



## Linda Lake and Cathedral Prospect

Although this area is often overlooked by visitors because of the longer distances required to get there, this destination provides the adventurous hiker with an experience of solitude unmatched in the Lake O'Hara region.

There are two access points into the area, as well as numerous side trails you can link together to make a memorable day trip.

### **Route 1: Linda Lake via Lake O'Hara Campground**

**Hiking time:** 1 to 1.5 hours

**Length:** 3.2 km from the campground to the east end of Linda Lake

**Elevation Gain:** 140 m

Lake O'Hara Campground can be accessed from the Lake O'Hara fire road or via the scenic trail that leads away from the west side of Lake O'Hara at the outlet bridge.

From Lake O'Hara Campground, take the trail that passes the first cook shelter and continue straight ahead. After 1.9 km you will come to a junction. Turn left or southwest. (Turning right will take you out to the fire road). The trail meanders through the trees briefly before crossing the outlet stream from Morning Glory Lakes.

The trail climbs slowly and gently, eventually reaching a four-way junction. The trail to the right or north (no longer maintained by Parks Canada) heads down to the highway parking lot. The trail to the left (south) is a shortcut to Morning Glory Lakes, which continues in a loop to Alpine Meadow Trail and Elizabeth Parker Hut. Linda Lake is reached by continuing straight (west) at this junction.

Once at Linda Lake, you can get to Cathedral Lakes Trail and eventually Cathedral Prospect (see trail description on Cathedral Prospect) by going either clockwise or counter-clockwise around Linda Lake.



## **Route 2: Linda Lake via Morning Glory Lakes Trail**

**Hiking time:** 1.25 to 1.5 hours

**Length:** 3.2 km to the south end of Linda Lake

**Elevation Gain:** 165 m

To reach Linda Lake via this route, begin on the common trail behind the Day Shelter that is also the start of the Schaffer Lake/Lake McArthur Trail. After 200 m, after climbing a short hill and descending to a small creek, turn right (west) at the trail junction and carry on until you reach Elizabeth Parker Hut, which sits in an alpine meadow. Turn right (northwest) at the small cabin, cross the creek, and follow Morning Glory Lakes Trail as it meanders through the meadow. The trail soon enters the forest, and after about 1.5 km, rounds the end of a long ridge off Odaray Plateau. Here the trail begins its decent toward Morning Glory Lakes, which still bear the scars of an avalanche that swept through the area many years ago.

Just past Morning Glory Lakes, you come to a trail junction. Turning right here (north) would take you to a four-way junction and a shorter return to Lake O'Hara. Instead, continue straight (northwest) to Linda Lake, re-enter the forest and climb a relatively steep trail. At the top, there is a loop trail that can take you around Linda Lake in either direction. Turning left (west) will bring you along the south side of Linda Lake and eventually to the start of Cathedral Lakes Trail.

If your trip ends at Linda Lake, you can retrace your steps to the Day Shelter or make a circuit by returning via Lake O'Hara Campground.

## **Cathedral Lakes to Cathedral Prospect and Monica Lake**

**Hiking time:** Linda Lake to Cathedral Lakes – 20 minutes, Cathedral Lakes to Cathedral Prospect – 1 hour.

**Length:** 1.3 km from west end of Linda Lake to Cathedral Lakes, 1.5 km from Cathedral Lakes to Cathedral Prospect.

**Elevation Gain:** 45 m to Cathedral Lakes, 230 m from Cathedral Lakes to Cathedral Prospect

From Linda Lake, Cathedral Lakes Trail meanders along through various small meadows. During peak flower season, the display of paintbrush, lousewort, and valerian in these meadows is breathtaking. The view south from Cathedral Lakes is equally spectacular, as the buttress of O'daray Mountain towers overhead. Many hikers make Cathedral Lakes their final destination, retracing their steps to Linda Lake and the Day Shelter via either the campground or Alpine Meadow Trail.

However, if you still have time and energy, the trip to Cathedral Prospect, with Monica Lake visible below, will not disappoint. Cathedral Prospect provides sweeping vistas of the entire Lake O'Hara area, while Monica Lake is nestled in a tiny alpine cirque beneath the ramparts of Cathedral Mountain, ringed by larch trees whose needles turn golden in the fall.

The trail follows the shoreline of Cathedral Lake for a sort while, then climbs gently along a small creek. You eventually enter the forest, then climb very steeply up beside a talus slope. The lessening of the grade is your clue that it's only a short traverse to Cathedral Prospect with its compelling views back toward the Lake O'Hara Basin.

From Cathedral Prospect, you can also see down to beautifully serene Monica Lake, which sits in the Cathedral Basin.