



Columbia Lake Frequently Asked Questions

Where is Columbia Lake located?

Columbia Lake is 2 kilometres south of Fairmont Hot Springs; a major golf/hot springs destination resort. The north end of Columbia Lake is minutes from Fairmont Hot Springs BC.

How large is Columbia Lake?

Columbia Lake is a 27 square kilometres, 13.6 km (8.5 miles) long and 2 km (1.2 miles) wide and the largest warm water lake (18 degrees Celcius in July) in the East Kootenay. Lake Windermere is 16 square kilometres. Columbia Lake is approximately 70% bigger than Lake Windermere. Columbia Lake is 809 meters (2654 feet) above sea level.

Is Columbia Lake connected to the Columbia River?

Columbia Lake is the headwaters of the Columbia River which is the largest river in the Pacific Northwest region of North America (2,000 km/1,243 miles) and empties into the Pacific Ocean at Astoria, Oregon.

Is there much development on Columbia Lake?

As almost the entire east side of Columbia Lake is Wildlife Management Area and Columbia Lake Provincial Park, housing and recreational development will be minimal around the lake. These lands and others protect 55% of Columbia Lake's foreshore from development.

Are power boats allowed on Columbia Lake?

Yes, power boats are allowed on Columbia Lake but it has only a fraction of the boat traffic compared with Lake Windermere. In fact, on a typical summer long weekend Columbia Lake has an average of 65 boats compared to 345 on Lake Windermere.

Where can I dock and put in my boat?

There is a public boat launch located at the Canal Flats' park on the south end of the lake. There are a limited number of boat slips and long term moorage located at the private marina at Columere Park, a short distance from Spirits Reach.

Is there good fishing at Columbia Lake?

Fishing is popular on Columbia Lake year round with mountain whitefish, burbot, kokanee salmon, rainbow trout, bull trout and cutthroat trout being favoured sport fish.

What is the Aboriginal and European history of the Columbia Lake region?

The Ktunaxa Creation Story clearly points out that Columbia Lake is a main focus of Ktunaxa first nation's history. Around Columbia Lake there are many Aboriginal archaeological sites dating back over 4000 years. The Spirits Trail (also known as the Fairmont Trail and the Plains of Nativity) passes along the east shore of Columbia Lake. It was a transportation route that was used by both First Nations and early European explorers. David Thompson discovered the source of the Columbia River, known as Columbia Lake, in 1807.