

# Edmonton Essentials

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**Origin of Edmonton's Name:** In 1794, the Hudson's Bay Company established a fort 25 km downstream of the modern city. Its name came from Edmonton, UK, the hometown of Sir James Winter Lake, then director of the Hudson's Bay Company. After several relocations, in 1808 Fort Edmonton was re-established at the site of the modern city that bears its name.

**Coat of Arms:** Edmonton's Coat of Arms was designated in 1994. At the top of the crest is a mace, representing Edmonton's status as Alberta's capital city. On the left is a Métis explorer, reflecting the city's fur trading past and on the right is Athena, the goddess of wisdom who represents education and the University of Alberta. These two figures, standing on green grass, are supporting a shield. The sun on the shield signifies Edmonton's above average amount of sunshine. The winged wheel on the shield represents Edmonton's aviation and industry and the sheaf of wheat, the importance of agriculture to the city's fortunes. The wave of blue across the shield symbolizes the North Saskatchewan River that runs through the city. The city motto runs across the bottom.

**City motto:** “Industry, Integrity, Progress.”

**City flag:** First approved by Edmonton City Council in 1966 and updated twenty years later, Edmonton’s flag includes the City Crest on a white field with two blue borders, which are the city’s official corporate colours. The blue symbolizes strength and the North Saskatchewan River. The white signifies peace.

**Official flower:** Edmonton’s official flower is the Marigold. Chosen in 1964, the bright yellow flower symbolizes sunny Alberta and Edmonton’s role in the 1890s Klondike Gold Rush.

**Voting age:** 18

**System of Measure:** Metric

**Incorporation:** Village: 1871 Town: 1892 City: 1904

**Time zone:** Mountain

**Area code:** 780

**Postal code:** T5A – T6Z

**Altitude:** 668 m

## Did you know...

that Edmonton was home to the world’s largest sundae? On July 24, 1988, Edmonton’s Palm Dairies concocted the 25 tonne (54,915 lb 13 oz) cool treat.

**Holidays:** New Year’s Day (January 1), Family Day (the third Monday in February), Good Friday (the Friday before Easter), Victoria Day (the Monday before May 25), Canada Day (July 1), Labour Day (first Monday in September) and Christmas Day (December 25). Lunar New Year (Chinese/Vietnamese New Year) is well recognized in the community — although it is not a day off work. Employers may also choose to add other general holidays, such as Boxing Day or Heritage Day.

## SISTER CITIES

- Harbin, Heilongjing Province, China
- Wonju, Gangwon province, South Korea
- Austin, Texas
- Nashville, Tennessee
- Hull, Quebec (now a part of Gatineau, Quebec)

## PARKS

Edmonton has the longest stretch of connected urban parkland in North America and the highest per capita area of parkland of any Canadian city.

- Length of this river valley park system: 25 km
- Total area of parkland: 111 km<sup>2</sup>
- Number of lakes within this area: 11
- Number of ravines: 14

## Did you know...

that Edmonton’s River Valley park system is 22 times larger than New York City’s famed Central Park and eight times larger than Vancouver’s Stanley Park?

## They Said It

*“Edmonton is a city with a sense of possibilities, a place that is both the outpost and the threshold for great ventures . . . It is Fortress North for liberal creativity and intellectual and artistic life, the preserver of the northern vision and the northern connection for southern Canada.”*

– Peter C. Newman, from *Titans* (1998)

## POPULATION

Edmonton is Canada’s second most populous provincial capital and Canada’s fifth most populous city.

- Population (2006): 712,391
- Population of Greater Metro Area (2005): 1,016,000

## ALL TOGETHER

Percentage of Alberta’s population falling within the Calgary-Edmonton corridor, according to Statistics Canada: 73

## POPULATION IN PERSPECTIVE

With just over a million people, the population of Greater Edmonton is six times smaller than Toronto. If Edmonton were an American state it would rank 44<sup>th</sup>, just ahead of Montana and just behind Rhode Island.

Edmonton is bigger than more than 20 countries in the world, including Luxembourg and Singapore.

## CRADLE TO GRAVE (2005)

- Births to Edmonton mothers: 8,575

## They Said It

*“Edmonton is as big as Chicago, but it isn’t all built up yet.”*

– Anon. Uttered to an early 20<sup>th</sup> century American tourist who asked of the size of Edmonton.

- Marriages: 3,868
- Deaths of Edmonton residents: 4,619

Source: Alberta Government.

## LIFE EXPECTANCY

- Men: 76.2
- Women: 81

Source: City of Edmonton.

## Take 5 ANNE MARQUIS' TOP FIVE ESSENTIAL READS ABOUT EDMONTON

Anne Marquis is Acting Manager for Information Services at the Stanley A. Milner Library, situated on Sir Winston Churchill Square, in the heart of the Arts District. She shares her top five books that she feels give true insight to Edmonton and its’ people. Edmonton is served by sixteen branches of the Edmonton Public Library system. Edmonton celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a city in 2004 and, in honour of that birthday, the library joined forces with city archivists, educators, historians and the University of Alberta to produce the first two books on the list to celebrate and tell Edmonton’s story.

1. *Edmonton In Our Own Words* by Linda Goyette and Carolina Jakeway Roemmich (2004).
2. *Kidmonton: True Stories of River City Kids* by Linda Goyette; illustrations by Robert Nichols (2004).
3. *Edmonton: Portrait of a City* by Dennis Person and Carin Routledge (1981): a wonderful pictorial history of the city.
4. *The Garneau Block* by Todd Babiak (2006): which first appeared as a serialized novel in the Edmonton Journal.
5. *A Tourist’s Guide to Glengarry* by Ian McGillis (2002): a day in the life of nine-year old Neil, set in 1971 Edmonton.

## YOU KNOW YOU'RE FROM

- You drive ten kilometres to do a five kilometre run in the River Valley.
- The biggest boat in your city is located in the biggest mall in the city.
- The second biggest boat in your city is too big for the river it's moored on.
- Your local bar owner complains that new residential development will hurt his business.
- Camping is something you do until you can find an apartment to rent.
- Your address contains the name of a hockey player.
- Your favourite summer event involves standing in a field of mud, soaked to the bone, drunk out of your mind, listening to folk music.
- You queue up for the pubs in -25 degree weather wearing short sleeves or a skirt.
- Your commuter vehicle is a pick-up truck.
- You're served a "prairie fire" on your birthday.
- Your favourite outdoor pool is on the Legislature grounds.
- You know that Calgary isn't the capital of Alberta.
- You've waited 45 minutes for a bus that comes every 15.
- Half of your football stadium is filled with Saskatchewan Roughrider fans.
- The house down the street is painted like an Edmonton Eskimos jersey.
- You go to North America's largest theatre festival for the mini doughnuts and not the acting.
- The "valley girls" are, well, homeless.
- You know what it means to "Raj against the machine."
- The longest distance you've ever walked was from the Bay to HMV and back at West Edmonton Mall.
- A night at the Commie has absolutely nothing to do with politics.

## EDMONTON WHEN . . .

- The perv taking pictures of girls outdoors in bikinis is actually on assignment for the newspaper.
- Your city is home to both Guardian Angels and Hell's Angels.
- You've paid to watch a guy do push-ups outside the bar. (Go Dougie!)
- Your mayor wears an animal carcass around his neck . . . but only on special occasions.
- You step out into the -40 sunshine and say, "Yes, but it's a dry cold."
- You use the word "Fringe" as a verb. (As in "I'm going Fringing....or "Did you Fringe yet this summer?")
- You know that Highway 2, Gateway Boulevard, the Calgary Trail, and the QEII are all the same road.
- You sneer at potholes that are less than a foot deep and less than two feet across.
- You know instantly what the acroynms WEM, NEP and LRT all stand for.
- You do a mosquito count before firing up the barbecue.
- You can golf an entire 18 holes between dessert and sundown.
- Your Shakespeare comes partly risqué with a chance of evening storms.
- You see Wayne Gretzky on ice more than 99 days of the year—or is that the Capilano Bridge.
- You've witnessed the miracle of flames being doused by oiler power.
- You don't need echinacea, or even Cold-FX, to enjoy a dry cold.
- Sourdough is a raft race and Klondike Days live the life of an ex.
- You become the cultural Capital of Canada while publishers and film crews flee to greener pastures.
- Smart growth fails to wag the sprawling dog.

**THE CENTURY MARK**

There are 163 Edmontonians who are 100 years old or older (as of 2005). Of these, 58 are men and 105 are women.

**GIRLS AND BOYS**

- the percentage of the population who are male: 49.6
- Female: 50.4

**POPULATION DENSITY (PEOPLE/KM<sup>2</sup>)**

Edmonton: 1067.2

Calgary: 1,279

Tokyo: 13,416

New York City: 10,194.2

Toronto: 3939.4

**MARITAL STATUS (PERCENTAGE)**

Never married 43.3

Married 37.4

Separated, divorced 6.7

Common-law 5.5

Widowed 4.3

Unknown 1.9

Other 0.8

Source: City of Edmonton.

**Did you know...**

that 17.8 percent of Edmonton's population is foreign born?

**Did you know...**

that in its summer 2007 edition, Edmonton was named one of Canada's top five gay-friendly cities by the magazine *Out Traveler*?

**RELIGION (PERCENTAGE OF ADHERENTS)**

Protestant	31.2
Catholic	29.4
Other Christian	3.9
Muslim	2.9

**Take 5** **MAYOR STEPHEN MANDEL'S "TOP FIVE REASONS I LOVE BEING MAYOR OF EDMONTON, CANADA'S BEST CAPITAL CITY!"**

Mayor Stephen Mandel is a capital-city booster who brings 30 years of business and community experience to City Hall. As President of the privately-held Mandel Group, he has been involved in business, residential and commercial real estate development, construction and hotel and sports enterprise operations. Mandel has also volunteered with the Alberta Heart Institute, Heart and Stroke Foundation, Jewish Community Centre, and Allen Gray Continuing Care Centre.

1. Sharing in the winning legacies of the Edmonton Oilers Hockey Club, the Edmonton Eskimos Football Club and the Edmonton Rush Lacrosse Team's energy and enthusiasm.
2. Meeting people from the more than 130 countries that now call Edmonton home.
3. Biking to work through our beautiful River Valley, which is 22 times larger than New York's Central Park.
4. Being a part of the visual spectacle found at any one of Edmonton's 30 year-round arts and cultural festivals.
5. The unbeatable quality of life; the 18,000 new Edmontonians moving here each year now know it too.

Christian Orthodox	2.6
Buddhist	2.1
Sikh	1.4
Hindu	1.1
No religion	24.4
Other	1.0

**ETHNICITY (PERCENTAGE WHO CLAIM ETHNIC ORIGIN)**

Caucasian	75.69
Asian	10.15
Aboriginal	4.62
Indian	4.24
Black	1.97
Arab	1.58
Hispanic	1.11
Other	0.64

Source: Statistics Canada.

**LANGUAGES WE SPEAK**

In total, there are 183,040 allophones in Edmonton (people with a language other than English or French as mother tongue.)

- Percentage whose mother tongue is English: 77.7
- Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese, etc.): 3.6
- German: 2
- Polish: 1.2
- Phillipino: .9
- Other languages include –, Spanish, Portuguese, Ukrainian, Arabic, Dutch, Greek, Vietnamese, Cree, Inuktitut

Source: Statistics Canada.

**LENGTH OF RESIDENCE**

- 44.5 percent of Edmontonians have lived in the city for five years or longer.

- 12.4 have lived there three to five years.
- 22.2 percent have called the city home for one to three years.
- 17.5 percent have been mobile in the last year.
- 3.0 percent are unknown.

**EDUCATION**

**Public schools**

Edmonton has three publicly funded school districts, Edmonton Public Schools, Catholic School District and North-Central Francophone School Authority, providing kindergarten through grade 12 for our future generations.

**School Numbers**

- 208 schools
- 82,000 students
- 2,600 non-teaching staff
- 4,400 teaching staff

**Post-Secondary Education**

An estimated 170,000 students (including those enrolled at multiple schools) attend classes on several city campuses.

**Post-secondary schools (full- and part-time enrollment)**

Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT)	59,271
University of Alberta	47,520
MacEwan College	36,342
Norquest College	6,300
Athabasca University	3,420

**Did you know...**

that the Greater Edmonton tourism industry hosts more than 4.4 million visitors a year?

## They Said It

*“Edmontonians look down on Calgary as uncultured; Calgarians look northwards at Edmonton and dismiss it as ‘Siberia with government jobs.’”*

– Richard Gwyn, columnist, *The Toronto Star*, 1 April 1978

Concordia University College	2,346
The King’s University College	645
Taylor University College and Seminary	470
University of Lethbridge	453
Lakeland College	151

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

- Percentage of Edmontonians with a university degree: 19.1
- Attended high school, earning no diploma: 18.7
- College certificate or diploma: 17.0
- Trades certificate or diploma: 12.5
- High school diploma: 10.7
- Some university education (but no degree): 8.0
- Attended college with no certificate or diploma: 7.4
- Less than grade nine education: 6.5

Source: *Statistics Canada*.

### HEALTH CARE

- Number of hospitals operated by Edmonton’s Capital Health in and around the city: 14
- Physicians: 2,300
- Nurses: 28,820
- Emergency visits per year: 369,000
- Hospital admissions per year: 100,000
- Health related phone calls handled per year: 400,000

Source: *Edmonton.com*.

## They Said It

*“A fine city with too many socialists and mosquitoes. At least you can spray the mosquitoes.”*

– Future Alberta premier Ralph Klein in 1990, commenting on the capital city in his capacity as a Progressive Conservative MLA from Calgary.

### PROFESSIONAL SPORTS TEAMS

- Edmonton Oilers, NHL, 5 Stanley Cup Championships
- Edmonton Eskimos, CFL, 13 Grey Cup Championships
- Edmonton Rush, National LaCrosse League, 0 Championships
- Edmonton Cracker Cats, Northern League Baseball, 0 Championships
- Edmonton Oil Kings, Western Hockey League, 0 Championships

## Web links

### Edmonton Journal

[www.canada.com/edmontonjournal/](http://www.canada.com/edmontonjournal/)

See the local daily newspaper online – check out the day’s top stories, classifieds and education services.

### University of Alberta

[www.ualberta.ca](http://www.ualberta.ca)

For prospective and current students, faculty, staff, alumni and donors about faculties and departments, research, resources, services and the university itself.

### Profile of Census Tracts in Edmonton

[www.statcan.ca/bsolc/english/bsolc?catno=95F0183X1996034](http://www.statcan.ca/bsolc/english/bsolc?catno=95F0183X1996034)

This profile presents data on education, income and work, families and dwellings, as well as general population information for census tracts in Edmonton.