



Lake Oesa

## Lake Oesa

**Hiking time:** 1.5 to 2 hours

**Length:** 3.2 km one way

**Elevation Gain:** 245 m

If you have time to do only one hike at Lake O'Hara, this is it. On the Lake Oesa (oh-EE-sa) Trail, the journey is every bit as compelling as the destination. Here you will witness the stone handiwork of Lawrence Grassi, a legendary figure at Lake O'Hara. Hike beside a rushing waterfall, and pass along the shorelines of numerous alpine lakes.

To access Lake Oesa Trail, you need to first hike 0.8 km on the Lakeshore Trail. Start at the Warden's Cabin, head to the north (left) as you're facing the lake and cross the outlet bridge. The first trail junction you come to is the Wiwaxy Gap Trail. It climbs very steeply and gives you access to Lake Oesa via the Huber Ledges, however it is much more difficult than the lower Lake Oesa trail, accessed at the second Lake Oesa Trail sign further along the Lakeshore Trail, closer to Seven Veils Falls. Turn left (north) to head up and away from the Lakeshore Trail.

The Lake Oesa Trail follows a series of switchbacks to the top of the cliff that dominates the east end of Lake O'Hara. From here the trail continues across a wide slope of loose talus and scree. After passing through a short section of forest, the path ascends alongside Victoria Falls on stone steps fashioned by Lawrence Grassi.

Continuing on toward Lake Oesa, the trail meanders through grassy meadows ringed by quartzite cliffs. A final climb to the top of a short grassy slope brings the trail through a break in the cliffs, leading you onto the rocky slabs above Lake Oesa. (Yukness Ledges Alpine Route can be accessed from a trail junction at Victoria Lake. See the Lake O'Hara Alpine Circuit section for details.)

