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Hop On, Hop Off — The Best Way To See A New Destination

by TFB EDITORS on AUGUST 14, 2012

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The first time we hopped on and off was in New York, but it would not be the last.

We were spending a couple of days in New York before we embarked on a cruise to Bermuda and we wanted to see as much of the city as possible in the little time we had. A tour was what we needed, but a tour of the most important tourist destinations in the short time we had?

How would that be possible?

Then we discovered the joy of the hop on, hop off tour. We booked a three-day pass with [Gray Line](#) and packed the next three days with all the many attractions to which we could drag our weary bodies. We hopped on the ubiquitous double-decker buses and hopped off whenever we saw something interesting. There were always more buses coming by and it was an easy, fun, and fairly cheap way to see the city.

We loved every minute of it.

So when we set out across the [Rainbow Bridge](#) to the Canadian side of Niagara Falls with a long list of attractions we wanted to see, the first thing we did was to buy tickets for the [Peplemover buses](#). These comfortable buses come by about every 20 minutes and stop at all the major attractions in the area.



They also drive up and down the [Niagara Parkway](#) to access the attractions, which is a beautiful attraction by itself. You should spend some time just riding up and down this road and enjoying the incredible view of the falls. Be aware, however, that the buses only run though the middle of October, when many of the attractions in Niagara Falls shut down for the fall and winter. And be sure to hop off at the "[Maid of the Mist](#)" for a cruise up to the incredible view of the

thundering falls and the Whirlpool Aero car, a tram that takes you right across the river hundreds of feet in the air. We loved both!

We again went international with the hop on, hop off concept when we stopped in Victoria, British Columbia, on one of our cruises. [Big Bus Victoria](#) takes you all over town to all of the major attractions. Have lunch at Barb's Fish and Chips and afternoon tea at the gorgeous and historical Empress Hotel, and then tour [Craigdarroch Castle](#). It's an incredible place!



In Victoria, we hopped off the bus for a tour of the incredible Craigdarroch Castle.



We discovered this after a hop off at Stanley Park, Vancouver.

From Victoria, we sailed on to Vancouver and hopped on our favorite mode of transportation once again. The [Vancouver Big Bus](#) took us all over town as we hopped on and off. We especially loved the [Vancouver Aquarium](#), where you should be sure to see the 4D movie in the theater. We also enjoyed a harbor cruise where we watched the incredible sunset and dined on delicious food.

All of these experiences were wonderful in every way. We loved the ease and convenience of hopping off wherever we wanted to spend more time, then hopping back on for an effortless trip to the next stop.

But the ultimate hop on, hop off experience had to be in Amsterdam.

Visiting the "Venice of the North" for a few days before we embarked on a river cruise in Europe, we mulled over the best way to see the city in the least amount of time. There were no hop on, hop off bus tours, but we quickly realized we could utilize the many canal tours in the same way.

We bought a two-day pass with [City Discovery](#) and spent the entire time traversing the canals of Amsterdam. Luckily for us, the canal boats stopped right at the IJ River in front of the [Movenpick Hotel](#) where we were staying, so we just hopped on every morning and spent the entire day seeing the city. I think we went over every single canal. We particularly enjoyed seeing all the houseboats berthed in the canals and the people who lived on them just going about their business. The sheer number of bikes in Amsterdam is also amazing, and it was fun to see people of every age biking everywhere. We peeked at the [Red Light District](#) (during the day – we weren't brave enough to venture there at night), tasted cheese and the scrumptious local pancakes in [Dam Square](#), and saw a windmill in the heart of the city.



Canal tour boats provided the perfect way to see the beauty that is Amsterdam.

It was the perfect way to see Amsterdam.

In fact, it was the perfect way to see New York, Niagara Falls, Victoria, B.C. and Vancouver.

It's probably the perfect way to see many other places.

What about you? Are you a fan of the hop on, hop off concept?