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# PLACES IN CALGARY THAT YOU MUST NOT MISS



Photographs by Christina Ryan

emons:

## 91 The Secret Seed Pod

*Surprise at the top of the hill*

The only people who know about the secret Seed Pod in Prairie Winds Park are those who have climbed the path to the top of the toboggan hill to a seating area known as “the lookout.” There’s an otherworldly bronze sculpture here that’s deliberately invisible from anywhere else in the park. The intriguing piece by Incipio Modo sculptors Danira Miralda and Edward Beltran has two parts.

The pod is a concrete oval sunk into the ground that serves as a gathering place, with an access ramp and seating platforms. The centre of the pod is an oval pit filled with black Rundle Rock that visually anchors the seed sculpture and provides drainage for snow and rain. The climbable seed sculpture is partially embedded here. Cast in silicone bronze with polished edges, it references the seed head of a native prairie wildflower. The artists were inspired by the multicultural, multi-faith community surrounding the park and were charged with creating a public art piece that represents everyone. Seeds are the beginning of everything, they reasoned. Seeds are blown by the prairie winds, land somewhere, take root and grow – a metaphor for new immigrants.

While you contemplate who you are and hope to become, remember that this park is close to the airport. So you’re not allowed to fly kites, drones, model planes or even balloons. If you could use a drone, though, you’d see that the two-part artwork looks like the silhouette of a seed pod and stem drawn on the hill.

The redeveloped park is known for its city-run toboggan hill and its attempts to be accessible to all ages, cultures and abilities. There’s a tandoori oven in the barbecue area, an accessible playground and a wading pool, lazy river, and spray park. There’s even a playscape with a zipline amid tennis and basketball courts and a cricket pitch. Or you can simply sit and enjoy the unexpected, sweeping city views.

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**Address** 223 Castleridge Boulevard NE, Calgary, AB T3J 3J8, +1 (403) 268-2489, [www.calgary.ca/csps/recreation/public-art/prairie-winds-park-public-art-project.html](http://www.calgary.ca/csps/recreation/public-art/prairie-winds-park-public-art-project.html) |  
**Getting there** CTrain to McKnight-Westwinds (Blue Line) | **Hours** Daily 5am–11pm |  
**Tip** The city’s Parks and Pathways Bylaw prohibits sledding in all but 22 of its parks. To avoid the \$100 fine, find designated hills, like St. Andrew’s Heights, that are steep, fast and long (2504 13 Avenue NE, [www.calgary.ca](http://www.calgary.ca))

