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## 'The Last of Us': All the Alberta Travel Hotspots From the Hit Show

by [CHELSEA BRIMSTIN](#)

MARCH 17, 2023

5 minute read



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If, like us, you've spent every Sunday watching HBO's *The Last of Us* over the past two months and have been left with a Cordyceps-sized hole in your brain heart since the finale, we've got some good news for you. The heart-wrenching drama was actually filmed in various picturesque Alberta locations – which means your next getaway could be inspired by the video-game-turned-TV-series.

Sure, internet heartthrob Pedro Pascal (Joel) and the loveable, daring Bella Ramsey (Ellie) are most definitely the scene-stealers throughout each and every episode, but there's no denying that their zombie-evading scenes wouldn't be nearly as powerful without the backdrop of barren, post-apocalyptic cities.

While the show is technically set in the United States, it was actually shot exclusively in Alberta from 2021 onward. Scenes were filmed at 180 locations across the province, ranging from Grande Prairie to Waterton Lakes National Park, as [Global News](#) highlights.

See also: [Our predictions for where 'The White Lotus' season 3 may be filmed.](#)

The show, which closely follows the beloved video game, has been a thrilling adventure from start to finish, but savvy travelers have had fun with spotting some of the province's more notable landmarks, all of which were made to look like abandoned landscapes.

While the show reportedly used CGI and special effects to turn a lot of these Albertan locations into US cities, viewers have still been able to spot some familiar locales.

You can view the full list of locations via [Google Maps](#), or read on to plan your next *The Last of Us*-inspired road trip.

*Note: Spoilers may lie ahead.*



## Episode 1, "When You're Lost in the Darkness"

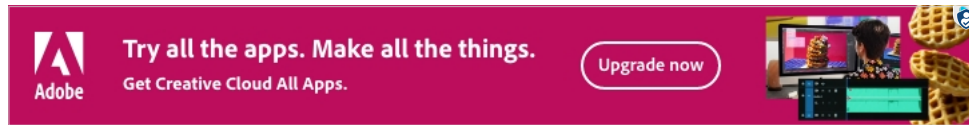
The devastating premiere episode of *The Last of Us* wasted no time moving viewers to tears, but (without too many spoilers) the premiere largely took place in downtown Calgary. The city was turned into a stand-in for Boston, and set designers transf

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an industrial area behind the Calgary Stampede grounds into the Boston “Quarantine Zone” (QZ).

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Alongside the downtown core, viewers were able to spot everything from Inglewood to the interiors of some Calgary high schools to Bow River. Plus, southern Alberta’s Fort McLeod was turned into downtown Austin, Texas for the early fungus outbreak scenes.

## Episode 2, “Infected”

Fans of *The Last of Us* are sure to remember the chilling cold open for “Infected” starring Christine Hakim as professor Ibu Ratna, who suggests “bombing” infected areas early on in the outbreak. That jarring scene was actually filmed at Southern Alberta Institute of Technology’s (SAIT) Senator Burns building. Many other rooms in the building also served as sets for the Jakarta hospital, from the main floor lounge to the basement.

Other parts of the show took place in modern day, starring beloved characters Joel, Tess (Anna Torv) and Ellie, who hike into a post-apocalyptic downtown Calgary. Plus, Alberta’s distinctive legislature building serves as a stand-in for the Massachusetts State House and more scenes from the episode were filmed in downtown Edmonton on Rice Howard Way.

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### Episode 3, “Long, Long Time”

I still can't think of *The Last of Us* episode three without feeling a few tears well behind my eyes. While there weren't many bone-chilling scenes of infected in “Long, Long Time,” the episode followed the intimate connection between Bill (Nick Offerman) and Frank (Murray Bartlett) – a perfectly devastating depiction of queer love.

The episode was primarily set at Bill's small-town-turned-compound, which was shot in Beachwood's High River. Throughout “Long, Long Time” we also see Bill head to High River's Mezzapa Gas Plant and a Lowes Home Improvement location in Calgary.

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## Episode 4, "Please Hold My Hand"

The opening setting of *The Last of Us* episode four features some moving scenery near Strathmore, where you can spot a CGI-created train dangling from Lethbridge's High Level Bridge/Viaduct.

When Ellie and Joel make their way to Kansas City and get blocked by a whole slew of cars jammed in a freeway tunnel, the actors were actually standing around Calgary's Airport Tunnel. Finally, the duo make their way into the alleyways of "Kansas City," where scenes were once again filmed in Calgary's downtown core. During the episode, Joel and Ellie even pass the iconic Globe Cinema.

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## Episode 5, "Endure and Survive"

Once again, I could cry thinking of brothers Henry (Lamar Johnson) and Sam (Keivonn Woodard), Joel and Ellie's new companions in *The Last of Us* episode five. Throughout "Endure and Survive," the group tries to escape Kansas City, and many of the scenes take place in underground tunnels, which were filmed in actual tunnels in the brewery district in Calgary.

The largest court building in Canada, the Calgary Courts Centre, serves as a US Post Office building in the episode, where an extreme resistance group meets and rebels against FEDRA (the Federal Disaster Response Agency). The episode's memorable battle was filmed at sets made specifically for the scene outside of the Calgary Film Centre and the devastating closing shot was filmed at Nanton's Ranchland Inn.

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## Episode 6, “Kin”

The sixth episode of *The Last of Us* sees Joel and Ellie in the middle of Wyoming in the dead of winter, where they need to cross the “River of Death.” The bridge that takes them over the river was the Canmore Engine Bridge, located at the mouth of the Canadian Rockies. Throughout the episode, Joel is on the hunt for his brother, Tommy, and he finds him at the gated city of Jackson, Wyoming – AKA Canmore’s Main Street.

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In Jackson, Joel and Tommy grab a drink at a Western bar, which was filmed at Heritage Park’s Wainwright Hotel in Calgary. Fun fact: Heritage Park itself is a vintage, old-timey replica town, making it a perfect filming locale for the scene. Also in “Kin,” Ellie and Joel eat at Olds’ Willow Lane Barn – a popular special events venue.

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Later on in episode six, Joel and Ellie head to what seems to be a new compound, but it was actually also filmed at SAIT.

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## Episode 7, “Left Behind”

The most moving scenes in *The Last of Us* episode seven take place at northwest Calgary’s Northland Village Mall. The mall, which steals the spotlight in “Left Behind,” has actually been closed since December 2021, as it’s being redeveloped into an open-air shopping centre.

This worked perfectly for set designers, who were able to gut, rebuild and transform the mall into a run-down, abandoned shopping centre. They were even able to bring in a retired merry-go-round from Calgary’s Spruce Meadows.



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## Episode 8, “When We Are in Need”

The most disturbing episode of the season, “When We Are in Need,” brings viewers to one of the southernmost spots in Alberta: Waterton Lakes National Park. The eerie setting takes place in the park, which is meant to be the town of Silver Lake, Colorado.

Since the episode was filmed in the winter, most of the park was boarded up for the season, which made it the perfect backdrop for the twisted episode eight.

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## Episode 9, "Look for the Light"

The high-stakes finale of *The Last of Us* once again follows Ellie and Joel, but this time they arrive in Salt Lake City, Utah and head to an abandoned hospital. The scenes at the hospital were filmed at the Queen Elizabeth II Ambulatory Care Centre in Grand Prairie.



After a shocking final feud, Ellie and Joel escape, making their way back to Wyoming when their car breaks down. That scene sees the pair looking out on Barrier Lake in Kanaskis. Filmed on-site at the Calgary Zoo with the help of some special effects, another memorable scene takes place when Ellie stumbles upon a roaming giraffe.

So, if you're a *The Last of Us* fan looking to book your next trip, you should have no problem finding a few destinations to head to in Alberta.



You may also like: [10 top travel trends we predict will be everywhere in 2023.](#)



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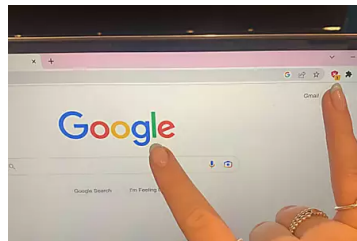
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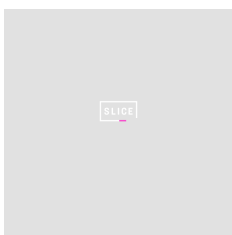


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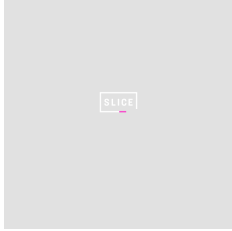
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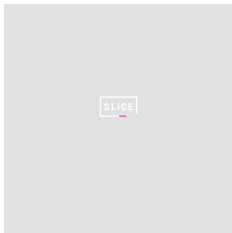
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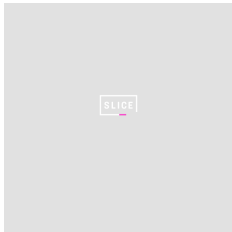
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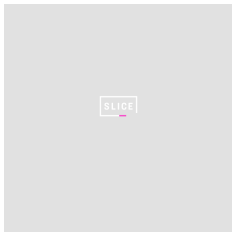
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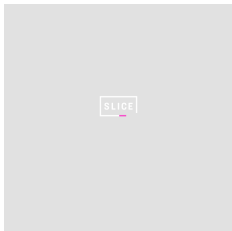
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