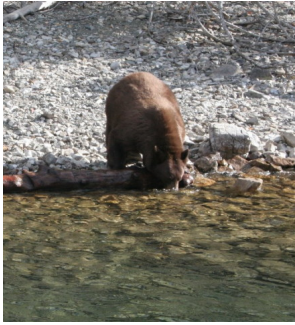


The Hike to Crypt LakeAlmost

Written by

Sunday, 24 September 2006 16:00



Yesterday we bought tickets to take a boat ride to a launch across the lake so we could take a day hike (17.2 km. - 10.7 mi.) up 2214 ft. to Crypt Lake. The guide map said it was a moderate hike. Okay, so in my brain here is how I interpreted moderate: We downhill ski. We ski the blue square hills (intermediate) and an occasional single black diamond (expert) but we never ski double black diamond (real expert). I had this convoluted idea that moderate would be equivalent to skiing an intermediate hill.

Lesson #1 – Susan, don't compare downhill skiing to hiking!

Lesson # 2 – there is a huge difference between taking a stroll up and down paved hills in Mission and hiking a flipping mountain in Alberta!

The brochure indicated that the trip to Crypt Lake and back was supposed to take 6 hours! It failed to mention that it would take six hours if you are an experienced hiker, in top shape. And to complicate things, today they cut back the boat runs from three to two meaning instead of picking us up at 6:30 PM giving us 8 hours and 15 minutes, they were picking us up at 4:15 giving us 6 hours....period!

Lesson # 3 – Don't believe anything you read in a brochure! They lie!

We packed a lunch, included some snacks and took some water with us. Rick was kind enough to carry the back pack which wasn't light. We had on good hiking shoes and wore layers (which came off pretty quickly) and the weather was perfect. We were in "Bear Country" so we hollered and sang while we climbed.

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Lesson # 4 – There is no such thing as a light back pack!

Well, we managed to hike about 5 ½ kilometers in three hours before we had to turn around to head back. Our legs were like rubber, I was sweating buckets and where the heck did my feet go? Oh ya, there they were still attached but definitely with minds of their own and we only had another 5 ½ kilometers to go! Downhill should be easier.

Lesson # 5 – Downhill is even more challenging especially when there are steep declines (which there were) and your lower extremities have gone on strike!

Anyway there was one other couple (experienced, fit hikers) Douglas and Carolyn from Canmore who made it to Crypt Lake and they caught up with us about 4 kilometers from the end. We all hiked back together and took a detour at about the 3 km. mark to see Hell-Roaring Falls.

Lesson # 6 – Hell-Roaring Falls trail should be renamed Roaring Falls via one Helluva Trail. It was quite possibly the most brutal trail of all!

We arrived at the dock with about 30 minutes to spare and all of us took off our shoes and plunged our feet into the lake. We were ecstatic to not be hiking anymore and not to have encountered a bear on the trail even though we did come across a huge pile of bear poop. About 25 minutes later, Doug suddenly got quite excited because along came a cinnamon coloured black bear to the lakeshore, not more than 30 feet away! Mr. Bear gave us the once over and decided we weren't worth the trip on the dock, drank from the lake and sauntered off into the bush just as the boat was approaching. Our hike was challenging (to say the least) the scenery was spectacular, and Mr. Bear was the icing on the cake. Despite the fact that we may never be able to move again, we had a fabulous day!

Oh ya, one more lesson. Make sure you are conditioned BEFORE you take on a 17.2 km. uphill mountainous hike!