

VISIT FORT ST. JAMES

VISIT



115 Douglas Ave,  
Fort St. James, BC V0J 1P0  
Phone: 250-996-7836

FORT ST. JAMES / STUART LAKE



FORT ST. JAMES  
DISTRICT

*historic and resourceful!*

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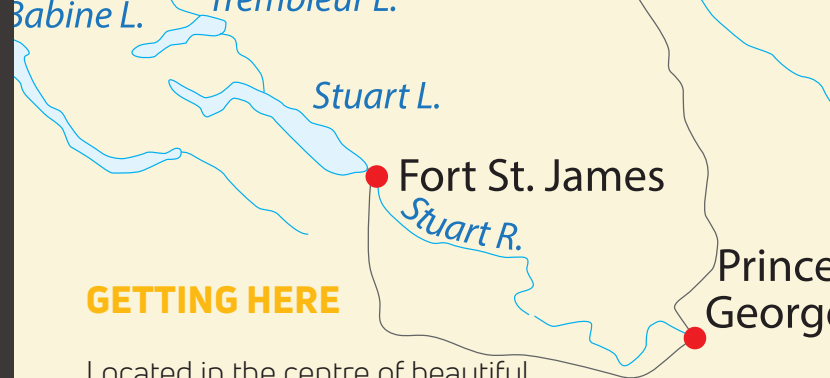
# WE LCO ME

## TS'UHOONT'I' WHUSAINYA WELCOME

Fort St. James occupies land that has been home to Nak'azdli Whut'en since time immemorial.

The land on which we live, work, and play holds great cultural value and importance. We acknowledge and respect the people and the territory that hold our community.

 ALL NATIONS GATHERING /  
PHOTO CREDIT: SAMANTHA JOSINA PHOTOGRAPHY



## GETTING HERE

Located in the centre of beautiful British Columbia, Fort St. James makes for an ideal home base and getting here is a breeze.

### *By Car*

Travel Highway 16 west from Prince George or east from Burns Lake, then head North onto Highway 27 to reach Fort St. James.

### *By Air*

Our closest commercial airport is 161 km away in Prince George. Daily flights into Prince George from Calgary, Vancouver, Kamloops, Edmonton, Fort St. John, Kelowna, and Smithers means you'll have options on how to get here.

Perison Airport in Fort St. James is the region's centre for float and ski plane operations. There are no scheduled flights, but charter services are available.

## VISITOR CENTRE

115 Douglas Ave,  
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# DIS COV ER

## DISCOVER FORT ST. JAMES, BC

Fort St. James is a welcoming, friendly, and laidback place for you to escape the hustle and bustle.

With the long history of the Nak'azdli Whut'en Nation and our place as one of the oldest European settlements in British Columbia, there's no shortage of historic sights to enjoy in and around the area.

Between our history and our location nestled up against Stuart Lake and surrounded by forests, mountains, and provincial parks, Fort St. James is perfectly positioned for adventure.

 STUART LAKE SUNSET

# TO DO

## THINGS TO DO / ADVENTURE WAITS

Snow to sun and land to lake, Fort St. James is surrounded by beautiful BC wilderness, including easy access to mountains, lakes, rivers, and trails. And with an average of 299 sunny days a year, you have year-round opportunities to enjoy them!

Whether you're in the mood for a fast-paced adventure or to slow down and enjoy the scenery, Fort St. James has something to offer.

### Motorsports

The area surrounding Fort St. James offers over 300 kilometres of marked, free-access ATV and snowmobile trails for recreationalists to explore. Guides are available through the Fort St. James Snowmobile/ATV Club.

### Golfing

Stuart Lake Golf Club is a challenging, but user-friendly, 9-hole golf course, and one of the most picturesque courses you'll ever see with stunning views of Stuart Lake and mountains throughout.

### Skiing

Both downhill and cross-country ski trails are available at Murray Ridge Ski Area. They even house the longest T-Bar in North America! If you're interested in a particularly scenic route, there are cross-country trails along the shores of Stuart Lake maintained by the Stuart Lake Nordic Society.

### Skating

Embrace outdoor skating in Fort St. James at the speed skating oval, Nak'azdli Whut'en's Ernie Sam Memorial Arena, and the Murray Ridge Ski Hill rink, or enjoy public and drop-in skating at the newly renovated Fort Forum Arena. Sections of Stuart Lake are also frequently cleared for skaters and hockey games in winter.

### Dog Sledding

The Caledonia Classic Dog Sled Races take place every year in February and welcome mushers and dogs from all over North America! We have sprint, long distance, skijor, and youth events with food and fun for the whole family.



CALEDONIA DOG SLED RACES / STUART LAKE  
PHOTO CREDIT: MARTY CLEMENS

### Beaches

Cottonwood Park has a playground, beach, and picnic areas and is located in town beside Cottonwood Marina and Campground. Just an 11-minute drive southwest, Paarens Beach Provincial Park offers 800 m of sandy beach, a boat launch, and a campground. 5 km past Paarens Beach is Sowchea Bay Park (known to locals as Big Bay) with a boat launch and 30 vehicle-accessible campsites.

### Swimming

Cottonwood Park right in town, offers a shallow swimming area on Stuart Lake. Other natural swimming spots are available at Paarens Beach Provincial Park, Sowchea Bay Provincial Park, and Tchentlo Lake Warm Springs, accessible only by boat.

### Boating

Fort St. James is located on the southern shores of Stuart Lake, one of the largest natural lakes in BC at 66 km long. We're also surrounded by a network of rivers, perfect for boating and sailing. Boat slip rentals are available at the Cottonwood Marina, or you can launch your own boat for five dollars.

### Paddle Sports

Sitting or standing, Stuart Lake and Stuart River are great places to flex your paddle skills. Take a canoe or a kayak out for a lap or rent a paddle board from Cottonwood Marina. For the adventure seekers, paddle the 300 km Takla-Trembleur-Stuart Lakes route, or head north to the Nation Lakes Chain.



 SAILING LESSONS ON STUART LAKE

### Hiking

Are your hikes a leisurely walk in the forest or a 700 m ascent up a mountain path? Either way, there's always something new to see in Fort St. James. "The Loop" is a stroll along the beach and forest in town, and more adventurous hikers are spoiled for choice with picturesque trail systems across Mt. Pope, including the panoramic views available on the Mt. Dickinson Trail.

### Rock Climbing

Looking for something more vertical? Mt. Pope has six mountain climbing routes, including the very popular Burning Bush, Heaven's Gate, or if you're looking for something really adventurous, Hell's Bells.

### Horseback Riding

Saddle up! With over 300 km of groomed trails, and beautiful lake-side trails along the beach to explore, the trail riding opportunities are endless.

### Hunting

Surrounded by forests, hunting is a popular activity in the Fort St. James region, especially for moose, black bear, elk, and deer. Lodges are scattered throughout the area and guide services and specialized transportation are available, including our chartered airstrip for easy access to the backcountry.

### Fishing

Stuart Lake is renowned for rainbow trout, lake trout, ling cod, and bull trout with peak action in June and July although fishing is good all year round! If you're up for some competition, the annual Binche Whut'en Fishing Derby is held each year in July.



 MURRAY RIDGE RESTAURANT / PHOTO CREDIT: SAMANTHA JOSINA PHOTOGRAPHY

# HISTORIC

## HISTORIC ATTRACTIONS

The Fort St. James area has been home to the Dakelh-speaking (Carrier) peoples of the Nak'azdli Whut'en Nation since long before Simon Fraser and the Hudson's Bay Company established a trading post in the area in 1806.

The communities of the Nak'azdli Whut'en, Tl'azt'en, Binche Whut'en, Yekooche, and Takla First Nations played an integral role in developing the region, and Fort St. James has many historically significant sites throughout the town and the surrounding area.

### **Fort St. James National Historic Site**

Fort St. James National Historic Site boasts Canada's largest collection of preserved, fur trade-era, wooden buildings and is a must-see for any Canadian history buff. Period costumed staff offer tours of the site and self-guided audio tours are also available. And of course, our world-class chicken races run every day in summer!

### **Stone Pictographs**

First Nations pictographs, dating back to the early 19th century, are visible in twenty-one locations along the north shore of Stuart Lake between Fort St. James and Pinchi Bay. Accessible only by boat, these are a perfect excuse to get out on the water!

### **Gravesite of Chief Kwah (Kw'eh)**

Chief Kwah, also known as the Fur Trade Chief, was one of the most respected and influential leaders of the Dakelh First Nation. He and Simon Fraser were instrumental in establishing a relationship between the Nation and the North West Company.

His burial site is at the mouth of the Stuart River. Please visit the Nak'azdli Whut'en Band Office prior to visiting this sacred site.

### **Nyan Wheti Trail**

Step into history on the Nyan Wheti Trail. A Dakelh phrase meaning "The Way Across", Nyan Wheti is an ancient land route and celebrated hiking trail. It makes up part of the Grease Trails, the routes used by Dakelh people for trade, travel, and communication, especially during the height of the fur trade.

### **Junkers W 34 Model Plane**

Cottonwood Park is home to a one-third scale model of a Junkers W 34 plane. The Junkers W 34 were designed and built in Germany around World War I and used locally in the 1940s when Fort St. James became an important float plane base.

### **Russ Baser Memorial**

For the dedicated aviation buffs, the Russ Baker memorial is located on a secluded bluff with a spectacular view over Stuart Lake. Frank Russel "Russ" Baker was one of the first bush pilots in the Fort St. James area. After WWII, Baker started Central BC Airways, which eventually became part of Pacific Western Airlines and Canadian Airlines.

### **Our Lady of Good Hope Church**

Our Lady of Good Hope Church was constructed in 1873 and was the first permanent Catholic mission north of Williams Lake.

Father Adrien Gabriel Morice, a French missionary priest, ran a printing press from the cabin behind the church. He adapted a Dene writing system of symbols to represent the Dakelh language for his newspaper, the first extensive transcriptions of material in an Athabaskan language.

### **Tom Creek Steam Shovel**

In Cottonwood Park, you can see a restored, Marion steam shovel, brought to the area in the 1930s by Thomas Kelly. The steam shovel was installed in the park in 1994 as a tribute to the pioneer families who developed our region in the early 20th century.



# ARTS CULTURE COMMUNITY

## ARTS, CULTURE & COMMUNITY

Fort St. James is home to a lively arts and culture scene. From community markets to music festivals, there's always something happening in town. Attend one of our annual festivals, watch a live show, or sign up for a workshop at the Pope Mountain Arts Centre.

### **Art Shows & Workshops**

The Pope Mountain Arts Centre, a beautiful historic building that was once a Hudson's Bay Company Store, hosts a fibre arts studio in the attic and a pottery studio in the basement as well as year-round workshops, visual arts displays, music, and comedy shows.

### **Music on the Mountain Festival**

The annual Music on the Mountain Festival is a celebration of music, art, friends, and family. Held in summer on the shores of Stuart Lake, enjoy a weekend of music and performance art or stake out a camping spot early and spend the week before the festival attending workshops for all ages.

### **Music Makers Live Theatre Performances**

Interested in comedy, theatre, or concerts? Music Makers Hall hosts community performances year-round. Tickets are available online.

### **Community Market**

The weekly Community Market includes baked goods, craft items from local vendors, and live music, available every Friday afternoon, May through September. Join us for the annual Night Market in early August!

### **Caledonia Days Festival**

The Caledonia Days Festival is a Fort St. James institution, running since 1962. It's a town-wide celebration, complete with a fall fair display, community activities, live music, and historical tours around town and the Fort St. James National Historical Site.