

MAR 2025



ABOUT CYCLING

Cycling tourism in British Columbia encompasses a wide range of activities, including road cycling, urban exploration, adventure cycling, and tour cycling.¹ It appeals to visitors seeking scenic routes, sustainable transportation, and active outdoor experiences. With unique geography and well-developed cycling infrastructure—supported by strong community and government backing—BC is positioned as a leading destination for cycling enthusiasts from around the world.

¹Mountain biking is considered a separate category from cycling tourism.



RICHMOND

Destination British Columbia acknowledges with gratitude the x̣ʷməθkʷəỵəm (Musqueam Indian Band), Skwx̣wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) on whose shared territories we operate our main office.

We further recognize with gratitude that we carry out our work on the lands of First Nations throughout the province. We honour our ongoing relationships with Indigenous Peoples and First Nation communities around BC, and we commit to continuing to work together.

Cycling Tourism at a Glance in BC



91

BC-based tourism experience providers for all biking types listed on HelloBC.com.²



270+

parks managed by BC Parks are considered bike-friendly.³



169

cycling and supply stores in the province.⁴

²HelloBC Website, Destination BC, March 2025

³BC Parks

⁴Number of Cycling Equipment and Supplies Stores in Canada, Statista, 2024



PENTICTON

Value of the Cycling Tourism Industry in BC

Cycling tourism contributes to BC’s economy through visitor spending on accommodations, food, and related services. It also supports jobs across multiple industries, including tourism, retail, and events.⁵

While specific data on the economic value of cycling tourism in BC is not currently available, global and national level information provides the following insights:

\$1.7B

VALUE AND GROWTH

In 2023, the global cycling tourism market was valued at \$170 billion and is projected to reach \$357 billion by 2032, growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 8.6%.⁶

\$26B

GLOBAL E-BIKE MARKET

Key cycling tourism destinations include Europe, North America, and the Asia-Pacific region, with Europe leading due to its extensive cycling infrastructure. E-bikes are driving market growth, with the global e-bike market expected to reach \$26 billion by 2026.⁷

\$14B

PROJECTED REVENUE

Canada is the fastest growing regional cycling tourism market in North America in terms of revenues and is projected to reach \$14 billion by 2030.⁸ Key Canadian cycling tourism regions include BC, Ontario, and Quebec, where well-developed cycling infrastructure supports both urban and rural cycling experiences.

Here are a few examples that demonstrate the value of cycling tourism in BC:

\$919K

ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

The Fernie Gravel Grind weekend-long gravel cycling event demonstrates the economic potential of cycling tourism in BC. In 2024, it attracted over 500 riders (including over 420 visitors) and 1,600 event patrons, generating almost \$919,000 in direct local economic benefit.⁹

16%

BIKES ON FERRIES

Bicycle numbers on BC Ferries’ Langdale-Horseshoe Bay route increased by 16% between 2017 and 2022.¹⁰

⁵Destination BC, inferred through a review of various research, including the 2009 / 10 Outdoor Recreation Study: BC Resident Participants, Environics Analytics data and 2022 Economic Contribution of Outdoor Recreation and Adventure Tourism in British Columbia

⁶Global Cycling Tourism Market 2024–2033, Custom Market Insights

⁷Deloitte

⁸U.S. Cycle Tourism Market Size & Outlook, 2024-2030, Horizon Grandview Research, 2024

⁹Numbers Behind the 2024 Fernie Gravel Grind, Fernie Gravel Grind, 2024

¹⁰Transportation Choices Sunshine Coast

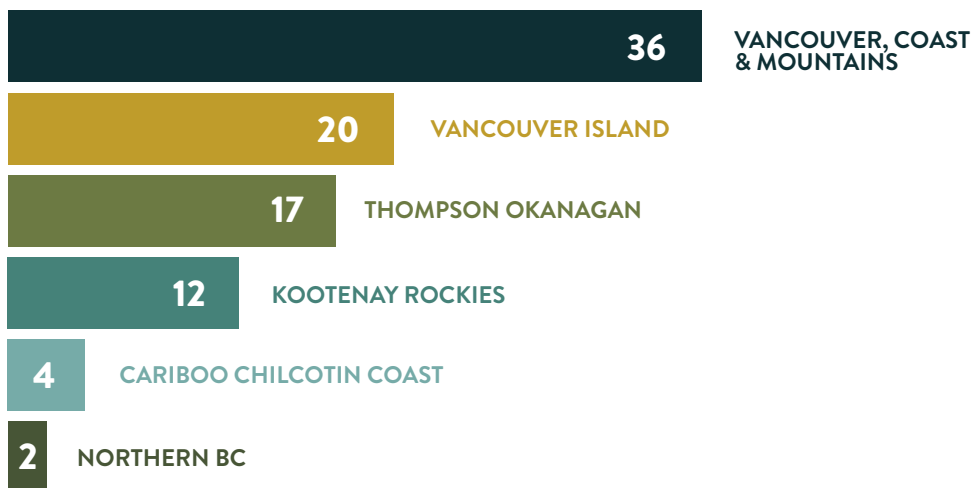


Characteristics of the Cycling Tourism Industry

There are 91 BC-based tourism experience providers for all biking types listed on HelloBC.com. Of these, 13% provide accessibility features.¹¹

Biking tourism business listings can be found in all tourism regions in BC:

Biking tourism business listings on HelloBC.com (all types)



¹¹Destination BC. Actual number of HelloBC listings with accessibility features: 12 (January 2025)

¹²Tourism Whistler

¹³Gran Fondo Guide

¹⁴Rotary Club of Cranbrook Sunrise

¹⁵Tour de Victoria

There are many cycling events in BC that attract visitors. Key events include:

GranFondo Whistler, with over **5,000** attendees annually and an estimated **9,000** spectators.¹²

Attracting **2,300** participants, the Okanagan Granfondo in Kelowna is considered one of North America's premier cycling events, taking riders through the heart of BC wine country.¹³

The 2024 Global Relay Gastown Grand Prix is recognized as one of North America's most historic and prestigious road cycling events, featuring riders from 13 nationalities and **30,000** spectators.

The Kootenay Rockies Gran Fondo in Cranbrook draws over 400 riders and an estimated 1,200 people involved overall. More than **65%** of the riders travel to the Cranbrook / Kimberley area from Calgary, Vancouver, Seattle, Ontario, and Europe. The event's total direct financial benefits are estimated at **\$750,000**.¹⁴

Tour de Victoria, with a sold-out **2,500** riders in 2024.¹⁵

Other cycling events include: Sea 2 Sky Gravel Fondo (Squamish), Jeremy's Roubaix (Pitt Meadows), Cowichan Crusher Gravel Fondo, Canada Day Populaire (Langley), Shuswap Gran Fondo, and Heart of the Rockies Gran Fondo (Invermere).



KELOWNA

According to the [BC Cycling Coalition](#), key cycling tourism hot-spots in BC include:¹⁶

Hwy 19A (Royston to Bowser): This coastal route on Vancouver Island offers picturesque views and access to charming rural seaside communities. Road cycling along Hwy 19A has gained popularity for its scenic beauty and relatively gentle terrain.

Sea to Sky Corridor The Sea to Sky connects Horseshoe Bay to Lillooet via Highway 99 and passes through iconic destinations like Whistler and Pemberton. Popular events such as the GranFondo Whistler and IRONMAN Canada have contributed to a significant increase in road cyclists along this scenic corridor.

Sunshine Coast Coastal Bike Route This scenic path links the entire Sunshine Coast, making it ideal for multi-day cycling tours. A collaborative vision exists to create a designated bike-touring route connecting Langdale through Earls Cove to Powell River.

Trail of the Okanagans This developing trail network connects communities throughout the Okanagan Valley. Over 70% of this pathway follows abandoned rail trails, offering cyclists compelling scenery and a unique blend of natural beauty and local culture.

Inside Passage Bike Route This proposed route along Vancouver Island's east coast, with connections to nearby islands via BC Ferries, would link several communities including Comox, Courtenay, Qualicum Beach, Parksville, Ladysmith, Nanaimo, Chemainus, Duncan, and Mill Bay.

¹⁶Cycle Tourism, BC Cycling Coalition

Government Investment and Support

The Government of BC has demonstrated a strong commitment to developing cycling infrastructure and promoting active transportation, increasing the opportunity for cycling tourism:

- Over 300 active transportation projects were funded between 2014 and September 2024.¹⁷
- More than \$40 million in grants have been allocated to communities for new paths, overpasses, lighting, and related infrastructure.¹⁸
- The government aims to have active transportation and public transit make up 30% of all trips taken in the province.¹⁹

Examples of BC Cycling Tourism Development

BC Rail Trails

An extensive network of repurposed rail trails across BC offers cyclists scenic journeys through diverse landscapes. Key trails include the 600 km Kettle Valley Rail Trail in the Okanagan, the Columbia & Western Rail Trail in the Kootenay Rockies, and the Cowichan Valley Trail on Vancouver Island. These trails promote eco-friendly tourism and support local economies by connecting communities.

ᑭᐱᓂᑦ ᑭᐱᓂᑦ Trail

The ᑭᐱᓂᑦ ᑭᐱᓂᑦ Trail connects Tofino and Ucluelet through the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve. This multi-use path, funded by federal, provincial, and local contributions, resulted from extensive collaboration between First Nations, Parks Canada, and local municipalities. It exemplifies sustainable tourism and environmental consciousness, featuring innovative elements like amphibian underpasses.²⁰

¹⁷Active Transportation Funding, BC Government, 2024

¹⁸Active Transportation Funding, BC Government, 2024

¹⁹Active Transportation Strategy, BC Government

²⁰BikeSense Podcast—Episode 2, BC Cycling Coalition



Traveller Characteristics

A 2024 survey by Abacus Data showed that 2.5 million Canadian adults travelled with cycling as the primary activity in the past two years. 11% said they definitely or probably will go on a cycling trip in the next two years, with strong interest from adults under 30, men, and Quebecers.²¹

30%

of BC households rate “above average” for Cycling Enthusiast Variables.²²

30-40%





E-bike users travel 30-40% further than conventional cyclists, contributing to sustainable travel options.²³






Additionally, a 2020 study indicated that e-bike users were likely to stay longer and spend more money in the areas they visited as compared to traditional bike cyclists.²⁴

2+B

people use bicycles globally.²⁵

Interest in casual biking and road cycling varies by key markets in BC, with a high of 29% for casual biking (France) and 19% for road cycling (France). Interest in mountain biking has been added for comparison:²⁶

Market	Casual Biking	Road Cycling	Mountain Biking
 France	27%	19%	16%
 Germany	19%	8%	13%
 Australia	17%	14%	13%
 China	16%	16%	18%
 US	16%	12%	11%

Market	Casual Biking	Road Cycling	Mountain Biking
 Canada	16%	11%	9%
 Japan	15%	12%	8%
 South Korea	15%	7%	5%
 UK	14%	11%	10%
 Mexico	10%	11%	15%

²¹Abacus Data, 2024

²²Cycling Enthusiast Sector Analysis, Symphony Tourism Services, 2021

²³Guide to Electric Bikes and Cycling Tourism, Reight Good Bikes, 2023

²⁴The Impact of E-Cycling on Travel Behaviour, Journal of Transport & Health, 2020

²⁵2020 Annual Report, Union Cycliste Internationale, 2020

²⁶2024 Global Traveller Research Program, Destination Canada. Information for Netherlands and India is not available.

Trends in Cycling Tourism

According to Adventure Travel Trade Association, CycleSummit, and the European Cyclists' Federation-EuroVelo, the key trends in cycling tourism globally include:²⁷



Increased Demand for Sustainable Travel Many travellers are increasingly choosing cycling as a sustainable way to explore destinations. This includes a growing preference for eco-friendly, low-carbon-footprint travel options.



Rise of E-Bikes The popularity of electric bikes (e-bikes) has surged. These bikes help reduce the physical barriers of long-distance cycling, making cycling tourism more accessible to a broader range of people, including older adults and those newer to cycling.



Growth in Adventure and Experience-Focused Travel Cycling tours are increasingly seen as part of the broader trend toward experiential and adventure tourism. Travellers are seeking unique experiences, such as riding through rural landscapes, remote destinations, or culturally rich routes.



Long-Distance and Multi-Country Routes Networks like EuroVelo have been instrumental in promoting long-distance cycling routes across multiple countries. These routes cater to cyclists interested in multi-day tours and cross-border experiences.



Cycling Infrastructure Development More countries and regions are improving their infrastructure for cycling travellers, including the creation of dedicated bike lanes, bike-friendly accommodations, and clearly signed routes. This development supports safety and enhances the overall experience.



Cycling as Part of Wellness Tourism There is an increasing intersection between cycling and wellness tourism, with cyclists often combining their tours with health and relaxation elements such as yoga, spa treatments, and wellness retreats.



Technological Integration Cyclists are using digital tools like mobile apps, GPS devices, and digital route planners to enhance their travel experiences. These technologies support better navigation and route planning, and make it easier to book and manage tours.

²⁷The State of the Cycling Tour Operators Industry: In Europe and Beyond; Adventure Travel Trade Association, CycleSummit, European Cyclists' Federation-EuroVelo, 2024



Considerations for Growth

Cycling tourism in BC faces several challenges, including awareness of the province as a cycling destination and gaps in cycling infrastructure and support services such as rentals and repairs in some areas. Cyclists may also encounter difficult terrain, variable weather conditions, and road safety concerns in both rural and urban areas.

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