



Stuttford Van Lines Country Guide for

# Canada



Country Guides: Courtesy of Overseas Moving Network International ( OMNI )

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## 1 CONTACT ADDRESSES

**Location:** North America.

**Time:** Canada spans six time zones. Information on which time zone applies where may be found in the regional entries following this general introduction. The time zones are: Pacific Standard Time: GMT - 8 (GMT -7 from first Sunday in April to last Sunday in October). Mountain Standard Time: GMT - 7 (GMT -6 from first Sunday in April to last Sunday in October). Central Standard Time: GMT - 6 (GMT -5 from first Sunday in April to last Sunday in October) Most of Saskatchewan does not observe DST. Eastern Standard Time: GMT - 5 (GMT -4 from first Sunday in April to last Sunday in October). Atlantic Standard Time: GMT - 4 (GMT -3 from first Sunday in April to last Sunday in October). Newfoundland Standard Time: GMT - 3.5. (GMT -2.5 from first Sunday in April to last Sunday in October).

Canadian High Commission in the UK

**Immigration division:** 38 Grosvenor Street, London W1K 4AA, UK Tel: (020) 7258 6600 or (020) 7258 6699 (recorded visa information). Website: [www.canada.org.uk](http://www.canada.org.uk) or [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)  
Opening hours: Mon-Fri 0800-1100 excluding public holidays (personal callers only). Consular section: Canada House, 5 Pall Mall East, Trafalgar Square, London SW1Y 5BJ, UK Tel: (020) 7258 6600. Website: [www.international.gc.ca/canadaeuropa/united\\_kingdom](http://www.international.gc.ca/canadaeuropa/united_kingdom)

Visit Canada Centre in the UK

**PO Box 170, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0ZX, UK Tel:** (0906) 871 5000 (Mon-Fri 0900-1730, recorded information line; calls cost 60p per minute). Website: [www.travelcanada.ca](http://www.travelcanada.ca) Deals with consumer enquiries.

Canadian Tourism Commission in the UK

**62-65 Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 5DY, UK Tel:** (0870) 161 5151 (travel trade only). Website: [www.travelcanada.ca](http://www.travelcanada.ca) Canadian Tourism Commission deals with marketing and trade enquiries only. Consumer enquiries should be directed to the Visit Canada Centre.

Canadian Embassy in the USA

**501 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001, USA Tel:** (202) 682 1740. Website: [www.canadianembassy.org](http://www.canadianembassy.org)

Canadian Consulate General in the USA

**1251 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020-1175, USA Tel:** (212) 596 1628. Website: [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/can-am/new\\_york](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/can-am/new_york) Consulates in: Anchorage, Houston, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Raleigh and San Diego. Consulates General in: Atlanta, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, San Francisco and Seattle.

## 2 OVERVIEW

'Land of diversity'

Few countries in the world offer as many choices to the world traveller as Canada. Whether your passion is skiing, sailing, museum-combing or indulging in exceptional cuisine, Canada has it all.



Western Canada is renowned for its stunningly beautiful countryside. Stroll through Vancouver's Stanley Park, overlooking the blue waters of English Bay or ski the slopes of world-famous Whistler-Blackcomb, surrounded by thousands of hectares of pristine forestland. For a cultural experience, you can take an Aboriginal nature hike to learn about Canada's First Nations' history and cuisine, while outdoorsmen can river-raft, hike or heli-ski the thousands of kilometres of Canada's backcountry, where the memories of gold prospectors and pioneers still flourish today. By contrast, Eastern Canada mixes the flavour and charm of Europe with the bustle of trendy New York. Toronto boasts an irresistible array of ethnic restaurants, bakeries and shops to tempt the palate, while Charlottetown, Canada's birthplace, is located amidst the rolling fields and sandy Atlantic beaches of Prince Edward Island. **Between the two, ancient Québec City is a world unto itself:** the oldest standing citadel in North America and the heart of Québécois hospitality. Of course, don't forget Northern Canada, where planes or all-terrain vehicles are sometimes the most common forms of transport and wildlife viewing is at its best. Whatever your passion, Canada has a place for it.

Jan Lee

### 3 GENERAL INFORMATION

**Area:** 9,984,670 sq km (3,855,101 sq miles).

**Population:** 32 million (2005, UN).

**Population Density:** 3.2 per sq km.

**Capital:** Ottawa. Population: 1.14 million (2004, including Gatineau).

**GEOGRAPHY:** Canada is bordered to the west by the Pacific Ocean and Alaska, to the east by the Atlantic Ocean, to the northeast by Greenland, and to the south by the 'Lower 48' of the USA. The polar ice cap lies to the north. The landscape is diverse, ranging from the Arctic tundra of the north to the great prairies of the central area. Westward are the Rocky Mountains, and in the southeast are the Great Lakes, the St Lawrence River and Niagara Falls. The country is divided into 10 provinces and three territories. A more detailed description of each province can be found under the separate provincial entries.

**Government:** Constitutional Monarchy. Head of State: HM Queen Elizabeth II, represented by Governor-General Michaëlle Jean since 2005. Head of Government: Prime Minister Stephen Harper since 2006. Recent history: Long-serving Jean Chrétien stepped down as Prime Minister in late 2003, replaced by Paul Martin. It seemed as if restoring relations with the USA was a primary concern of Martin's since the USA had barely concealed their frustrations with their neighbour for the refusal to support the 2003 war against Iraq. However, soon after being sworn in, Martin's Liberal Government became embroiled in a scandal concerning the misappropriation of millions of dollars of public money, with the Liberal Party supposedly receiving kickbacks from advertising contracts awarded in Québec in the late 1990s. Martin barely survived a confidence motion in Parliament in May 2005: just one vote saved him. However, in November 2005, his Government lost a confidence vote, Parliament was dissolved and an election was called for January 2006. After 12 years of Liberal rule, Canada swung to the right in the 2006 general election with conservative Stephen Harper succeeding Paul Martin as Prime Minister. Conservative leader Stephen Harper has pledged to cut taxes and tackle violent crime and corruption. Executive power is vested in the British Monarch, the Head of State, who is responsible for appointing the



Governor General, currently Michaëlle Jean. The Prime Minister, elected Cabinet Ministers, a 104-member Senate and a House of Commons make up the Federal Parliament. Members of the House of Commons are directly elected, while members of the Senate are appointed by the Prime Minister. The ten provinces of Canada each has a Lieutenant Governor and a local legislature, in power for up to 5 years. There are also three territories (Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut) constituted by Acts of Parliament. Several recent attempts to amend the Constitution have been rejected by popular referendum.

**Language:** Bilingual: English and French. The use of the two languages reflects the mixed colonial history Canada has been under both British and French rule.

**Religion:** 75 per cent of the population belong to the Christian faith: Anglican, Roman Catholic and United Church of Canada. There are numerous other active denominations and religions.

**Electricity:** 110-120 volts AC, 60Hz. American-style (flat) two-pin plugs are standard.

**SOCIAL CONVENTIONS:** Handshaking predominates as the normal mode of greeting. Close friends often exchange kisses on the cheeks, particularly in French areas. Codes of practice for visiting homes are the same as in other Western countries: flowers, chocolates or a bottle of wine are common gifts for hosts and dress is generally informal and practical according to climate. It is common for black tie and other required dress to be indicated on invitations. Exclusive clubs and restaurants often require more formal dress. Smoking has been banned in most public areas. Most restaurants, theatres and cinemas, if they permit smoking, have large 'no smoking' areas.

Passport/Visa

	<i>Passport Required?</i>	<i>Visa Required?</i>	<i>Return Ticket Required?</i>
<b>British</b>	Yes	No/4	Yes
<b>Australian</b>	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Canadian</b>	1	N/A	N/A
<b>USA</b>	2	No	No
<b>OtherEU</b>	3	5	Yes
<b>Japanese</b>	Yes	No	Yes

**Restricted entry and transit:** The Government of Canada refuses admission to: (a) holders of passports, identity or travel documents issued by Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, Transkei, Venda or the All Palestinian Government; (b) holders of passports issued by the UK Government entitled "British Temporary Resident's Passport"; (c) holders of passports purported issued by the Government of Somalia.

**Note:** Visitors to Canada must satisfy an examining officer at the Port of Entry that they are genuine visitors, in good health, with no criminal convictions, and have sufficient funds to maintain themselves during their stay in Canada and to return to their country of origin, as well as evidence of confirmed onward reservations out of Canada. Persons under 18 years of age who are unaccompanied by an adult should bring with them a letter from a parent or guardian giving them permission to travel to Canada.



**PASSPORTS:** Passport valid for at least one day beyond the intended departure date from Canada required by all except the following: (a) 1. Canadian citizens holding a Canadian Certificate of Identity, Canadian birth certificate or a certificate of Canadian citizenship; (b) permanent residents of Canada with proof of status, ie Permanent Resident Card, Record of Landing, Returning Resident Permit or a Refugee Travel Document issued by the Government of Canada to refugees who have been resettled in Canada; (c) 2. citizens of the USA holding proof of citizenship (eg US birth certificate or US naturalisation papers);(d) persons entering from St Pierre & Miquelon or the USA who are legal permanent residents of the USA and hold a US alien registration card (Green Card);(e) 3. citizens of France who are residents of and entering from St Pierre & Miquelon; (f) nationals who are residents of and entering from Greenland.

**Note:** Identity/travel documents issued to non-national residents of the country of issue, refugees or stateless persons are recognised for travel to Canada.

**VISAS:** Required by all (visitor or transit) except the following for stays of up to six months: (a) nationals of countries indicated in the chart above, including 4. citizens of British dependent territories (except holders of passports endorsed 'British Subjects' and 'British Protected Persons', who do require a visa); (b) 5. nationals of EU countries (except Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovak Republic, who do require a visa);(c) nationals of Andorra, Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Botswana, Brunei, French Overseas Possessions and Territories, Greenland, Guernsey, Hong Kong (SAR), Iceland, Israel (National passport holders only), Jersey, Korea (Rep), Liechtenstein, Mexico, Monaco, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, St Kitts & Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Swaziland, Switzerland and the Vatican City.(d) those visiting Canada who, during that visit, also visit the USA or St Pierre & Miquelon (a French Overseas Territory) and return directly to Canada as visitors within the period authorised on their initial entry (or any extension thereto).

**Types of visa and cost:** Visitor: C\$75 (single-entry); C\$150 (multiple-entry). Family: C\$400 (for families of six or more persons). Transit: gratis. Transit visas are necessary for all nationals who require a visitor visa. Although transit visas are not required by British citizens, they may be required by foreign nationals with British passports; check with the Embassy or High Commission for details. Employment: C\$150 (individual); C\$450 (group of three or more). Student: C\$125. Fees to be paid in the form of a Canadian Dollar bank draft made payable to 'Receiver General for Canada.' Bank drafts must be no older than two months with name and address of applicant printed on the back. For further information, contact the High Commission. Prices are subject to frequent change.

**Validity:** Up to six months depending on circumstances of individual applicant. The determination regarding length of stay in Canada can only be decided by the examining officer at the port of entry, but visas cannot exceed the validity of the passport and cannot be longer than five years. If no actual departure date is indicated within the visitor's passport, then the visitor will be required to depart within three months from the date of entry. Visitors must effect their departure from Canada on or before the date authorised by the examining officer on arrival. If an extension of stay is desired, an application must be made in writing to the nearest Canada Immigration Centre at least three weeks before the expiry of the visitor visa. Multiple-entry visas cannot be valid longer than passport. Transit visas are only allocated if a national's flight/onward journey is continuing within 24 hours. Single-entry visas can be used multiple times by nationals of St Pierre & Miquelon and the USA.

**Note:** (a) A single-entry visa is still valid if used to visit the USA. (b) Persons wishing to attend a course of six months duration or less, at any level, do not require a study permit. However, if



there is the possibility that you will extend your period of study in Canada, or if you are a full time student and wish to work on campus, you may apply for a study permit.

**Application to:** Consulate (or Consular section at Embassy or High Commission); see Passport/Visa Information.

**Application requirements:** (a) Valid passport. (b) Proof of immigration status in country of residence. (c) Application form. (d) Two recent passport-size photos. (e) Proof of sufficient funds for length of stay (this may entail providing a letter from one's employer, mortgage statements or bank statements or letter of invitation from a Canadian resident). (f) Evidence of employment (in some cases). (g) Details of travel plans. (h) Visa processing fee payable in bankers draft only. (i) For those applying by post, an 8" x 6", registered, self-addressed envelope with 50p (C\$1) stamp. Transit: (a)-(i) and, (j) Onward/return tickets.

**Note:** (a) Children under 18 years must have information with them on the people responsible for their welfare, if travelling alone; this includes a letter of permission to travel from guardian(s), and also a letter from the custodian in Canada. (b) Depending on circumstance and nationality, certain applicants may need to undergo a medical examination in order to receive their visas; this must be carried out by a physician on Canada's list of Designated Medical Practitioners.

**Temporary residence:** A work permit is required for temporary residence in Canada. Persons who wish to proceed to Canada for the purposes of study or temporary employment should contact the nearest Canadian High Commission, Embassy or Consulate, as authorisation is normally required prior to arrival. Those taking up temporary employment will require an Employment Authorization, for which a fee is charged. Persons going for study purposes must obtain a Student Authorization; a charge is made for this service.

**Working days required:** 10 days are required from receiving applications, but applications should be made at least one month prior to the intended date of departure; eight weeks if applying by post. Certain nationals are subject to longer processing times. For urgent applications it is advised to apply in person.

**Passport/Visa Information:** Canadian High Commission in the UK Immigration division: 38 Grosvenor Street, London W1K 4AA, UK Tel: (020) 7258 6600 or (020) 7258 6699 (recorded visa information). Website: [www.canada.org.uk](http://www.canada.org.uk) or [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca) Opening hours: Mon-Fri 0800-1100 excluding public holidays (personal callers only). Consular section: Canada House, 5 Pall Mall East, Trafalgar Square, London SW1Y 5BJ, UK Tel: (020) 7258 6600. Website: [www.international.gc.ca/canadaeuropa/united\\_kingdom](http://www.international.gc.ca/canadaeuropa/united_kingdom) Canadian Embassy in the USA 501 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001, USA Tel: (202) 682 1740. Website: [www.canadianembassy.org](http://www.canadianembassy.org) Canadian Consulate General in the USA 1251 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020-1175, USA Tel: (212) 596 1628. Website: [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/can-am/new\\_york](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/can-am/new_york)

## 4 MONEY

**Currency:** Canadian Dollar (CAD; symbol C\$) = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of C\$100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of C\$2 and 1, and 25, 10, 5 and 1 cents.

**Credit & debit cards:** Major credit cards are widely accepted.



**Traveller's cheques:** To avoid additional exchange rate charges, travellers are advised to take traveller's cheques in Canadian Dollars; these are widely negotiable.

**Currency restrictions:** There are no restrictions on the import or export of either local or foreign currency. The export of silver coins over C\$5 is prohibited. Amounts equal to or greater than C\$10,000 must be declared on entry and exit.

Exchange rate indicators

DateAt time of publishing£1.00 =2.09\$1.00 =1.17

**Banking hours:** Mon-Fri 0930-1600/1700 with extended hours in some locations. Business accounts can only be set up on presentation of a letter of credit from a home bank.

## 5 DUTY FREE

The following goods may be imported into Canada by non-residents without incurring customs duty:200 cigarettes and 50 cigars or cigarillos and 200g of loose tobacco and 200 tobacco sticks per person over 18 years of age; 1.5l bottle of wine or 1.14l bottle of liquor or 24 bottles or cans (355ml) of beer or ale per person over 18 years of age if entering Alberta, Manitoba and Québec, and over 19 years if entering British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland & Labrador, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan and Yukon; gifts to the value of C\$60 per gift (excluding advertising matter, tobacco or alcoholic beverages).

**Prohibited items:** The import of firearms, explosives, endangered species of animals and plants, animal products, meat, dairy, food and plant material is subject to certain restrictions and formalities. The import of soft shell turtles from any country and articles from Haiti made of animal skins (eg drums) is prohibited. The plant Qhat (Kat), although legal in the UK and various other locations, is illegal in Canada. Enquire at the Canadian High Commission or Embassy for further details.

**Note:** There are three different forms of sales tax throughout Canada, these are added onto the price of goods at the till. A Goods and Services Tax (GST) of 7 per cent is added on to the sale of all goods and services (in Québec, GST is known as TPS). A Provincial Sales Tax (PST) is payable on most items purchased in shops, on food in dining establishments and, in some cases, on hotel and motel rooms in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Québec and Prince Edward Island. The level of PST will vary from province to province. A Harmonised Sales Tax (HST) of 15 per cent has replaced GST and PST in Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Visitors may reclaim GST or HST on accommodation and any goods purchased and taken out of the country. The goods must be available for inspection on leaving the country. The total amount on each receipt for eligible exported goods must be at least C\$50 and the total purchase amount (before taxes) must be at least C\$200. However, GST is not reclaimable on food, drink, tobacco or any form of transport. To claim a rebate, a form must be completed, with all original receipts and aircraft boarding pass attached, and posted to the address on the form. Forms are available in hotels and tourist offices. In Québec, the provincial sales tax can be reclaimed at the same time as GST on the GST form (see Shopping in the Social Profile section for further information on provincial sales tax). GST forms should be sent to Visitor Rebate Program, Summerside Tax Centre, Canada Revenue Agency, 275 Pope Rd, Suite 104, Summerside, Prince Edward Island, C1N 6C6 Canada. Or a form can be downloaded from the website: [www.cra-arc.gc.ca](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca).For cameras, radios, personal computers etc, a deposit may be requested at the port of entry; this will be refunded to the owner upon submission of proof of



export. Canada Customs require nationals to declare whether they intend to visit a farm within 14 days. UK nationals were subject to particular questioning, following their Foot and Mouth epidemic in 2001.

## 6 PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Below are listed Public Holidays for the January 2006-June 2007 period. Jan 1 2006 New Year's Day. Jan 2 New Year's Day (forwarded to Monday.) Apr 14 Good Friday. Apr 17 Easter Monday. May 22 Victoria Day. July 1 Canada Day. Sept 4 Labour Day. Oct 9 Thanksgiving Day. Nov 11 Remembrance Day. Dec 25 Christmas Day. Dec 26 Boxing Day. Jan 1 2007 New Year's Day. Apr 6 Good Friday. Apr 9 Easter Monday. May 17 Victoria Day.

## 7 HEALTH

	Special Precautions	Certificate Required
<b>Yellow Fever</b>	No	No
<b>Cholera</b>	No	No
<b>Typhoid and Polio</b>	No	N/A
<b>Malaria</b>	No	N/A

**Other risks:** In the summer months, extremely high temperatures can be reached, so visitors at this time may wish to guard against the problems of heat and sunstroke. Rabies is present in animals. For those at high risk, vaccination before arrival should be considered. If you are bitten, seek medical advice without delay. For more information, consult the Health appendix.

**Health care:** There is no reciprocal health agreement with the UK, but doctors will continue medication for prescriptions issued in Europe. Private health insurance of up to C\$50,000 is absolutely essential as hospital charges are very high (from US\$1000-2000 a day, often with 30 per cent surcharge for non-residents imposed in some provinces). Health facilities are excellent (similar to the USA). Personal first-aid kits should be carried by travellers to more remote northern areas. Dial 911 for emergencies.

**Note:** Visitors intending to stay in Canada for more than 6 months - either as tourists, students or employees - may be required to take a medical examination. Visitors working in an occupation in which protection of public health is essential may be required to undergo a medical examination even if employment is only temporary. Check with the Canadian Consulate or High Commission for further information.

Travel - International

**AIR:** The principal national airline is Air Canada (AC) (website: [www.aircanada.ca](http://www.aircanada.ca)).

**Approximate flight times:** From London to Calgary is nine hours 10 minutes, to Halifax is seven hours five minutes, to Montréal is seven hours 20 minutes, to Toronto is seven hours 55 minutes and to Vancouver is nine hours 45 minutes. From Los Angeles to Montréal is six hours 5 minutes, to Toronto is five hours 15 minutes and to Vancouver is two hours 50 minutes. From



New York to Montréal is one hour 15 minutes, to Toronto is one hour 30 minutes and to Vancouver is five hours. From Singapore to Montréal is 23 hours 45 minutes, to Toronto is 21 hours 35 minutes and to Vancouver is 27 hours 50 minutes. From Sydney to Montréal is 24 hours 30 minutes, to Toronto is 20 hours 30 minutes and to Vancouver is 19 hours 50 minutes.

**Main airports:** Canada has 13 international airports. All have full banking and catering facilities, duty free shops and car hire. Airport-to-city bus and taxi services and, in some cases, rail links, are available. Calgary (YYC) (website: [www.calgaryairport.com](http://www.calgaryairport.com)) is 20km (12.5 miles) from the city (travel time 45 minutes). Montréal (YUL) (Dorval) (website: [www.admtl.com](http://www.admtl.com)) is 25km (16 miles) from the city (travel time 25 minutes). Ottawa (YOW) (Macdonald-Cartier) (website: [www.ottawa-airport.ca](http://www.ottawa-airport.ca)) is 15km (8 miles) from the city (travel time 20 to 45 minutes). Toronto (YYZ) (Lester B Pearson) (website: [www.gtaa.com](http://www.gtaa.com)) is 27km (17 miles) from the city (travel time 30 minutes). Vancouver (YVR) (website: [www.yvr.ca](http://www.yvr.ca)) is 13km (8 miles) from the city (travel time 20 to 45 minutes).

**Departure tax:** An Airport Improvement Fee (AIF) has been implemented at all major airports, the cost is per person and is added to the price of the air ticket. Vancouver charges C\$5 for flights within British Columbia and Yukon and C\$15 for all other flights. Calgary's AIF is C\$15. Toronto has a departure tax of C\$8 for connecting flights and C\$15 for all others. Ottawa and Montréal levy an AIF of C\$15.

**Note:** An Air Travellers Security Charge (ATSC) was introduced in 2002, which helps to pay for the additional security following 11 September 2001. This charge is levied on all passengers departing from any Canadian airport for domestic, national and international flights. The charge is currently C\$17 per person for national and international departures and C\$5-17 per person per flight for all domestic services.

**SEA:** Main ports: Canada has many ports which are all served by international shipping lines. Montréal ([www.port-montreal.com](http://www.port-montreal.com)) is the only port for passenger liners from Europe. Toronto's port ([www.torontoport.com](http://www.torontoport.com)) is on the northwestern shore of Lake Ontario. Halifax, Nova Scotia, ([www.portofhalifax.ca](http://www.portofhalifax.ca)), St John, New Brunswick ([www.sjpa.com](http://www.sjpa.com)) and St John's, Newfoundland ([www.sjport.com](http://www.sjport.com)) are the principal ports on the Atlantic Ocean. The port of Vancouver ([www.vancouverport.com](http://www.vancouverport.com)) is on the west coast.

**RAIL:** The Canadian rail system connects to the USA at several points. Major routes are: New York-Montréal, New York-Buffalo-Niagara Falls-Toronto, Chicago-Sarnia-London-Toronto, Cleveland-Buffalo-Niagara Falls-Toronto and Detroit-Windsor-Toronto. VIA Rail Canada, the country's main rail operator, issues a discount pass for rail travel within Canada and the USA: The North American Rail Pass (available to anyone) is valid for 30 days and allows 12 days unlimited travel within that 30-day period on VIA trains in Canada and practically any Amtrak train in the USA, with direct access to over 900 Canadian and US cities and towns. For details of ticket prices and reservations, contact VIA Rail in Canada (tel: (1 888) 842 7245 (toll-free in Canada); website: [www.viarail.ca](http://www.viarail.ca)) or their UK representative 1st Rail (tel: (0845) 644 3552/3; website: [www.1strail.com](http://www.1strail.com)).

**ROAD:** The only road access to Canada is through the southern border with the USA or from the west through Alaska. Apart from private motoring, the most popular way of travelling by road is by bus. The biggest coach company in the world is the Greyhound Bus Company (see the Coach section in Travel Internal) and this is one of the most common routes to Canada from the USA. There are many crossing points from the USA to Canada, but some of the most common are: New York to Montréal/Ottawa; Detroit to Toronto/Hamilton; Minneapolis to Winnipeg; Seattle to Vancouver/Edmonton/Calgary.



## Travel - Internal

**AIR:** Air Canada has a low-cost airline called Tango that offers reduced flights from most Canadian provinces and Fort Lauderdale, Orlando and Tampa in Florida, USA to a number of internal destinations. For further information about Tango services contact Air Canada, PO Box 64239, Thorncliffe Outlet, 5512 Fourth Street, NW, Calgary, Alberta, T2K 6JO (tel: (800) 315 1390 (toll-free in Canada); website: [www.flytango.com](http://www.flytango.com)). There are also around 75 airlines operating local services, the principal ones being: Air Nova (for eastern Canada) (website: [www.airnova.ca](http://www.airnova.ca)), Air Alliance, Air Ontario and WestJet (website: [www.westjet.com](http://www.westjet.com)) (for central Canada). Reductions are available for those aged 13 to 21, with substantial reductions for those under 12.

**Departure tax:** From C\$5 to C\$28, depending on the airport of departure and the destination.

**Note:** An Air Travellers Security Charge (ATSC) was introduced in 2002, which helps to pay for the additional security following 11 September 2001. This charge is levied on all passengers departing from any Canadian airport for domestic, national and international flights. The charge is currently C\$17 per person for national and international departures and C\$5 per person per flight for all domestic services to a maximum of C\$17 per person per ticket.

**SEA/RIVER/LAKE/CANAL:** Canada has many thousands of miles of navigable rivers and canals, a vast number of lakes and an extensive coastline. The whole country is well served by all manner of boats and ships, particularly the east and west coasts, where the ferries are fast, frequent and good value. The St Lawrence Seaway provides passage from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes. For further details, see individual regional entries or contact the Visit Canada Centre (see Top Things To See & Do).

**RAIL:** VIA Rail Canada operates extensive services across Canada. The regional railways are Algoma Central, British Columbia Railway, Great Canadian Railtour Company, Ontario Northland, Québec North Shore & Labrador, Toronto Hamilton & Buffalo Railway and White Pass & Yukon Route. Children under two years of age not occupying a separate seat may travel free (one per adult) and children two to 11 years of age pay half fare. Persons over 60 years of age and students carrying an International Student Card (ISIC), will receive a 10 to 50 per cent discount (depending on the type of ticket); student discount fares also apply to young people aged 12 to 17. VIA Rail operates a Western transcontinental service (the Canadian) between Toronto (Ontario) and Vancouver (British Columbia), running three times weekly east and west, transiting Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Edmonton and Jasper. Passengers are drawn to this route by the spectacular scenery of the three mountain ranges which are passed en route the Rockies, the Selkirks and the Coastal. The route also features views of ancient glaciers, large lakes and waterfalls. The journey takes three days and all trains operating on this route include showers in the sleeping cars. The transcontinental service can be accessed by regular services from the Atlantic provinces and from Québec City and Montréal. Rapid intercity services are available between Québec, Montréal, Halifax, Toronto, Windsor and Ottawa. On these journeys, the fare price includes a meal, snacks and drinks. VIA Rail also operates an overnight Eastern transcontinental service (the Ocean) between Montréal (Québec) and Halifax (Nova Scotia). Long-distance trains are extremely comfortable, with full restaurant services, air conditioning and spacious reclining seats. The Rocky Mountaineer service (website: [www.rockymountaineer.com](http://www.rockymountaineer.com)) runs from April to October and offers the opportunity to travel between Calgary, Banff, Jasper and Vancouver during daylight hours, enabling passengers to view the extraordinary passing scenery. Customers can purchase either a one-way or round-trip fare. A one-way trip takes two days and covers approximately 442km (275 miles) each day. Included in the price is a one-night



stopover in Kamloops, bus transfer from train to Kamloops hotel, two continental breakfasts, two light lunches and complimentary beverages (coffee, tea, fruit juices and soft drinks). Alcoholic beverages, films and souvenirs are available on board at an additional cost. For visitors seeking a route into the Canadian wilderness, the Polar Bear Express ([www.polarbearexpress.ca](http://www.polarbearexpress.ca)), TorontoNorth BayCochrane Moosonee, runs daily (except Monday) from late June to early September. Passengers are advised to make hotel reservations in Moosonee in advance. Particularly scenic routes include Sault Ste. MarieEtonHearst (with superb views of the Montréal River and hundreds of lakes), WinnipegHudson BayChurchill, JasperPrince GeorgePrince Rupert (with exceptional scenery between Burns Lake and Prince Rupert), VictoriaCourtenay (along sheer cliffs to Malahat Summit with good views of Vancouver Island) and VancouverWhistler (along the fjord-like coast of Howe Sound, then the craggy cliffs and rushing white-water streams in the heavily forested Cheakamus Canyon to Alta Lake) (website: [www.whistlermountaineer.com](http://www.whistlermountaineer.com)). VIA Rail also offers tailor-made adventure rail trips (VIA Adventures) to far-flung destinations, some of which are inaccessible by road, offering drop-off and pick-up services and special facilities for carrying bulky items such as canoes and bicycles.

**Discount Rail Passes:** The Canrailpass must be purchased outside Canada and a valid passport presented at time of purchase; it allows unlimited journeys on the Canadian railway system (except for the Bras d'Or tourist train) for 12 days (up to three extra days can be added to the pass at any time) within a 30-day period, and is only valid on VIA Rail trains. There is also a Student Canrailpass available to holders of International Student Cards (ISIC) and a Senior Canrailpass available to persons aged 60 and over. There is a reduced fare for children. The Alaska Pass (website: [www.alaskapass.com](http://www.alaskapass.com)) offers eight-, 12-, 15- and 21-day travel within Alaska and British Columbia, including travel on Alaska Ferry, Alaska Railroad, Holland America Motorcoaches and White Pass & Yukon Railroad. For more information on rail itineraries, timetables, fares and special discounts, contact VIA Rail in Canada (tel: (416) 366 8411; website: [www.viarail.ca](http://www.viarail.ca)); or the Visit Canada Centre (see Top Things To See & Do).

**ROAD:** The Canadian road network covers vast distances as the country is over 7600km (4800 miles) from west to east and 4800km (3000 miles) from north to south. The longest road is the Trans-Canada Highway (website: [www.transcanadahighway.com](http://www.transcanadahighway.com)), running west to east for 8000km (5000 miles) from Victoria, British Columbia to St John's, Newfoundland. On country roads, visitors should be mindful of wild animals that may be roaming, such as deer or moose. Petrol and oil are sold by the litre, and costs per litre should be obtained at time of travel. The Canadian Automobile Association (tel: (613) 247 0117; website: [www.caa.ca](http://www.caa.ca)) is affiliated to most European organisations, giving full use of facilities to members. Road signs are international. Right turns on red lights are not permitted in some parts of Québec. Traffic drives on the right. Road speeds (per hour) and distances are in kilometres, and speeds are: 100kph (60mph) on motorways, 80kph (55mph) on rural highways and 50kph (30mph) in cities. Many road signs throughout the country are bilingual (English and French). Seatbelts are compulsory for all passengers. Radar detection devices are strictly prohibited in many states and may not be carried in automobiles. Studded tyres are illegal in Ontario, but are permitted, without seasonal limitations, in the Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan and Yukon, and are allowed only in winter in other provinces. Many provinces require drivers to keep headlights on during the day. International Driving Permits are recommended - car hire companies may want to see one as well as a passport and air tickets. Note: The official date on which winter begins, for this and other purposes, will vary from province to province.

**Coach:** One of the cheapest and most convenient ways of travelling the country apart from private motoring is by coach. Each region is well served by a large network of coach lines, the most extensive being the Greyhound Bus Company, which covers more than 193,000km (120,000 miles) of North America. Greyhound's International Discovery Pass system offers a



variety of options to travellers from outside Canada and the USA. The ticket must be purchased outside of North America and entitles the holder to unlimited travel in the region specified on the pass. The International Canada Pass offers travel over periods of seven, 10, 15, 21, 30, 45 and 60 days in Canada. The International North America CanAm Pass offers travel over periods of 15, 21, 30, 45 and 60 days in Canada and the USA. The International Eastern CanAm Pass offers 10 or 21 days in Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and the eastern coast of the USA. The International West Coast CanAm pass offers 10 or 21 days travel in British Columbia, Whitehorse, Yukon, Alberta and the western coast of the USA. The Greyhound Discovery Passes include all scheduled routes on Greyhound plus Greyhound Lines Inc: Montréal to New York and Vancouver to Seattle; Voyageur Colonial: Toronto to Montréal/Ottawa and North Bay to Montréal; Brewster Transportation: Banff to Jasper; Adirondack Trailways: New York to Buffalo to Toronto; Canada Coach Services: Toronto to Niagara Falls and Buffalo and Toronto to Detroit; Grey Goose Bus Lines: routes between Manitoba and Ontario; Laidlaw Coach Lines: services on Vancouver Island; Saskatchewan Transportation Co: Alaska to Saskatoon; and VIA Rail: Toronto to Ottawa to Montréal. For further information, contact Greyhound Canada (tel: (403) 265 9111 or (800) 661 8747 (toll-free in USA and Canada)); website: [www.greyhound.ca](http://www.greyhound.ca)). Gray Line is another bus company that offers excursions to major Canadian resorts (website: [www.grayline.ca](http://www.grayline.ca)). Canada also has regional bus services, the most important of which are: Atlantic Canada: Acadian Lines, CN Roadcruiser, SMT Eastern and Terra Nova Transport. Central Canada: Canada Coach Lines, Grey Goose Bus Lines Limited, Orleans Express, Saskatchewan Transportation, Voyageur and Voyageur Colonial. West Canada: Brewster Transport and Vancouver Island Coach Lines. Other coach companies operating in Canada include: Gray Coach: Toronto to Niagara Falls and Buffalo; Arctic Frontier Carriers: Hay River to Yellowknife. Discounts are available for children under 16, persons over 62 years and students. The Moose Travel Network (website: [www.moosetravelnetwork.com](http://www.moosetravelnetwork.com)) offers a 'jump on, jump off' service for backpackers and independent travellers. Besides long-distance travel, all these companies operate a range of services, such as regional tours and escorted sightseeing for groups. RoutPass ([www.routpass.com](http://www.routpass.com)) runs between May and December. It offers 14-, 15-, 16- and 20-day passes for unlimited bus travel in Ontario and Québec. Children are not charged if under five years old; half the adult fare is charged for children aged five to 11 years old. Contact individual operators for details.

**Bus:** Metropolitan buses operate on a flat-fare system (standard fares, irrespective of distance travelled). Fares must be paid exactly, which means that drivers do not carry change or issue tickets. Transfers should be requested when boarding a bus.

**Car Hire:** Available in all cities and from airports to full licence holders over 21 years of age. For some rental companies drivers may need to be at least 25 years old. Major companies from which cars can be booked in the UK for use in Canada are Alamo, Avis, Budget, Dollar, Hertz, Holiday Autos, Pelican Car Hire and Thrifty.

**Documentation:** It is advised to apply for an International Driving Permit. Visitors may drive on their national driving licences for up to three months in all provinces, with the following exceptions: Yukon one month; Prince Edward Island four months; British Columbia, New Brunswick and Québec six months.

**TRAVEL TIMES:** The following chart gives approximate travel times from Ottawa (in hours and minutes) to other major cities/towns in Canada.

Mode	Toronto	Montréal	Winnipeg	Vancouver
Air	1.00	0.30	2.30	5.00
Road	0.05	0.02	3.00	62.00
Rail	0.00	0.00	2.00	75.00



## 8 ACCOMMODATION

**HOTELS/GUEST HOUSES/BED & BREAKFAST/SELF-CATERING:** International hotel chains are represented in major cities, but advance booking is essential. Guest houses, bed & breakfast establishments and self-catering lodges are available throughout the country. There is no national system of accommodation grading. Some provinces operate their own voluntary grading programmes; see the individual Provinces/Territories sections for details.

**CAMPING/CARAVANNING:** Camping facilities in the National Parks are generally only open from mid May until the end of September. Mobile trailers and caravans are extremely popular ways of traversing the enormous expanse of the Canadian landscape. There are two different types of vehicle available: a 'motorhome' is a vehicle with combined driving cab and living space which is equipped for up to five adults. A 'camper' is a vehicle with a separate driving cab, more like a truck with a caravan on the back, equipped for up to three adults. There are different models according to the size of the accommodation and facilities required, but most have a fridge, cooker, sink, heater, fitted WC and showers. All vehicles are fitted with power steering. Petrol consumption is about 24km (15 miles) per imperial gallon (but petrol costs half as much as it does in Europe). Hiring is available to those who hold full licences and are aged over 25. The cost of hire can vary according to the season. High season runs from June to the end of September, and low season runs for the rest of the year. Full details can be obtained from the Visit Canada Centre (see Top Things To See & Do).

**YOUTH HOSTELS:** There are youth hostels in major cities and national parks across the country.

**LODGES:** Remote hunting lodges are available to rent. This accommodation is ideal for fishing, hunting and hiking enthusiasts. They are fully furnished and equipped with spacious living areas and some have spa facilities. They are a popular way to sample life in the wilderness.

**OTHER ACCOMMODATION:** Most universities offer budget-price accommodation during the summer vacation.

**ACCOMMODATION INFORMATION:** Hotel Association of Canada Suite 1206, 130 Albert Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4 Tel: (613) 237 7149. Website: [www.hotelassociation.ca](http://www.hotelassociation.ca) Canadream Campers 2510-27 St NE, Calgary, Alberta T1Y 7G1 Tel: (403) 291 1000 Website: [www.canadream.com](http://www.canadream.com) Hostelling International Canada 205 Catherine Street, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 1C5 Tel: (613) 237 7884. Website: [www.hihostels.ca](http://www.hihostels.ca)

### Introduction

Canada offers a huge range of attractions, from large cosmopolitan cities such as Montréal and Toronto in the south, to isolated Inuit (Eskimo) settlements dotted around the frozen shores of Hudson Bay. The contrasting Pacific and Atlantic seabords and the thousands of lakes and rivers of the interior provide superb watersports and fishing. The Rocky Mountains and other ranges offer breathtaking scenery on a grand scale. Some of the best resorts are in the series of great National Parks which preserve the wildlife and forests of Canada in their virgin state. Those in the north provide basic amenities for tours of the beautiful northern wilderness. A taste of the pioneering west can be had in the rich farming and grain regions of central Canada. Further north are the New Frontier of Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. For a more detailed description of the historic sites and natural attractions of each region, see Resorts & Excursions in the individual Provinces/Territories sections.



## 9 SPORT & ACTIVITIES

**Outdoor pursuits:** Canada's vast wilderness areas and rich natural beauty offer scope for all kinds of outdoor activities. From fishing in the countless lakes and rivers to trekking in the back country, long-distance canoeing, horse riding, rafting and skiing, there are wonderful opportunities for those with a pioneering spirit. All activities are easy to arrange, given Canada's well-developed infrastructure: outfitters, guides, equipment hire and charters can be organised practically anywhere. Activities are often best pursued in national parks, of which there are about 41 in the whole of Canada, with other conservation areas and provincial parks adding to the range of facilities. At least one of the parks is larger than Switzerland (Wood Buffalo Park in Alberta and the Northwest Territories) and seven of them have been listed by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites. The national parks are administered by Parks Canada, 25 Eddy Street, Gatineau, Québec K1A 0M5 (tel: (819) 997 0055 or (888) 773 8888 (toll-free in USA and Canada); e-mail: information@pc.gc.ca; website: www.pc.gc.ca). Each national park has an information centre where advice on outdoor activities can be obtained, as can weather reports and bear sightings. Permits are required for fishing and camping and can be bought at these centres. Regulations common to all national parks include prohibitions on firearms, snowmobiles and off-road vehicles. Natural features may not be removed or damaged and hunting is also forbidden in most parks. Permits are required for all motor vehicles (approximately C\$5-10 per person per day). Regional and national passes are available. Camping regulations vary, but in general, an overnight permit is required, whether or not the traveller camps at a campsite. Visitors intending to fish should note that regulations apply regarding closed seasons, quotas and equipment. Fishing permits are also usually required from the provincial authorities. For further information, contact regional tourist boards or the Visit Canada Centre (see Contact Addresses section).

**Hiking:** All the national parks and most of the provincial parks have well-marked and well-maintained trails. Maps may be obtained from information centres, but those intending to go into the back country should obtain the appropriate map from the Canadian Topographical Series. Walkers should not venture into the wilder areas without ensuring that they are fit and properly equipped. Canada's long-distance footpaths include the Voyageur Trail along the northern shores of Lakes Superior and Huron and the 690km- (428 mile-) Bruce Trail from Queenstown on the Niagara River to Tobermory on the Bruce Peninsula.

**Canoeing:** Regional tourist boards can supply lists of outfitters who will help make arrangements. Aeroplane and boat drop-offs, and boat and equipment hire, are among the services offered, and maps can be supplied. The most challenging canoeing is in the northern areas, in the Northwest Territories and British Columbia, while the rivers and lakes in Ontario are often easier to negotiate. Further advice and information can be obtained from the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association, PO Box 398, 446 Main Street West, Merrickville, Ontario K0G 1N0 (tel: (613) 269 2910 or (888) 252 6292 (toll-free in Canada); fax: (613) 269 2908; e-mail: info@paddlingcanada.com; website: www.paddlingcanada.com). Excellent facilities for sailing and other watersports are available throughout the country.

**Wintersports:** Both downhill and cross-country skiing can be enjoyed in innumerable resorts throughout Canada. Most cities are close to ski resorts. Prices of ski passes and accommodation tend to be lower than in Europe. Ottawa's Rideau Canal features the world's largest skating rink, and this is an activity that is popular throughout.



**Other:** Ice hockey is played at the highest level and top-class competition can be enjoyed as a spectator sport in all cities throughout Canada. Canadian football, which is similar to American football, is played everywhere, but European football (soccer) is becoming increasingly popular. Professional baseball is enjoyed in several cities in the summer months. Facilities for golf and tennis are excellent throughout the country. Most large hotels have some sports facilities. A number of tour operators offer all-in-one golfing packages.

#### Entertainment

**Food & Drink:** Canadian cuisine is as varied as the country. The colonial influence is still strong, with European menus available in all major cities. The French influence in Québec is easily discernible in the many restaurants which specialise in French cuisine. Waiter service in restaurants is common. Dress requirements and billing procedures vary. A selection of European/US wines and spirits are imported. Things to know: Spirits may only be purchased from specially-licensed liquor stores or restaurants displaying the sign 'Licensed Premises.' Many allow customers to bring their own beer or wine. A wide variety of alcohol is sold in most hotels, restaurants and bars. Bars may have table or counter service and payment is generally made after each drink. Opening hours vary from province to province. National specialities: The hundreds of miles of coastline offer varied seafood. The central plains provide first-class beef and agricultural produce. Some more unusual produce might include elk, bison and caribou. National drinks: Canadians enjoy their own rye whisky. Legal drinking age: The minimum drinking age is either 18 or 19, depending on the province/territory. See Entertainment in the individual Provinces/ Territories sections. Nunavut is an exception because alcohol is prohibited in some communities. Tipping: Normal practice is usually 15 per cent of the bill, more if service is exceptional. Waiters, barbers, hairdressers and taxi drivers should be tipped this amount. Porters at airports and railway stations, cloakroom attendants, bellhops, doormen and hotel porters generally expect C\$1 per item of luggage. Tipping your server is standard practice in bars and nightclubs.

**Nightlife:** Every major provincial capital in the more populated areas has nightclubs, and hotel dinner/dancing. Montréal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver and Winnipeg are centres for ballet, opera and classical music, with visits from leading orchestras and internationally renowned performers. Entertainment in the more remote towns is scarce.

**Shopping:** Fine examples of Canadian craftware are available, such as art woodcarvings, pottery, cottons and native artefacts. Some countries have restrictions against the import of endangered animal species products, such as polar bear, seal, walrus etc, so visitors should check entry regulations in their home country before departure. A 7 per cent goods and service tax (GST) is levied on most goods and services in Canada. In addition, most provinces (except Alberta, Northwest Territories and Yukon) levy a provincial service tax (PST) of 5 to 7 per cent in shops, restaurants and short-term accommodation. In the provinces of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, a 15 per cent harmonised sales tax (HST) has replaced the GST and PST. Visitors to Canada are entitled to claim a rebate of GST and HST (except on food, drink, tobacco and transport). The province of Quebec also allows visitors to apply for a rebate of its provincial sales tax (TVQ). For further information, see the special note under the Duty-Free section or contact Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) (website: [www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca](http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca)). Shopping hours: Mon-Sat 0900-1800, with late-night shopping in some stores Thur-Fri, up to 2100. Some shops and stores are also open on Sunday, and some are open 24 hours a day.

#### Business



**GDP:** US\$991 billion (2004). Main exports: Motor vehicles and parts, wood pulp, timber, crude petroleum, machinery, natural gas, aluminum, telecommunications equipment, aircraft, plastics and electricity. Main imports: Machinery and equipment, crude oil, chemicals, motor vehicles and parts, durable consumer goods and electricity. Main trade partners: China, France, Japan, Mexico, Taiwan, UK and USA.

**Economy:** Canada is the seventh-largest trading nation and a member of the G8 group of major industrial economies. The country has immense natural resources and a high standard of living. Agriculture and fisheries are particularly important; Canada exports more than half of its agricultural produce principally grain and oil seeds and is the world's leading exporter of fish. Timber is another important sector, given that more than 40 per cent of the land area is forest. As a mineral producer, Canada exports crude oil and natural gas, copper, nickel, zinc, iron ore, asbestos, cement, coal and potash. Energy requirements are met by a mixture of hydroelectric (two-thirds), nuclear and oil-fired generating stations. Manufacturing covers a wide range of industries from heavy engineering and chemicals to vehicle production and agro-business to office automation and commercial printing. After running a substantial trade deficit throughout much of the 1990s, Canada now enjoys a net trade surplus, currently estimated at US\$40 billion for the year 2000-2001. Slightly more than 75 per cent of the country's trade is with the USA, making this the world's largest single bilateral trade route. In common with most OECD countries, GDP growth slowed during 2002 to just over one per cent although the outlook for the next few years is rather better. The 1989 free trade agreement signed with the USA formed the basis for the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA); Mexico has joined as the third signatory and other Latin American countries may sign up in due course.

**Business etiquette:** Usual courtesies observed, including exchange of business cards and making appointments. Office hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1700.

**Conferences/Conventions:** All the major business centres, such as: Calgary, Edmonton, Montréal, Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver, offer extensive convention and conference facilities. For general information on conferences and conventions in Canada, contact the Meetings and Incentive Officer at the Canadian High Commission, in London. Consult the individual Provinces/Territories sections for more information.

**Commercial Information:** CanadaUnited Kingdom Chamber of Commerce in the UK38 Grosvenor Street, London W1K 4DP, UK Tel: (020) 7258 6576 or 6578 (trade information service; enquiries cost £10 plus VAT for non-members). Website: [www.canada-uk.org](http://www.canada-uk.org) Canadian Chamber of CommerceHead Office, Delta Office Tower, 350 Sparks Street, Suite 501, Ottawa, Ontario K1R 7S8, Canada Tel: (613) 238 4000.Website: [www.chamber.ca](http://www.chamber.ca)

## 10 CLIMATE

Climate graphs for the various provinces and territories may be found in the relevant entries below.

**Note:** Summer thunderstorms are common throughout Canada. Occasionally, these may become 'severe'. Tornadoes also occur throughout Canada, with May to September being prime months. The peak season is June and early July in southern Ontario, Alberta, southeastern Québec, and a band stretching from southern Saskatchewan and Manitoba, through to Thunder Bay. The interior of British Columbia and western New Brunswick are also tornado zones. Earth tremors



occur in the western mountains. Forest fires can occur at any time, regardless of the season, particularly in the grasslands and forests of western Canada.

**Required clothing:** March: Moderate temperatures. Winter clothing with some mediumweight clothing. April: Milder days but the evenings are cool. Mediumweight clothing including a topcoat is recommended. May: Warm days but cool at night. Mediumweight and summer clothing recommended. June: Warm, summer clothing with some mediumweight clothing for cool evenings. The weather in June is ideal for travel and all outdoor activities. July/August: These are the warmest months of the year. Lightweight summer clothing is recommended. September: Warm days and cool evenings. Light- to mediumweight clothing recommended. October: Cool, with the first frost in the air. November: Cool to frosty. Medium- to heavyweight clothing is recommended. First signs of snow. Motorists should have cars prepared for winter and snow tyres are recommended. December/January/February: Winter temperatures. Winter clothing is necessary (eg overcoat, hat, boots and gloves). Heavy snowfall in most provinces.

## 11 HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

**History:** The first inhabitants of Canada are thought to have moved across the Bering Straits from Siberia during the last Ice Age. Traces of up to a dozen distinct groups of Inuit (Eskimos) have been discovered across the far northern regions of North America. The first Europeans to reach Canada were descendants of Norse seafarers who had settled in Iceland and in Greenland during the 9th and 10th centuries. Remains of three Norse settlements have been identified on the eastern seaboard, but these were evidently not permanent. The next wave of European arrivals was led by the Italian navigator Giovanni Caboto (better known as John Cabot) in an early attempt to seek out a NorthWest passage to Asia in 1497. Over the next 100 years, attracted by rich fishing grounds, English and French commercial interests settled in parts of Newfoundland. This period also saw the first major incursion inland following the discovery of the St Lawrence River by the French explorer Jacques Cartier. During the 17th century, backed by the French crown and, especially, Cardinal Richelieu, the French pushed further into Canada while significantly expanding their trading operations in Canada under the auspices of the New France Company which operated in much the same manner as the English and Dutch concerns (such as the East India Company) in India and the Far East. Relations with the local Inuit were inevitably mixed. The territory was also attracting interest from elsewhere. The formation in England of the Hudson's Bay Company, in 1670, initiated a long period of commercial, political and strategic rivalry which culminated in the Anglo-French war of the early 1760s, which ended with the capitulation of the French Canadian capital, Québec, to the besieging forces of the English General Wolfe. The ensuing Treaty of Paris, in 1763, ceded all French territories in north-east America to the British. Within two decades, however, the English had been ousted from their American colonies following defeat in the American War of Independence. Eastern Canada was then settled by loyalists from the USA holding allegiance to the defeated British Crown. The Americans made a number of efforts to seize control of Britain's Canadian territories, but failed, and the two countries thereafter evolved along different historical paths. In 1791, Canada was divided between regions occupied by the English-speaking and the longer-established French-speaking community but the arrangement did not work and was replaced by a unified system. In the mid-19th century, Canada was granted the status of a Dominion of the British Empire, with an autonomous government but with the British monarch as Head of State. This arrangement has lasted through several modifications to this day, with the position of the British monarch maintained in what is otherwise a wholly independent nation. The tie between the two countries remains strong, especially between the two governments' foreign policy and military establishments. Despite the reservations of the French-speaking population, principally in Québec



where a secessionist movement has been active (occasionally violently) since the 1970s, the Canadian government has displayed a strong loyalty to the 'mother country', notably during both World Wars. From 1968 to 1984, politics were dominated by the charismatic figure of Pierre Trudeau, leader of the Liberal Party and four times Prime Minister. After his retirement from politics in 1984, his party was eventually ousted by the opposition Progressive Conservatives under Brian Mulroney. Under Mulroney, the Québec issue came to the fore once more. Several attempts were made to resolve it by negotiation principally the 1990 Meech Lake accord but all of these foundered. A 1995 referendum asked the Québécois whether they wished to leave the Canadian Federation. The result was an extremely narrow vote in favour of remaining inside Canada, which proved little more than that the province is still deeply divided. Since then, the Parti Québécois has been in terminal decline, losing first its position as Canada's principal opposition party and then, in 2003, its control of the province of Québec itself to the ruling Liberal Party. Another historical problem that the Mulroney government went some way to resolve was the question of land taken from the indigenous Canadian peoples, collectively known as the Inuit, who inhabit the sparsely populated frozen expanses of northern Canada. The issue is not dissimilar to that faced by Koori (aboriginal) peoples in Australia, in that the Inuit maintain that traditional lands were taken from them by force or subterfuge by previous governments. In 1991, a 350,000 sq km (135,135 sq miles) area of the Northwest Territories was relinquished to the Inuit as the semi-autonomous Nunavut territory. (Additional lands and measures of self-government were granted to the territory in 1999.) Approximately 95 per cent of Nunavut's 25,000 population are Inuits. The main problems facing the territory are economic: traditional sources of work, fur trading and whaling, have been in terminal decline for years as have attempts to develop oil and mining industries. The new administration in Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut formerly known as Frobisher Bay, is pinning its hopes on ecotourism to reduce the current heavy reliance of subventions from central government. The 1993 general election was significant in that the hugely unpopular governing Conservative Party was all but wiped out, being reduced from 169 seats to just two. The new prime minister was Liberal Party leader Jean Chrétien, who introduced a major package of economic reforms designed to expand the economy and implement the North American Free Trade Agreement with the USA and Mexico as soon as possible. Chrétien has since proved to be the industrialised world's most successful politician, having won three successive general elections and a decade in office. The main opposition parties are now the centre-right Canadian Alliance (formerly known as the Reform Party) and the Progressive Conservatives. Chrétien stood down in November 2003 and was replaced by Paul Martin. In June 2004, Martin was re-elected. By and large, the Liberal governments have confirmed Canada's consistent support for the USA and NATO, of which it is a member. However, relations with the right-wing Bush administration - elected in 2000 - have been difficult. In particular, Canada refused to support the 2003 war against Iraq. In November 2005, Martin's government lost a confidence vote in parliament after only 17 months in power, following a corruption scandal which dated back to the late 1990s. (The Liberal government had spent C\$100 million of public money to advertising agencies in return for little or no work. Liberal officials are alleged to have demanded kickbacks for awarding the contracts.) An election is to be held on 23 January 2006. Polls suggest the Liberals will win the most votes, but they are not expected to gain a majority.

**Government:** Executive power is vested in the British monarch, the Head of State, who is responsible for appointing the Governor General, currently Michaëlle Jean. The Prime Minister elects cabinet ministers, a 104-member Senate and a House of Commons make up the Federal Parliament. Members of the House of Commons are directly elected, while members of the Senate are appointed by the Prime Minister. The 10 provinces of Canada each has a Lieutenant Governor and a local legislature, in power for up to five years. There are also three territories (Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut) constituted by Acts of Parliament. Several recent attempts to amend the Constitution have been rejected by popular referendum.



## Travel Advice

Most visits to Canada are trouble-free but you should be aware of the global risk of indiscriminate international terrorist attacks, which could be against civilian targets, including places frequented by foreigners. This advice is based on information provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the UK. It is correct at time of publishing. As the situation can change rapidly, visitors **are advised to contact the following organisations for the latest travel advice:** British Foreign and Commonwealth Office Tel: (0845) 850 2829. Website: [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk) US Department of State Website: <http://travel.state.gov/travel>

## Top Things To See & Do

For a detailed description of the historic sites and natural attractions of each region, see Top Things To See and Top Things To Do in the individual Provinces/Territories sections.

**Tourist Information:** Visit Canada Centre in the UK PO Box 170, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0ZX, UK Tel: (0906) 871 5000 (Mon-Fri 0900-1730, recorded information line; calls cost 60p per minute). Website: [www.travelcanada.ca](http://www.travelcanada.ca) Deals with consumer enquiries. Canadian Tourism Commission in the UK 62-65 Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 5DY, UK Tel: (0870) 161 5151 (travel trade only). Website: [www.travelcanada.ca](http://www.travelcanada.ca) Canadian Tourism Commission deals with marketing and trade enquiries only. Consumer enquiries should be directed to the Visit Canada Centre.

## OverviewII

Few countries in the world offer as many choices to the traveller as Canada. Whether your passion is skiing, sailing, museum-combing or indulging in exceptional cuisine, Canada has it all. Western Canada is renowned for its stunningly beautiful countryside; Eastern Canada mixes the flavour and charm of Europe with the bustle of trendy New York; wildlife viewing is at its best in Northern Canada; and, everywhere, you will be surprised by how much more there is to this country than just maple syrup and Mounties. However, Canada also has its fair share of unsavoury history. Traces of up to a dozen distinct groups of Inuit (Eskimos Canada's indigenous peoples) have been discovered across Canada's far northern regions. The Inuit maintain that traditional lands were taken from them by force or subterfuge by previous governments, bearing some resemblance to the plight of the Aborigines in Australia. However, **there have been some small measures to tackle their remonstrations:** in 1991, a 350,000 sq km (135,135 sq miles) area of the Northwest Territories was relinquished to the Inuit as the semi-autonomous Nunavut territory; and additional lands and measures of self-government were granted to the territory in 1999. There is certainly room in Canada to accommodate for these peoples: despite Canada's gigantic size, the country is sparsely populated. Most people congregate around urban centres, and venturing into more remote rural areas, you may well have only the country's stunning scenery as your companion. Indeed, Canada is so beautifully diverse that it makes it that little bit easier to comprehend why so many people fought for possession of it. During the 17th century, the Anglo-French war over Canada ended with the capitulation of the French Canadian capital, Québec, to the besieging forces of the English General Wolfe. The Americans made a number of efforts to seize control of Britain's Canadian territories after British defeat in the American War of Independence, but failed, and the two countries thereafter evolved along different historical paths. In 1791, Canada was divided between regions occupied by the English-speaking and the longer-established French-speaking community, but the arrangement did not work and was replaced by a unified system. Canada now promotes itself as a country of peace, most notably in recent times in its opposition to the US-led war against Iraq. Canada happily



governs itself independently but still has the British Monarch as its Head of State, with relatively little dissent. These factors are typical of a country that somehow succeeds in unifying incredible range: whatever your passion, Canada has a place for it. After all, this country spans six time zones and borders three of the world's four oceans.

#### Communications

**Telephone:** Most public telephones operate using 25-cent coins. There is a reduced rate Mon-Fri 1800-0900, Sat 1200 to Mon 0900. For long-distance calls, telephone cards are available. Credit card telephones are to be found in larger centres. Full IDD is available. Country code: 1.

**Mobile telephone:** Roaming agreements exist with most international mobile phone companies. Coverage is good.

**Internet:** Available throughout Canada, as are Internet cafes.

**Post:** All mail from Canada to outside North America is by air. Stamps are available in hotels, some pharmacies and local stores, or in vending machines outside post offices and shopping centres. Post office hours: generally Mon-Fri 0930-1700, Sat 0900-1200, but times vary according to province and location; city offices will have longer hours.

**MEDIA:** Canada has a long history of public broadcasting. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) was set up in the 1930s in response to the growing influence of American radio. Broadcasting is in both French and English. The corporation also operates two national TV channels, TV and radio services for indigenous peoples in the north, plus the international broadcaster, Radio Canada International. There is freedom of speech in media throughout Canadian media. The broadcasting regulator rules that quotas of Canadian material - usually 30 or 35% - must be carried by TV and radio stations. Press: The main national daily newspaper is The Globe and Mail. The National Post also has national distribution. Daily newspapers published in the larger population centres have a wide local and regional circulation. French-language dailies are published in seven cities, including Montréal, Ottawa and Québec. In Alberta, the main English-language newspapers are the Calgary Herald, The Calgary Sun, The Edmonton Journal and The Edmonton Sun; in British Columbia, the Vancouver Sun; in Manitoba, the Winnipeg Free Press and The Winnipeg Sun; in New Brunswick, the Daily Gleaner and The Times and Transcript; in Newfoundland & Labrador, the Telegram and The Western Star; in Nova Scotia, The Chronicle-Herald and The Daily News; in Ontario, The Ottawa Citizen, Ottawa Sun, The Toronto Star and the The Toronto Sun; in Prince Edward Island, the Guardian and the Journal Pioneer; in Québec, The Gazette (daily); in Saskatchewan, the Daily Herald, Leader Post, Star-Phoenix and the Times-Herald ; and in Yukon, The Whitehorse Daily Star.TV: CBC owns the English-language cable news channel CBC Newsworld. Société Radio-Canada is another public broadcaster that operates the French-language network and cable news channel RDI. CTV is a major commercial network, whilst TVA is a major French-language commercial network. CPAC is the parliamentary and political channel. Radio: CBC operates English-language Radio One and cultural network Radio Two; Société Radio-Canada operates French-language Première Chaîne and Espace Musique; and CBC runs the external service, Radio Canada International.