular mountain drive takes travellers on a grand tour through picturesque Yukon towns, alpine passes and Southeast Alaska.

## Driving Route

From Whitehorse, this route travels the South Klondike Highway to Skagway, Alaska through the scenic White Pass. A ferry connects to Haines, Alaska and the drive continues on the Haines Road and Alaska Highway through Kluane country back to Whitehorse.

### Suggested Itinerary

**Day 1:** Whitehorse

**Day 2:** Skagway or Haines

**Day 3:** Haines Junction

**Day 4:** Whitehorse

### Duration

4 days

### Season

Mid-May to late September

### Total Distance

579 km or 360 mi

### Road Surface

Paved highway



## Whitehorse

Steeped in culture and history, Whitehorse is a contemporary city with a vibrant arts community, world-class attractions, and top-notch tourism services. It offers the amenities of a big city, with an endearing small-town vibe.

### Sightseeing

S.S. Klondike

Yukon Transportation Museum

Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre

Kwanlin Dün Culture Centre

Old Log Church Museum

Whitehorse Trolley

Macbride Museum

Whitehorse Fish Ladder

Miles Canyon

Yukon Artists at Work Gallery

### Outdoor Activities

Canoeing, Disc golf, Dog sledding, Fishing, Horseback riding, Kayaking, Mountain biking

## Suggested Day Tours

### *Takhini Hot Springs Road*

About 30 minutes from downtown Whitehorse, visitors can spend the day visiting the Yukon Wildlife Preserve, enjoying Eclipse Hot Springs, and savoring some locally roasted coffee.

### *Southern Lakes Region*

Named for the interconnected lakes and rivers that form the headwaters of the mighty Yukon River, this region is also home to diverse landscapes, from desert dunes to snow-capped mountains. Villages to explore include Carcross, Mt Lorne, Tagish, Teslin, Marsh Lake & Atlin.

## Drive from Whitehorse to Skagway

### *Sites along the way*

*Emerald Lake:* A favourite stop for photos.

*Carcross Desert:* The world's smallest desert, but not really a desert. It's actually the remains of a glacial lake.

## Carcross

Originally called Caribou Crossing, this historic village is home to the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. It is a land steeped in history and culture. Its mountains and valleys offer incredible outdoor activities including world-class mountain biking trails and scenic hiking opportunities. The cluster of historic structures in the heart of Carcross include some of the Yukon's oldest buildings including the Matthew Watson General Store. Other attractions include the Carcross Commons, White Pass & Yukon Route railroad depot, the Caribou Hotel Historic Site, sternwheeler S.S. Tutshi's remains, Skookum Jim's house and the Carcross/Tagish carving studio. Carcross Historic Buildings Walking Tour brochures are available at the Carcross Visitor Information Centre.

## Skagway (Alaska)

Skagway was the gateway to the Klondike gold fields during the Klondike Gold Rush. From here, prospectors hiked the Chilkoot Trail to Bennett Lake and navigated the Yukon River to Dawson City. Today, Skagway is a well-preserved gold rush town and major cruise ship port with plenty of attractions for visitors.

### Sightseeing

Red Onion Saloon  
Skagway Museum and Archives  
Klondike Gold Rush National Historic Park  
Dyea Townsite

### Activities

White Pass & Yukon Route Rail, Walking Tours, Guided Bus Tours, Shopping

### White Pass & Yukon Route Railroad

No visit to Skagway would be complete without a ride on the White Pass and Yukon Route Railroad. Built in 1898 to service the Klondike Gold Rush, this narrow gauge railway is now an Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. The track climbs 3000' in just 20 miles, through tunnels and across trestle bridges with stunning scenic views. There are a range of tour options available between Skagway and Carcross.

## Take the Ferry from Skagway to Haines

Alaska Marine Highway (AMH) operates the 1hr vehicle ferry service between Skagway and Haines, Alaska. Book well in advance.

## Haines (Alaska)

A picturesque coastal town nestled in the heart of the Tongass National Forest. Surrounded by towering mountains and lush rainforests, this charming community offers breathtaking natural beauty and a peaceful atmosphere.

## Drive from Haines, Alaska to Haines Junction

The Haines Road re-enters Canada and passes through the alpine heights of Haines Pass and past breathtaking views of Tatshenshini Alsek Park and Kluane National Park and Reserve to Haines Junction.

### Sites along the way

*Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve, Haines:* The area along the Chilkat River flats, alongside the Haines Road, is critical habitat for bald eagles and the best place to observe eagles.

*Klukshu Village, Haines Road:* A seasonal First Nations fish camp.

*Million Dollar Falls, Haines Road:* In addition to a government-run campground, there are walking trails, a network of boardwalks and observation decks for viewing the falls.

*Distance: 241 km or 150 mi, approx. 3.5 hours*

## Haines Junction

A picture-postcard village at the edge of Kluane National Park and Reserve, Haines Junction boasts a wilderness adventure playground in its backyard.

### Sightseeing

Kluane National Park and Reserve  
Kathleen Lake  
Kluane Lake  
Da Ku Cultural Centre  
Tachal Dhal Visitor Centre  
Long Ago Peoples Place

### Activities

Glacier flightseeing, White water rafting, Hiking, and Fishing

## Drive from Haines Junction to Whitehorse

*Distance: 158 km or 98 mi, approx. 2 hours*



This route can be combined with the Klondike Kluane Loop and Southern Lakes Circuit.