



# CULTURAL FACTS

**For the month of July, we learn about our neighbors to the north. Canadians are a melting pot of many diverse cultures and lifestyles!**

The name Canada is from the Huron-Iroquois Indian word *kanata*, which means village or settlement. In 1535, when French explorer Jacques Cartier was traveling with Indian youths, they used the word to describe *Stadacona*, a village where Quebec City is located today. Cartier then used the word *Canada* to refer to the entire surrounding area, and in 1547, *Canada* appeared on maps, applying to land north of the St. Lawrence River.

Canada has the largest coastline in the world. It is 202,080 kilometers long (125,567 miles). The country has the world's largest water area too. It would take you roughly 4.5 years to walk around Canada, without breaks for sleeping, eating, or rest.

Built in 1695, Quebec City is the only fortified city in Canada. It's also the first fortified city in North America, and the only city north of Mexico to have preserved the old ramparts, a citadel, and other defensive structures. The ramparts of Old Quebec were built on the west side of the city, the only space not protected by the cliffs. The fortifications reach nearly 4.6 kilometers (2.9 miles) in length. Quebec City is not only the only walled city north of Mexico, but it was the first city in North America to become a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Located in both northeastern Alberta and southern Northwest Territories, Wood Buffalo National Park is the country's largest national park at 44,807 square kilometers (17,300 square miles), and the world's second-largest national park. It was created to be a home for bison, and it's bigger than countries such as Denmark, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.





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Of the world's maple syrup, 71% comes from Canada, which probably isn't surprising. But what is fascinating is that 91% of maple syrup production occurs in Quebec alone, according to Pure Canada Maple. It also makes up 80% of global green lentil exports, with 95% produced in Saskatchewan.

The people of this country follow diverse religion and the freedom of religion is a constitutionally protected right. Christianity is the most prevalent religion along with the presence of others like Hinduism, Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist, Jewish, etc.

Canada is a bilingual country with English and French being the official languages. The Majority of Canadians speak in English, this is one the reasons Indians find it easy to study in Canada as opposed to other countries like Germany, France, etc. But most people in Quebec prefer using French for all communication. Due to Canada's welcoming attitude to immigrants, the language mix is very diverse. There are people speaking Chinese, Punjabi, Spanish, German and Italian to name a few.

Canadians are known for their politeness. But they say sorry so much that an Apology Act was passed in 2009, which made apologies inadmissible in court. So an apology "means an expression of sympathy or regret" and not "an admission of fault or liability in connection with the matter to which the words or actions relate."

