

# Canada

Canada is a country with a great diversity of characteristics. You will come to find that Canadians are very friendly and welcoming people of many different cultures, nationalities and religions.

## Facts about Canada

- Canada is the second largest country in the world, with 9,971,000 square kilometers of land. Ottawa is the capital.
- The population is 35,749,00. With only three people per square kilometer, Canada has the fourth lowest population density in the world.
- Vancouver Canada is tied with Zurich Switzerland for the highest quality of life of any city in the world.
- According to the United Nations Human Development Index, Canada has the highest quality of life in the world.
- Canada has the ninth biggest economy of the world
- Contrary to popular opinion, Canada does not own the North Pole. In fact, the North Pole is not owned by any country. It is believed, however, that Santa Claus is from Canada.
- Canada is the world's eighth biggest trader.
- Of all of the world's producers of natural gas, copper, zinc, nickel, aluminum, and gold, Canada is in the top five.
- Canada is the home of many great inventions, including: basketball, the electric light bulb, the electric range, the electron microscope, standard time, the television, the telephone, and the zipper.
- Canada is the fifth largest energy producer.
- Canada has the world's highest tertiary education enrollment

## Founding Peoples

Canada is a founded by 3 separate nations, each with a distinct identity preserved for over 300 years. The founding nations are the Indigenous people, French, and English. The relationships and connections between each of the founding nations have evolved with every interaction and event, thus shaping Canada's current identity.

“ Indigenous peoples” are those whose family lived in Canada before the arrival of European explorers, pioneers and settlers. There are three different groups:

- First Nations (sometimes called “Indians”);
- Inuit; and
- Métis.

“French Canadians” are the descendants of French settlers and include Acadians, Quebecers and people in smaller French-speaking communities across Canada.

Most “English Canadians” are descendants of English, Welsh, Scottish and Irish settlers, soldiers and migrants who came to Canada from the 17th to the 20th century. Generations of these pioneers helped to bring British political institutions and traditions to Canada.

Most Canadians were born in Canada and came from the original founding peoples. However, over the past 200 years, many newcomers have helped to build and defend this country's way of life. Today, many ethnic and religious groups live and work in peace as proud Canadians. Until the 1970s, most immigrants came from European countries. Since then, the majority have come from Asian countries. Approximately 20 percent of Canadians were born outside Canada. In Toronto, Canada's largest city, this number is over 45 percent. Immigrants like you are a valued part of Canada's multicultural society.

More information on the Canadian people, is available in the [Discover Canada](#) guide.

## Language

Canada has two official languages: English and French. All official federal government services, publications and documents are available in both languages.

## Canadian Values

Every society has values that are important to it and that sets it apart from others. Canadian society is no different from other societies in this respect. There are values that are important to Canadians that may not be fully shared by other societies. Many Canadians feel that its values are what make Canada an attractive place to live.

Canada has long been recognized for its peace-keeping role around the world. Canadians are seen as polite, sometimes too polite. We often say sorry or excuse me even when other people bump into us.

Canadian values include freedom, respect for cultural differences and a commitment to social justice. We are proud of the fact that we are a peaceful nation.

Canada is a large country with a small population. We have developed a unique federal style of government that is based on compromise and co-existence. We value our democracy, and every citizen is encouraged to do his or her share. Our laws are based on our democratic values. Canadian values include:

**Equality**—We respect everyone’s rights. Everyone has the right to speak out and express ideas that others might disagree with. Governments must treat everyone with equal dignity and respect—two other fundamental Canadian values.

**Respect for cultural differences**—We try to understand and appreciate the cultures, customs and traditions of all Canadians, whether they were born in Canada or came here from another country.

**Freedom**—As Canadians, we enjoy basic freedoms, such as freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of religion and freedom of peaceful assembly.

**Peace**—We are proud of our non-violent society and our international role as peacekeepers.

**Law and order**—We respect democratic decision making and the “rule of law.” We promote due process so that the courts and the police treat everyone fairly and reasonably. We ensure that our elected governments remain accountable to Canadians.

**Contentious issues** - Although Canadians are proud of their country we recognize that certain factors have not been fully resolved; including rights of the indigenous people, climate change, child poverty and homelessness. Progress has been made and efforts to resolve these, and other contentious issues, continue to be a priority for both federal and provincial governments as well as institutions of civil society.

## ***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***

In terms of explicit rules, women and men have equal standing and equal status in Canadian society. Both men and women may participate in political life, serve in government, own and dispose of property,

## **Religion**

### **Religious Beliefs.**

Religious affiliation is more prevalent than religious observance, though this varies by ethnic and religious group.

Often new Canadians will make special efforts to maintain their religious observances as part of the process of retaining their ethnic or cultural identity.

An exception is the increase in the observance of traditional religious practices among First Nations peoples in recent decades, which should be seen both as a spiritual revitalization and as part of the historic process of reasserting their ethnic and political identities in Canada.

## **Canadian Human Rights Act**

Canadian law protects against discriminatory practices based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

## **CANADIAN MULTICULTURALISM**

In 1971, Canada was the first country in the world to adopt multiculturalism as an official policy. Canadian multiculturalism is fundamental to our belief that all citizens are equal. Multiculturalism ensures that all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry and have a sense of belonging.

Read more - <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/citizenship.asp>

## **CELEBRATIONS**

### **Canada Day**

Canada Day is celebrated on July 1st of each year and is the anniversary of the day in 1867 when Canada officially became an independent country. There are many festivities that happen all across the country in celebration of our nation's birthday.

### **Thanksgiving**

Thanksgiving is a tradition that is celebrated each year on the second Monday of October. As the name Thanksgiving suggests, this holiday is for giving thanks close to the harvest season.

## Remembrance Day

On November 11th of each year, initially services were held across Canada to remember the lives of the armed forces that were lost in the First World War. This has since been expanded to include remembrance of all members of the armed forces who have died in the line of duty. Pins that look like poppies are distributed weeks before Remembrance Day and are worn over the left side of the chest, over the heart, as a symbol of remembrance in Canada.

## Halloween

On October 31st of every year, children dress up in costumes and knock on doors in the neighborhood saying "Trick or Treat" and collecting candy from the person who answers the door. Lots of people carve pumpkins and decorate their homes to look scary.

## ONTARIO HOLIDAYS

### New Year's Day

January 1

### Family Day

Third Monday in February

### Good Friday

Friday before Easter Sunday

### Easter Monday \*

Government employees only

### Victoria Day

Monday before May 25

### Canada Day

July 1

### Civic Holiday

First Monday in August

\* not an official stat holiday.

### Labour Day

First Monday in September

### Thanksgiving Day

Second Monday in October

### Christmas Day

December 25

### Boxing Day

December 26

## CANADIAN FLAGS AND SYMBOLS

National Anthem 'O Canada'

Royal Anthem 'God Save the Queen'



Canadian Flag - a flag featuring a red field with a stylized red 11 pointed maple leaf on a white square at its centre.

Canada is often symbolically connected with three key images - hockey, the beaver, and the dress uniform of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

## **YOUR NEW COMMUNITY**

Newcomers are important to the development of a strong community. There are many ways to meet people in your community and to learn more about the Canadian culture and Canadians.

The Province of Ontario has a population of 13 million and includes people from 200 countries, speaking 130 languages.

Toronto is the capital of Ontario.

The County of Lanark is a rural community that has a multitude of resources and facilities including cottage and resort areas, villages reminiscent of Canada's rural traditions, industrial attractions, natural parks and beautiful scenery.

The towns of Perth, Smiths Falls, Mississippi Mills and Carleton Place are the municipal centers in the area and provide resources and activities including;

- Educational Interests
- Youth Activities
- Activities for Seniors
- Faith Communities
- Cultural Groups

### Town of Perth

Perth is a World Heritage Destination a short distance from the Nation's Capital. People of the region have access to all the world-class amenities of a major centre. At the same time, they enjoy the relaxed lakeside lifestyle. Generations of residents and visitors have built a strong community spirit that has cultivated small business, events and festivals that speak to our ancestral and geological heritage

## Cultural Attractions

Perth Citizen Band  
Stewart Park  
Town Crier  
Mammoth Cheese  
Festivals  
Perth Museum - National Historic Site  
International Friendship Fountain - Tay Basin  
Big Ben Park  
Perth Studio Theatre

## Town of Smith Falls

The Town of Smiths Falls offers a lifestyle centered around its affordable housing, range of educational facilities, medical & municipal services, recreation, shopping, leisure activities and other services.

## Cultural Attractions

The Rideau Canal, which runs through the community at its mid-point between Ottawa and Kingston, was designated in 2007 by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.  
Rideau Canal Museum  
Heritage House Museum  
Station Theatre - Home of Live community theatre

## Mississippi Mills

Mississippi Mills is an outstanding urban and rural community that is recognized for its natural and architectural beauty, high quality of life and respect for its heritage and environment. In its vision of the future, the community will be seen to promote and manage balanced economic growth.

## Cultural Attractions

Dr. James Naismith (inventor of basketball) Museum  
Almonte Celtfest- celtic entertainment  
Mill of Kintail  
Puppets Up! - a family festival  
Light Up the Night

## Town of Carleton Place

Carleton Place has emerged in recent years as a very popular place to live with a high quality of life, excellent schools and an abundance of recreational and cultural opportunities.

Carleton Place's close proximity to the National Capital region, the fourth largest metropolitan area in the country, provides access to a large pool of skilled workers, which makes it a strategic location for business.

### Cultural Attractions

The Carleton Place Canoe Club was founded in 1893 and it is the oldest canoe club in Canada.

The Bridge Street Bazaar hosted annually by the Carleton Place BIA (Business Improvement Association) is a street fair, which occurs on the Civic Holiday weekend.

Classic Car Show

### References

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/citizenship.asp>

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/welcome/index.asp>

<http://www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1356631760121/1356631904950>

<http://movetolanark.ca/canadianculture.cfm>