



Southern Alberta Indigenous Site Guide

Fort Macleod would like to acknowledge that it is on Treaty 7 territory, the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Nations, including Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai, the Tsuut'ina, Nation and Stoney Nakoda First Nations.

Do You Know?

Four out of the six UNESCO World Heritage Sites found in Alberta are in southern Alberta!

Photo by Fort Museum of the NWMP



The Fort Museum of the NWMP

Located in Fort Macleod

The Fort Museum is a re-creation of the original fort that was built in 1874 by the North-West Mounted Police. The Museum is famous in Canada for its Musical Ride performances that honour the original NWMP Musical Ride that was first performed at Fort Macleod in 1876.

Since the North-West Mounted Police duties were inextricably tied to First Nations relations, the museum also holds a robust selection of influential artifacts and records showcasing Indigenous history. The Blackfoot Gallery provides an introspective look at Indigenous artifacts, including photos, tools, ceremonial dress, and recorded personal accounts of what life was like at this transitional time in southern Alberta.

Do You Know?

The term "Blackfoot" actually refers to 3 tribes: the Blackfoot proper (Siksika), the Bloods (Kainai), and the Peigan (Piikani).



Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump

Located 21 kms west of Fort Macleod

For some 6,000 years, the natural sandstone cliff was used by hunters to drive bison over the edge to their death.

Below the cliff the carcasses were butchered and processed, and it is the remains of these activities that archaeologists have been excavating since the 1960s.

From the depth of this research, the site is one of the most significant aboriginal archaeological sites in Canada. It was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1981 and continues to tell the unique story of the Plains people through interactive exhibits and thoughtful storytelling.

Photo by Travel Alberta / Roth & Ramberg



Fort Whoop-Up

Located in Lethbridge

Fort Whoop-Up is a replica of an original fur trading fort built in the late 1800s that tells the stories of the characters tied to the buffalo robe and illegal whisky trade in the region. It is a complex situation rooted in nefarious characters and cultural intricacies including Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), other First Nations, Métis, Canadians, Americans, and British; North-West Mounted Police fighting for "right" and the others trying to survive in a rapidly changing environment. Trade, politics, culture, and the wild west of frontier living forms a melting pot of intrigue.

Although this period of time was brief, it was a complex and formative period of the buffalo robe and whisky trade in southern Alberta.



Photo by Travel Alberta / Chris Amat



Photo by Travel Alberta / Fort Museum of the NWMP

Writing-on-Stone / Áísina'i'pi

Located 177 kms east of Fort Macleod

Full of cultural and spiritual significance, Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park, or Áísina'i'pi as it's known in Blackfoot, is a notable UNESCO World Heritage Site. The landscape is marked by unique geological formations called hoodoos, which are large sandstone structures formed 85 million years ago that have been eroded by the elements over time.

There is evidence of steady habitation over thousands of years by Blackfoot Peoples through the numerous rock paintings and carvings found in the park. In fact, Writing-on-Stone is home to the largest collection of First Nation rock art in the Plains of North America.

