

Title:

Toronto, the New York City of Canada

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Summary:

Overview of Toronto, the largest and most multicultural city in Canada.

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Article Body:

Toronto, my city of birth, is the largest city in Canada with a population of about 3 million (5 million in the greater area) and it keeps growing every year as it seems to be the first city of choice for immigrants from around the world. With over 100 languages spoken here, Toronto is the most multicultural city in the world according to the United Nations. This is actually a good thing since Toronto can be a model for the rest of the world in regards to showing how it is possible for different people of many different cultures and faiths to get along peacefully. Friends of different racial backgrounds and religions can be found here where they would probably be enemies in other parts of the world.

Having lived in Toronto for most of my life so far, I'm always amazed on how the city has grown as a tourist destination. Torontonians seem to take world class attractions like the CN Tower and the Skydome for granted since many see it every day during their commute. Of course, the CN Tower is a very worthwhile visit as a ride to the top is a must for every visitor.

Toronto has one of the best redeveloped harbourfronts anywhere. This area has boutiques at Queen's Quay, restaurants, cafes and galleries. Nearby Ontario Place and the Canadian National Exhibition are annual favorites among locals. This is also where one takes the ferries across to the Toronto Islands. The islands are all connected via bike paths and offer a unique view of the Toronto cityscape as well as a nice break from the busy downtown. Located on the main island, Centreville is a petting zoo and small amusement park for kids.

The action is downtown and probably where most tourists should stay. Although the hotels prices are higher in downtown than the suburbs, Toronto traffic is unfortunately not getting any better so it is best to stay where commuting is kept at a minimum. There is a very efficient transit system for those who want

to stay outside of the downtown area though. A walk along Yonge Street near the Eaton Centre mall will reveal the wilder parts of Toronto life. For the latest trends, Queen Street West is where the funky boutiques and bars are. For upscale shopping, go to Bloor Street between Yonge and Avenue Road as well as the Yorkville area.

Toronto is a live theatre town, second to perhaps only New York or London. The theatre district on King Street has a lively after theatre scene including restaurants and clubs. During the day, the world renowned Royal Ontario Museum, Art Gallery of Ontario and the Planetarium showcase treasures from around the world (as well as out of the world). Many also come to see the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Toronto has Canada's largest Chinatown. Actually, the growth of the Asian population has resulted in four different Chinatowns in the greater area. The main one is centered around Spadina and Dundas. The dim sum in Toronto is one of the best outside of Hong Kong since most Chinese immigrants here were originally from Hong Kong. Other ethnicities are also represented by such districts as Little Italy, the Greek Danforth area and many others. For outdoor markets, the Kensington and St. Lawrence Markets are great. Since Toronto is so multicultural, it is an excellent place to try out different cuisines.

For animal lovers, the Metro Toronto Zoo northeast of the city is world famous and will take an entire day to see. During the summers, Canada's Wonderland is a family oriented theme park just north of the city. Niagara Falls, one of the natural wonders of the world, is just ninety minutes away and worth a day trip or even an overnight stay. There are just too many things to see and do in the Toronto area to mention in one article. Vancouver has the ocean and mountains while Quebec City has that old European touch. But to see world class live theatre and Canadian multiculturalism at its best, Toronto is where it's at.