

LAKE O'HARA AND LAKE OESA, YOHO NATIONAL PARK, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

The Lake O'Hara region of Yoho National Park is a restricted-access area: the 11+ kilometer access road is closed to public vehicles and bicycles, so the only way to get to Lake O'Hara is to hike in or ride the bus. As of July 2013, a seat on the bus could be reserved in advance, or a hiker could show up at the parking lot and be on stand-by in case one of the hikers with a reserved spot cancelled out. As we were unable to secure a spot on the bus, we hiked in. Bus-riders automatically get a spot on the bus back out from Lake O'Hara to the parking lot; walk-ins can also get a spot on the bus back out. It appears that, to make sure everyone leaves the Lake O'Hara area safely, they will take as many bus trips as needed to get the walk-ins back to the parking lot. For up-to-date information on this bus system, check the Yoho National Park website.

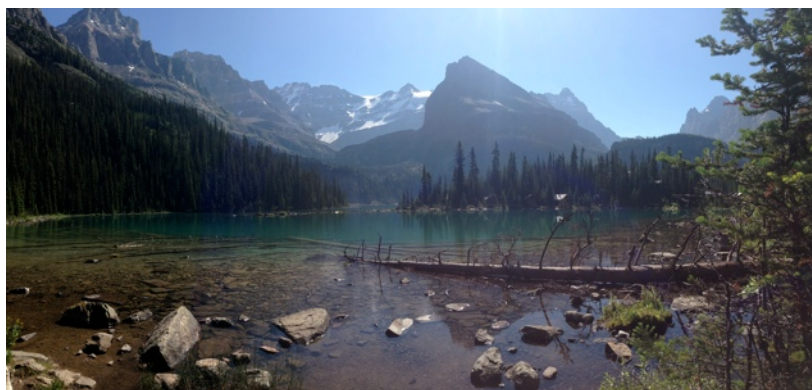
These four photos show some views on the hike up the access road to Lake O'Hara:



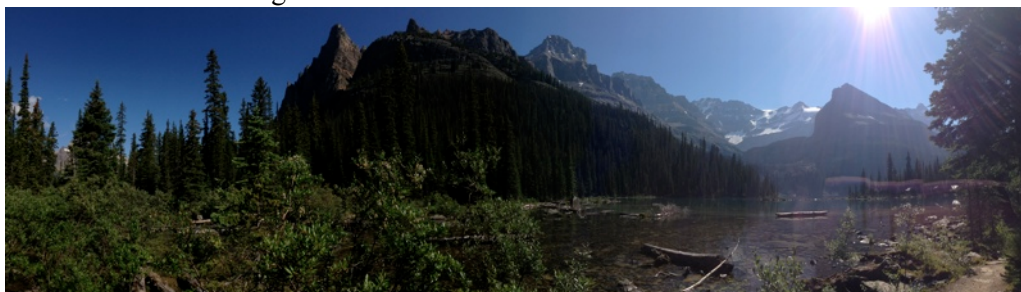
Panorama of nearby mountains on the way to Lake O'Hara:



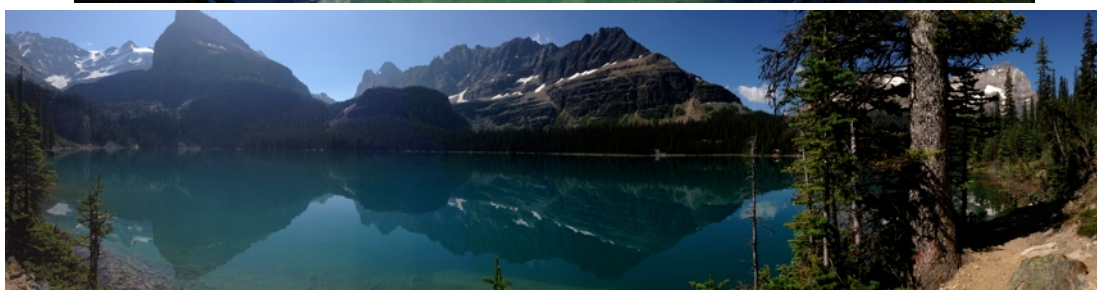
Looking across Lake O'Hara towards the valley where Lake Oesa is located after finally completing the hike up the access road:



Another photo of Lake O'Hara as we begin in the clockwise direction on the trail around the lake



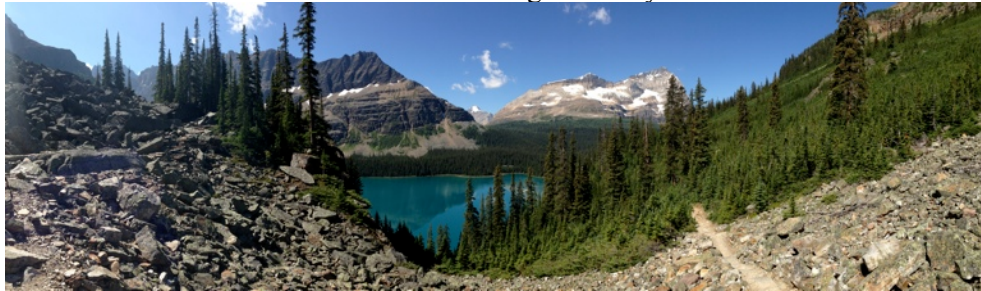
Two panoramas showing reflections of distant mountains in the lake as we continued on the trail:



After 0.8 km around the lake, we started on the trail to Lake Oesa, which climbs somewhat steeply through some short trees before reaching a rocky area:



Looking back down the trail towards Lake O'Hara after reaching the rocky area:



Looking up towards the Wiwaxy Peaks and Mount Huber:



We continued upward and onward towards Lake Oesa, passing by three small lakes on the way; this is Yukness Lake, with Yukness Mountain in the background:



Looking back towards Lake O'Hara, which is no longer visible, with Yukness Lake on the left:



Looking ahead on the trail towards Lake Oesa, which continues past the upper set of small waterfalls seen in the center of this photo:



Looking back down the trail where it passes through some short trees:



The waterfalls increase in height as we climb up the trail:



View looking towards Lake O'Hara from below these falls:



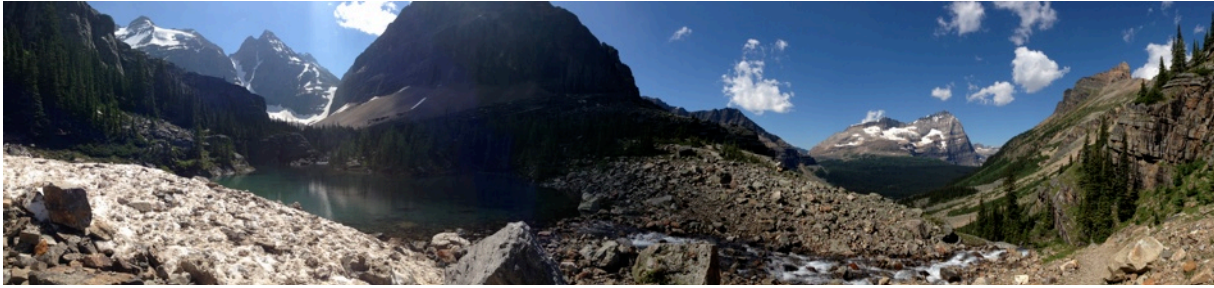
Looking down towards where the bigger waterfalls become smaller waterfalls/rapids from a little higher up than in the previous photo, with Lake O'Hara to the right in the photo and Yukness Lake just to the left of Lake O'Hara:



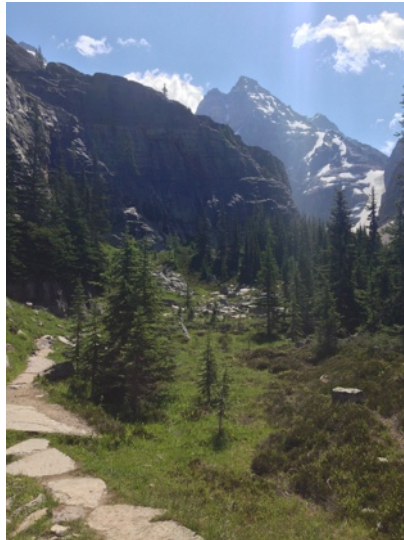
The larger waterfall at the top of the set of waterfalls is called Victoria Falls; it is located 1.7 km from where the Lake Oesa Trail turns off from the Lake O'Hara Circuit:



Just above these falls is Victoria Lake:



Past Victoria Lake, the trail crosses through a nice meadow:



Then, we reach Lefroy Lake:



The trail climbs through another small meadow with a few anemone wildflowers:



After half a kilometer from Victoria Falls, we reach a view of Lake Oesa:



Looking up to the left of Lake Oesa towards where the Huber Ledges Alpine Route comes down, and where climbers can access the Abbot Pass Hut:



Another view of Lake Oesa:



Looking back towards Lake O'Hara:



Next, we walked down the 0.2 km to the edge of the lake:



From here, we turned back as we wanted to catch the 4:30 bus out from the Lake O'Hara area; photo of Lake O'Hara on the way down the Lake Oesa Trail:



Heading back down the steeper stretch at the start of the Lake Oesa Trail:



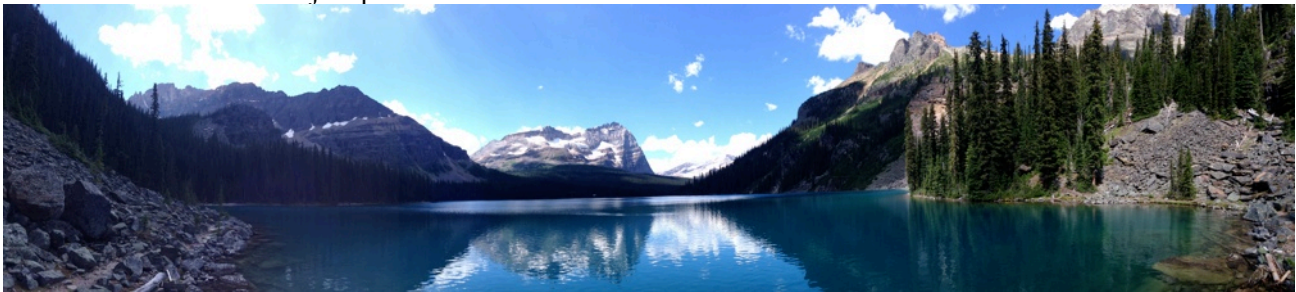
Upon reaching the Lake O'Hara Circuit, we continued clockwise around the lake; this photo was taken just before reaching Seven Veils Falls:



Looking up at the lower portion of Seven Veils Falls:



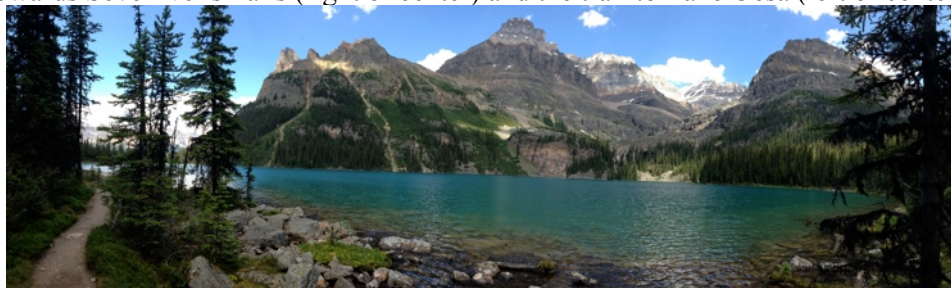
Panorama of Lake O'Hara from just past Seven Veils Falls:



Another panorama of Lake O'Hara from further along on the Lake O'Hara Circuit, with Odary Mountain to the left in the background and the Cathedral Mountain area to the right in the background:



Panorama looking towards Seven Veils Falls (right of center) and the trail to Lake Oesa (left of center):



We decided to take a quick side-trip to Mary Lake, which turned out to not be nearly as spectacular as the other lakes we had seen in this area, before returning to the Le Relais Day-Use Shelter to pick up the 4:30 bus:

