

CAA

SASKATCHEWAN MAGAZINE



WINTER 2022

PLUS

WINTERIZE YOUR RIDE

ECO GIFT GUIDE

AIR PASSENGER RIGHTS

THAILAND FOR FOODIES

BEST OF THE CARIBBEAN

Island Time





MAY 3 – 19, 2023

AFRICA

Check a few more countries off your Bucket List with this adventure through South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Botswana. Our African tour features urban exploration in the picturesque cities of Johannesburg, Livingstone, and Cape Town. The South African culture is one of the most ethnically diverse in the world adding to the ambiance and wonder of this action-packed tour. Heading into the countryside, ecological adventures including safaris, game drives, bush walks, and river cruise safaris balance the urban and rural experience. You will visit Kruger and Chobe National Parks and attend a sunset cruise on the Zambezi River. See one of the seven natural wonders of the world at Victoria Falls. **Don't miss this exciting opportunity to visit Africa!**

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Deluxe Motorcoach Transportation
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- Welcome briefing & dinner
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- Kruger National Park in South Africa
- Travelling along the Panorama Route
- Livingstone town tour
- Sunset cruise on the Zambezi River
- Victoria Falls
- Chobe National Park in Botswana
- Safaris, game drives, bush walks and river cruise safaris
- Cape Town city tour
- Winelands tour
- Local English-speaking guide & driver
- Gratuities for local guides, drivers, game rangers, trackers & paddlers
- Internal Airfare

TO BOOK THIS ADVENTURE WITH US:

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📞 1.800.564.6222

🌐 WESTWORLDTOURS.COM



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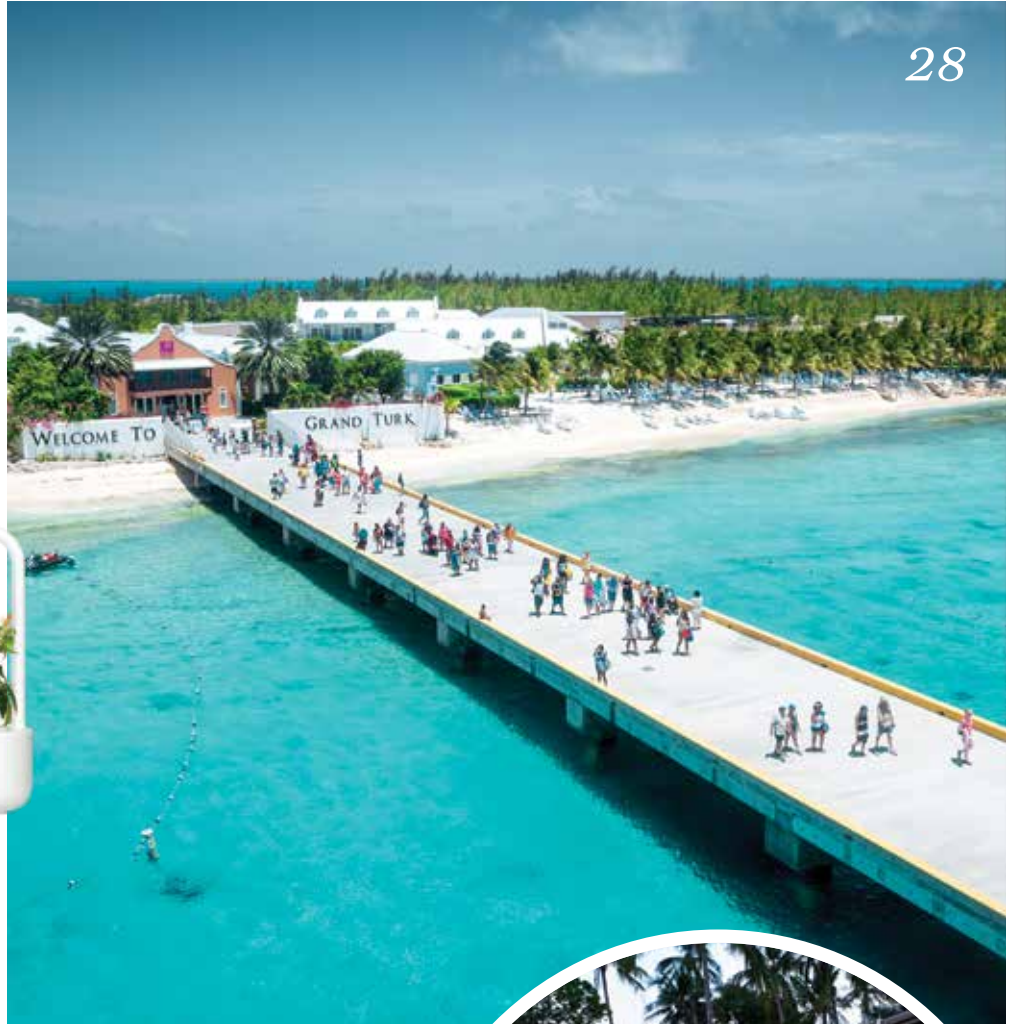
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CAA PAVES THE WAY

HALFWAY THROUGH my two-year term, I am proud to say my first year as chair of the CAA Saskatchewan Board of Directors has been challenging, exciting—and very rewarding. Along with our dedicated board directors and approximately 200 staff members, I would like to thank you, our valued Members for your continued business and support.

We all know Covid-19 had a major impact on how we managed our day-to-day routines and tried to maintain some sort of normalcy.

At CAA Saskatchewan, we stayed the course and did our best to serve you—while providing peace of mind for your daily lifestyle needs, including insurance, automotive, roadside assistance and travel. Everything we do is for you, our Members, and the communities where you live, work and play. We remain Member-focused and community-driven.

The road ahead for our club looks exceptionally bright with the return of air travel. Membership retention and growth are on the increase as we proudly welcome more Saskatchewan residents into the CAA family. Staff at our 11 CAA Stores in nine Saskatchewan communities continue to maintain their professionalism, while also learning new ways of doing

things to enhance your Member experience—whether it's face-to-face or virtual.

In addition to our lines of business, we remain a strong safety advocate for Members and the public. We constantly research and monitor the latest updates and trends concerning:

- Driver safety, including cannabis-impaired and distracted driving
- Highway and road safety through our annual Worst Roads campaign
- Pedestrian and cyclist safety
- Air passenger rights
- Consumer education about electric, hybrid and autonomous vehicles
- School-zone safety
- Fuel efficiency driving costs
- Mature driving safety tips through CarFit

Your opinions and comments matter. So please drop us a line at notify@caask.ca with any thoughts, suggestions, tips and questions. Take care and stay safe!

Brian L. Barber
Chair
CAA Saskatchewan Board of Directors

CAA

SASKATCHEWAN MAGAZINE

WINTER 2022

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Win a VIP experience to the biggest race of the year using Shell EasyPay™

Witness the world's fastest race car drivers navigate a quick and flowing circuit, courtesy of Shell and CAA. Beginning Nov. 7, CAA Members will have a chance to win one of two VIP experiences for you and a guest to the 2023 race in Montreal.

Get in on the action

Enjoy three days of fast-paced competition and experience all the historic charm Montreal has to offer. You and a guest will receive:

- VIP Seats to view the race
- a \$500 prepaid gift card per pair
- Round-trip transportation to Montreal
- Three-night stay accommodation

Simply add your CAA Membership number in the Shell app and pay for fuel using Shell EasyPay and you'll be automatically entered for a chance to win. Two winners will be selected from entries across Canada. Visit shell.ca/caacontest for details.

Member benefits

As a CAA Member, you also receive discounts everyday at participating Shell stations when you insert your CAA card at the pump, present it in-person or add your membership number in the Shell app and pay with Shell EasyPay. You'll benefit from:

- three cents off each litre of fuel
- 10 percent off eligible in-store purchases at participating locations
- savings of 10 percent on car washes at participating locations

Fuel up with Shell for the adventure of a lifetime at the most exciting race weekend of the year. Conditions apply. See Shell.ca/CAA for details.

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NO PURCHASE NECESSARY.

For full rules, complete prize descriptions and how to enter, visit Shell.ca/CAAContest.

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Contest begins at 12:00:00 AM ET on November 07, 2022 and ends at 11:59:59 PM ET on January 01, 2023. 2 Prizes available to be won, each consisting of a trip for 2 people (winner and 1 guest) for a VIP Race Experience in Montreal, QC in June 2023 - approximate retail value \$11,750 (CAD). Random draw will take place on January 09, 2023 at 10:00 AM ET in Oakville, ON. Odds of being selected for a Prize depend on the total number of eligible Entries received by the Contest Closing Date. Open to legal residents of Canada (excluding the Province of Quebec) who have reached the age of majority at time of entry and are a CAA member in good standing at the commencement of the Contest. Correct answer to a mathematical skill testing question required. Sponsor: Shell Canada Products.

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CAA INSIDER

Club News | Member Perks | Family Fun



3 WAYS YOUR CAA MEMBERSHIP PAYS FOR ITSELF

1 Roadside Assistance Did you know you can effectively recover the cost of your CAA membership in just a few roadside assistance calls? On average in Saskatchewan, it costs about \$75 to \$125 to call a tow truck, up to \$100 for a battery boost, and as much as \$250 to unlock a locked car. This means your membership can pay for itself even if you use two of your four or five roadside assistance calls.

2 CAA Rewards A CAA membership includes benefits like CAA Rewards, which allow you to save money and earn CAA Dollars on everyday shopping. As one of Canada's largest loyalty programs, CAA Rewards allow you to

enjoy exclusive deals and discounts at your favourite retailers, stores, restaurants, hotels, entertainment complexes and travel partners. Plus, you can use your earned CAA Dollars towards your membership payments, thereby making it effectively pay for itself.

3 Insurance Discounts Being a CAA Member also allows you to save money on your insurance policy premiums. Whether it's home coverage, pet insurance or protecting your travel plans, your membership allows you to save up to 12% on policy premiums. The extra savings can come in handy when you renew your CAA membership.

WWT travellers at Iceland's Gullfoss Waterfall



WESTWORLD TOURS

GLOBETROTTING GOALS

WestWorld Tours (WWT) is Western Canada's premier motorcoach tour company. Owned and operated by CAA Saskatchewan, WWT celebrated 20 years in 2020—and looks forward to many more

years serving Canadians from coast to coast. This year's travel lineup included the annual Blue Jays Jaunt to Seattle and exciting tours across Canada, from Victoria to Newfoundland. WWT also travelled internationally

with fabulous tours of Vietnam and Cambodia, Iceland and Portugal's Douro River. Plan now for 2023 and 2024 tours of Africa, Peru and the Amazon, Alaska, Croatia, Antarctica and Australia and New Zealand. The latest addition to WWT's portfolio is Women Xplorers, a travel program designed by women for

women. The curated soft-adventure tours expose women to new experiences through travel and friendship. This summer, Women's Xplorers ventured to Ireland, where they explored the Emerald Isle on foot and horseback—before popping by the pub! Learn more at westworldtours.com.

EV BUYER'S GUIDE

GREEN YOUR RIDE

Interested in buying an EV? You're not alone. Sales of new electric vehicles in Canada grew from 5% in 2021 to 7.7% in the first quarter of 2022. That's why CAA recently launched an interactive *EV Buyer's Guide*, which provides info about 90-plus electric vehicles on the market today, as well as facts and advice on price, savings, charging and owning an EV. "CAA has been



supporting the transition to more fuel-efficient and zero-emission vehicles for more than a decade,"

says Ian Jack, CAA's vice-president of public affairs. "It's a one-stop, neutral source of information

for those thinking about going electric." Test drive the new CAA *EV Buyer's Guide* at caask.ca/EVs.

CAR: SOFIKOS/SHUTTERSTOCK



CAA TRAVEL

HERE TO HELP

Did you know CAA Saskatchewan's travel team includes experienced travel consultants, located at all of the province's 11 CAA Stores in nine communities? These travel professionals can help you plan and answer questions about destinations, hotels and resorts, passport photos, CAA Digital TourBooks, International Drivers' Permit, visas, testing and restrictions, and travel and medical insurance. Visit caask.ca/travel for more details.

SEE THE WORLD

CAA'S VACATION TEAM

Book now for the second-annual Football Fan Trip to Los Cabos on the Baja Peninsula. In February 2023, check into the Riu Santa Fe Resort for a one- or two-week getaway to soak in views of Cabo's famous El Arco. You'll be accompanied by two CFL players, attend a touchdown party and compete in the ever-popular Rider Bingo. Contact your local CAA travel consultant for details.

CAA IN THE COMMUNITY

MEMBER FOCUSED, COMMUNITY DRIVEN

At CAA Saskatchewan, Members always matter. We strive to support our valued Members and the communities where they live, work and play. This year, CAA was pleased to support these community organizations.



First Ride, Aug. 17

The fifth-annual event was organized by the Regina Catholic School and Regina Public School divisions to introduce school-zone safety to kindergarten-age students and their parents/guardians. New students learned about the CAA School Safety Patrol, how to safely enter and exit buses, bicycle safety and more.



Nifty 50s, Nov. 4

CAA Travel teams up with the Saskatoon Council on Aging (scoa.ca) for the Nifty 50s fundraising event at Saskatoon's Western Development Museum. This year, seven finalists will compete for the coveted title: Unique Quintet, No Hurry, Colleen Carr, Crystal Gilbert, Brian Kendall and Jeff Arndt. Magic City Chorus will take the stage for a special guest performance.



Rox and Randy Alexander and their 1964 Chev Biscayne, the CAA Choice Award winner

Access Communications

Labour Day Show N Shine, Sept. 5

In partnership with the Collectors Car Club, proceeds from the 15th-annual event support the Regina Food Bank. As presenting sponsor, CAA hosted the CAA Family Fun Zone, with activities for kids of all ages, and served complimentary Nimbus Water in CAA bottles. Over 500 exhibitors and 5,000 spectators raised \$46,300 to help the food bank fight hunger and feed hope.



WHAT'S THE SECRET PASSWORD?

A look at password managers and why you should consider using one

BY CARALEE EPP

PASSWORDS: WE ALL HAVE THEM, but are you practising good password hygiene?

Jarrett Swereda, director of information technology at CAA Saskatchewan, answers some pressing questions about these essential combinations of letters, numbers and symbols.

Are passwords really all that important?

Yes, yes and yes! They're often the only thing standing between a hacker and your personal data.

Nowadays, we have so many online accounts. And passwords protect everything from our bank accounts and payment details to sensitive work emails and health information.

A 2017 survey conducted by Dashlane and Virginia Tech found an average internet user in North America has 150 different online accounts. To avoid possible hacks and identity fraud, never reuse the same password for multiple accounts. And, when possible, enable multi-factor authentication for an added layer of protection.



JARRETT SWEREDA

Director, information technology

“
Password managers help you generate unique passwords of varying lengths and complexity for every account you create

”

My browser offers to save my passwords when I'm surfing the web. Is that good enough?

It might be, especially if you use your browser to prevent you from reusing the same password everywhere. But stand-alone password manager apps, such as LastPass, KeePass or Dashlane, offer unique benefits.

Browser-makers have higher priorities than password management, so they offer to save your passwords to make the surfing experience more convenient, but not necessarily to protect your data. Password managers are more secure and accessible from a variety of browsers and devices.

How exactly do password managers work?

They help you generate unique passwords of varying lengths and complexity for every account you create, to prevent hackers from finding out you used the same password on multiple accounts. Password managers also require multi-factor authentication to ensure it's really you trying to

access your account, and protect you from phishing attempts using imposter websites.

Any other unique features?

You can store credit card info and other private data to simplify online shopping. The family-sharing function helps you access common info, and even designate an emergency contact who can access your accounts should something happen to you.

Are there any risks associated with password managers?

As with any digital technology, if the app suffers an attack, it could compromise your passwords. An outage could also temporarily disrupt your access. But it's important to understand that while these risks exist, they're unlikely to happen.

The risk is far greater that you could be hacked due to weak or reused passwords. Start with a few low-value accounts—news subscriptions or free online seminars. Once you're more familiar with the password manager, try higher-value accounts that store your credit card details (think Netflix or iTunes), and build up to your highest-risk services, like online banking.

How do I choose the right password manager?

Risk tolerances differ greatly. You might prefer options that store passwords on your devices, while others may be more comfortable with a cloud-based password manager.

Regardless of which one you choose, look for features like encryption and multi-factor authentication capabilities; compatibility with your devices; recovery access in case you lose a device or forget your master password; and cost. Start with a free app to learn how it works, but consider upgrading for greater security and features. **CAA**



UP IN THE AIR

What you need to know before booking your next trip

BY ALLAN BRITNELL

AIR TRAVEL HASN'T had the smoothest return to normal—for airlines, airport or travellers—with flight cancellations, staffing shortages, long lineups, lost luggage and passengers stuck on the tarmac. CAA has long been an advocate for your rights as a traveller and we have your back. So before you head out on your next trip, here's what you should know.

Know your rights

Canada's national Air Passenger Protection Regulations (APPR) came into effect in 2019. "The regulations lay out the ground rules for airlines to provide you with a basic standard of care," says Ian Jack, CAA's vice-president of public affairs. The rules apply to any flight to, from or within Canada.

Among your rights as an air traveller: Being promptly

“
Among your rights as an air traveller: Being promptly informed and updated about any delays, and compensation for being bumped from an overbooked flight

”

informed and updated about any delays, compensation for being bumped from an overbooked flight and compensation up to \$2,300 for lost/damaged luggage.

Another notable change is that, in the past, airlines would offer you a credit for cancelled flights—now, airlines must rebook, offer a credit or a full refund, at your discretion.

As of Sept. 8, 2022, a significant addition has also been made to passenger rights for delayed flights. The change “requires airlines to provide passengers with either a refund or rebooking, at the passenger's choice, when there is a flight cancellation, or a lengthy delay, due to a situation outside the airline's control,” according to the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA). In other words, regardless of the reason for the delay, the airline is required to refund you

or rebook you at no additional cost to you.

If you feel your rights have been infringed upon, your very first point of contact will always be the airline. “The government can't fly you anywhere or find your bags for you,” Jack points out.

But if you're not satisfied with the airline's response, the next step would be to file a complaint with the CTA.

Ongoing issues

“The regulations are a good start, but there's still room for improvement,” Jack says.

For starters, the CTA should require airlines to publish data about their on-time performance, number of bags they lose, and other information related to delays and cancellations. “That way, we can judge their performance and incentivize carriers to improve their service.”

Another area of improvement is an exemption to compensation for mechanical problems with aircraft. “It's a loophole big enough to fly an airplane through. It's an incentive to classify anything as a ‘mechanical’ issue,” Jack says. CAA continues to monitor this and other potential regulations to protect passengers.

Refresher course

Brush up on baggage basics. Check your airline's rules on maximum dimensions for carry-on bags and checked baggage limits. And remember that carry-on liquids must still be in containers 100 mL or less.

Look into peak travel times for your departing airport and give yourself plenty of time to check in. “The days of showing up 30 minutes before gates close are behind us now,” Jack cautions.

For more information about air passenger rights and smart flying tips, check out caask.ca/airpassengerrights. **CAA**

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The Latest Buzz on Tinnitus

How to identify, manage and live with this common condition

DO YOU HEAR THAT RINGING?

It could be tinnitus, a condition that impacts one in three Canadians. Tinnitus is described as a phantom noise with no external sound source. It manifests as a constant ring, buzz, whistle, static or siren sound. The noise might come and go, stick around for a few months, or stay with you for life. But the sooner tinnitus is diagnosed by a hearing care professional, the better the chance of improvement. The team at Connect Hearing can help you prevent, identify and manage your tinnitus.

What causes tinnitus?

Although commonly associated with older people, tinnitus can affect anyone at any age. Some instances

occur as a result of infections, blockages in the ear canal, head or neck injuries, and some medications. Other factors that may increase your risk are loud noise, age, tobacco and alcohol use, or various health issues like high blood pressure and cardiovascular problems.

Is it harmful?

Medically speaking, no. But a tinnitus assessment is important to help identify what started it, as the underlying cause could have a medical solution or require medical treatment. A permanent noise in the ear can be distracting, aggravating and make it harder to sleep, which is why many sufferers report stress, anxiety and a lack of concentration.

How do I know I have tinnitus?

The sound in the ear is unique to each patient—tone, pitch and volume vary greatly. You might only hear it in one ear, and sometimes it's in the very centre of the head. It might come in wave-like intervals, or it could be continuous. If the noise lasts longer than 24 hours, seek medical advice or book a tinnitus assessment at Connect Hearing.

How is it diagnosed?

Since 80 percent of tinnitus sufferers

experience some degree of hearing loss, your Connect Hearing professional will conduct a full audiological test. The examiner will also ask about pre-existing conditions, triggers and details about the intrusive noise, and measure its pitch and loudness.

How do you treat tinnitus?

Treatment depends on the root cause of your tinnitus, but usually includes a mix of coping techniques, sound therapy and hearing devices. Though there's not currently a drug to reverse the effects of tinnitus, medication can help control secondary symptoms. Hearing aids with a tinnitus masker also help by amplifying external sounds to reduce how loud the sound of the ring, buzz or whistle seems in the ear.

What are the costs involved?

The experts at Connect Hearing can help you manage tinnitus simply and affordably. CAA Members **save up to \$2,000** on a pair of select level hearing aids, plus other exclusive benefits, including **15 percent off** everyday listening products and five years of free batteries with the purchase of hearing aids.

Book your hearing test at connecthearing.ca/CAA or call 1-888-486-0177.

Visit connecthearing.ca/CAA for complete terms and conditions.

THE GUIDE

Rewards | Travel | Auto | Lifestyle

HOW TO SHOP



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This Gift guide is green

Feel good about giving this holiday season with sustainably sourced, fair-trade or eco-minded gifts. Shop through the CAA Rewards eStore to save or earn CAA Dollars on every purchase: caask.ca/estore.



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Give a night out with **The Ultimate Dining Card**. Eateries include Montana's, East Side Mario's, State and Main, among others. Members save 5% on cards bought online and get free standard shipping.



CAA gift memberships provide peace of mind in a plastic card. Your loved one will get the most reliable roadside assistance, plus perks like travel, hotel and insurance discounts: caask.ca/membership.



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LOLÉ

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SEPHORA

The 7 Virtues Lotus Pear eau de parfum with all-natural ingredients
 Earn 5% in CAA Dollars



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Raber Mens/Womens Garbage Mitts® (MS-0194)
 Genuine Cowhide pile lined "GARBAGE MITTS®".
 Made in Canada.

Member Price: \$41.99 | Regular Price: \$46.99

Safe To Go Roadside Kit (SA-0103)

Everything you need for a winter drive in one portable kit. Carry all the essentials to keep warm and safe, including a collapsible shovel, a 19-piece First Aid kit, hand warmers, a signal flashlight, and much more.



Member Price: \$39.99 | Regular Price: \$49.99



Louehide Avalon Bag (Lou-Avalon-Tan)

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KEEP CALM AND CAR ON

Stuck in the snow? Follow a few dos and don'ts to help get unstuck

BY SCOTT MARSHALL



FOR MOST CANADIANS, winter includes snow, ice, cold weather—and the possibility of your vehicle getting stuck in deep snow. If it does happen, “Check for any damage that may have been caused, and make sure that your vehicle is safe to continue on,” says Peter Kreis, vice-president of operations at CAA Saskatchewan. Here are a few other dos and don'ts to get you back on the road again.

DO PACK A KIT

Always keep a winter driving safety kit in your vehicle in case you have to wait until CAA Roadside Assistance arrives to help. Pick up a roadside safety kit at your local CAA Store. Add a few other items to be fully prepared: a cell phone charger, non-perishable food, sand or kitty litter, water, a shovel and booster cables. Pack extra winter gear like mitts, toques, boots and blankets.

DON'T PANIC

If you slide off the road, stay calm and see whether any injuries require a 911 call. Otherwise, assess the situation. Can you get “unstuck” easily or is it time to call CAA? Members can request assistance online at caask.ca/automotive, call 1-800-222-4357 or download the CAA Mobile App. While you wait, clear the exhaust pipe of snow to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning inside the car.

DO CLEAR THE TIRES

Ensure all wheels are straight. Use a small shovel to dig a short path in front and behind each wheel. Sprinkle the path with sand or kitty litter for traction. You can also use the vehicle floor mats: Place them around the wheel that seems to be spinning most. As a preventative measure, CAA recommends winter tires—the rubber compound allows for better traction and control.

DON'T USE CERTAIN FEATURES

Avoid using traction control. It may seem counterintuitive—since you're trying to gain traction—but not using this feature will let your wheels spin when needed to free the vehicle. If you keep traction control on and hit the gas, nothing will really happen since it reduces power to the wheel that keeps spinning. It might also completely stop power to all four wheels.

DO ACCELERATE GENTLY

Apply the gas very smoothly and, once the vehicle stops the forward motion, press the brake so your vehicle does not fall back into the rut again. Do the same thing in reverse and continue rocking back and forth to gain momentum until the vehicle is freed. But be careful and gentle with this procedure as even gentle rocking and switching gears can be harmful to the vehicle. **CAA**

HOLLY JOLLY MARKETS

Christmas markets were born in Germany centuries ago, and the country today hosts up to 3,000 markets a year. Here are five of our favourites.

BY KELLIE DAVENPORT



1

DRESDEN

Largely considered the world's oldest Christmas market, Dresden's Striezelmarkt dates to 1434. Located in the Altmarkt, where 15th-century knights once jousted, the market hosts local vendors, selling everything from nutcrackers to the city's famous *stollen*, a fruit-filled sweet bread dusted with sugar. For an even more historic experience, wander through the Stallhof market in the courtyard of Dresden's Royal Palace. Costumed crafters, bakers and brewers set an authentic medieval tone.

2

MUNICH

The Bavarian capital is special any time of year, but it's particularly picturesque during the holidays. Head to the famous Marienplatz, best known for its iconic Glockenspiel, and peruse the city's biggest and best Christmas market. After munching on some tasty *lebkuchen* (German-style



gingerbread) and fresh-brewed beer, go market

hopping to visit the city's 30-plus holiday markets.

3

OBERRAMMERAU

Best known for its once-a-decade Passion Play, this pretty Bavarian village sparkles during the holidays. Surrounded by snow-capped peaks, the cobblestone streets are packed with sweets sellers and local artisans displaying their wares. Over the centuries, wood carving has become a town speciality, so be on the lookout for hand-carved nativity scenes and delicately adorned baubles.



4

WÜRZBURG

Opulent baroque and rococo architecture lend fairy-tale charm to this city nestled in the hills of northern Bavaria. It was once the seat of power for the Prince-Bishops of Germany, and no visit is complete without a guided tour of

the festively decorated, UNESCO-designated Würzburg Castle. In the main market square near the gothic Marienkapelle, wooden stalls, twinkling lights and tree-lined streets keep the holiday mood going.

5

REGENSBURG

One of Germany's best preserved medieval cities, Regensburg also boasts one of the country's top markets. The holiday extravaganza is situated in the city's Old Town—a UNESCO Heritage Site—so you're surrounded by history at every turn. Stroll over the 12th-century Stone Bridge, which connects the historic centre to Stadthof, and on chilly nights, warm up with *glühwein*, hot-mulled wine traditionally served in clay cups. **CAA**

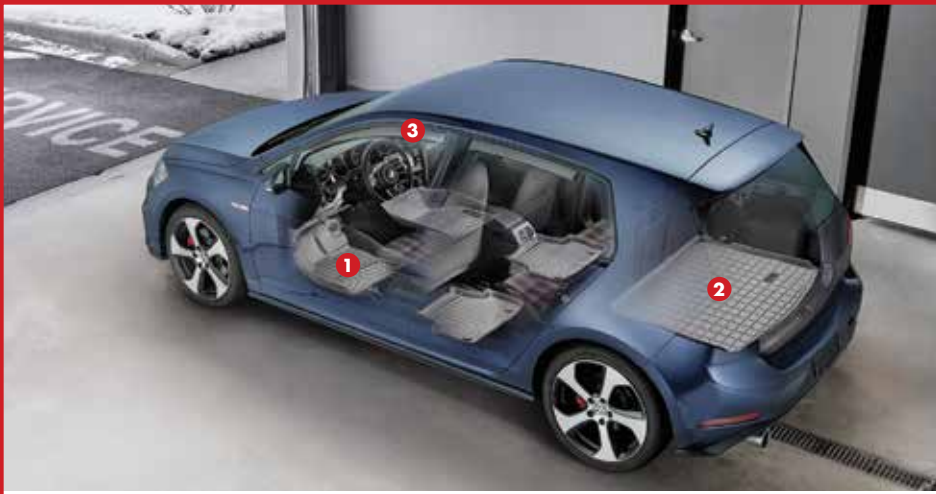


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Travel back in time as you stroll along the holly-lined laneways of Europe's prettiest Christmas Markets. On a 14-day guided tour of Bavaria and Austria, visit the bustling cities of Frankfurt, Munich and Vienna, plus quaint towns like Oberammergau, Augsburg and Melk. Along the way, partake in an Austrian cookie tasting, sip piping hot *glühwein* and tour top historic sites, such as Neuschwanstein Castle and Vienna's famed Opera House.

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ALL-INCLUSIVE KNOW-HOW

Making the most of your next all-inclusive vacation

BY ALLAN BRITNELL

NOTHING BEATS THAT first sip of a frozen drink in the lobby of your all-inclusive resort. It's the kick-off to a week of zero stress, no planning and pure unadulterated fun. But you should pack a few pointers before checking in. Here are some insider tips for all-inclusive success.

Research and booking

Ensuring you have the perfect trip begins long before you book your destination. "With the help of your CAA Travel Consultant, establish what you want from your vacation," advises Candace Glenney, travel consultant at the CAA Saskatoon Store. "What are your vacation priorities?"

Make a list of your must-have

amenities. Some considerations include a kids' club for a family or multi-generation vacation, adults-only for couples or friends, quality entertainment and activities, premium alcohol, speciality restaurants, multiple pools, water sports and a fitness centre.

Travellers with reduced mobility or those with small children in strollers will want to ask about on-site accessibility. Regardless of what you're looking for, a CAA Travel Consultant can help you find the right location.

"We can help you pick the best resort for your needs," Glenney notes. And while it's worth reading the reviews of resorts you're considering, "People rarely post a good review.

You've got to take them with a grain of salt," she adds.

For a more accurate picture, Glenney suggests looking at reviews that coincide with the time period you'll be travelling. Many resorts in tropical areas, for example, reduce staffing during the summer, and often do maintenance work in off-peak weeks. And always ask about travel insurance to protect your vacation.

You should also research available outings and activities. "We can help you book excursions in advance", Glenney says. And let the resort know in advance if you'll be celebrating a birthday or anniversary—you may score an extra amenity or special meal.

If anyone in your party has severe food allergies, "tell your consultant from the get-go," says Melinda Budvarson, travel consultant at the CAA Swift Current Store. "We can advise about which chains are best equipped to deal with any dietary concerns."

Upon arrival

When you arrive at a resort there's usually a one-on-one or group orientation session. "Make sure you attend that session, no matter how many resorts you've visited," Budvarson advises. You'll learn about the resort's amenities, activities, which restaurants require reservations and more. Ask for a map of the resort and entertainment schedule.

If there are speciality restaurants, book your time slots as soon as you arrive: Most resorts don't book reservation-required restaurants prior to arrival.

When it comes to bars and drinking, always be mindful. "Know your limits. Drinking all day in the sun can ruin your holiday," Budvarson says, adding that you also run the risk of nullifying your medical insurance if you get injured while under the influence.

One last, very important piece of advice is to make the most of your all-inclusive vacation: "Try to be open-minded," Budvarson suggests. "Enjoy the culture and leave your worries behind!" **CAA**

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OFF TO A FLYING START

How travel medical insurance helps snowbirds protect their winter escape

BY ALEX CORREA

AS THE TEMPERATURE drops and snowy weather approaches, hundreds of Saskatchewanians will begin their long-awaited winter ritual. Snowbirds are gearing up for their annual migration south of the border to seek sun, sand and serenity.

In a recent survey by Snowbird Advisor, more than 66 percent of snowbirds plan to spend at least three winter months away from Canada. With the cost of living in warmer states like Arizona and Florida above the national average, snowbirding

“*Something that may not be well known is that travel medical insurance policies can be purchased with a deductible*”

could get pricey. Luckily, CAA’s travel medical insurance options can help Members offset the expenses of their second summer.

“Something that may not be well known is that travel medical insurance policies can be purchased with a deductible,” says Lori Madsen, general manager of CAA Saskatchewan Insurance Services.

Like car insurance, the deductible is the amount you pay out-of-pocket toward an insured loss. When you increase the deductible on your policy,

it lowers the cost of your insurance premium. The higher your deductible, the lower the premium. The same principle applies to travel medical insurance.

This flexible deductible ranges between US\$500 to \$50,000 and can save up to 45 percent of your premium for travel medical insurance. As long as you visit a facility that supports direct billing, you wouldn’t pay out-of-pocket unless you have a deductible.

“You might not be able to afford high medical expenses if you’re caught out of the country in an emergency without medical insurance,” Madsen explains, “but you might be able to afford a higher deductible to pay a lower premium.”

Saskatchewan snowbirds who spend a lot of time outside of the province might not be able to afford emergency medical expenses without insurance in a foreign country. A more manageable scenario would be agreeing to a higher deductible to pay a lower premium. It’s a great way to reduce the expenses.

“This is most advantageous for people in higher-risk categories and has higher premiums,” Madsen adds. Anyone over the age of 60 must complete a medical questionnaire to determine their risk category. But she notes, “no matter your age or risk bracket, a deductible can significantly reduce your upfront premium cost.” Think of it as a parachute during your southern migration, ready to deploy when and if you need it.

You can apply the deductible to the single trip medical plans or the multi-trip annual plan. There’s even a top up option attached to the multi-trip plan, for those snowbirds looking to extend their vacations. Visit caask.ca/insurance to learn more or to inquire about a travel insurance quote. CAA



HAPPY PAWS

ADDING A NEW FURRY FRIEND TO A HOUSEHOLD IS EXCITING, BUT THERE'S ALSO A LOT THAT FIRST-TIME DOG AND CAT OWNERS NEED TO KNOW

BY TRACEY TONG



STOCK UP

Shop for pet supplies through the CAA Rewards eStore and earn CAA Dollars at Well.ca, Walmart, Roots and Hudson's Bay

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COMING HOME

Before bringing a pet home, remove any unsafe items from their living space. Dr. Karen Sheehan, clinical associate at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan, points to many common items that can be toxic to animals. "Things like chocolate, grapes/raisins, compost, cannabis, rodenticides and some flowers," Sheehan says. "One of the most common plant toxicities is lily ingestion in cats—even the water in a lily vase can be toxic."

It may take time for your pet to become accustomed to his or her new home. Anxiety can manifest itself in many ways, including poor appetite, tummy upset, lethargy, hiding and cowering, crying, lack of eye contact and stiff posture.

Some level of nervousness is normal, and an animal may need a quiet place to adjust for the first 24 hours, says Ottawa

Valley dog whisperer Karen Rosenfeld, a holistic dog behaviourist. Puppies may find a spot to observe the household for a week or two before coming out of their shell. You can restrict your pet's activity to one room to help with their transition.

SOCIALIZING

Help pets acclimate to the people, animals, places and things they'll regularly interact with. "The use of food, praise and toys are invaluable for assuring a positive experience," Sheehan says. "The socialization window for puppies is from three to 12 weeks, and three to nine weeks for kittens." But, she cautions, young puppies, kittens and new adoptees that haven't had their full vaccinations should socialize only with healthy pets whose shots are up to date.

TRAINING

Always start with the basics. Dogs will need to learn where they'll sleep,

what the feeding routine will be and the toys they are allowed to chew and wrestle with.

"The use of positive reinforcement is paramount to success," Sheehan notes. To house-train your pup, take them outside to the same spot or for a walk when they wake up and every few hours after that. After they relieve themselves, praise them and reward them with a treat.

The next steps are helping a dog learn to walk safely on a leash and how to meet new people and other dogs politely when they're outside or at the vet or groomer.

A new cat should be shown where her litter box is, where her food and water will be, and where her safe sleeping spots and scratching post are.

Veterinarians, as well as other pet owners, are usually great resources for finding reliable pet trainers and classes in your neighbourhood. »

NEW PET MUST-HAVES

Your new pet needs a few essential items



DOG ESSENTIALS

Crate (large enough that the dog can sit, stand, lie down and turn comfortably)

- Bed
- Exercise pen or baby gates
- Non-retractable leash
- Collar or harness
- Food and water bowls
- Wet and dry food, plus treats
- Extra towels for potential accidents
- Waste bags
- Toys
- Dog brush/comb
- Nail clippers



CAT ESSENTIALS

- Litter box, litter and scoop
- Food and water bowls
- Wet and dry food, plus treats
- Toys (interactive and independent)
- Scratching post
- Hard cover carrier
- Bed
- Cat brush/comb
- Nail clippers

FINDING A VET

Ask neighbours, friends and relatives who their veterinarian is and why they chose them. Veterinary designations or certifications may help you make a decision. For example, veterinary staff who are Fear Free certified have been trained in easing fear, anxiety and stress in pets.

Your new pet should see a vet within the first week of being home with you. At this first visit, the veterinarian can assess overall health, including looking for congenital problems, dental health and bite, and palpating the abdomen. You may be asked to take a fecal sample to the first appointment so that it can be checked for parasites.

Puppies and kittens are routinely dewormed every two weeks until 12 weeks of age. Puppies should receive monthly parasite prevention thereafter.

All pet dogs and cats in Canada are required to be vaccinated against rabies. Both dogs and cats require additional immunizations to protect them, and depending on lifestyle and exposure, there may

be other necessary vaccinations to speak with your vet about.

A pet's lifestyle, age and activities will determine how often they should see the veterinarian, with healthy pets visiting once or twice annually.

PROTECT YOUR PET

Emergencies, injuries and critical or severe illnesses unfortunately can happen and are not easy to predict

or plan for.

Pets can suffer from many of the same injuries and medical conditions that afflict their human owners, including glaucoma, heart disease, dental disease and broken bones.

Pet insurance can do more than alleviate the cost of emergencies or expensive procedures that your cat or dog may require, it can also ease stress during an emotional

time if your pet is ill or has had a serious accident.

With today's advanced procedures, like ultrasounds, MRI, endoscopy and hip replacements being commonplace in veterinary medicine, pet insurance is a necessity. As Dr. Sheehan says: "It can be lifesaving, but like any other insurance, the owner needs to understand the benefits and limitations of their policy."



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SEEK OUT A DOG PARK

Consider taking your new pooch to a designated leash-free space—but only if they're up to date on their vaccines. "It allows them to run around in an enclosed environment, play with other dogs and generally do what dogs are meant to do," says Vanessa Powell, co-founder and chairperson of the Off Leash East Hants Dog Park in Elmsdale, Nova Scotia. "Dogs who have adequate amounts of off-leash physical and mental exercise display fewer troublesome behaviours and are calmer," she adds. Be sure to check your local dog park for specific rules, but general etiquette includes being in control of your dog at all times, cleaning up after him or her and immediately removing your pet if she displays any sort of aggressive behaviour.

EIGHT TIPS FOR TRAVELLING WITH YOUR PET

Travelling with the family pet isn't as easy as throwing a leash, a couple of bowls and a big bag of kibble into the trunk. Here's our checklist for how to be prepared.



1 PACK THOUGHTFULLY

Depending on travel restrictions, if crossing the Canada-U.S. border by car, bring your pet's medical records and medication, including a valid rabies vaccination certificate. For the drive, bring a first-aid kit, food, bowls and a familiar pillow or blanket. Dogs will also require a leash and poop bags, while cats need litter, a box and scoop. Toys should be limited to one or two.

2 HAVE THE PROPER IDENTIFICATION

Outfit your pet with a flat collar and a tag imprinted with your home address, as well as a temporary travel tag with your cellphone and destination phone number and any other relevant contact information.

3 PROTECT YOUR VEHICLE

If you frequently hit the road with your pets, it's worth investing in rubberized floor liners and waterproof seat covers.

4 CRATE YOUR PET

Your pet might be your sidekick, but your dog or cat should never ride shotgun. Cats and dogs should be secured inside

a well-ventilated crate or carrier in the back seat, and whether you choose a wire, plastic or soft-sided carrier, be sure to:

- Secure the carrier to the inside of the vehicle so it doesn't move if you suddenly hit the brakes.
- Ensure it's the right size. Your pet should be able to lie down, sit and stand up in it.

5 BUILD UP TO THE BIG DAY

Encourage your pet to spend time in and around the crate before travel day so he or she knows it as a safe spot. Puppies and kittens should be exposed to the car using small experiential steps as part of a training program. Play with your puppy in the back seat of a parked car. After a few successful stress-free sessions, do the same with the car engine running. Work up to a drive around the block. Increase the distance until everyone is comfortable being in the car. Don't feed your pet in a moving vehicle—except for treats, which can be used for positive reinforcement. Stop frequently for wash-room breaks. Bring lots of water and pour some into a bowl whenever

you stop, keeping pets leashed at all times outside of the vehicle.

6 CREATE A COMFORTABLE INTERIOR TEMPERATURE

Most cats are familiar with room temperature, which is 22 C. On cold days, warm the car up before placing your pet inside the car. And on hot days, cool the car down.

7 NEVER LEAVE THEM UNATTENDED IN THE CAR

The *Saskatchewan Animal Protection Act* authorizes peace officers and animal welfare inspectors to enter a vehicle, home or property to relieve animals in critical distress. For example, if a dog is left outside with no doghouse, but the forecast calls for -30 C, the ani-

mal may be removed from the premises and taken to a warm shelter. In winter, vehicles can also quickly become freezing. On hot days, heat stroke is a real risk with a potentially fatal outcome. When the outside temperature is 30 C, car temperatures can increase 10 C in just 10 minutes.

8 CONSIDER LEAVING YOUR PET AT HOME

Your pet may enjoy weekend trips to the cabin, but if he will be sitting in a hotel all day while you explore museums and other locations where pets are not welcome, leave your dog or cat with a sitter, or have someone come to your home while you're away. **CAA**

Island Hopping

**Glistening turquoise water as far as your eye can see;
white sand beaches as far as your legs can go:**

Cruising the Caribbean gives you sun-kissed adventures on the ship—plus the chance to experience new places on land. This handful of both well-loved and off-the-beaten-path ports showcases the kaleidoscope of Caribbean cultures.

BY **JENNIFER ALLFORD & KAREN KWAN**



Saint Lucia

The vibrant slice of paradise serves up historic and geologic wonders, making it easy to choose your own adventure. Ships dock in Castries, the capital city of the island nation.

ADVENTURE

Make a beeline to **Soufrière Volcano (a.k.a. Sulphur Springs)**, the world's only drive-in volcano. Though it's dormant and last erupted in the 1700s, the volcano remains an awe-inspiring sight. Soak in a warm mud bath—which is said to detoxify the body and help soothe sun burns, eczema, arthritis and sore joints. If the mountains are calling your name, trek up Gros Piton, the taller of the two peaks comprising Saint Lucia's iconic Pitons. The UNESCO-designated hill features marked trails to the summit—a trek that typically takes between three and six hours. For a shorter excursion, try the 45-minute Tet Paul Nature Trail and snag great views of both Gros and Petit Piton.

FOOD & DRINK

Foodie dreams come true at Castries Market, where vendors serve up some of the best versions of traditional Saint Lucian cuisine. Try the national dish of green fig and saltfish, creole-style *lambi* (a.k.a. conch), *souse* or *bouyon*—a soup filled with lamb, beef, pork, saltfish and root veggies. If spirits are your thing, Saint Lucia Distillers Rhythm of Rum Tour showcases each step of the distilling process, from huge fermentation vats to the impressive copper stills.

CULTURE

Alongside stalls hawking tropical fruit, chocolate, hot sauce and spices, the 131-year-old **Castries Market** showcases the work of Saint Lucia's finest artisans. Wander through colourful displays of hand-painted masks, wooden toys, bespoke dolls and Caribbean-inspired jewellery. You can also watch makers at work, as weavers, woodworkers and painters often ply their trades at the bustling marketplace. »



JENS KARLSSON/GETTY; SULPHUR SPRINGS: SAINT LUCIA TOURISM; MARKET: LUCY THOMAS/ALLAMY

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Barbados



“For a lively evening with locals, head to the Friday night fish fry at Oistins Bay Gardens”



As the capital city and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Bridgetown offers a mix of history, bold Bajan culture and unique flavours.

ADVENTURE

You don't have to be a diver to view spectacular reefs and **shipwrecks**. Stay dry aboard an Atlantis submarine as it navigates around marine life off the Bajan shore. For a dryland excursion, watch for turtles scampering to the sea at Carlisle Bay. The beloved Bridgetown beach also boasts the circa-1885 Needham's Point Lighthouse. For more sporty pursuits, check out a cricket match at the Kensington Oval. Built in 1882, the oldest pitch on the island continues to attract hordes of cheering fans.

FOOD & DRINK

Mount Gay Distillery, the world's oldest commercial rum distillery, has been making rum since 1703. Rum production on the island started when the British imported sugar

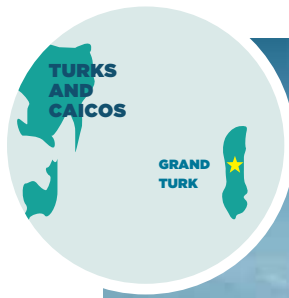
cane from Brazil. Slaves from Africa harvested the crops, while Jewish workers, fleeing persecution in South America, constructed windmills to turn sugar cane into juice. Take a distillery tour and sip on the long history of Bajan rum, once called Kill-Devil for its potency. For a lively evening with locals, head to the Friday night fish fry at **Oistins Bay Gardens**, a 35-minute taxi ride from Bridgetown. Nibble on a conkie—a pumpkin and coconut dumpling that's steamed in banana leaves.

CULTURE

By the 18th century, much of the slave trade from Africa to the New World passed through Bridgetown. It was Britain's most lucrative port, and the waterfront Careenage once hosted weekly slave markets. A commemorative plaque explains this dark chapter of Bajan history. Explore Jewish history on the island at an old cemetery and museum at the oldest synagogue in the Western Hemisphere. Nidhe Israel Synagogue was built in 1654 by Sephardic Jews fleeing persecution in Dutch Brazil.

SHIPWRECK: WATERFRAME/ALAMY; FISH: YVETTE CARDOZO/ALAMY

Turks and Caicos



Grand Turk, where cruise ships dock, is at the southeastern end of a chain of 100 islands that make up Turks and Caicos.

ADVENTURE

Many cruise passengers find everything they need for a great day at the **Grand Turk Cruise Center**. Enjoy a giant pool, glorious beaches, snorkelling, shopping and restaurants all in one location. To venture further afield on tiny Grand Turk, try scuba diving at a nearby reef, horseback riding on the beach or dune buggy tours. You can book excursions at the cruise center.

FOOD & DRINK

Take a 10-minute taxi ride into Cockburn Town for the catch of the day at one of many cafés or inns. Near the Cruise Center, Beached Whale Bar & Grill is right on the sand and serves classic Turks and Caicos fare such as coconut shrimp, cracked conch, conch fritters, seafood chowder and daily fresh fish specials. Or head to the Caribbean's largest outpost of Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville to lick the salt off the rim of your margarita, a nod to the centuries of salt production on Grand Turk, Salt Cay and South Caicos islands.

CULTURE

Learn more about the islands' salt production, from the 17th century to the 1960s, at the Turks and Caicos Museum in Cockburn Town. Explore the tiny town centre on foot, checking out pastel-coloured colonial buildings. Back at the Cruise Center, a free **NASA exhibit** celebrates astronaut John Glenn's splashdown near Grand Turk, after orbiting the Earth in 1962. The 1,066-square-metre exhibit features a model of the space capsule, a six-metre Atlas rocket and a life-size replica of Glenn in his famous spacesuit. »



“A free NASA exhibit celebrates astronaut John Glenn’s splashdown near Grand Turk”



Jamaica

Jamaica offers five cruise ship ports: Montego Bay, Falmouth, Port Antonio, Kingston and Ocho Rios, which is the perfect jumping off point for the iconic Dunn's River Falls.

FOOD & DRINK

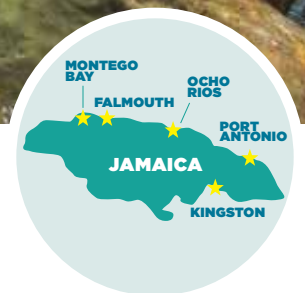
While not everyone will want to try goat curry (a Jamaican staple), you won't want to miss spicy jerk chicken, pork or fish. Jerk became popular in the 1600s when runaway slaves hid in the mountains, cooking pimento-spiced meat underground over hot coals. Other beloved local dishes include fried sweet dough, meat patties, ackee and salt-fish, and pepper pot soup. Non-meat lovers should look for hearty, vegetarian Rastafarian fare. Wash everything down with an ice-cold Red Stripe beer.

ADVENTURE

At **Dunn's River Falls**, just a few minutes from the Ocho Rios cruise port, visitors hold hands to form a human chain and climb up the rocks. The waterfall, which drops 55 metres into the Caribbean, is the site of the 1657 Battle of Las Chorreras, which saw English forces defeat the Spanish. Another sky-high experience awaits at Mystic Mountain. The popular attraction begins with a chairlift ride to the summit, with stunning views of Ocho Rios and the turquoise ocean beyond. At the top, you can zip-line over the rainforest or jump in a custom bobsled for a 1,000-metre ride through the lush tropical landscape.

CULTURE

Music fans will want to see where it all started for reggae legend **Bob Marley**. The musician grew up in Nine Mile, a mountain town about an hour southwest of Ocho Rios. Tour his humble ancestral home, learn about Rastafarianism, marvel at Marley's guitars along with other artifacts, and see the mausoleum where he rests. Guided tours begin and end at the cruise ship port. **CAA**



“Music fans will want to see where it all started for reggae legend Bob Marley”

WATERFALL: WESTEND61/GETTY; MURAL: AGEFOTOSTOCK/ALAMY



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- Sacred Valley
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- Maras & Moray
- Chinchero
- Cusco Cathedral
- Sacsayhuaman
- Living Museum of Yucay
- Pacaya Samiria National Reserve
- Coricancha Temple
- Casa Hacienda Orihuela
- Aliaga House
- Saint Francis' Church
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- Vistadome train
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THAILAND

FEAST FOR THE SENSES

A SUSTAINABLE CULINARY TRIP TO THAILAND
BY TWYLA CAMPBELL



USE YOUR NOODLE
Sample Thailand's many noodle varieties at a Bangkok night market

WHEN I WAS SIX, my uncle returned from an overseas posting with the United States Air Force. He regaled us with tales of Thailand: an enchanting place known as “the land of smiles,” with friendly people, turquoise water, pristine beaches and the best food he’d ever tasted. For a kid in landlocked Saskatchewan, it sounded like paradise. In that moment, I vowed that one day I, too, would go to this magical place.

Forty-five years later, I finally fulfilled that promise to myself on a two-week Thai journey. I devoured coconut curry, fed rescued elephants and survived white-knuckled tuk-tuk rides—though not without a keen sense of caution. In the decades since my uncle’s visit, the damaging effects of over-tourism have taken their toll on popular destinations throughout Southeast Asia. Thankfully, I discovered in Thailand a nation at the forefront of sustainable tourism.



THE SPIRIT OF SUSTAINABILITY seems to surround you in Thailand, from government initiatives to the local noodle stand down the street. “Sustainability is of the utmost importance as we strive to preserve both natural settings and cityscapes,” says Santi Sawangcharoen, director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand

(TAT). “More and more travellers are opting for planet-first options—and prioritizing destinations that provide plentiful sustainable choices.”

Thailand has banned smoking on beaches, reduced single-use plastics, and temporarily closed popular sites like Maya Bay, the filming location of Leonardo DiCaprio’s 2000 movie, *The Beach*. Such efforts have restored those beaches and fostered the recovery of reefs, vegetation and sea life.

Private businesses are also investing in more eco-minded measures. Many Thai resorts, eateries and tourist sites build with recycled materials, use ingredients grown on-property, and employ renewable energy systems.

The Green Bangkok 2030 project also offers optimism through the next decade. The frenetic city is in constant motion: motorcycles, tuk-tuks, cars, delivery trucks, nightlife, music and the pulse of 12 million people. As Sawangcharoen says, the initiative is “rewilding the city with significantly more green space and reducing emissions by 40 percent within the decade.” By the end of the program, nearly a third of the city’s total area will be covered with trees. Think fewer neon-soaked streets, more family-friendly neighbourhoods. »

**I DEVoured
COCONUT
CURRY AND
SURVIVED
WHITE-
KNUCKLED
TUK-TUK
RIDES**

YOU'RE GOING TO EAT NOODLES—LOTS OF THEM



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Noodles and green spaces in Bangkok (left and below). Opposite, clockwise from top: Bangkok street food, rescued elephants and a Buddhist temple in Chiang Mai



IN THAILAND, my inner child was hoping for magic, while my adult self just wanted to taste some incredible local dishes! It seems everywhere I went, steam from gigantic vats of food rose into the air from sunrise to sunset, while the spicy smells of market stalls enveloped me like a warm hug.

Over the past decade, Bangkok has consistently ranked in the top-20 culinary destinations in the world, with historic Chiang Mai not far behind. But areas in the south, like beachy Phuket and bucolic Krabi, are also garnering attention—not only for seafood-rich regional cuisine, but also their progressive approach to lessening waste and cultivating native ingredients.

No matter the region, you're going to eat noodles—lots of them—for many meals. I often ate them for breakfast. Along with sticky rice (also plentiful), menus typically include spicy papaya salad with salted crab, panang curries and creamy iced tea or cold coffee.

In Bangkok, you can spend very little on immensely satisfying food, from 55 Thai baht (\$2 CAD) for a bowl of noodles in an open-air space, or substantially more at a Michelin Guide Bib Gourmand-rated restaurant. The rating is awarded to restaurants that serve high-quality food at reasonable prices.

The Michelin-rated Supanniga Eating

Room is a perfect example of Thailand's high-low dualism: an elevated dining experience comprised of traditional recipes from the owner's grandmother. For two people, my bill for four dishes—including Pon Yang Kham steak (Wagyu crossed with locally raised Charolais beef), wine and cocktails—rang in at 1,791 baht, or about \$65 CAD. A similar meal in Edmonton, Saskatoon or Winnipeg could easily set you back a few hundred dollars.



NESTLED NEAR MOUNT INTHANON—Thailand's tallest peak—the ancient city of Chiang Mai is less bustling than Bangkok but it, too, offers an explosion of sights, smells and sounds. The low chanting of monks echoes into temple courtyards and mixes with the clucking of copper-coloured chickens. On the streets, vendors paint a rainbow in produce: bright pink dragon fruit, purple mangosteen, emerald bamboo shoots and red Thai chilis.

Many markets are located near or inside the walls of the old city. At the night market on Chang Khlan Road, loops of grilled sausage hang like thick necklaces from stall frames. The region is known for *sai oua*—a fragrant grilled sausage containing lemongrass, galangal, kaffir lime, coriander and red curry paste. I paid about 30 baht (\$1.10 CAD) for a six-inch piece. I also sampled *sai krok*, »



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TEMPLE: SUTIPORN SOMNAM/GETTY; STREET FOOD: ALUXUM/GETTY; ELEPHANTS: CHERYL RAMALHO/ISTOCK





LOCAL FLAVOURS

Chocolate company Siamaya focuses on fair-trade cacao (left), while traditional *khao soi* is Thai comfort food (below)



I COOK FOR THE LOVE OF IT

garlicky fermented sausage from the Isaan region, which comes with sticky rice to temper the intense spice.

The most recognized dish of the Chiang Mai area is *khao soi*, a combination of soft and crisp noodles in a bowl of rich coconut curry. To get a full appreciation for this delicacy, I took a cooking class at Galangal Cooking Studio. Owned and operated by wife-husband duo, Aoy and Bruce Sutherland, the school has been offering classes to locals and tourists alike since 2014. “I cook for the love of it,” Aoy says, “so that people can learn about our traditional food and Thai culture.” For her, the best part about teaching is meeting people from around the world.

Though the pandemic nearly shuttered the studio, she vows to carry on and support other Chiang Mai businesses. Every class at Galangal starts with a trip to the nearby Kha Chao Fresh Market. Less frequented by tourists, the market sells goods grown by vendors in their tiny, personal garden plots. Aoy and the market producers teach students about the benefits of using hyper-local ingredients.

Responsible sourcing is a through-line across Thailand. In 2017, budding chocolatiers

Kristian Levinsen and Neil Ransom founded Siamaya, a bean-to-bar chocolate company located in Chiang Mai’s Old City. The friends and ex-pats (Danish and American, respectively) started selling handcrafted bars at city markets as a weekend hobby. But they quickly gained recognition for infusing local flavours—masala chai, pomelo and coconut milk, among others—and sourcing cacao from ethical producers.

“Cacao is largely grown in areas where sustainability and social responsibility take a backseat to profit,” Levinsen says. “So, we buy ours—at a fair price—directly from local farmers and cooperatives in Thailand,” he adds. The company also employs an Indigenous printer for its recycled packaging. “All of the printer’s proceeds go to support the hill tribes in northern Thailand.”

After returning home from my Thai adventure, while munching on chai-infused Siamaya chocolate, I realized my uncle was right all those years ago. Thailand is one of the most magical places on the planet. And with eco-friendly initiatives to protect its beautiful resources, I look forward to experiencing that magic again and again. **CAA**



Banyan Tree

ECO STAYS

In recent years, Thailand has become a leader in sustainable accommodations and eco-friendly resorts

Banyan Tree, Koh Samui

Nature and culture collide at this luxury resort situated on a private bay with stunning Gulf of Thailand views. The property hosts nature walks, educational snorkelling classes and an alms-giving ceremony, during which guests learn about Buddhist traditions and pay respect to local monks. The resort also works closely with Thailand's Department of Marine and Coastal Resources to protect nesting sea turtles.

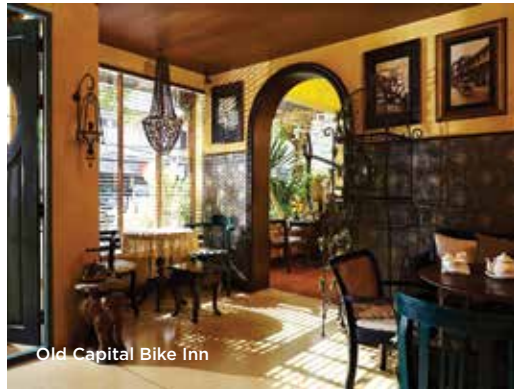
Old Capital Bike Inn, Bangkok

This boutique heritage inn is truly one-of-a-kind, with each of its 10 rooms furnished with Thai golden-teak heirloom furniture for old-world

charm. But free Wi-Fi, energy-efficient lighting and appliances provide modern, eco-conscious comfort. To help cut back on emissions, guests have access to a fleet of vintage bicycles.

Phu Chaisai Mountain Resort, Chiang Rai

Luxury and sustainability work hand in hand at this family-owned resort in northern Thailand. Consisting of 33 hillside cottages and suites, the property helps guests live mindfully with nature via mountain treks, Mongolian horseback riding and ancient spa treatments. The onsite restaurant serves traditional and Western cuisine made with ingredients grown on the resort's organic farm.



Old Capital Bike Inn



Phu Chaisai Mountain Resort

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A trip to Costa Rica will leave you with a renewed appreciation for nature, culture and wildlife. Find yourself soaring through the rainforest, walking along hanging suspension bridges, hiking around the Arenal Volcano and taking a dip in Hot Springs. Float through the lush flora and fauna on the Cano Negro River in search of birds, monkeys, sloths and other endangered jungle creatures. Enjoy time at a nature park exploring the cloud forest, butterfly gardens and hummingbirds. Finish your trip with a relaxing stay along the beautiful beaches, a perfect place to bask in the beauty of Costa Rica.



Houston... We have New Orleans FEBRUARY 25 – 6 OR 25 – 12

Embark on a journey to the Southern states of Texas & Louisiana. Glimpse into the skies and explore the stars at the NASA Space Center. Be greeted by the famous Louisiana hospitality, eat at the many unique Cajun restaurants on a Cajun Food Tour, learn the Cajun Waltz and two-step and test out your skills in front of a live band. Visit the TABASCO factory. Take an in-depth boat tour of the least altered marshland, Honey Island Swamp. Entrench yourself in a restored antebellum era plantation and tour the biggest and oldest parade floats that make up Mardi Gras. Not ready to go home?! Top it all off with a relaxing cruise of the Western Caribbean.



Quilters Delight APRIL 2 – 9

Grab your friends and visit the famous Missouri Star Quilt Co. Enjoy some of the stops along the way, but the real highlight is spending time at quilt week. Take in exhibits, workshops and lectures from top quilting instructors. And don't forget to leave room in your suitcase, we have plenty of time to shop at the Merchant Mall and at the many shops in Hamilton, Missouri home of Missouri Star Quilt Co.



Cherry Blossoms APRIL 4 – 11

Experience the museums, monuments, architecture and culture of Washington, DC when the beautiful cherry blossoms are in full bloom! Take in the exhibits and entertainment during the annual Petalpalooza National Cherry Blossom Festival. Visit famous sites in Washington including the Lincoln Memorial, National Mall and of course the Smithsonian Museums. More history and culture await you in Philadelphia, from Independence Hall to the Philadelphia Museum of Art to the Rocky Statue.



Victoria APRIL 24 – MAY 6 OR SEPTEMBER 25 – OCTOBER 7

Visit the picturesque Inner Harbour, one of the most magnificent harbours in the world, with its quaint shops and unique restaurants. Enjoy Butchart Gardens' wondrous beauty with 900 bedding plant varieties on 55-acres of professionally sculpted grounds. Experience a tropical jungle up close at Victoria Butterfly Gardens where poison dart frogs, tortoises, iguanas, birds, fish, and butterflies are on display. Be inspired with the Murals of Chemainus, about a one a half hour scenic drive north of Victoria.



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WEEKENDER

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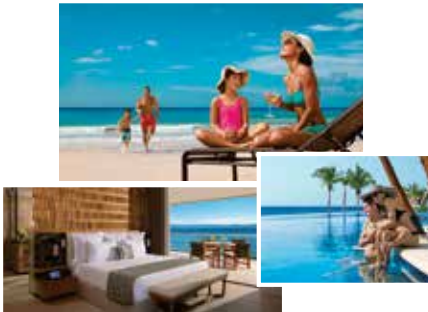
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CYPRESS HILLS

BY NAOMI HANSEN

TUCKED IN A SCENIC southwest corner of the province, Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park is a winter paradise for outdoor adventurers, while nearby Maple Creek offers cozy shops and eateries for warming up. Be sure to pack your snowshoes!



OUT AND ABOUT



1 EAT
The Daily Grind is a Maple Creek staple for coffee (roasted in-house!), fresh-baked goods and lunch fare. Daily homemade soups are the perfect winter warm-up. 132 Jasper St.



2 DRINK
Rafter R Brewing Company is the go-to for local small-batch craft beer. Visit the taproom for a tasting flight or take-home growler of blonde ale or oatmeal stout. 13 Pacific Ave.



3 EXPLORE
Book an ATV tour with **Historic Reesor Ranch**, which offers one-hour guided tours through beautiful forest scenery. You can also book an overnight stay. Southwest of Maple Creek



4 SHOP
Cowtown Kids Toy & Candy is a must-see in Maple Creek. The large toy store is chock-full of both retro and modern games, puzzles, novelties and, of course, candy galore. 127 Jasper St.

MAP: JASON SCHNEIDER; ATVs: HISTORIC REESOR RANCH; STORE: TOURISM SASKATCHEWAN

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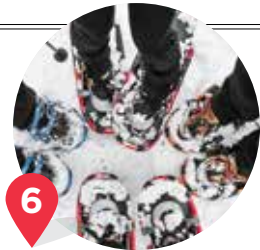
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GET OUTSIDE

Skiing, snowshoeing, skating and more!



Rent or bring skis and explore 30-km of **cross-country ski** trails that loop through the park, many of which are groomed and double as hiking trails.



6

The park is home to interpretive trails, ideal for a winter hike or snowshoe. Check out the **Valley of the Windfall Interpretive Trail**, which passes by The Resort and loops through snow-capped trees for 1.2 km.



Head to the designated **snowmobiling** area in the centre block for trails through beautiful forest scenery. There's also a staging area, located near the ball diamond.



7

In the park's centre block, **Loch Leven Lake** is the perfect spot for a day of ice fishing for rainbow trout. The scenic lake is surrounded by towering lodgepole pines, which often attract artists sketching near the shore. **CAA**



SNOW IT ALL

For outdoor enthusiast **Kim Eng**, winter one of the best times to experience Cypress Hills. "It's just a beautiful, magical winter wonderland," says the owner-operator of The Resort at Cypress Hills. Now in its 35th year, it's a year-round destination and the main hub for winter activity on the Saskatchewan side of the park.

What is your favourite thing to do in the park?

Snowshoeing or cross-country skiing. Just getting outside to enjoy the sights and watch for wildlife. I love snowshoeing with our dogs for a walk through the winter campgrounds and off-the-beaten-path trails. They are amazing

and offer such unique views in any season.

Why should folks visit The Resort this winter?

We're the only place for equipment rentals in wintertime—we rent cross-country skis and snowshoes. We also have Ivan's Restaurant, which has great food.

Some of my favourites are crispy chicken poutine, flatbread pizzas and the noodle dishes. And during the holidays, the entire property is decorated and transformed into a Christmas wonderland.

What do you love most about Cypress Hills in winter?

The scenery and the mood it inspires. Being out there is almost like finding your zen—just so beautiful and peaceful. I like to say winter in the hills tells a different story, because it's a totally different feel. If you really want to get away from it all, winter is the perfect season here.

Cozy cabins at The Resort



5

SKIER: VISUALSPACE/ISTOCK; SNOWSHOES: DEBBIE GALBRAITH/ISTOCK; ATVS: SHAUNL/ISTOCK; CHILD: LEMONADELUCY/ISTOCK

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BY ASHLYN GEORGE



ISKWATIKAN LAKE

COLD COMFORT

TENT: ASHLYN GEORGE

WHILE MOST PEOPLE book a lodge for a winter getaway, Christopher Lake-based outdoor enthusiast Ron Schlamp prefers to pitch a tent in the snow. Hauling gear on a pulk, his portable canvas tent is designed

to accommodate a wood burning stove in a style of camping called hot tenting. “I use a high-quality titanium stove because it’s lightweight and produces more heat: the tent can warm up to room temperature or hotter.” With Sask Parks officially launching winter camping reservations in select provincial parks

last year, Schlamp isn’t alone in his enjoyment of the activity or why he does it. “It’s a great way to get outside and see new places—especially in winter when everything is quiet and pristine.” Schlamp’s best tip for those interested in hot tenting is to invest in quality gear that can withstand Saskatchewan’s cold climate.



As Canada’s largest indoor mineral pool, **Manitou Springs Resort and Mineral Spa** offers a relaxing opportunity to escape Saskatchewan’s winter weather. Sourced from nearby Lake Manitou, the water is often compared to Israel’s Dead Sea due to its unique natural salt and mineral properties. The heated pools range in temperature from 34 to 39 C, making it the perfect spot to soak away the winter chills.



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SEASONAL SIPS

Winter drinks to warm you to the core

Crossmount Cider Company puts a fresh spin on traditional hard apple cider by infusing it with cinnamon and nutmeg to make a hot mulled cider. Enjoy a steaming mug on the heated outdoor patio.

Regina's **Bushwakker Brewpub** makes seasonal blackberry mead using 181 kg of honey from the Lumsden Valley, plus 38 kg of blackberries. The sweet treat will be released on the first Saturday in December.

Saskatoon's **Odlia Restaurant and Market** serves spicy mulled wine every winter. The purveyor of fine food and produce also sells easy-to-make mulled wine kits, which are perfect for gift giving.

COZY CABINS

Cuddle up in some cute accommodations



During the off-season, the **Ness Creek** summer festival site turns into a winter wonderland. Check into Cabin No. 3 and spend the day snuggled up with a good book in front of the wood burning stove and the evening sweating it out in Ness's wood-fired sauna.



With hotel rooms, townhouses and cabins for rent, **The Resort** at Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park has fireplaces, snow-covered porches and outdoor activities for an epic winter staycation. There's also an on-site yoga studio offering private classes to keep you warm and limber.



Book one of two tiny cabins in the woods at **Shell's Fitness and Soul Centre**. About six km south of Carrot River, this staycation destination offers unlimited access to outdoor adventure or indoor relaxation, including a sauna to melt away the cold. **CAA**

Hot Cocoa buffet

Nothing says indulgence like a velvety hot chocolate and a "cookie charcuterie" board, piled high with sweet toppings. This DIY hot chocolate smorgasbord is the perfect warm-up at family gatherings, festive soirées or a night in with the kids.

1. Gather a flat board, small bowls and several seasonal mugs.

2. Start with the largest items. Place items in bowls and set on the board: hot chocolate powder mix, whipped cream and sprinkles.

3. Arrange cookies, wafers and biscuits around the bowls.

4. Fill the gaps with candies, like peppermint sticks, chocolate dipped spoons, caramels, marshmallows and chocolate chips. Enjoy!



HOW TO

WINTERIZE YOUR RIDE

BY CRAIG MOY

WHOEVER COINED THE TERM “winter wonderland” surely never had to drive on Saskatchewan roads after a fresh snowfall. But the season doesn’t have to spell doom and gloom for motorists. With a little planning, you can help make sure your vehicle performs safely and efficiently on ice, snow and slush. And for more auto advice, visit caask.ca/automotive.



BEFORE YOU DRIVE

Always check weather and road conditions. Allow extra time to reach your destination safely and be prepared to reduce your speed. Be sure to defrost your windows and remove ice and snow from your vehicle. Keep a full tank of fuel or, at minimum, half a tank. This will help reduce moisture in the gas tank and adds weight to your vehicle.



TIRES

Switching to winter tires is the most important thing you can do. Flexible rubber and deep treads offer better traction on slick roads and any time the mercury dips below 7 C. But remember that temperature changes can cause tires to lose pressure: one psi for every five-degree drop.



BATTERY

Extreme cold drains battery voltage, making it harder to start the vehicle. Batteries more than three years old are at higher risk of sluggishness. Have the vehicle battery tested and recharge or replace as required. Planning a winter getaway? Plug in a battery tender.



WIPERS

Like winter tires, winter wiper blades just work better in frigid conditions. The best blades use a more rugged rubber that stays flexible in the cold and resists damage from wiping away ice and snow. For improved windshield cleaning, use winter-grade washer fluid, too.



OIL

If you don’t already use synthetic oil, consider making the switch. Unlike conventional motor oil, synthetic oil doesn’t thicken in cold weather. It’ll flow better for easier winter starts and smoother shifts, helping reduce the wear and tear on your engine.



BELTS & HOSES

Over time, temperature variations can cause them to crack, bulge and leak. Worn-out belts often squeak or make a squealing sound, while broken hoses may hiss. Visually inspect them—and if anything looks suspect, have a trusted mechanic check your engine.

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