

Sicamous a mecca for houseboats and more

Sicamous is in a most beautiful setting surrounded by the Monashee Mountains right on the shores of Shuswap and Mara Lakes. The town is famous for its houseboats in the summer and superb sledding in the winter.

It's impossible to have a bad or boring day while you're in Sicamous because there is so much to see and do. People are in holiday mode and you'll notice everyone is relaxed and having fun.

So much to do and too little time to do it! Here are a few ideas of things to do and see while you're in the Sicamous area.

Take a tour around the Shuswap on the historic Phoebe Ann paddle wheeler. If you want to charter the Phoebe Ann you can see some sights like Native pictographs, Marble Point and No Name Falls. It holds up to 39

people and you can get meals and drinks on board.

There are other companies that do tours around the lake including guided fishing charters.

Sicamous has live theatre, karaoke at Brother's Pub, a Saturday farmer's market, bingo, go-karts and mini-golf, a museum and a spiritual labyrinth at the United Church. They've got golfing, hiking trails, great fishing and one of the best family friendly parks in the entire area right at the beach.

There are lots of boat rentals whether you want a speedboat or a canoe. You have a lot of choice. Sicamous has an impressive number of bed and breakfast spots, cabins for rent, hotels and motels.

At D Dutchmen Dairy the kids will enjoy walking around the farm to see the exotic animals.

And remember to leave some time to wander around the town. There are many shops with unique gift ideas and fun boutiques as well as the ever popular Art Walk.

For more information on any of the things to do drop by the Visitor Information Centre at 110 Finlayson Street. In July and August it's open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The winter hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays.

Snowmobiling

Although most tourists come to the Shuswap for the lakes and hiking trails, more and more people are coming in the off season to enjoy the terrain, which is a perfect winter sports playground.

Snowmobilers have a lot of choice when it comes to trails.

Sicamous has a number of different riding areas: Eagle Pass offers lofty peaks and breathtaking views; Blue Lake has wide open alpine; Owlhead has some serious hill climbing; and Queest is a well established hill with a chalet and 35 km of country riding, deep powder and exciting hill climbs.

The Fly Hills area, just 10 minutes from downtown Salmon Arm has some of the best family oriented riding in B.C. The trails are safe, well managed and mapped and there are lots of signs. In total, Fly Hills boasts over 200 kilometres of interconnecting trails. There are good snow conditions from mid November to March. You'll enjoy the view of the city, the lake and the surrounding countryside.

It's easy to get there. Go west on the Trans Canada from Salmon Arm. Just past the Salmon River Bridge turn onto Salmon River Road. Drive about a kilometre and turn right on Christianson Road (13th Ave. SW). Go up the hill just over a kilometre and turn left on 5th Ave. S.W. Continue on this road until it turns into 60th Street and then 15th Avenue. Going to the Forest Service Road it's two kilometres from there to the main staging area.

There is a small fee to use the trails. There will either be an attendant at the parking lot or you can put it in the collection box at the chalet.

Check out the 20 square miles of trails in Crowfoot Mountain in the North Shuswap, and the 80 kilometres of trail in Falkland.

If you stop by a local Visitor Info Centre you can pick up a snowmobile trail map or go to www.shuswap.bc.ca.



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