

Squamish: Canada's natural workout

B.C. Who needs a row machine and spinning class when you've got kayaking and mountain bikes?

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Squamish easily earns its title as "Canada's Outdoor Recreation Playground" with the many elements that provide a natural workout for this very active community.

The rowing machine is traded in for a sea kayaking tour with Coast River Kayak School. They provide the equipment, training, and the commentary for a paddle out toward Howe Sound, stopping to take in the breathtaking scenery that surrounds you — mountains, birds, kites from the nearby kite boarding school, rustic beaches, logging activity and the occasional seal popping up and down.

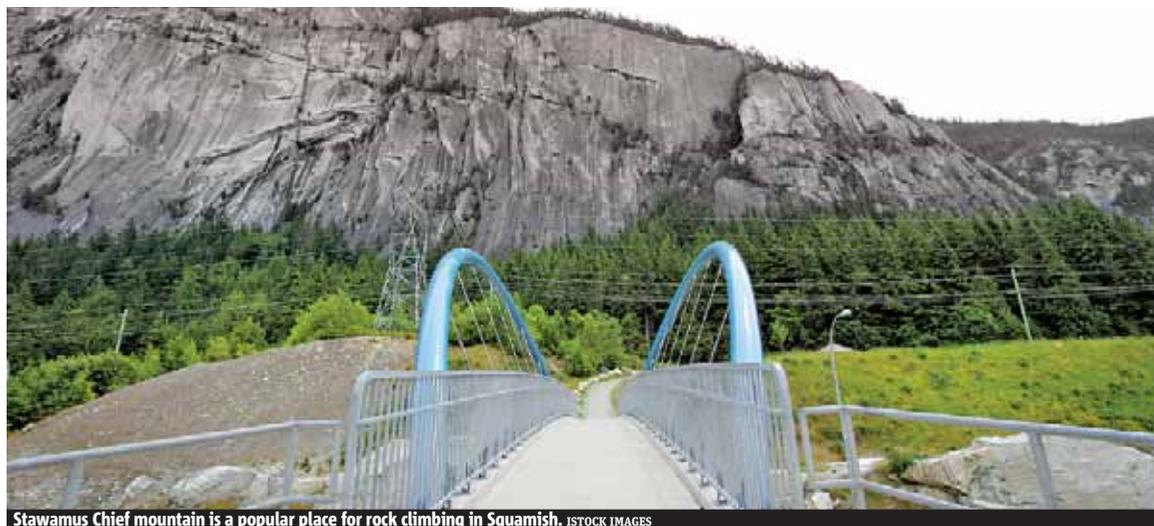
Hiking The Chief, Canada's largest granite monolith, offers a natural and scenic Stairmaster, featuring a steep hiking trail up over 600 metres of rocky terrain. Stone and wooden stairways take you up to ladders and chains before eventually opening up to the top to an unparalleled view of Squamish Valley.

The only better view you'll get is with the Sea to Sky Air team. Flying out of Squamish's tiny airport, tours up and down the valley are offered, and fliers can also have the opportunity to "take the wheel" with an expert flight instructor.

Spinning class can wait when you have the opportunity to rent bikes from the Sea to Sky Adventure Company (located inside the beautiful Squamish Adventure Centre),



Visitors to Squamish can choose between rapids and the slower moving parts of the Elaho and Squamish Rivers. CONTRIBUTED



Stawamus Chief mountain is a popular place for rock climbing in Squamish. ISTOCK IMAGES

which includes everything from mountain bikes, which can take on the many trails, to the more sedate cruisers,

perfect for a gentle cycle down riverside paths and through the downtown area. Cycle down to the Howe Sound Brewery,

which offers 30 plus types of craft beers.

Their once a month beer-pairing dinners have become

a huge hit. Don't worry about jumping on that bike again afterwards, as the brewpub is also a 20-room inn.

Jumping and bumping is something you do in an aqua fit class; replace that with the white water rafting rides offered by Canadian Outback Adventures.

The Elaho River tour takes brave participants down heaving Class IV rapids, bouncing and throwing up gallons of glacial water. The quieter parts of this river, and the Squamish River that it joins up with, allow for a break from the "Paddle hard" commands of the rugged raft guides. Guests of the Executive Suites Resort & Hotel can be picked up on site, and then return for drinks and gourmet food at The Living Room restaurant, or enjoy a meal in their kitchen-fit suite.

While the outdoors defines Squamish, the Britannia Mine Muse shows what happens underneath the scenic elements. This historic site allows visitors to go down the tunnels, learn about mining and enter into the massive mill building, where the ghosts of miners are felt. Kids love the oversized dump truck and play area, while adults are drawn in by this important piece of copper history.

Every workout needs fuel, and the perfect spot is the award winning Fergie's Café, located at the charming Sunwolf lodge, which includes 10 cabins and one larger building available for renting.

In 2014, the views from the top of Squamish become available to everyone with the Sea to Sky Gondola.

Set to open in July 2014, this highly anticipated addition will allow people to travel up 2,500 feet and enjoy a restaurant, retail shops and a suspension bridge. For those still looking for an active alternative, new hiking and biking trails will be added at the summit. For more information visit tourismsquamish.com.

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