

LOWER BUGABOO FALLS, SPILLIMACHEEN, BRITISH COLUMBIA

The trailhead for the Lower Bugaboo Falls is located near the town of Spillimacheen. It is also accessible from the south by turning onto the Brisco Road from the town of Brisco; however, this requires more dirt road driving than is really necessary, as well as additional navigation through the maze of old logging roads in this area. From Spillimacheen, all you need to do is to turn west onto Westside Road and continue on this well-maintained dirt road for a few kilometers until you see the Lower Bugaboo Falls trail sign on the right. This easy 3 kilometer round-trip walk visits the impressive 25 meter tall falls, which has a natural bridge visible on the right side. About halfway through the hike, the trail forks at a switchback; the right fork goes along the river and leads to some impressive viewpoints of the falls, while the left fork leads through some berry bushes to the viewpoint at the top of the falls.

Looking north towards Golden from the Brisco Road:



This is the start of the Lower Bugaboo Falls trail:



The trail starts out very level and easy to follow:



There were numerous patches of blueberries alongside the trail, so we were very glad we had brought bear spray and we were very alert of our surroundings:



We took the right-side fork when the main trail forked, and got this nice view of the falls; notice that the natural bridge is just barely visible on the far right side of the falls:



Panorama of an impressive bend in the river below this lower viewpoint of the falls:



We continued up the river-side trail and reached this closer viewpoint of the falls; taking the river-side trail is certainly worthwhile to get this great view of the falls and the natural bridge on its right side:



Panorama of the river, with the falls on the left and the impressive bend in the river on the far right (the part of the river seen in the center of the photo is actually straight; the apparent bend is due to the distortion of a 270-degree panorama):



Past this viewpoint, the river-side trail becomes less well-defined, although it is certainly very passable. I would guess that many hikers who take the river-side trail do not have a map and do not continue past the closest lower viewpoint to the upper viewpoint of the falls:



The river-side trail soon gets steep and slippery as it ascends back towards the main trail; luckily, however, this stretch of trail is relatively short:



After re-joining the main trail, we continued out to the overlook of the falls. It appears that hikers can walk out to the point shown in the photo below to get pictures of the falls; however, given that the trail was steep here, with sheer cliffs on either side and not much to hold on to, I did not consider it worth the risk to get another photo of the falls from a different angle:



Here is the Lower Bugaboo Falls from above:



Another photo of the falls; note the natural bridge which the water is shooting through is clearly visible in the center of this photo:



There is a safer spot from which to get panorama photos of the upper part of the falls further along the trail:



The natural bridge can be seen to the right in this photo:



Looking up-river from just above the falls; there is no "Upper Bugaboo Falls" further up-river from here. Instead, the name "lower" is used to distinguish this waterfall from the main Bugaboo Falls in Bugaboo Provincial Park:



Looking over the cliff at all the water pouring over these falls. I think there have been times when there hasn't been so much water coming down this waterfall, but when we visited (August 2016) there seemed to be quite a bit of water:



Looking at the "safer" upper viewpoint of the falls:



From here, we headed back towards the parking area, following the main trail (which does not go right along the river). Note how much more overgrown this trail is than the river trail, although this trail is wider. Please be watchful for bears while hiking in this area:

