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## **Oh CANADA!**

*Welcome! Bienvenue! Recepción! 欢迎 Willkommen Benvenuto 歡迎 환영  
boa vinda привітати*

Every city has a story and Toronto's is written by the people - in several languages, in poetry, in song, in sidewalk art, in restaurant menus, in architectural blueprints, in scientific discoveries - even in legislation. Toronto is a city built with and for the limitless imaginations of the people who come here to live and those who come here to visit.

Literally, Toronto's cultures offer an unparalleled variety of spice but it takes fusion to a level far beyond cuisine. Find beautiful architecture of the city's settlers alongside modern, sleek, gold-tinted skyscrapers. They are modest but celebrate voraciously with over 1,000 festivals every year. If you're the kind who likes the unexpected, you'll fall in love with Toronto.

What do Torontonians love about Toronto? That's a long list but topping it would be their diversity. Two transit tokens can take you from one country to another, passing along the way through the quaint neighborhoods that make up their intimate metropolis. Toronto is a place of energy exchange. Leave your mark, find yourself changed. Sound too much like your yoga instructor? Visit and you'll see things differently too – maybe from the perspective of a hundred cultures.

Toronto, on the north shore of Lake Ontario, is the largest of Canada's vibrant urban centres. It is the hub of the nation's commercial, financial, industrial, and cultural life, and is the capital of the Province of Ontario. People have lived here since shortly after the last ice age, although the urban community only dates to 1793 when British colonial officials founded the 'Town of York' on what then was the Upper Canadian frontier. That backwoods village grew to become the 'City of Toronto' in 1834, and through its subsequent evolution and expansion Toronto has emerged as one of the most liveable and multicultural urban places in the world today. Home to more than 2 million people, the city is the key to one of North America's most vibrant regions, the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). 4.5 million Canadians live in the GTA, the cultural, entertainment, and financial capital of the nation. The city is also the seat of the Ontario government.

### **Toronto overview**

A continental gateway and a crossroads for the world, Toronto, Canada's business capital ranks alongside economic powerhouses such as New York, Boston and Chicago.

The city's remarkably diverse economy creates unlimited business opportunities. This is a city of innovation and ingenuity, a leader in everything from proteomics to debit cards. Toronto is the most diversified economy of any city-region in North America. Toronto ranks in the top 5 for more than 16 sectors compared to other North American cities and comparable to only Chicago and Boston each named 11 times in the top five cities.

**Languages Spoken:** There are two official Canadian languages – English and French. In addition to these, the top 5 languages spoken in Toronto are Chinese, Italian, Tamil, Portuguese and Spanish.

### **GETTING THERE**

**By Air:** Toronto Lester B Pearson International Airport is Canada's principal airport was named in honour of Lester B. Pearson, Canada's 14<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister, and is located 27 kilometres (17 miles) west of downtown Toronto.

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**Flight Times**

Atlanta. GA	2hrs. 20 min
Boston. MA	1 hr. 30 min
Buffalo. NY	55 min
Calgary. AB	4 hrs
Chicago. IL	1 hr. 30 min
Cleveland. OH	1 hr. 10 min
Dallas. TX	3 hrs. 25 min
Detroit. MI	40 min
Halifax. NS	2 hrs
Los Angeles. CA	5 hrs. 20 min
Miami. FL	3 hrs
Minneapolis. MN	2 hrs. 10 min
Montreal. QC	1 hr. 10 min
New York. NY	1 hr. 30 min
Ottawa. ON	1 hr
Philadelphia. PA	1 hr. 30 min
Pittsburgh. PA	1 hr
San Francisco. CA	5 hrs. 20 min
Vancouver. BC	5 hrs. 10 min
Washington. DC	1 hr. 30 min
Winnipeg. MB	2 hrs. 30 min
Frankfurt. Germany	7 hrs. 25 min
Hong Kong. China	16 hrs. 30 min
London. England	7 hrs
Osaka. Japan	13 hrs. 10 min
Paris. France	7 hrs. 25 min

**By Rail:** Toronto is served by the **VIA Rail System**, the network that provides all rail service throughout Canada (with connections to the **Amtrak** system through Niagara Falls, New York). **Union Station** is located on Front Street, between Bay and University (across the street from the Fairmont Royal York Hotel). The station is right on **Toronto's subway line**, and is within walking distance of **Rogers Centre** (formerly Skydome), the **CN Tower**, the financial district and many downtown hotels, shops and restaurants.

**By water:** Toronto offers docking facilities and complete services for boaters. For information on harbour facilities, call the **Toronto Port Authority** at 416-863-2000

**By Road:** Several highways, including 2, 401, 407 and the Queen Elizabeth Way, link surrounding cities to Toronto. Nearest Canada-U.S. border crossings are at Niagara Falls, Fort Erie and Windsor.

### From the US

From	Kilometres	Miles
Atlantic City. NJ	912	567
Boston. MA	906	566
Buffalo. NY	154	96
Chicago. IL	854	534
Cincinnati. OH	802	501
Cleveland. OH	476	297
Detroit. MI	378	236
New York. NY	851	529
Philadelphia. PA	813	508
Pittsburgh. PA	518	324
Rochester. NY	274	171
Syracuse. NY	390	244
Washington. DC	832	517

### CLIMATE

A gloriously all-weather destination, Toronto has different experiences in store for you no matter the time of year. Situated on the northern shore of Lake Ontario, Toronto is one of the southernmost cities in Canada. In fact, the latitude is very close to that of northern California. As a result, Toronto enjoys a moderate climate with warm springs and beautiful summers.

**May Average = 12°C, 54°F    May High = 18°C, 64°F    May Low=6°C, 43 °F**

**What to pack:** A light jacket and umbrella in case of fresh, rainy days.

Up to date weather information is available at: [www.mytorontomeeting.com](http://www.mytorontomeeting.com)

### **CURRENCY**

Toronto offers visitors world-class products without world-class prices. A favorable exchange rate doesn't hurt either. So be sure to pack an extra bag for the loot you'll want to bring back home.

- Toronto's currency is the Canadian Dollar
- For denominations under five dollars we use coins - some we've even given cute names: the loonie (\$1), the toonie (\$2)
- US dollars are accepted in most Toronto establishments, although you'll receive change in Canadian funds and exchange rates will differ from merchant to merchant
- You'll find cash machines/ATMs in most banks, hotels and shopping centres
- Travelers cheques and credit cards are accepted at most (but not all) major retailers
- Currency exchange is available at banks and kiosks throughout the city and at the airport

**Currency Converter:** To find out the value of your money in Canada, use the currency converter at: [www.mytorontomeeting.com](http://www.mytorontomeeting.com)

### **GETTING AROUND THE CITY**

**Public Transit:** Explore Toronto on one of North America's finest transportation systems – the **Toronto Transit Commission (TTC)**. Toronto's public transit system is the second largest in North America and has the highest per capita ridership rate on the continent. More than 2,400 subway vehicles, buses and streetcars make it easy for more than 1.4 million business riders to travel throughout the city daily. With easy to navigate subways, buses and streetcars, getting around the city is a snap. When using the TTC a single fare will take you anywhere in the city on a one way trip. You can freely transfer between subway, streetcar and bus, but make sure you obtain a transfer when and where you pay your fare. On buses and streetcars, exact change is required.

Every subway car is equipped with emergency strips which, when activated, will alert transit authorities to medical or other emergencies

All subway platforms have designated waiting areas (DWA's) equipped with video surveillance and two-way speaker systems

Buses offer a "Request-Stop" program between 9:00 pm and 5:00 am which allows passengers to exit the bus between regular TTC stops

**Driving Around Town:** Toronto's streets follow a basic grid pattern and are easy to navigate.

- Speed limit signs are posted on each street The city's "rush hour" is more than an hour long – count on heavy traffic from 7:00-9:00 a.m. and again from 4:00-6:00 p.m.
- Plenty of Toronto's major streets have bicycle lanes nearest the curb.
- Please respect cyclists in the city – they're environmentally friendly!

**Hail a taxi:** There are over 5000 taxi's in Toronto and encompass several different taxi companies – each has a distinct look.

- Fares are standard, metered and non-negotiable. The driver should start the meter at the beginning of your ride and stop it when you reach your destination.
- Refuse to ride in a taxi without an operational meter
- If your service was acceptable, a 10-15% tip is customary

### **BORDERS AND CUSTOMS**

Canada has one of the most advanced customs organizations in the world, and our borders and the processes we have in place to manage them are critical to our ability to provide Canadians and visitors to Canada with the security and opportunity they expect. Visitors entering Canada must clear Canada Customs border security upon entry.

#### **Entry into Canada:**

**Effective January 23, 2007**, American visitors traveling by **air** require a valid passport to re-enter the United States.

**Effective January, 2008**, all American visitors crossing the border by **air, land** (car, bus, train) or **sea** will also require a passport to re-enter the United States.

For more information on travel security and border procedures, visit the **U.S. Department of Homeland Security** web site (<http://www.dhs.gov/xtrlsec/crossingborders/whitibasics.shtm>).

Visitors from other countries can visit the Canadian Government web site (<http://www.goingtocanada.gc.ca>) for more information or contact the Canadian Embassy high commission or consulate responsible for their region. Within Canada, call Citizenship and Immigration Canada at 1-888-242-2100.

**Students:** Students who are not US residents, but are living and studying in the USA on a student Visa must apply for a Canadian Visa to visit Canada. Please contact the Canadian Embassy for more information.

**Bringing children into Canada:** If you are traveling with children, you should carry identification for each child. Divorced parents who share custody of their children should carry copies of the legal custody documents. Adults who are not parents or guardians should have written permission from the parents or guardians to supervise the children. When traveling with a group of vehicles, parents or guardians should travel in the same vehicle as the children when arriving at the border. Customs officers are looking for missing children and may ask questions about the children who are traveling with you.