



The Heartland Province

Established 1867
1st Province

Did You Know?



- One in every three Canadians lives in Ontario.
- The name *Ontario* comes from an Iroquois word that can be translated to mean “shining waters” or “beautiful lake.”
- Niagara Falls is located in both New York and Ontario. More than 28,317 cubic metres (1,000,000 cubic feet) of water pour over Niagara Falls and into Lake Ontario every second.
- The CN (Canadian National) Tower in Toronto stands at 553 metres (1,815 feet) and is the tallest freestanding structure built on land in the Western Hemisphere.
- There are more than 250,000 lakes in Ontario. Four of the five Great Lakes are within Ontario’s boundaries: Lake Superior, Lake Erie, Lake Huron, and Lake Ontario. Together, they are the largest group of freshwater lakes in the world.
- Ontario is the centre of the newspaper industry in Canada. More than 40 daily newspapers are published in the province, including Canada’s largest newspaper, the *Toronto Star*.
- During the War of 1812, Loyalist Laura Secord overheard plans for a surprise American invasion. Secord walked 32 kilometres (20 miles) to warn British forces of the attack. As a result, they were able to defeat the Americans at the Battle of Beaver Dams, and Secord became known as Canada’s Paul Revere.

Quick Facts



Capital city: Toronto

Population: 13,982,984

Total Area: 1,076,395 square kilometres (415,598 sq miles)

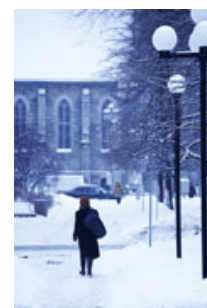
Population Density: 14.10 persons per square kilometre (36.00 per sq mile)

The Place



Climate

No matter where in the province they live, Ontarians experience all four seasons. However, southern Ontario and northern Ontario have very different climates. In the southern area, wind from the Great Lakes brings cool air in the summer and warm air in the winter. Colder Arctic winds chill the northern area around Hudson Bay. In July, southern Ontario’s average temperature is 23°C (74°F), while the temperatures average 14°C (57°F) up around Hudson Bay. In January, the temperatures in eastern Ontario average -13°C (9°F). The temperatures in northern Ontario can get down to -24°C (-12°F). The record low is -47°C (-53°F). Southern Ontario is not quite as cold, at an average of -4°C (24°F). The entire province sees plenty of snow in the winter, but the greatest amount falls on the area east of Lake Huron known as the Snow Belt, which often sees 300 centimetres (120 inches) of snow per year.



Average Seasonal High and Low Temperatures

Spring: 11/0°C

Summer: 25/14°C

Fall: 14/5°C

Winter: -5/-12°C

Geography

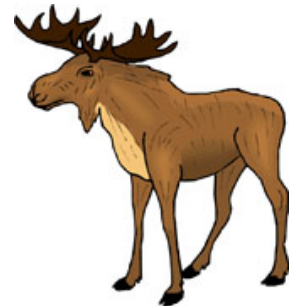
Ontario is the second-largest province in Canada and covers 1,076,395 square kilometres (415,598 square miles). Ontario has many rivers and rocky landscapes, so you can find lots of rapids and waterfalls in the province, including the famous Niagara Falls on the border of Ontario and New York.

Ontario has three main geographic regions: the Canadian Shield, the Hudson Bay Lowlands, and the Great Lakes–Saint Lawrence Lowlands. The Canadian Shield stretches across the middle of Ontario, covering about two-thirds of the province. It is a large section of ancient rock, and the land in this region is rugged and covered in forests. The Hudson Bay Lowlands is an area of much flatter land around Hudson Bay, full of wet, swampy bogs. These bogs are known as *muskeg* and are made up of dead or decaying plants and trees. The farther north you go in the Hudson Bay Lowlands, the less plant life there is. The Great Lakes–Saint Lawrence Lowlands area lies south of the Canadian Shield and has some of the best farmland in Canada. The Niagara Escarpment, a long range of limestone cliffs, is in this region and stretches from Niagara Falls north to Lake Huron. The most important river in Ontario is the Saint Lawrence River, which connects the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean.



Wildlife

Ontario's landscape supports a wide range of wildlife, from large animals like moose, polar bear, and black bear in the northern region to the smaller squirrels, raccoons, and rabbits in the forests of the southern region. Caribou roam across the wilderness areas, and deer are common in the south.



Flora and Fauna

Common Animals

Beaver
 Black bear
 Black-capped chickadee
 Blue jay
 Channel catfish
 Chinook salmon
 Chipmunk
 Common loon
 Eastern cottontail rabbit
 Gray wolf
 Groundhog
 Midland painted turtle
 Red fox
 Red-tailed hawk
 Ringed seal
 Skunk
 Southern flying squirrel

Common Plants

Aster
 Beech
 Elm
 Maple
 Shag bark hickory
 Spruce
 Trillium
 Wild blueberry bush

Walrus
 White-tailed deer
 Woodpecker
 Yellow perch

Endangered Animals

American badger
 American white pelican
 Bald eagle
 Barn owl
 Beluga whale
 Eastern cougar
 Eastern Massasauga rattlesnake
 Eastern mole
 Eastern wolf
 Kirtland’s warbler
 Northern cricket frog
 Small-mouthed salamander
 Spotted turtle
 Woodland caribou

Endangered Plants

American chestnut
 Cucumber tree
 Eastern prairie fringed-orchid
 Forked three-awned grass
 Heart-leaved plantain
 Juniper sedge
 Pitcher’s thistle
 Slender bush clover
 Spoon-leaved moss
 Wood poppy

Environmental Issues

Energy Conservation

Ontarians are concerned with energy conservation because the province has experienced energy shortages in the past. The government of Ontario works hard to create and improve programs to help people conserve energy in an inexpensive way. The programs include services such as free pick up of old refrigerators that use too much energy and installing energy-monitoring systems in homes and businesses. These services are meant to help Ontarians make energy conservation a way of life.

Forest Fires

Ontario has many forests, and fires can occur when the land is dry. Forest fires start from lightning or from people who do not follow fire safety rules. Communities sometimes have to be evacuated because of the danger of fire and heavy smoke. The smoke also affects other areas as it is carried outside of Ontario by the wind. Ontario has a fire-management program that helps teach the people how to prevent fires and also allows forest employees to respond to fire alerts.



Resources and Industries

Agriculture

Ontario is Canada's top farming province. The southwest region is the heart of the industry, since northern Ontario's soil is rocky and not suited to farming. Beef, dairy, fruit, corn, and mixed farms are all found within the province. Hay, oats, corn, and other grains are important crops, while peaches, grapes, and cherries are grown in the Niagara region. There are two main dairy regions, near Toronto and Ottawa.



Manufacturing

Ontario leads the nation in manufacturing, producing more than half of all goods manufactured in Canada. Manufacturing also makes up the majority of Ontario's economy. Many of the products manufactured in Ontario are sold to foreign markets, particularly to the United States since no *tariffs* (fees) have to be paid on goods sold between the two countries. Cars and transportation vehicles are leading manufactured goods.



Mining

Thousands of Ontarians work in the mining industry, the most of any province in Canada. Copper, nickel, zinc, platinum, and silver are plentiful in Ontarian mines. Ontario also produces half of Canada's gold, mostly from mines in the north of the province. Southern mines produce salt, clay, and gravel. The Lake Huron area is rich in natural gas and *petroleum* (oil). It even has a town called Petrolia, which was once the centre of the gas industry.



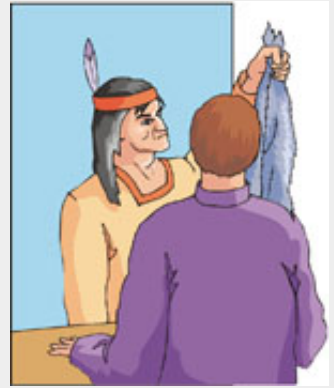
History



Time Line

5000 BC	
5000 BC	The Algonquin and Iroquois First Nations peoples live in what is now Ontario
AD 1600	
1612	French explorer Étienne Brûlé is the first European to reach what is now Ontario

1620 The Huron people begin trading with European fur trappers



1638 Half the Huron die from smallpox brought by Europeans

1673 Fort Cataragui becomes the first permanent European settlement

1700

1784 Large numbers of *Loyalists* (Americans loyal to the British) and Iroquois arrive from the United States and settle along the Saint Lawrence River



1791 The Constitutional Act divides the province of Québec into Upper Canada (what is now Ontario) and Lower Canada (what is now Québec)



1800




1812 The United States declares war on Britain and invades Upper Canada

1832 The Rideau Canal opens



1840 The Act of Union unites Upper and Lower Canada, with Ottawa as the capital



1867	Ontario, New Brunswick, Québec, and Nova Scotia unite to form the Dominion of Canada	
1880s	Mining booms spread across Ontario	
1900		
1912	Ontario is expanded to its present-day boundaries with Manitoba and Hudson Bay	
1916–27	Ontario outlaws the drinking of alcohol, but it continues to be produced and sold illegally in the United States	
1917	Women gain the right to vote in provincial elections	
1921	Agnes Macphail is elected the first female member of Parliament	
1954	Hurricane Hazel sweeps across southern Ontario	
1968	Canada's first full-scale nuclear power plant, Douglas Point, opens	
1974	Pauline McGibbon is appointed as Canada's first female lieutenant-governor	

1976	The CN (Canada National) Tower is built	
1995	Ojibwa natives clash with provincial officials over a land claim in the Ipperwash Crisis	
2000		
2003	Ontario legalizes same-sex marriage	
2013	Kathleen Wynne is elected the first female premier of Ontario	
2015	Ontarian Justin Trudeau, son of former prime minister Pierre Trudeau, becomes prime minister	
PRESENT		

The Iroquois and the Algonquin

The Iroquois and the Algonquin peoples lived in what is now Ontario for thousands of years before European explorers arrived. The Iroquois group was made up of the Huron, Eerie, Neutral, and Tobacco peoples. They lived in the region southeast of Lake Huron and spoke several languages. These peoples were mostly farmers and grew corn as well as squash and tobacco. They dried and stored their food to help them survive during the winter. Since they depended on the crops they grew, the Iroquois tended to stay in one place and built large homes known as *longhouses*. Each *longhouse* had a central cook fire, with several holes in the ceiling through which the smoke from the fire could escape. Families slept along both sides of the cook fires. Groups of *longhouses* made up a village or community.



The Algonquin group was made up of the Ojibwa, Algonquin, and Cree peoples, who lived mainly on the land north of Lake Huron. The Algonquin spoke a different language from the Iroquois and lived a very different lifestyle. They hunted and moved often, following the herds of elk or caribou. The Algonquin lived in *wigwams*, or dome-shaped tents made of animal skins stretched over wooden poles. These *wigwams* could easily be taken down when it was time to move.

Both the Algonquin and the Iroquois believed everything in nature had a spirit. They also believed in the *Great Spirit*, an all-powerful being who created the world and everything in it. Young teenagers often went on *vision quests*. On a *vision quest*, the young person went off alone to experience a vision, or dream, or gain a guardian spirit who would watch over him or her. The young person would then return to tell the village what he or she saw and try to figure out what it might mean.

Upper Canada

In 1610, 17-year-old French explorer Étienne Brûlé settled with the Huron in the Great Lakes region. The first European to see the Great Lakes, Brûlé claimed the surrounding land for France and laid the foundation for a strong fur trade between French trappers and the Huron. In 1670, British traders established the Hudson’s Bay Company, claiming all the land around the bay. The two nations battled in the Seven Years’ War for control of the fur trade and the region. France lost the war in 1763, and Britain took over the area that is now Ontario. By this time, there were many settlers from both countries in the area, and the people did not always agree on which laws should be followed. To stop a war, Britain passed the Constitutional Act, separating the colony into Upper Canada (what is now southern Ontario) and Lower Canada (what is now southern Québec). Upper Canada operated under British law. Soon immigrants from all over the United Kingdom began pouring into the new colony.



The War of 1812

On 18 June 1812, the United States of America declared war on its mother country, Great Britain. This declaration included Britain’s colonies in North America. U.S. general William Hull’s forces invaded Upper Canada in the area that is now Windsor, Ontario, on 12 July 1812. The attack was an attempt to weaken British control in North America. Canadian forces immediately fought back. Many *indigenous* (native) groups joined these forces, helping to drive out the American invaders and put down several of the early attacks. *Loyalist* settlers, who were people who fought for the British during the American Revolution and later fled to Canada, also took up arms and fought on the Canadian side.



British and Canadian troops held off the Americans until the United States won the Battle of the Thames near Chatham, Ontario, on 5 October 1813. For the next year, both sides traded victories until leaders signed the Treaty of Ghent in 1814. The war was officially over, and neither side had given up any land, but borders between the United States and Canada were firmly set by this treaty. Many Canadians felt a new sense of national pride at being able to defend their land.

Confederation

In 1840, Britain decided to reunite Upper and Lower Canada to form the Province of Canada, but Canadians were anxious for more control over their own government. In 1867, the British North America Act was passed. The act separated the Province of Canada into two separate provinces—Ontario and Québec. These two provinces joined with two eastern colonies—Nova Scotia and New Brunswick—to form their own country, the Dominion of Canada. Ottawa was chosen as the nation’s capital.



The new government still answered to Great Britain, but the Dominion immediately began expanding its borders by purchasing Rupert’s Land from the Hudson’s Bay Company. These lands became part of Ontario, and soon Ontario reached all the way to Manitoba. Railways were built across the land, which brought many people and railway workers to Ontario. By the early 1900s, rich deposits of minerals such as gold, silver, and copper were discovered in Ontario, and many miners filled Ontario as well.

Hurricane Hazel

On 15 October 1954, Hurricane Hazel struck the Toronto area in southern Ontario. The hurricane started out 10 days before in the Caribbean and ran all the way up the Atlantic coast of the United States before reaching Canada. Weather experts expected the storm to wear itself out before reaching so far north. In fact, it was no longer classified as a hurricane after it passed New York. But as the storm moved, it unexpectedly grew stronger. By the time it hit Toronto, the hurricane's winds were blowing as fast as 110 kilometres per hour (68 miles per hour).



Within the space of two days, Hurricane Hazel dropped 286 millimetres (11 inches) of water on Toronto, killing 81 people and leaving thousands homeless. The worst hurricane ever to hit Canada caught people by surprise and washed many homes and buildings into Lake Ontario. As a result, the province was forced to change the way it handled flood control. Toronto regional authorities updated their flood control plan and began building larger dams and reservoirs to help better control the waters from unexpected floods and storms like Hurricane Hazel.

The Ipperwash Crisis

On 4 September 1995, members of the Stony Point Ojibwa *band* (tribe) staged a protest in the Ipperwash Provincial Park on Lake Huron. The land that makes up the park was once part of the Stony Point Reserve, given to the Stony Point First Nation by the government in the Treaty of 1827. In 1928, the Stony Point First Nation sold 153 hectares (377 acres) of the land back to the province of Ontario. This land was made into the provincial park. The rest of the reserve land was later taken over by the government during World War II to use as a military training camp. The government offered the band \$50,000 in exchange for the use of the land.



Ever since the end of the war, the Stony Point First Nation has tried to regain its land, claiming that the land was undervalued at the time the government took it over. However, the Department of Defence decided to keep the camp open. In 1995, about 30 protesters set up barriers blocking entrance to the park in an attempt to regain their land and protect ancient burial grounds on the site. The Ontario police came in to break up the protest, and protester Dudley George was shot and killed. Since the crisis ended, provincial governments have been more willing to listen to *indigenous* (native) land claims instead of resorting to violence.

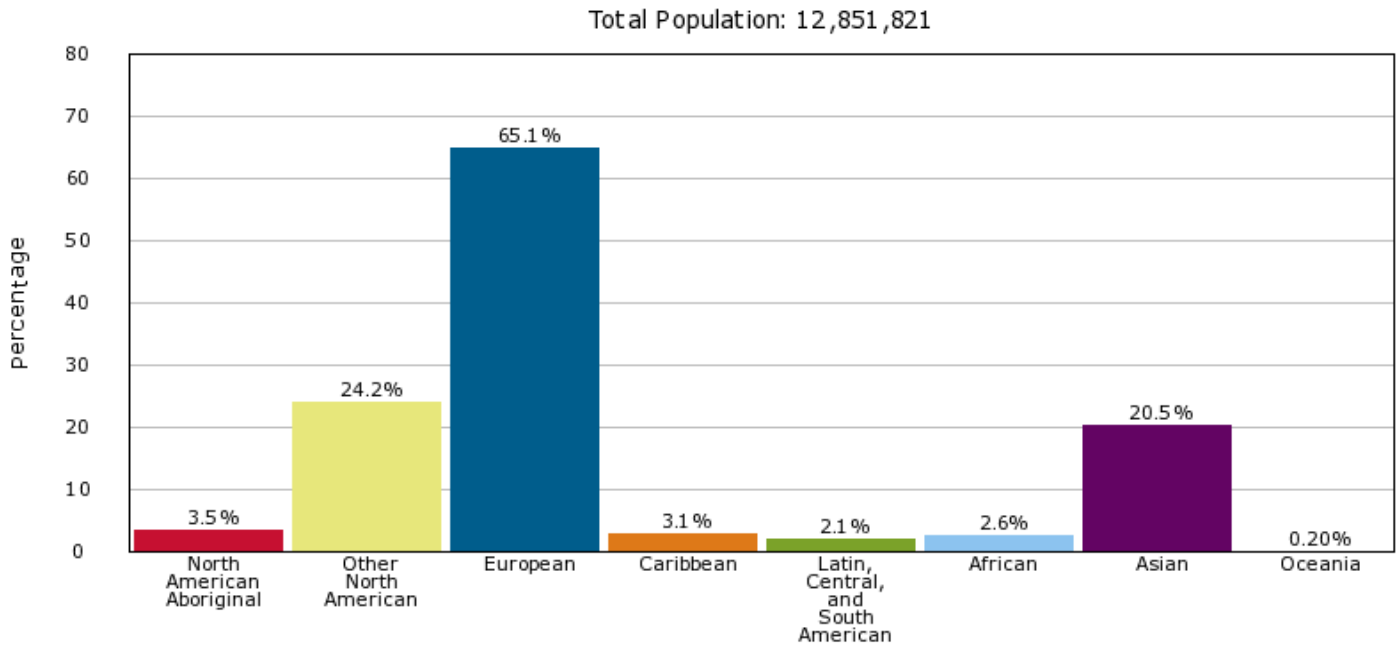
The People



Population

Toronto is the capital of Ontario and Canada's most populous city. The majority of Ontarians live in cities like Toronto or Mississauga, as opposed to the countryside. One-third of all Canadians live in Ontario, and the population continues to grow steadily, partly because many immigrants are settling in the province.

People of British descent make up the largest ethnic group, followed by French Canadians. There is also a large Italian community centred in Toronto, where many Italian immigrants settled both in the late 1800s and after World War II. Ontario is home to the majority of Canada's larger minority groups as well, with South Asians, Chinese, and blacks being the largest groups. Ontario's population is concentrated in the southern region of the province, in the area known as the Golden Horseshoe, along the north and northwestern shores of Lake Ontario. Few people live in the colder, northern areas.



Canadians may belong to more than one group. Totals may not equal 100%.

Government

Federal

Senators: 24

- Liberals: 3
- Conservatives: 10
- Non-affiliated: 5
- Vacant: 6



Members of Parliament: 120

- Liberals: 79
- Conservatives: 33
- New Democratic Party: 8

In Canada, members of Parliament are elected from across the country. The leader of the party that wins the most seats in the House of Commons becomes the prime minister. The prime minister is the head of government in Canada. The monarch (today, Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom) is leader in name only. She appoints a governor-general to be her representative in Canada. The role of this governor-general is largely ceremonial. In Canada, there are two separate lawmaking bodies, the House of Commons, which is made up of elected members, and the Senate, whose members are appointed by the governor-general under the advice of the prime minister. The House of Commons debates and votes on *bills* (proposed laws). The Senate carefully examines the *bills* and decides whether to approve, change, or reject them. For a *bill* to become law, it must be passed by both the House of Commons and the Senate and be given royal *assent* (approval) by the governor-general.

Provincial

Capital: Toronto, population 5,583,064

Province Abbreviation: ON

Premier: Kathleen Wynne (Liberal)

Lieutenant-Governor: Elizabeth Dowdeswell

Members of the Provincial Parliament: 107

Female MPPs: 36

The lieutenant-governor of Ontario represents the monarch (queen of the United Kingdom) and calls on the leader of the party with the most votes to be the premier. The premier chooses the members of the Cabinet from the elected members of the Provincial Parliament, who represent voters. These members are then appointed by the lieutenant-governor. Each is placed in charge of a department such as education, health, or *aboriginal* (native) affairs. The Cabinet members advise the premier, while the Provincial Parliament makes the laws.

Key Issues

Tobacco and Smoking

The government of Ontario *bans* (outlaws) people from smoking indoors, except for personal homes and selected hotel rooms. *Smoking rooms*, areas specifically assigned for smokers, in the workplace are no longer allowed. Bars, pool halls, and pubs must also follow this rule. This *ban* is one of many that have been passed over the last several years. The government focuses on providing healthy, smoke-free environments for Ontarians, teaching youth about the dangers of tobacco, and restricting tobacco advertisements. Many Ontarians die from diseases related to smoking and tobacco every year.



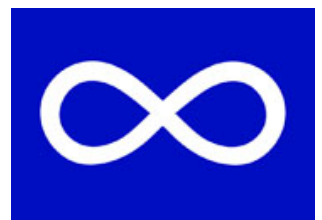
Health Care

The Ontario government is working on improvements for emergency room care. Emergency rooms across the province struggle to meet the healthcare demands of the public. Money has been set aside to provide more equipment, hospital beds, and hospital staff. The government has worked with Ontarian doctors to provide better coverage on holidays and weekends. These improvements are meant to decrease waiting times in the future so more people will be helped.



First Nations, Métis, and Aboriginal Peoples

There are a total of 189 First Nations *reserves* (land set aside for native use) within the province. The Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve in southern Ontario is the most populous *reserve* in Canada. The Six Nations *reserve* population represents the Mohawk, Cayuga, Tuscarora, Oneida, Onondaga and Seneca First Nations. Residents elect members to a governing council, which oversees *reserve* affairs. Every year, the *reserve* hosts the *Wahdakeh*, or Six Nations Native Pageant, which is an outdoor forest theatre. The pageant draws thousands of visitors and features live performances, food, and crafts.



Métis (people with both European and native heritage) see themselves as a distinct nation of *aboriginal* (native) peoples. The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) was formed in

1994 with the goal of bringing *Métis* from all over Ontario together to preserve their culture and encourage their interests and wellbeing. The MNO has developed education, healthcare, housing, youth, and many other programs to help its members achieve their goals in life. One project they sponsored was an *oral* (spoken) history project in which *Métis* youth held storytelling sessions with *Métis* elders, recording the histories and stories of their people.

Famous People



**Wayne
Gretzky**

- *Margaret Atwood* – Author
- *Dan Aykroyd* – Actor
- *Paul Martin* – 21st prime minister of Canada
- *Elvis Stojko* – Figure skating champion
- *Sir Frederick Banting* – Doctor and co-discoverer of insulin
- *John Candy* – Actor



**Margaret
Atwood**

- *John A. MacDonald* – First prime minister of Canada
- *Wayne Gretzky* – National Hockey League player
- *Karen Kain* – Ballerina
- *Graham Greene* – Actor
- *Robert Munsch* – Children’s author
- *James Naismith* – Inventor of basketball



**Rachel
McAdams**

- *Christopher Plummer* – Actor
- *Mackenzie King* – 10th prime minister of Canada
- *Joseph Brant* – Loyalist Mohawk chief
- *Keanu Reeves* – Actor
- *Neil Young* – Musician
- *Alexander Mackenzie* – Second prime minister of Canada



**Peter
Jennings**

- *Peter Jennings* – News anchor
- *Jim Carrey* – Actor
- *Glenn Gould* – Pianist
- *Megan Follows* – Actress
- *Lester B. Pearson* – 14th prime minister of Canada
- *Gordon Lightfoot* – Folk singer

- *Mike Myers* – Actor
- *Alanis Morissette* – Musician
- *Avril Lavigne* – Musician
- *James Cameron* – Director
- *Ryan Gosling* – Actor
- *Justin Bieber* – Singer
- *Rachel McAdams* – Actress
- *Stephen Harper* – 22nd prime minister of Canada

Cultural Notes



The Group of Seven

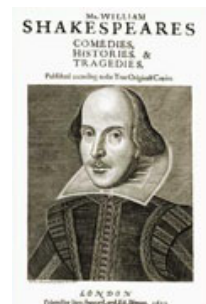
In the 1920s, a group of seven artists came together to discuss art and share their talents. J. E. H. MacDonald, Franklin Carmichael, Lawren Harris, A. Y. Jackson, Frank Johnston, Arthur Lismer, and Frederick Varley put on art shows featuring all of their work together. They painted landscapes and other scenes of nature. Their work showed strong ties to *Impressionism*, an artistic movement that emphasized colour and light rather than line and shape. The goal was to create an impression of the scene rather than the scene itself.

In Canada, the Group of Seven travelled across the country, painting uniquely Canadian scenes, from the western wilderness to the wild Arctic regions of the north. Eventually their work gained a large following and had a strong impact on the way Canadians viewed the country they lived in. In 1931, the Group of Seven founded a new association of Canadian painters known as the Canadian Group. The Group of Seven remains the most famous art movement in Canadian history.



The Stratford Shakespeare Festival

Every year, Stratford, Ontario, hosts the Stratford Shakespeare Festival of Canada. Running for seven months out of the year, this theatre festival focuses on the works of William Shakespeare. It also includes a wide range of other plays, from musicals to Greek tragedies. In the early 1950s, Ontario journalist Tom Patterson had the idea of starting a Shakespearean theatre festival in his hometown of Stratford, which shared the same name with Shakespeare's hometown in England. In the early days of the festival, plays were staged inside a big canvas tent. The tent weighed 3.5 tonnes (3.9 tons) and was supported by four 19-metre (62-foot) poles. The unique stage had seven different levels, including a set of trap doors. The festival was an immediate success and has now grown to fill several theatres, as thousands of theatregoers from around the world travel to Stratford to enjoy the shows.



Fun Facts & Contacts



Official Emblems

Provincial Flower

White Trillium

This small white flower blooms in Ontario's forests in late April and early May.



Provincial Bird

The Common Loon

This bird is a good swimmer and can usually be found nesting or swimming in the lakes and rivers of the province.



Provincial Tree

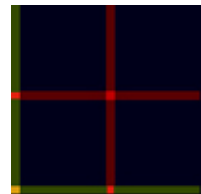
Eastern White Pine

This pine is the tallest tree in eastern North America. It has a smooth, grey bark that darkens as the tree gets older. The Eastern White Pine can live several hundred years and is somewhat resistant to fire.



Provincial Tartan

Ontario's tartan is made up of four different blocks. The three shades of green symbolize the forests and fields of Ontario, while the two blue colours depict provincial waters. The red represents Ontario's First Nations, and the white stands for the sky.



Provincial Coat of Arms

The cross of Saint George is also the flag of England. Maple trees are found in the southern half of the province, and the moose, deer, and black bear are some of the original animals commonly found in Ontario. The cross represents Ontario's English heritage, and the maple, moose, deer, and bear represent Ontario's flora and fauna.



Major League Sports Teams

- Toronto Blue Jays (MLB)
- Ottawa Senators (NHL)
- Toronto Maple Leafs (NHL)
- Toronto Raptors (NBA)
- Toronto FC (MLS)
- Hamilton Tiger-Cats (CFL)
- Toronto Argonauts (CFL)
- Ottawa Redblacks (CFL)

For More Information

To learn more about Ontario, see www.ontario.ca. Or contact the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation, 10 Dundas Street East, Suite 900, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M7A 2A1; phone (800) ONTARIO; web site www.ontariotravel.net.

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Ontario

EXTREMES

Lowest: The province's lowest point is sea level, at James Bay and Hudson Bay.

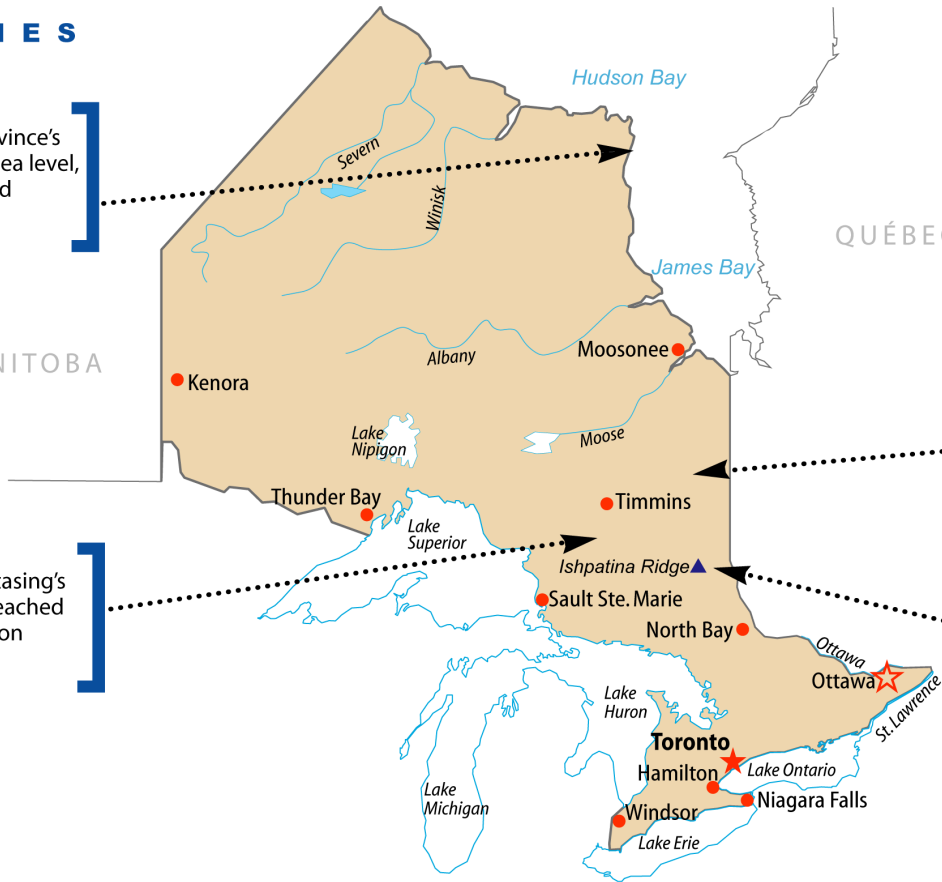
MANITOBA

QUÉBEC

Coldest: On 23 January 1935, Iroquois Falls's temperature dropped to -58.3°C (-73°F).

Hottest: Biscotasing's temperature reached 42.2°C (108°F) on 20 July 1919.

Highest: Ishpatina Ridge, in the Timiskaming area, stretches to 693 metres (2,274 ft).



- ★ National Capital
- ★ Provincial Capital