

# TRIP OF A LIFE TIME

*A guided adventure in British Columbia's  
Chilcotin Mountains takes some unexpected  
twists, turns and gravity-defying tumbles.*

I CAN'T BREATHE—A SMALL DRAWBACK IN THE grand scheme of things, really. I should be thinking about my feet hanging off the rocky ledge, and definitely should be panicked that the only thing keeping me from falling into the rushing water below is the guide's tenuous grip on my hydration pack: He's pulling so hard that the chest strap is choking me. But all I'm thinking about is breathing. Or, not breathing, as it were.

Three days ago, I was immersed in the pre-trip minutia of finding spandex that weren't worn through to the point of indecency and deciding on the ideal number of socks to bring. I had planned for everything—except the prospect of dangling off the edge of a cliff.

I wanted the trip of a lifetime, but one where I wouldn't have to ask what day it was when the plane landed—something along the lines of a three-day weekend of a lifetime. Chris Winter, owner of Big Mountain Bike Adventures and our trip's Willy Wonka (minus the creepiness), devised a plan with Tyax Air Services that combined the best of two worlds: All-day backcountry riding with the luxury of guides who would set up our tents, make incredible dinners in the middle of nowhere, and keep us from getting eaten by bears.

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