



My Drift

Title: Yellowknife

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Map of Canada

Canada Overview

Canada's ten provinces and three territories extend from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean and northward into the Arctic Ocean, making it the world's second-largest country by total area, with the world's longest coastline. Its border with the U.S. is the world's longest international land border. The country is characterized by a wide range of both meteorological and geological regions. With a population of just over 41 million people, it has widely varying population densities, with the majority residing in urban areas and large areas of the country being sparsely populated. Canada's capital is Ottawa, and its three largest metropolitan areas are Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver.

Canada's Three Territories

The Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut are located in the northern part of the country and are governed by the Parliament of Canada.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

Yukon:

Located in the western portion of Northern Canada, Yukon (population 46,000) is the smallest of the three territories. Whitehorse (population 35,000) is the capital of the Yukon, and the largest city in Northern Canada.

Northwest Territories (NWT):

Situated in the central part of the three territories, the Northwest Territories is the second largest. Yellowknife is the capital city. Here is some general information:

- The estimated population of the Northwest Territories is around 45,600.
- Yellowknife, the capital city, has a population of around 20,500.
- Other Notable Communities are Hay River, Inuvik, Fort Smith, and Behchokò.
- The land area is 519,700 square miles.
- The population density is 0.1 people per square mile.
- There are about 20,200 Indigenous people representing 49.6% of the total population.
- The median total income of all families in Northwest Territories is around \$135,000 dollars.



Northwest Territories

Nunavut:

The largest of the three territories (709,267 square miles), Nunavut (population about 41,500) is located in the eastern portion of Northern Canada and was created from the eastern portion of the Northwest Territories in 1999. Nunavut is the largest of the three territories comprising a major portion of Northern Canada and most of the Arctic Archipelago. Its vast territory makes it the fifth-largest country subdivision in the world, as well as North America's second largest (after Greenland). The capital Iqaluit (formerly "Frobisher Bay") has an estimated population of 7,500 and is located on Baffin Island. It was chosen by a capital plebiscite in 1995. Other major communities include the regional centers of Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay.

Yellowknife

Yellowknife is the capital, largest community, and the only official city in the rugged Northwest Territories, Canada. It is on the northern shore of Great Slave Lake, about 250 miles south of the Arctic Circle, on the west side of Yellowknife Bay near the outlet of the Yellowknife River.



Yellowknife River

See if you can find Yellowknife on the map of Canada above.

Yellowknife and its surrounding water bodies were named after a local Dene tribe, who were known as the "Copper Indians" or "Yellowknife Indians", today incorporated as the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. They traded tools made from copper deposits near the Arctic Coast. Modern Yellowknives members can be found in city and in the adjoining, primarily Indigenous communities of Ndilo and Dettah.



Great Slave Lake (in the Summer)



Great Slave Lake (in the Winter)

The city's population is about 20,500 per the latest Canadian Census. Of the eleven official languages of the Northwest Territories, five are spoken in significant numbers in Yellowknife: Dene Suline, Dogrib, South and North Slavey, English, and French. In the Dogrib language, the city is known as Sqòmbak'è (Athapascan pronunciation: [sõ:'mbak'e], "where the money is").



The City of Yellowknife (in the Summer)



The City of Yellowknife (in the Winter)

The Yellowknife settlement was founded in 1934, after gold was found in the area, although commercial activity in the present-day waterfront area did not begin until 1936. Yellowknife quickly became the center of economic activity in the Northwest Territories and was named the capital in 1967. As gold production began to wane, Yellowknife shifted from being a mining town to a center of government services in the 1980s. However, with the discovery of diamonds north of the city in 1991, this shift began to reverse. In recent years, tourism, transportation, and communications have also emerged as significant Yellowknife industries.



Diavik Diamond Mine near Yellowknife



Some of the Diamonds

Yellowknife locals are known for their friendliness, and they know how to make visitors feel welcome. Built on the shore of the Great Slave Lake, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, is perfect for vacationers who love all the activities the great outdoors offer, but there are plenty of indoor activities to keep busy with if the weather gets too harsh. There's never a shortage of fun to be had in this unique city.

Things to Do in Yellowknife

The capital city of the Northwest Territories is famed for its Aurora viewing. For up to 240 nights a year, you can witness the Aurora Borealis, more commonly known as the Northern Lights.



Northern Lights

Yellowknife is the perfect winter adventure destination for cold-weather fun. From December to March, temperatures range on average from -10F to -2F degrees, guaranteeing a frozen playground for the usual frosty outdoor activities as well as some unique ones.

A dogsledding tour is a must when visiting the NWT. Feel the thrill as you glide through the snow on a sled pulled by energetic, well-trained dogs, experiencing uniquely Northern and age-old traditions.



Dogsledding

If you prefer horsepower over dog power, take a snowmobile tour. Or, if you'd rather hit the trails under your own steam, try a fat bike tour—there are options for all cycling abilities.



Yellowknife is famous for its extensive network of trails, each leading to unique northern scenery. While you're downtown, check out Frame Lake or Niven Lake—both scenic and accessible on foot. Tin Can Hill, a 1.3-mile loop which offers breathtaking views including a spectacular look at Yellowknife Bay. Then there's Ranney Hill Trail, just 3.8 miles from Yellowknife, which provides a short hike with outstanding views of the surrounding landscape.



Cameron Falls

Looking for more adventure? Head a little further to the scenic Cameron Falls, a stunning waterfall that looks like a picture frozen in time. And don't forget your camera!

Prefer ski trails? Rent a pair of cross-country skis and explore the freshly groomed routes along the ice-covered Frame Lake, Back Bay, and the 9 miles of well-marked trails.

One of the season's biggest highlights is the famous Snowking's Winter Festival. Every year, Anthony Foliot—better known as the “Snowking”—and his team build a stunning snow castle on the frozen Great Slave Lake. The castle features ice bars, slides, craft markets, shows, and concerts. It's an authentic Yellowknife attraction you won't want to miss.



Snow Castle at the famous Snowking's Winter Festival

The ice road to Dettah across Yellowknife Bay opens as early as mid-December until mid-April, growing 4-6 feet thick. Take a short trip – 6km (3.7 mi) – to visit the Dene community of Dettah or drive up the ice road from Vee Lake to set up your ice fishing hut for the day.



Drive the Ice Road to Dettah across Yellowknife Bay

Nature's North Wildlife Gallery is sure to be a family favorite. Featuring taxidermy exhibits of incredibly resilient and diverse Northern species, this space lets your imagination step into the world of wildlife, offering a unique Northern experience. After exploring the natural and modern worlds, step into history at the Yellowknife Historical Society Museum.

After a day of skiing, hiking, or sightseeing, satisfy your appetite with a taste of Yellowknife's local flavors. You'll find plenty of opportunities to try traditional foods with a Northern twist, from fresh fish sourced straight from Great Slave Lake to bannock and bison dishes that showcase the region's culinary heritage. Whether you're in the mood for a hearty meal or a light bite, there's no shortage of delicious options to warm you up after your winter adventures.



How do you get to Yellowknife from Honolulu?

So, you are one of those people that like snow, ice, and freezing weather and want to go to Yellowknife for some fun. How do you get there?

The best way is to take Hawaiian or Alaska Airlines from Honolulu to Seattle (2680 miles). Then take Alaska Airlines from Seattle to Edmonton, Canada (564 miles). From Edmonton you need to change airlines so you can take either Air Canada or WestJet to Yellowknife (633 miles).

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