

Canada



Geography of Canada

Canada is a country in the northern part of North America. Canada is the second-largest country by total area in the world after Russia, covering an area of 9,984,670 sq km. It is bordered to the west by the North Pacific Ocean and Alaska in the northwest, to the east by the Atlantic Ocean, to the north by the Arctic Ocean, to the northeast by Greenland (across the Nares Strait), and to the south by the 'Lower 48' states of the USA. The polar ice cap lies to the north.

Canada stretches 4,634km from its northernmost point on Ellesmere Island, Nunavut to its southernmost point on Middle Island, Lake Erie, Ontario. The longest distance east to west is 5,514km from Cape Spear, Newfoundland and Labrador to the Yukon-Alaska border. Canada also has the world's longest coastline at 202,080km. The country's highest mountain, with a peak at 5,959m, is Mount Logan in the Yukon Territory.



State symbols of Canada

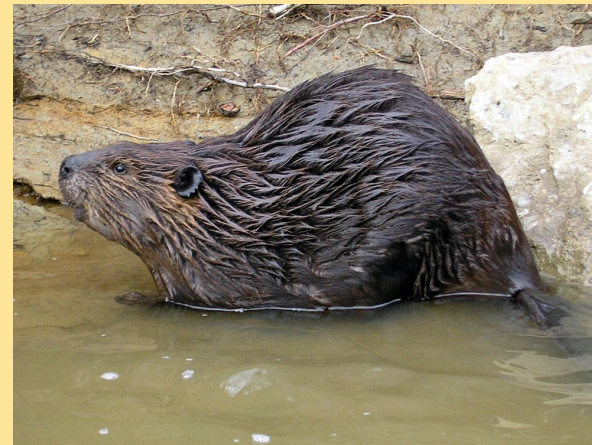


The maple leaf is the characteristic leaf of the maple tree, and is an important national symbol of Canada.

The Beaver is Canada's National animal and its discovery is intrinsically associated with the discovery of the country itself. As an official National symbol, the beaver appears on several Canadian memorabilia like stamps and coins. The beaver is a symbol of ingenuity and perseverance.

National anthem is «O Canada».

Motto is “A Mari Usque Ad Mare” (From sea to sea) It was officially adopted on November 21, 1921.



Climate

Summer thunderstorms are common throughout Canada. Occasionally, these may become severe. Tornadoes also occur throughout Canada, with May to September being prime months. The tornado-prone areas include most of Alberta, southwestern Quebec, and a band stretching from southern Saskatchewan through to Thunder Bay in Ontario. The interior of British Columbia and western New Brunswick are also tornado zones.



Snow and cold may be the first words people think of when describing Canada's weather, but summer temperatures can be surprisingly warm. Southern Canada's climate is very similar to that of the northern United States. Even Iqaluit, the capital of Canada's far north territory of Nunavut, has seen its summer temperatures soar as high as 75°F (24°C) as a result of global warming in recent years. Canada's hottest summer temperatures generally occur in southern British Columbia's Okanagan Valley and southern Ontario.

Population and Culture

Both English and French still play a significant role in Canada, with both being official languages. Most of Quebec and parts of eastern Canada are still heavily influenced by their French origins. Much of the rest of Canada is English origin. Canada has also had significant immigration from other European countries such as Germany, Italy and the Ukraine. There are also many immigrants from Asia. The Canadian Government tries very hard to maintain a multi-cultural environment, encouraging people to maintain their heritage.

Most of Canada's population lives within 100 miles of the border with the United States. About 75% of the population lives in major cities or towns.



Political System of Canada

Canada has an unusual political system because for a long time it was the British colony. In the 20th century, it became an independent state but remained in the British Commonwealth (nowadays the Commonwealth of Nations) as a former part of the empire.

Canada is an independent federal parliamentary state. The Queen of Great Britain, Elizabeth II, is the official head of the state, but the Governor General acts as her representative. Canada combines the American federal form of government with the British cabinet system.

The two leading political parties in Canada are the Progressive Conservative Party and the Liberal Party. The New Democratic Party is also rather influential.



Canada's Economic System

Economic system is classified as a mixed economy.

Canada has the tenth largest economy in the world is one of the world's wealthiest nations, and is a member of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Group of Eight (G8). As with other developed nations, the Canadian economy is dominated by the service industry, which employs about three quarters of Canadians. Canada is unusual among developed countries in the importance of the primary sector, with the logging and oil industries being two of Canada's most important.

Canada also has a sizable manufacturing sector, centred in Central Canada, with the automobile industry especially important.

Religion

Religion in Canada encompasses a wide range of groups and beliefs. Christianity is the largest religion in Canada, with Roman Catholics having the most adherents. Christians, representing 67.3% of the population in 2011, are followed by people having no religion with 23.9% of the total population.

The majority of Canadians consider religion to be unimportant in their daily lives, but still believe in God.



Gérald Cyprien Lacroix is the current Archbishop of Quebec and Primate of Canada

Holidays



In Canada, public holidays are legislated at the national, provincial and territorial levels. Many of these holidays are observed nationwide, but each province and territory does have its own holidays as well.

While major Christian holidays such as Christmas and Good Friday are officially observed, other religious holidays are widely accepted as well (see Multiculturalism). For example, some school children and employees take days off for Jewish holidays, Muslim holidays, or Eastern Orthodox observances according to the Julian calendar. While not normally taken off work, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day and Hallowe'en are traditionally observed by Canadians.