

SO, YOU THINK YOU LIKE CAMPING?

Peachland, BC

As the first light of dawn filters through the window, I slowly open my eyes, as waking up to the sunrise is like being awoken by nature itself. The crisp, fresh air, with a hint of pine trees, immediately fills my lungs. I lay in my single bed inside an A frame tiny home cabin in Peachland, BC and take in my surroundings. The sun ascends over the Okanagan making the sky glow with bright hues of pink and orange. The sound of birds chirps softly in the distance, the wind rustles the trees, and I take in a deep breath as the world felt silent and still.

I had never stayed in an Airbnb before, let alone a tiny home A frame cabin; a small building with a tall, triangular roof that resembles the capital letter 'A'. However, I love camping so surely, I could handle camping in this tiny home. My friend, Brynn, and I both confidently under the same presumption, booked this Airbnb for four nights during the first week of August.



Rustic Sanctuary on the Hills

I had awoken with the sunrise at 5am on our first day there. Brynn was still asleep, so I made my way outside to take in my surroundings. This A frame cabin, adorned with wooden shingles and large windows, reflected the sky above; thin, pinkish-orange clouds stretched across the blue sky. The cabin's design extended to an outdoor seating area, where two white chairs sat nestled on a long wooden porch.



Tranquil View Upon Waking

Towering green pine trees submerge the surrounding area, with more cabins in the distance that dot the landscape. A brown, rustic fence encircles the property.

Inside the cabin is a cozy and rustic sanctuary. The room adorned with wood-panels, two large windows, and two single beds, made neatly with light-coloured bedspreads and decorative pillows, sat nestled on either side of a small, wooden nightstand. A large water dispenser on a small wooden table sits in the corner of the room.

Beyond the forest's edge, a vast body of water stretches out as far as the eye can see, mirroring the blue sky above. The water is surrounded by tall, tree-covered mountains, their slopes stretching on for miles.

To the left of the cabin, a bright blue wooden bench stands out against the earthy tones of the surroundings. Its weathered surface tells tales of years of countless memories made here. To the left of the bench, a black metal gazebo with a slanted roof offers shade and shelter. Underneath, there's a black barbecue grill with a small wooden table next to it, furnished with kitchen tools and supplies, from plates, pots, pans, and cutlery to a large white sink.

My moment of serenity is abruptly shattered as a blood curdling scream sliced through the air.

I run back to the cabin to find Brynn curled up near the head of her bed. Her face draining of color, turning a white that seemed almost ghostly. A green hue crept up from her neck, spreading across her cheeks. Eyes wide and unblinking, she points to her blanket now strewn into a ball near the foot of her bed.

All she can coarsely muster is, “There is something big under there.”

This small, rustic cabin is designed with the purpose of leaving one side of the structure open, at all times, especially throughout the night. With no AC unit and the muggy August air, there is no choice but to leave it open. The chance of encountering bugs and wildlife, Brynn and I knew going in, was bound to happen, but the possibility of bugs being in our beds was not something we had considered.

Brynn moves with a cautious and deliberate pace around the bed, her body tense with fear. As she nears the foot of the bed, she grabs the empty, flat cardboard box of White Claws from the floor. As she hands the box to me, she says, “On the count of three, I’m going to pull back the blanket and you fling whatever that is off my bed, okay?”

We stand on either side of the bed, rigid with anticipation. Brynn shifting her weight from foot to foot, unable to stay still, while I stood poised, arm raised high, fingers gripping the flat cardboard box. Our eyes fixed on the same point, unblinking and wide, trying to will the awaited moment into existence, as if sheer willpower could ensure my aim. On the third count, the blanket is hurled off the bed in a dramatic flourish, exposing a 3-inch insect with a thick, dark brownish red, oval-shaped body. Its wings unfurled, growing the creature in size as its antennae twitched.

My arm immediately coils back in towards my body as my breath catches in my throat. My body seemingly frozen, like a deer caught in headlights. My legs feel heavy and unresponsive as my jaw hits the floor below.

Brynn shrinks back in fear, as the bug rises from the bed, wings fluttering, and sets off into the trees.

Now horrified with the realization of this creature’s existence and that it could come back, we set out on a wine tour for the day in Summerland.

The Fitzpatrick Family Vineyards is a beautiful and charming stone building with a peaked roof, a winding pathway lined with greenery and purple flower beds. At the edge of the vineyard, mountains loom, their slopes dotted with trees, aligning with a vast body of water, that mirrors the clear blue skies above.

Later in the evening, we make our way to Sun-Oka beach in Summerland to set up our paddleboards. As I lay on the paddleboard reading my book, I glide gently across the surface of the lake. The calm waters stretched out before me, reflecting the golden hues of the setting sun. A sense of peace is upon me, as I hope for a calm and smooth night ahead.



Paddleboarding on a Serene Sunset Kissed Lake

Back at the cabin, the sky now a dark blue dotted with faint, twinkling stars and a moon that cast a faint glow. The day's bustle faded into a distant memory, as a serene stillness settled in.

Under the cool sheets and fluffed pillows, I continue to read my book. Secured to the bedside table, a book light illuminates the cabin, as Brynn and I are immersed within the stories of our books. The world outside seems to fade away into silence, only the faint chirping of crickets in the distance can be heard.

Suddenly, an overwhelming feeling that I needed to look out into the dark suddenly washes over me. I grab the book light as I sit up, the beam of light casting a bright, focused circle that directly exposes the same creature from before, this time on the floor between the two beds. I slowly move the light up, illuminating everything in its path to reveal a swarm of these creatures covering every square inch of the porch.

My eyes dart wildly, scanning for an escape route. Brynn and I immediately grab everything we could find in sight; blankets, pillows, phones, charging cords and water bottles. We make our way to my car, meticulously navigating the creatures. My 2002 Toyota Corolla had just enough space for us to spend the night, curled up against the reclined seats, doors locked, as if those creatures would grow thumbs and open the doors.

We spent the remainder of our trip graciously put up in a spare Airbnb cabin, this one with four enclosed walls, by the host. My trip to Peachland, though filled with beautiful memories of wine tours, laying on the beach, reading books while paddleboarding on lakes, walking along the strip of Peachland's town and exploring their farmers market and restaurants, exposed me to my limits on how much of an outdoors person I truly am. By facing and overcoming many different obstacles, this experience helped me to grow more independently. Peachland is a charming little town with beautiful beaches and scenic views that reestablished my appreciation for nature and my love for camping, as long as I am surrounded by four solid, enclosed walls.



Camping Rules



Peachland Farmers Market



*The Fitzpatrick
Family Vineyards*